

Why community engagement is so important for junior miners

By [Cecilia Jofré](#)

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Exploration is risky business, especially for junior miners. Not only is there the danger not finding enough mineral reserves, but their efforts could also be frustrated by ineffective social and environmental management.

If the social and environmental aspects are not considered early on in the project, in other words from exploration stage, it could have impact on future production. Therefore, tracking performance in all aspects of the exploration phase and generating clear governance reports gives junior miners an edge when it comes to attracting institutional investors and complying with regulatory requirements.



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Investing early in software management information systems can deliver extensive benefits throughout the life of the mine. The cost needs to be weighed against the risk of not engaging effectively with the community. Keeping auditable records of all community engagements, such as commitments made, and grievances logged, as well as all environmental monitoring from day one, helps to safeguard the mine in later years. Social risk is now consistently regarded as one of the top ten risks mining houses face.

Geological research is incomplete without collaboration and cooperation with the communities, as they provide access to the resource, in the form of the social licence to operate. While the issue becomes more pressing during production as opposed to exploration, establishing good relationships with communities right from the start makes the path to social cooperation smoother.

Looking after your social and environmental concerns assists in obtaining permits, as well as attracting investors. Institutional investment is concerned with how you manage stakeholders and environment sustainability. It is much easier for production to begin if the groundwork have already laid for cooperation from the community. There have been too many instances of community protest action bringing mining operations to a costly standstill for us not to look at this from the start. You might as well get it right from the beginning and make yourself that much more attractive to investors.

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