

SOCIAL PRACTICE

F O R U M



COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL PERFORMANCE PRACTITIONERS

First Edition

Compiled by

The Social Practice Forum Competencies Working Group

Acknowledgements

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Ana Maria Esteves and Liz Wall, the Competencies Working Group Co-Leads, alongside the following individual members: Mafalda Arias, Peter Austin, Dost Bardouille, Elizabeth Bradshaw, Janet Fishlock, Philippe Hanna, Anne-Sophie Leroy, Eddie Smyth, Ian Thomson, Frank Vanclay, Simon Wake, and Luc Zandvliet.

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About the Social Practice Forum

The Social Practice Forum (SPF) was established to provide active leadership on social performance. The SPF's vision is that business, civil society, communities and government can transform natural resource endowments to create enduring, positive social, environmental and economic outcomes.

The SPF contributes to this vision by creating a space for members to pool their collective experience, advance ideas and promote progressive practices. More can be found about us at <https://socialpracticeforum.org/>

Limitations

SPF publications are by no means exhaustive, nor intended to represent any judgement or designation of individual leadership in discussions of best practice. Rather, the documents are intended to highlight useful information and mechanisms for effective social performance practices, based on current internal research and practitioner insights.

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WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

This document is the Competency Framework for Social Performance Practitioners. The Framework includes definitions and behavioural indicators of 31 competencies and 47 specialisations in the field of Social Performance.

WHY WAS THE SOCIAL PERFORMANCE PRACTITIONER COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED?

At present, Social Performance is not a formalized profession, at least, not in terms of being governed by an accreditation body, regulations or ethics prescribing a minimum set of acceptable standards. Yet many professionals from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and experiences self-identify as being a Social Performance Practitioner.

The first Strategic Plan of the Social Practice Forum (SPF) expressed a collective desire to promote recognition of social performance as a professional discipline, build the technical capabilities of members and Social Performance Practitioners in the wider community of practice, as well as seek to formalise the social performance roles and competencies.

This Competency Framework (Framework) is a response to this strategic intent and is a first step towards defining the Social Performance profession. The Framework informs other SPF initiatives, such as models for professional accreditation and the levels of proficiency required for specific roles (such as site-based community relations, corporate-based social performance, consultants, lender safeguard specialists, etc.). It is expected that this Framework will evolve as it is informed by these initiatives as well as member and external feedback from review and application of the Framework.

WHAT IS THE SOCIAL PRACTICE FORUM?

The Social Practice Forum (SPF) was established to provide active leadership on social performance. The SPF's vision is that business, civil society, communities and government can transform natural resource endowments to create enduring, positive social, environmental and economic outcomes.

The SPF contributes to this vision by creating a space for members to pool their collective experience, advance ideas and promote progressive practices. The SPF brings together experienced social performance practitioners dedicated to promoting the advancement of social performance.

The Competency Framework focuses on SPF's strategic priority of advancing the professionalisation of Social Performance Practitioners.

HOW SHOULD THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK BE USED?

This Framework describes the competencies that Social Performance Practitioners need to perform their jobs successfully. The Framework can be used to inform career development, training and coaching schemes; recruitment and selection procedures; performance interviews; decisions about career advancement options; and to determine what constitutes a 'competent' or 'expert' person for a specified task.

WHO CAN USE THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK?

The Framework is intended to be applicable to all sectors that develop projects, which potentially impact on people and their livelihoods, such as energy, extractives, forestry, agri-business, infrastructure, manufacturing and conservation, as well as the institutions that fund these projects. The Framework can be applied to Social Performance Practitioners who are employed directly or indirectly by these sectors and to those who are engaged as consultants. The Framework can also be used by their supervisors, Human Resources staff, career advisors who have an interest in competency management, and people in other professions who are seeking to deepen their understanding of the Social Performance profession.

The Framework is intended to be applied to individuals whose primary role and responsibilities relate to supporting the Social Performance of a project and who should have the specialist skills listed in this document. In its current design, the Framework is not intended to be applied to those who may also play a significant role in the Social Performance of a project, but do not have this as their primary function (such as personnel in corporate communications, environmental management, human resources, procurement/supply chain, compliance, legal departments and senior management). There are competencies in the Social Performance Practice Framework that are also relevant to this second group of professionals, and we hope that by making this tool readily available, it will be useful to those other professions.

HOW WAS THE FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED?

SPF members had a number of opportunities to provide inputs to the Working Group tasked with the drafting of the Framework. A brainstorming workshop was held at the SPF meeting in Oxford, UK in November 2019. SPF members were invited to review and provide written comment on the first draft throughout February 2020. Verbal feedback was also provided in an SPF meeting held in Toronto late February 2020. A second draft was subsequently shared with the members in April 2020 and discussed in a call in June 2020. The document was subsequently reviewed by the SPF Stewardship Committee and endorsed in August 2020. The SPF intends to actively elicit stakeholder feedback on this version of the Framework so as to inform its continuous improvement.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Within this Framework, a competency is defined as a specific combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes and character traits that are expressed in a person's behaviour, and that are essential to effectively perform the professional tasks in a specified field, in this case, Social Performance Practice.

A specialist skill is a type of work-related activity that requires special training and/or knowledge.

HOW IS THE DOCUMENT ORGANISED?

This document first describes the 31 competencies listed below and divided into four clusters. These clusters are related to the individual and social behaviours as well as character traits of Social Performance Practitioners and the activities they perform.

The Framework uses the following structure to describe each competency in detail:

- A definition of the competency. This definition is a concise statement of what the competency means.
- A list of behavioural indicators used to describe the competency in terms of visible and therefore measurable behaviour.

Following the competency descriptions, a list of the 47 currently identified specialisations within the field of social performance practice is presented. This is followed by an indicative table of requirements for different levels of career development (basic, intermediate, competent and expert).

WHAT ARE THE COMPETENCIES?

The 31 competencies listed below and described in this document are divided into four clusters. These clusters are related to the individual and social behaviours and character traits of Social Performance Practitioners and the activities they perform.

CLARITY OF PURPOSE



1. Vision of sustainable development that is fair and respectful of people
2. Conceptual knowledge
3. Analytical capacity
4. Context-sensitivity
5. Capacity to learn and adapt
6. In touch with trends

COMMUNICATION



7. Listening
8. Empathy
9. Persuasiveness
10. Collaboration
11. Intercultural relations
12. Organisational awareness
13. Verbal communication
14. Written communication
15. Presenting in public
16. Negotiating

COORDINATION



17. Planning and organising
18. Monitoring
19. Time and cost consciousness
20. Stakeholder focus
21. Health and safety attentiveness
22. Accuracy and precision
23. Managing for social outcomes
24. Delegating
25. Ethical handling of personal data

CHARACTER



26. Integrity
27. Adaptability
28. Curiosity
29. Resilience
30. Self-reflection
31. Independence

ARE SOCIAL PERFORMANCE PRACTITIONERS REQUIRED TO HAVE ALL THE COMPETENCIES IN THE FRAMEWORK?

The competencies under the four clusters apply to all Social Performance Practitioners. However, the expected level of proficiency within a competency will vary depending on the specific role. For example, there will be varying requirements of a Community Liaison Officer working at the operations level, a Social Performance Director in a corporate head office, a social safeguards specialist working for a lender, a consultant undertaking a Social Impact Assessment, or a project manager implementing a resettlement, regarding how they manage their tasks. These differences should be considered when drawing on the Framework to develop role-specific tools for recruitment, selection, development and performance management.



CLARITY OF PURPOSE

1. VISION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THAT IS FAIR AND RESPECTFUL OF PEOPLE

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner assists organisations in addressing the social pillar of sustainable development. They should take a long-term view that is concerned with the equitable distribution of risks and benefits brought about by projects. The Social Performance Practitioner understands that this function, which requires identification and management of social issues and associated risks to communities and to the organisation, is integral to the organisation's core business. In their vision, community needs are given the same weight as business needs. This competency requires not losing sight of these fundamentals in the conduct of day-to-day practice.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS:

- Takes the time to think ahead, focusing on achieving the fundamentals while balancing short- and long-term outcomes taking into account potential unintended undesirable outcomes.
- Focuses on intended sustainable outcomes, rather than inputs, activities or outputs.
- Identifies opportunities and possibilities for the mutual benefit of communities, project developers and other relevant stakeholders, and to strengthen their inter-relationships.
- Provides a clear picture of the future of a project and its interactions with local communities and their living environment.
- Has a clear personal mission and is guided by this when working in a changing internal and external context.
- Indicates how the strategy of the organisation must change in order to respond effectively to developments in the social context as well as internal developments.
- Understands their role and the role of the department they are assisting within the organisation in guiding the project through this change process.

2. CONCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE

DEFINITION

In their work, the Social Performance Practitioner will draw on core conceptual frameworks and models from social performance practice. They ensure that decision-making in relation to a project's interactions with communities is not based on biased intuitions but on sound understandings of social risk appropriate to the local context. This competency involves formulating views and ideas based on knowledge of core concepts, considering problems within overarching frameworks, translating observations into practical insights, and connecting personal experiences to an abstract level which contributes to enhanced or new frameworks.



CLARITY OF PURPOSE

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Demonstrates knowledge of relevant concepts to social performance practice, such as procedural and distributive fairness, human rights, engagement, participation, social inclusion, community development, health and wellbeing, quality of life, culture, social impact assessment, the gendered nature of impacts, risk perception, sense of community, place attachment, rights of Indigenous Peoples, benefit-sharing, livelihoods, governance, land tenure and use, political economy, ecosystem services.
- Demonstrates knowledge of the business model of the project or industry being worked with.
- Considers problems or situations in a conceptual framework, leading to broader and deeper insights.
- Is aware of their own biases when formulating views and seeks help from a cultural facilitator to apply conceptual models and verify observations if working in a different cultural setting.

3. ANALYTICAL CAPACITY

DEFINITION

Social issues are typically characterised as situations in which it is often difficult to establish causality and/or where there is little consensus in identifying problems and solutions; where there are many overlapping stakeholders with different perspectives on the problem; and which cannot be solved 'once and for all'. The Social Performance Practitioner is required to analyse situations or information and decide what is of major and lesser importance and get to the core of the issue.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Sorts information gathered from different sources (e.g. community consultation, grievances, specialist reports, baseline data, community-based impact monitoring, community investment project evaluation) into items of major and lesser importance.
- Applies knowledge of relevant conceptual frameworks, analyses issues in order to get to the core of the matter and, considers the consequential risks and opportunities for all stakeholders, external and internal to the project.
- Examines a problem (and a dataset) from different viewpoints.
- Describes the different perspectives about a problem or issue.
- Asks specific questions in order to understand and uncover the possible causes or contributors to a complex problem or issue.
- Applies a 'systems-thinking' approach to a problem and understands the interconnectedness between the issues and/or solutions.
- States clearly what the implications of a particular choice will be.
- Integrates ideas, themes and observations into clear, practical insights on how project activities potentially affect communities, and how social issues potentially affect projects.



CLARITY OF PURPOSE

4. CONTEXT-SENSITIVITY

DEFINITION

Social Performance Practitioners work in a range of social and project contexts, each context having its own advantages and disadvantages, and varying ability to effectively anticipate and respond to the changes brought about by a project. The Social Performance Practitioner avoids uncritical application of approaches that may have been used elsewhere and instead considers what will work within the given context and its social system. Similarly, the Social Performance Practitioner will consider the internal organisational system in which they are working before recommending solutions. This competency involves proposing ideas, perspectives or solutions that are context-sensitive.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Sees ways of adapting approaches and creating new approaches to achieve the fundamental vision given contextual factors.
- Is mindful of the feasibility of implementing recommendations, taking into account, for example, stakeholder priorities, stakeholder dynamics, and unintended consequences, such as those arising from a lack of capacity of the implementer, potential for elite capture and corrupt practices.
- Demonstrates resourcefulness in working with others to create new solutions.
- Advocates for the right type of context analysis at the right moment in the project timeline in order to guide investment decisions to avoid potential for harm.

5. CAPACITY TO LEARN AND ADAPT

DEFINITION

Social performance practice is a developing field with a growing body of knowledge. Furthermore, Social Performance Practitioners work in complex, changing and often challenging environments where new information is constantly being presented and where societies are often undergoing rapid and significant change. This competency refers to a Social Performance Practitioner being capable of absorbing new knowledge and information and applying it, being open to innovation, and avoiding repeating the same 'old recipes and practices' that have not proved to be effective.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Maintains critical engagement with the outcomes of past actions and advice provided.
- Shows that they learn from previous errors.
- Shows that they want to expand and deepen their knowledge and experience.
- Is up to date with important developments in disciplines which interface with social performance and their own knowledge base.
- Integrates newly acquired knowledge and experience into their own approach.
- Examines good ideas or programmes to see why they work and examines failures to understand their causes.
- Tests and appraises their own way of working in order to learn from this.



CLARITY OF PURPOSE

6. IN TOUCH WITH TRENDS

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner is well informed about social, political, economic and work-related developments, both internationally and in the project contexts in which they work. This competency is also about applying the knowledge effectively to their work.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Is well-informed about the current news issues relevant to their position.
- Keeps up to date with economic, social, work-related and other developments locally and internationally.
- Relates trends in society to own area of responsibility.
- Is aware of the potential biases inherent in their own personal ideologies when applying knowledge about trends and developments in a project context.
- Has external contacts and networks that inform about trends and developments relevant to their own position or the Social Performance discipline.



COMMUNICATION

7. LISTENING

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner interacts with people from a wide range of backgrounds, levels of education and experience. This competency refers to the Social Performance Practitioner's ability to carry out active listening, which involves listening with all senses and showing they understand important verbal and non-verbal information and to ask further questions when necessary, while adjusting their listening behavior to the other person.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Actively listens, in other words, fully concentrates on what is being said rather than just passively 'hearing' the message of the speaker.
- Shows genuine interest and demonstrates they are listening through culturally appropriate norms and behaviours.
- Patiently lets the other person finish their story without interrupting.
- Knows when to be quiet.
- Asks questions until everything is answered.
- Paraphrases the other person's story and briefly summarizes the other person's point of view to check whether summary is a correct representation.
- Is able to 'listen between the lines', read non-verbal behavior and identify, and distinguish, between stated positions and underlying interests through listening and questioning techniques.
- Adjusts to the level, background and experience of the other person.

8. EMPATHY

DEFINITION

Engaging with stakeholders to understand their needs and concerns is a significant component of a Social Performance Practitioner's work. In order to address these needs and concerns, a Social Performance Practitioner uses empathy to connect and build trust with people. This competency involves noticing the feelings and needs of others and appropriately responding to them. This also requires being socially flexible, able to connect and build trust with marginalized and disenfranchised (vulnerable) people, adaptive and respectful.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Listens non-judgmentally so as to articulate another's feelings and needs.
- Can think from the perspective of another person's culture, position and circumstances, and takes others' wishes, interests and feelings into account.
- Engages with all stakeholders in a respectful manner.
- Responds to non-verbal signals and notices quickly if 'something is the matter' with another person. Notices the effect of own behaviour on another and if appropriate adjusts their own behaviour accordingly.



COMMUNICATION

9. PERSUASIVENESS

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner influences stakeholders to see the value in operating in a way that avoids harm and enhances the benefits to local communities, whilst building relationships and trust between organisations and communities. Further, they influence individuals across functions and at all levels to change their attitudes or behaviours, thus ensuring that social performance is cross-cutting, and supports the ongoing process of organisational evolution to more mature levels of social performance. This competency involves succeeding in influencing others, particularly project decision-makers about ideas, plans and standards of conduct.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Puts forward proposals that demonstrate high levels of professional credibility to internal/project stakeholders.
- Puts forward relevant arguments at the right time.
- Discusses and addresses any questions or doubts in others, with the confidence and ability to adapt strategies to find an appropriate compromise when necessary.
- Deploys a range of arguments and behavioural styles in order to influence others, while taking account of their culture, position and background.
- Utilises the right champions in order to achieve appropriate objectives.
- Communicates complexity in simple terms, so as to ensure internal stakeholders understand social performance risks and issues.

10. COLLABORATION

DEFINITION

Social Performance Practitioners work together with a range of teams from project functions that interface with communities, such as Environment, Procurement, Communications, project contractors, security providers, external authorities such as government regulators and service providers such as emergency services. The Social Performance Practitioner helps other team members identify risks and opportunities and works with them to mitigate these risks. The Social Performance Practitioner also looks for opportunities to support the design and implementation of a collaborative developmental agenda with communities. This competency involves contributing with other persons or groups to achieve a joint result.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Utilises company management processes and systems as tools of collaboration to increase organisational effectiveness in social performance.
- Shares information and experiences with others.



COMMUNICATION

- Offers colleagues help when they need it. Contributes ideas, proposals and other input designed to achieve a group result, making use of the differences between the group members. Responds actively and constructively to the ideas of others.
- Adapts to the group and its goals when a joint result is needed.
- Bridges people's differences and their different viewpoints.

11. INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

DEFINITION

Social Performance Practitioners are often required to work in cross-cultural settings, including with community leaders, interest groups and vulnerable groups. Ensuring that all community members have sufficient access to information and that their needs and concerns are addressed requires communicating with heightened intercultural sensitivity. This competency involves recognising and appreciating differences and commonalities in one's own and other cultures, and adapting behaviour and communication approaches based on an awareness of how messages and situations are interpreted in different cultural situations.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Interacts across cultures in ways that expand their knowledge about cultural differences and to gain skills in adapting to these differences.
- Appropriately and authentically adapts and accommodates behaviors to a different culture.
- Connects emotionally with people, shows compassion, thinks in more than one perspective, and listens actively.
- Confronts cross-cultural ethical questions by fully considering what a particular practice means from their own cultural perspective and what a cultural practice represents in a different cultural community.
- Focuses more on the process of the interaction rather than its outcome while maintaining the desired communication goals in perspective.
- Is open to new information, takes more than one perspective, and understands personal ways of interpreting messages and situations.
- Keeps focus on situations that are not clear rather than becoming anxious, and is able to adaptively determine the best approach as the situation evolves.
- Engages in mediation between cultural groups that are experiencing problems.

12. ORGANISATIONAL AWARENESS

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner needs to understand the organization in which they work to be able to present social management information in a way that recognizes the capacity of the organization to respond. This competency involves understanding the organisational context, recognising the consequences that the Social Performance Practitioner's proposals or actions have on the organisation and, adapting accordingly in order to influence effectively.



COMMUNICATION

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Recognises and takes into account the opinions, sensitivities, incentives and disincentives with regard to social performance that are present in the organisation.
- When making proposals, takes into account the likelihood of acceptance within the organisation and adapts influencing behaviours accordingly.
- Demonstrates basic/essential business acumen.

13. VERBAL COMMUNICATION

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner communicates effectively with a broad spectrum of people, including community members, traditional and governmental authorities, media, managers, contractors and external expert teams. They explain complex social issues, potential project impacts and appropriate conduct. This competency involves making ideas and information clear to others verbally. The Social Performance Practitioner does so by using comprehensible language and checking that the message has been understood, particularly with marginalized groups and individuals.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Speaks in comprehensible language and explains jargon.
- Recognises when translation or interpretation is required to ensure clarity of communication.
- Checks that the person being spoken to has understood the message.
- Uses simple phrases to make their point of view clear to the other person.
- Keeps checking in order to fathom unclear statements or signals.
- Uses appropriate intonation and/or gestures to emphasise the messages being conveyed.
- Adapts the use of language to that of the person being spoken to and takes account of their cultural context.

14. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

DEFINITION

This competency involves setting out ideas and information clearly in writing, taking relevant target groups into account, such that the message is received and understood.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Uses professionally appropriate and culturally aware language in letters, memos, e-mails etc.
- Uses short, clear sentences in written texts.
- Uses form and structure to organise the written message clearly.
- Use of written language is consistent with the target group's specific needs and circumstances.
- Formulates complex issues clearly and precisely.
- Formulates sensitive issues tactfully and, adapts the choice of words to the objective and target group.



COMMUNICATION

15. PRESENTING IN PUBLIC

DEFINITION

A Social Performance Practitioner is often in situations where they are required to give presentations or address public meetings. Examples of such situations include providing feedback to community members on how their views and concerns have been taken into account, or reporting to company managers or external auditors on team performance or the situation in the community. This competency involves presenting ideas and information clearly, taking the target group into account.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Briefly highlights the essential points of a complex matter.
- Pays attention to the form, individual parts and structure of a communicated message.
- Aligns the content of the presentation closely to the target group's concerns and expectations.
- During presentations, engages with the audience by inviting people to ask questions and respond.
- Varies presentational approach.
- Uses attractive language and examples so that others listen attentively.

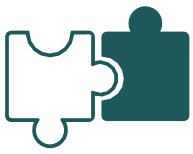
16. NEGOTIATING

DEFINITION

One role Social Performance Practitioners sometimes plays is as a 'bridge-builder' between an organisation and its stakeholders. This requires negotiation skills, which are applied in instances such as collaborative decision-making, agreement-making, resolving community grievances or disputes between the community and the company or its contractors, or resolving issues between community members and local authorities. They might take part on negotiations in a range of roles: on the organisation's negotiating team, the community's negotiation team, or they may be an independent mediator. This competency requires clarity on what the role requires and whose interests the Social Performance Practitioner needs to be promoting and protecting, such that favourable results are achieved whilst still maintaining mutual respect.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- In negotiations, is aware of (and has agreement for) how far they can go and what they can commit to.
- Identifies the objectives, arguments and underlying interests of the other parties.
- Puts forward arguments when the other party's proposals are not acceptable.
- In arguing one's own position, takes care to maintain a good relationship with the other parties.
- Searches actively for win-win situations.
- Puts forward arguments at the right time; exerts pressure or reduces tension as appropriate.
- Acts in good faith in respect of all stakeholders.



COORDINATION

17. PLANNING AND ORGANISING

DEFINITION

Social Performance Practitioners are involved in many activities that require rigorous planning in order to be effective. Examples of such activities include scoping an understanding of local conditions pre-project and relevant regulatory and policy frameworks, identifying stakeholders, engaging stakeholders, gathering data, setting up databases, assessing impacts and risks, designing measures to reduce harm and enhance benefits, resettling people, negotiating benefit-sharing agreements, implementing processes of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), or proactively mitigating health and safety risks. This competency involves surveying the work; setting goals and priorities; and planning the activities, time and resources needed.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Creates priorities by classifying issues into matters of major and lesser importance.
- Considers carefully how to tackle an issue systematically.
- Formulates measurable objectives for self and others.
- Creates frameworks for completing tasks in an orderly and efficient way.
- Anticipates unexpected events and is able to adapt the plans accordingly.
- Realistically estimates the time, people and resources needed to achieve a goal.
- Drives change processes.

18. MONITORING

DEFINITION

Social Performance Practitioners apply monitoring tools and techniques in order to enhance lessons learnt, performance assessment, reporting and decision-making. They may facilitate a participatory monitoring program, or undertake formal monitoring and evaluation of the resolution of community grievances as part of a formal grievance mechanism, an agreement-making process, a social impact mitigation plan, a social investment programme, a resettlement process or livelihoods restoration plan. This competency involves acting to monitor and check the progress made on activities or tasks.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Makes clear agreements at the start of a project or work about the different points in time at which evaluation will take place.
- Maintains an overview of the work.
- Makes interim checks as to whether the work is progressing as agreed.
- Calls people to account if agreed deadlines are not being met.
- Takes the initiative to get feedback or reports from team members.
- Evaluates and reflects on the monitoring results and adapts accordingly.



COORDINATION

- At the end of discussions, makes follow-up arrangements.

19. TIME AND COST CONSCIOUSNESS

DEFINITION

This competency involves the Social Performance Practitioner being aware of the timing and financial implications of their own actions and of the value of timeliness and resources. It also involves understanding the timeframes and cost considerations of the organisation they are assisting and ensuring appropriate budgeting of activities.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Is aware of project schedules and advises strongly when timelines might result in unacceptable social risk.
- Takes care with the resources they are managing.
- Recognises that time is important for stakeholders and knows when there is enough relevant information to substantiate a decision on taking action.
- Weighs up costs and benefits carefully from the perspective of all stakeholders.
- Monitors the time taken for activities, with a view to keeping costs down and maintaining the agreed timeframe.
- Considers the financial implications of plans and actions.

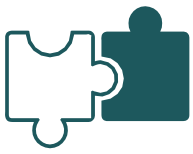
20. STAKEHOLDER FOCUS

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner assists stakeholders from a range of diverse sectors. They could be engaged by Indigenous Group rightsholders, government authorities, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, or companies. Internal to an organisation, stakeholders could hold many different functions that have a role to play in a project's social performance, such as Environment, Supply Chain, Human Resources, Health & Safety, Legal & Compliance, Communications, and Government Relations. The Social Performance Practitioner's 'bridging' role helps internal stakeholders in understanding where their needs and wishes are detrimental to external stakeholders and rights-holders (and vice versa) and how to avoid this, where there is mutual benefit to be gained, and where different or incompatible values need to be reconciled. This competency refers to the Social Performance Practitioner placing themselves in the shoes of all stakeholders to gain an understanding of respective needs and wishes.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Adopts a 'happy to help' attitude.
- Understands the rights and interests of internal and external stakeholders, giving particular attention to vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Takes the initiative in offering additional service to support the 'bridging' role.
- Keeps asking questions until a complete picture of the stakeholder's needs and wishes is obtained.
- Puts forward proposals that balance the interests of stakeholders (offers customised solutions).



COORDINATION

- Seeks an understanding of the stakeholder's organisation to achieve implementation of proposals.
- Checks that the stakeholders' respective needs for procedural fairness have been met.

21. ACCURACY AND PRECISION

DEFINITION

Recording and reporting in an accurate and objective manner on identified issues and all stakeholder engagement activities is an essential characteristic of the Social Performance Practitioner. This competency involves acting precisely and carefully when performing work.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Can articulate the perspectives and concerns of others accurately.
- Takes care when performing tasks and providing products.
- Checks own work for errors.
- Works according to agreed procedures and guidelines.
- Rarely makes errors in their work.
- Sees things that others miss.
- Considers the adequacy of data and evidence.

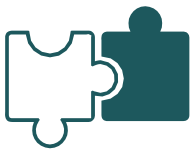
22. HEALTH AND SAFETY ATTENTIVENESS

DEFINITION

Performing a work task in a safe and healthy way, and across multiple and changing working environments, demands certain awareness, skills and knowledge of a Social Performance Practitioner. This competency refers to taking proactive steps to protect oneself and colleagues and stakeholders by preventing accidents and work-related ill health (physical and mental).

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Thinks about how accidents and ill health can happen in the workplace, both desk and field, and concentrates on real risks, i.e. those that are most likely and that will cause most harm.
- Thinks about how colleagues and other stakeholders who may be present might be harmed and involves others in identifying the hazards.
- For each hazard, takes steps to control the risks so that harm is unlikely. For example, involving and consulting with workers and community stakeholders; trying a less risky option; preventing access to the hazard; organising work to reduce exposure to the hazard; using protective equipment; having access to first aid and washing facilities.
- Does not put oneself or others in danger, especially in situations of conflict, protest or potential flare up of violence.
- Takes active care of their own mental health and work-life balance.



COORDINATION

23. MANAGING FOR SOCIAL OUTCOMES

DEFINITION

Project management is an essential skill for the Social Performance Practitioner, irrespective of whether they are acting in a formal role as a project manager, a team leader, or part of a project team or a cross-functional working group. This competency involves directing and steering team members in order to achieve the desired social performance objectives and results.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- States the expected social performance goals or results in clear, specified arrangements that include a timeframe.
- Ensures that, within a team, tasks are allocated clearly in order to achieve results.
- Offers guidance and direction when people express doubt about the chosen approach.
- Monitors progress made in achieving results and compares with the original objectives.
- When performance disappoints, takes corrective action.
- Expresses appreciation to team members who achieve the agreed goals and results.

24. DELEGATING

DEFINITION

The work of a Social Performance Practitioner often involves working in inter-disciplinary project teams and their expertise, roles and responsibilities will often need to be complemented by that of others. This requires knowing when to delegate tasks and delegating effectively. This competency involves assigning tasks and decision-making powers clearly to the right staff and monitoring the implementation and results.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Finds it easy to assign tasks to others.
- Delegates matters to specialists or team members and does not get unnecessarily involved with tasks once delegated (i.e. does not micro-manage).
- Delegates assignments that fit in with the level of competency and circumstances of the team members in question.
- Provides clear and accurate information when delegating the tasks. Monitors the progress made on the tasks they have delegated.



COORDINATION

25. ETHICAL HANDLING OF PERSONAL DATA

DEFINITION

A significant component of the Social Performance Practitioner's tasks involves listening to and faithfully recording the views of stakeholders so that these views are given due consideration in an engagement and/or assessment process. Respect for stakeholders and ethical practice requires the Social Performance Practitioner to accord confidentiality (i.e. non-disclosure of information) to all private or personal matters or views as well to the identities of individuals expressing those views.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Assumes anonymity of people participating in stakeholder engagement activities and the protection of their anonymity, unless they have given permission to be named.
- Discloses all relevant information and any possible risks of participation in stakeholder engagement activities, especially any issues around what will happen to the data obtained.
- Applies culturally appropriate forms of obtaining informed consent, so that the stakeholder's participation is based on voluntary choice and sufficient information and an adequate understanding of the data collection and the consequences of their participation.
- Provides full disclosure of the sources of funding of the data collection process.
- Does their utmost to ensure that no harm will come to stakeholders as a result of their participation in the engagement activity.
- Takes care to ensure that all personal data are stored securely and safe from unauthorised access and is destroyed after a stated timeline.



CHARACTER

26. INTEGRITY

DEFINITION

This competency refers to the Social Performance Practitioner's ability to act and comply with existing values, principles and rules to the best of their knowledge. This competency also involves the ability to be tackled about this and to tackle others about it too.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Takes care when handling confidential information.
- Upholds commitments and obligations they have previously agreed to.
- Does not misuse prior knowledge, personal information or their position.
- Does not withhold information that another person is entitled to.
- Propagates professional and organisational principles and values.
- Continues to act in an honest and trustworthy way in the face of temptation or pressure.
- Calls out corrupt practices and unethical behaviour.

27. ADAPTABILITY

DEFINITION

The working environment of Social Performance Practitioners is constantly changing, whether within the external socio-political context or the organisation they are working with. This competency involves adapting to different people and new or changing circumstances, without losing sight of, or compromising, one's integrity.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Is open to changes in their tasks.
- Finds it easy to switch between different tasks.
- Adapts their approach to the person, culture and situation.
- Quickly masters the culture in a new organisation or situation.
- Adjusts their own opinion based upon new information or persuasive arguments put forward by others.
- Is able to cooperate with a wide range of people.



CHARACTER

28. CURIOSITY

DEFINITION

The Social Performance Practitioner has an inquisitive mind that, for example, is not content only with literal interpretations of stakeholder answers to questions, secondary data, or observations at face value. This competency refers to using questioning in order to seek the knowledge required to fully understand the project context or issue at hand. Curiosity is a competency that ensures the Social Performance Practitioner applies critical thinking in their work and keeps learning.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Asks the right questions, even if 'inconvenient' and is challenging of assumptions in order to gain a deeper and broader understanding of the issue at hand.
- Willing to go beyond the first answer provided by a stakeholder and probe further.
- Feels at ease and is humble about acknowledging their own lack of knowledge about a particular matter, or not having all the answers, and uses questioning accordingly.

29. RESILIENCE

DEFINITION

This competency enables the Social Performance Practitioner to continue to perform effectively when under time pressure, in activities that require physical exertion (such as in fieldwork), and in the face of setbacks, disappointments or resistance.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Continues to work systematically when a number of people simultaneously ask for their attention.
- Continues to work calmly and effectively when deadlines approach.
- Recovers quickly from a setback or disappointment.
- Doesn't take their eye off the ball during crises.
- Responds calmly in the face of resistance or personal reproach.
- Is willing to undertake fieldwork and has the necessary physical fitness.
- Does not take 'failure' – unforeseen or unwanted outcomes – personally.

30. SELF-REFLECTION

DEFINITION

A Social Performance Practitioner should be able to demonstrate that they critically evaluate their own behaviour, viewpoints and methods and are open to evaluation by others. This competency is also about showing a willingness to learn from these evaluations by changing their behaviour, position or methods.



CHARACTER

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Asks for personal feedback.
- Can be called to account on own behaviour and/or errors.
- Shows real understanding of own strengths and weaknesses.
- Regularly evaluates their own approach and considers ways of improving or modifying it.
- Tries to improve weaknesses by modifying their own behaviour, position or methods.
- Shows an understanding of their own cultural background, standards and values and the effect these have on others.
- Demonstrates understanding of their personal limitations and limits when faced with a task and seeks support when appropriate.

31. INDEPENDENCE

DEFINITION

For a Social Performance Practitioner to be effective in ensuring procedural fairness for stakeholders and being a bridge between projects and stakeholders, they need to have the trust of all parties involved. If the Social Performance Practitioner is not seen as independent or impartial, this places that trust at risk. However, most Social Performance Practitioners work under conditions which limit perceived independence. They may be employed by the project developer and therefore have a stake or interest in the project, or they may not be financially autonomous in relation to the project. This competency refers to the Social Performance Practitioner's ability to perform actions and make statements that reflect their own analyses and views while being aware of the limits to their independence as perceived by stakeholders and to put in place measures acceptable to stakeholders where trust is at risk.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

- Makes decisions and forms opinions based on their own analyses and views.
- Forms an independent judgement even when put under severe pressure by other people.
- Dares to disagree with the judgments of others.
- Presents plans and proposals that do not follow 'business as usual' when appropriate.
- Holds on to professional ethics and standards even if they go against the stakeholder's wishes.
- Keeps appropriate professional distance from stakeholders in order to form an impartial judgement.
- Works with stakeholders to identify appropriate measures to ensure that information shared can be trusted.

THE SPECIALISATIONS WITHIN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

Below is a non-exhaustive list of subfields of and/or activities within the field of Social Performance Practice. A Social Performance Practitioner could be a specialist in one or more of these topics.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Anthropological analysis | 25. Indigenous peoples |
| 2. Audits/reviews against performance standards (company, financial institution, accreditation) | 26. International development |
| 3. Change Management | 27. Land access, acquisition and resettlement |
| 4. Communications (incl. crisis communications) | 28. Livelihoods |
| 5. Data Analysis | 29. Local economic development |
| 6. Community agreement-making and implementation | 30. Local content |
| 7. Community development | 31. Mediation |
| 8. Community health and safety | 32. Monitoring & evaluation |
| 9. Community liaison | 33. Negotiation |
| 10. Community planning | 34. Organizational Behaviour |
| 11. Community profiling | 35. Planning for closure decommissioning/transitioning |
| 12. Community psychology | 36. Political economy analysis |
| 13. Conflict resolution/mediation | 37. Project-induced in-migration |
| 14. Crisis management | 38. Regional economic development |
| 15. Cultural heritage management | 39. Social due diligence for new country entry, mergers & acquisitions |
| 16. Cumulative impacts | 40. Social impact assessment and management |
| 17. Disaster risk reduction | 41. Social investment programmes |
| 18. Ecosystem services | 42. Social research methods (qualitative and quantitative) |
| 19. Emergency preparedness and response | 43. Social risk analysis |
| 20. Facilitation | 44. Sociology |
| 21. Gender analysis | 45. Stakeholder analysis |
| 22. Grievance redress mechanisms | 46. Stakeholder engagement and participatory methods |
| 23. Human geography (cultural geography, social geography) | 47. Strategic environment & social assessment |
| 24. Human rights | |

Table 1 on the page that follows provides the indicative requirements for each level of professional development for specialists in the general field of Social Practice. At this stage of early maturity in the professionalisation of the field, the levels are not intended to be bounded by 'hard' thresholds. It is envisaged that, into the future, a person claiming expertise in one or more of these subfields would need to demonstrate that they align with the requirement in Table 1 with respect to their claimed subfield.

THE SPECIALISATIONS WITHIN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

TABLE 1: INDICATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

	BASIC	INTERMEDIATE	COMPETENT*	EXPERT **
Education	University degree, or equivalent accreditation in a relevant field	University degree, or equivalent accreditation in a relevant field	Post-graduate university degree, relevant specialised training, and/or equivalent accreditation in a relevant field	Post-graduate university degree, relevant specialised training, and/or equivalent accreditation in a relevant field
Industry experience	Up to two years of experience in the industry or similar industry relevant to professional degree or area of practice	Between two and seven years of experience in the industry or similar industry relevant to professional degree or area of practice	Between seven and 10 years of experience in the industry or similar industry relevant to professional degree or area of practice	Over 10 years of experience in the industry or similar industry relevant to professional degree or area of practice
Practical experience in subject-matter	Up to two years of experience relevant to the subject matter	Between two and seven years of experience relevant to the subject matter. Experience in the geographic setting and jurisdiction of the project, or in similar jurisdictions	Between seven and 10 years of experience relevant to the subject matter. Experience in best social management practices. Experience in the geographic setting and jurisdiction of the project, or in similar jurisdictions	Over 10 years of experience relevant to the subject matter. Experience in best social management practices. Experience in the geographic setting and jurisdiction of the project, or in similar jurisdictions
Practical experience in community-based fieldwork			At least 2 years of fieldwork experience	At least 2 years of fieldwork experience
Affiliations			In good standing with a professional network or association	In good standing with a professional network or association
Demonstrated breadth of knowledge	Basic understanding of the social impacts of a project	Basic-level knowledge about all the other subsets of the field of Social Performance beyond own expertise	Basic-level knowledge about all the other subsets of the field of Social Performance beyond own expertise. Basic understanding of scope of studies required to assess the social impacts of a project, and experience using this information to manage the impacts	Basic-level knowledge about all the other subsets of the field of Social Performance beyond own expertise. In-depth understanding of scope of studies required to assess the social impacts of a project, and experience using this information to manage the impacts
Competencies	Requirements for different levels of proficiency for each of the 31 competencies are under development			

* Enough skill or knowledge to do well or to a necessary standard

** Very knowledgeable about or skilled in a particular area: trained by practice

SOCIAL PRACTICE

F O R U M

About the Social Practice Forum

The Social Practice Forum was established to provide active leadership on social performance. The SPF's vision is that business, civil society, communities, and government can transform natural resource endowments to create enduring, positive social, environmental, and economic outcomes. The SPF contributes to this vision by creating a space for members to pool their collective experience, advance ideas and promote progressive practices.

<https://socialpracticeforum.org/>