



**RAGLAN MINE. ACTION-ORIENTED
SOCIAL RESEARCH PROGRAM**

SCOPING PHASE: ANALYSIS

**A REPORT TO
THE COMMUNITY OF:**

KANGIRSUK

MAY 2000

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1.0 IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The issues and concerns raised in this section are related to contamination of the land from both past and present activities. The monitoring of environmental impacts of the Raglan project was also discussed by the interviewees.

1.1 CONTAMINATION

The people of Kangirsuk discriminate between two types of environmental contamination: that arising from garbage and materials left behind from previous mining activities in the region, and that from operation of the present Raglan mine.

1.1.1 PAST ACTIVITIES

The Inuit of Kangirsuk are concerned about the effects on the environment of previous mining activities undertaken within the region since the 1960's. There is concern about the discarded barrels and other debris contaminating the physical environment.

The following statement affirms this concern:

With the stuff that ... the mining companies that left behind, which are a concern for me. I camp at a place called Qanaq in the summer time. There are old barrels...and other debris close to the lakes because the airplanes used to have equipment and stuff down there, and it is strewn with old barrels in those lakes which have fish in them. So there is work to do down there in cleaning up stuff that was left behind.

1.1.2 PRESENT OPERATION

Interviewees also expressed concern over the potential impacts that the present mining operation may have on the land and its ecosystems. Mine tailings are feared to be a contaminant of both water and air.



There is a feeling that any contaminants on site, including tailings, will flow to Kangirsuk through the river system and affect fish stocks. This feeling is expressed in such statements as:

We informed them that the contamination would just spread about, since the rivers flow toward Kangirsuk, that the contamination would reach Kangirsuk...we did inform him of our concerns with regard to the spreading of pollution, and that the tailings site...the substance on that site will have to flow or disseminate to the environment.

And,

...there might be the presence of pollution. The lakes holding water will disperse the pollution through the watersheds such as rivers, and Kangirsuk is going to receive the full extent of the contamination, as the headwaters origin from that direction, because there are several rives leading to it. From the tributaries, because there are several tributaries flowing from the mine's direction.

Alternatively, contaminants could travel to the community through the atmosphere. There are concerns in Kangirsuk that dust from mine tailings will blow towards them. This sentiment is expressed in statements like:

...you know, when the wind blows, it doesn't show any mercy anywhere, it blows when it blows, and it blows strong enough to spread all kinds of things all over the place.

And,

I figure that it would have an impact on the atmosphere [and] cloud level by being carried up there by the winds.

And,

...we are very concerned by dust emissions from the site.





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Makivik Corporation Société Makivik

1.2 MONITORING

Interviewees expressed interest in the monitoring of physical impacts of the Raglan mine. They had heard that sampling stations analyzing water quality were put into place, and wanted to learn more about these stations. Interviewees also wanted atmospheric studies initiated, analyzing, "...the wind, to determine prevailing direction, and see how strong it normally is." And finally, they also wanted to know if action could be taken against Falconbridge if monitoring studies identified major environmental impacts.

This notion of environmental protection is expressed in statements like:

After 10 years or so, if the studies determined that there are impacts, can we ask the company to stop the project? We want studies to be done in order to build a case against the company if necessary. Our economy is based on the wildlife, and more particularly the fish.

1.3 PHYSICAL IMPACTS SECTION SUMMARY

In summary, the views expressed by the interviewees regarding physical impacts relate to contamination from past mining explorations and from the everyday operation of the Raglan mine. To remedy the situation, clean-up of the old sites should be organized, and monitoring of the tailings and of the winds should be undertaken.

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2.0 IMPACTS ON THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

This section pertaining to the impacts on the economy of the community identifies the interviewees' views on benefits of mine incomes, on employment and Inuit businesses in the community, and on how compensation money should be spent.

2.1 INCOME

Community members recognize that the income made at the mine will have many benefits. Among these benefits are an increased ability to go hunting and increased economic activity for the community's retail stores.

Some people interviewed believe that the money made at the mine will allow them to hunt more often. These people said that they use their wages to buy vehicles (snowmobiles, ATV's, canoes), thus increasing their ability to hunt on the land and sea. This prediction of more hunting is expressed in statements such as:

Probably gonna start next year, probably gonna be a lot of hunting next year, because I got most of the toys now. Ski-doo and I got my canoe now.

Others foresee that mine workers will bring their wages back to town and spend them at local retail businesses. One person stated this notion in the following way:

People go to the mine to earn an income and when they do they make a lot of money which would really benefit our retail stores, like our Co-op.

2.2 EMPLOYMENT AND INUIT BUSINESS

While some mine workers are bringing home substantial incomes, other community members are not satisfied with the amount of economic activity the mine is



contracts. One interviewee expresses his thoughts on business in the following way:

We in the community are interested in bidding on contracts. Like the transport contract that you just mentioned, we should have known about this and then we could have submitted a bid.

2.3 AGREEMENT MONEY

Concerning the use of compensation money arising from the Raglan Agreement, interviewees spoke of the need for a community-wide benefit. One person says:

...the people of Salluit and Kangiqsujaq are using their share, and perhaps Makivik can decide to use the funds with a view to benefit the whole community.

2.4 ECONOMIC IMPACTS SECTION SUMMARY

Community members believe that income from the mine will increase their ability to go hunting. It will also increase the economic activity for the community's retail stores. Interviewees felt that they were not receiving the mine jobs and benefits they deserved, and that other Nunavik communities are benefiting much more than they do. Finally, compensation money should be used for community purposes.

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3.0 IMPACTS ON THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

This section deals with issues and concerns that were raised in relation to both the community environment and that at the work site. Community issues include those related to family, youth, elders, employment, education, out-migration, and inter-community relations. Issues related to work at the mine site include alcohol, language, discrimination, work schedule, and job stability.

3.1 THE COMMUNITY

3.1.1 FAMILY

Children are often the first ones to feel the effects of family stress. When a parent leaves for mine employment, children may be left in the community unattended. Some workers hire, “Someone to baby-sit for us for four weeks,” but there is concern that other children are being neglected. Interviewees spoke of the need for a “watchdog” organization to monitor child neglect. They also realized that ideal mine workers should have no children at all. This idea is seen in the following statement:

There could be a sort of watchdog that could say when the children are being neglected and this could be considered. However, as I said earlier for the newly weds, before they start making children, they could probably go to work together and this way they could not be so eager to go home.

Couples also feel the stress of a spouse leaving for mine work. Being separated for a 4-week work shift is difficult for couples to deal with, and a suspicion of infidelity may contribute to relationship problems. The following quotes demonstrate this point:



And,

...this girlfriend and boyfriend problems are accusing each other on the phone or they go home, it's building up a little bit because cheating up there it's very bad. Girls cheating each other up there, girls are maybe they're too excited because there's a lot of men around.

Interviewees suggested two ways to alleviate the negative effects of mine work on families. One person said that certain jobs should only be open to mature or single applicants.

Single people or mature persons with grown up children should be invited to work.

When jobs are advertised it is for everyone but it should be for single or mature persons only.

Recognizing that separations can be difficult for newly married couples, another interviewee suggests that mine workers be allowed to bring their spouses to the work site:

...if those who have just gotten married wonder if they could bring along their brand new brides, then if this was the case, the desire to go home would not be as strong, bring along their bride or even if they've been married a little while longer, because they start missing their wives and easily get homesick even if we wanted the employee to be stable, we can never keep them long. Now, if they were given that chance to bring their wives to the site while going to work, would that not improve the situation?

3.1.2 YOUTH

Interviewees expressed their enthusiasm for future generations of Inuit to gain employment at the mine. The youth of the community are encouraged to get mine jobs, but the lack of formal education is seen as an obstacle to employment. A few



interviewees described the difficulties of uneducated youth finding employment, and they fear that these youth will be unemployed in the community, despite the obvious talents they possess.

A few interviewees expressed the need to encourage the community's youth to work at the mine. These youth are seen to be a symbol of future generations, and community members want them to have a bright and prosperous future. It is agreed that mine employment will give them discipline and a chance at further employment opportunities. The need to get youth interested in work is seen in the following statements:

I do wish very much for my nephews and nieces and my grandchildren. Like that. I would instruct [them] to go and get jobs because they are the next generation and they will get the discipline.

And,

We should encourage them somehow, since there are going to be generations after them, even after we are gone. There will be descending generations. ...They're not going to find out by just waiting around. If they don't have the education, they'll not be able to work and they way they'll end up nowhere.

While there is encouragement in the community for youth employment, there is also the feeling that work opportunities are not plentiful due to a lack of education. The future of the community's uneducated youth, who are seen as talented, is seen as bleak by some interviewees. This sentiment is reflected in statements like:

Regarding the youth, I feel that they don't have much of an opportunity due to lack of education and because of this, even though there may be jobs available...due to lack of education and being a drop-out, these youth are just idle and this has an impact on us.

And,



3.1.3 ELDERS

The elders of the community who were interviewed spoke of their parents' willingness to accept a mining operation, despite the negative consequences, as long as money was involved. Interviewees talked of agreeing to the Raglan operation in a similar light; as long as compensation is paid, the consequences are of secondary interest.

At the time that plans were being made to dam Kattiniq, we were invited to see the site. At the time, I was asked what we were thinking when plans were being made to start up the mine? When I was asked this question, at the time, Inuit had no concern, because the older generation, just so as long as there's a bit of money, and Inuk, since there's going to be some money if he is asked whether he will be able to work, we used to just say yes, and we did not even consider the consequences negative or otherwise.

Other elders hear of the present mining operation and the good wages it offers, and they wish they were young enough to take advantage of Raglan employment. This sentiment is expressed in statements such as:

From what I hear, sometimes I wish I was a young healthy person so that I could be there and that's what I think, though now, I am not in a state to do this.

3.1.4 EMPLOYMENT

Interviewees recognized that there is little employment in the community of Kangirsuk, and predicted that the Raglan mine would benefit the town by providing jobs. The lack of municipal employment means that there are many people in town who want to work but don't have jobs.



The following statements are evidence of the employment situation in the community:

I can see that it will certainly be of a benefit, considering the fact that they are almost no job opportunities anywhere to be found and that there are several people unemployed in the communities.

And,

If one job opens, everybody's jumping into it. Jobs are very scarce in the small communities like this.

3.1.5 EDUCATION

Speaking of the youth of the community, one interviewee stated the importance of education in the following way: "If they don't have an education, they'll not be able to work, and in that way they'll end up nowhere."

Education is not the only qualification for mine employment. Indeed, good work skills are also needed, and some interviewees felt that a good work ethic, combined with the ability to learn on the job, are as important for Inuit employees as schooling. This sentiment is reflected in the following statements:

Capability outranks the need to be educated, in my view...as in getting up in the morning, respecting the working hours and completing the responsibilities and tasks given, that's how I have been able to work, and I am not at all schooled. In fact, I don't even understand the English language, in that respect.

And,

Even though I have never gone to school, this is the point being made. You can work while learning. In the Inuit way, we used to learn from our fathers and in the same way, you can keep learning and hone your skills and I happen to think this is possible even if



see another area. He also felt that his children would benefit from experiencing a different environment. He said:

Yeah, I won't mind, I don't mind, I won't mind, I've been travelling a lot for a few years now, so why not, see another world...My children I think, I think they will learn from that.

Some workers may consider moving away to gain mine employment in other parts of the world. Others may move away to achieve Raglan hiring priority in another Nunavik community. Salluit and Kangiqsujuaq are perceived to have more of a hiring priority than Kangirsuk. One person spoke of a woman who considered moving out of town to get a better chance of being hired by Falconbridge:

One time I had a client who thought, she was just thinking to herself, maybe if I move to Wakeham, they will think that I am from Wakeham then I will get a job.

Finally, other interviewees were not so quick to predict migration out of the community. One person said:

When they won't be able to hold jobs here because they've go to try to make a living, and when that's all gone, I'm wondering whether they'll be left with only that option. Or perhaps they may not want to leave at all, I'm not sure....it's difficult to answer because they may not be keen to move anywhere.

3.1.7 INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

In relation to Salluit and Kangiqsujuaq, there is a feeling of inequity in the level of participation and involvement in Raglan-related issues. Interviewees repeatedly stated that they were not happy with the preferential treatment they saw other communities receiving, and statements of feeling left out of the decision making



process were commonly heard in the interviews. Comments like the following affirm this feeling:

It's a...I feel I'm left out.

And,

...they feel that they should be treated equally.

A perception that there is a lack of information about Raglan-related decisions and jobs might contribute to these feelings of exclusion. A few interviewees stated that they were not receiving as much information about Raglan as they would like. Statements such as the following affirm this point of view:

We don't even get a good information from them or from whoever...

And,

If there was a sources of information from basically one or now even the two will be more than sufficient...instead of lack of information flow this would certainly be better, I think, instead of just not saying anything at all.

Other people, however, spoke of the information that the community did receive. For example, the community heard about training opportunities that could lead to Raglan jobs:

...we do hear about developments with the mine, from the person who gets this information, that people can go get training in Inukjuak and then go to the Raglan site.

3.1.8 COMMUNITY IMPACTS SUB-SECTION SUMMARY



This is what is good about it. Because one starts to think, how come then when there are restrictions contrabands arrive and one begins to be afraid of what's going to result and for this reason, it is desirable to have a screening method.



3.2.2 LANGUAGE

Interviewees who worked at the mine identified communication difficulties due to the various languages spoken on site. On the short term, translators can solve communication problems due to language issues between the foremen and workers. One suggestion for dealing with language-related problems in the future is the hiring of bilingual (French-Inuttitut) foremen.

Workers understand that communication problems can result when the foreman speaks one language and workers speak another. These problems do arise at the mine site, but they are solved quickly with translators.

The following statements reflect the type of problems that can occur when different languages are spoken:

Yes, communicating, like have to find a translator just to do the job, like I have to do small things, I have to go look for a translator to do what's going, what they want, that's a little bit of small communication problem, but we usually find a, find a translator, so that's, I think it's normal like that for now, maybe in the future it's gonna be more adjusted a little bit.

And,

Yeah, to understand what he wants and what can I do for him. Creates a problem because I don't understand and he give me shit, because I mad a mistake because I didn't understand what he's talking about. That's a ...that comes up too, problems we have, we usually solve it at the same day.

One interviewee suggests hiring foremen who speak both French and Inuttitut as a possible solution to the ongoing communication problems:



The future, it think is we should be more little bit more like, Inuit. We should get Inuit foremen, bilingual, that'll be great, bilingual bosses...French-Inuttitut.

3.2.3 DISCRIMINATION

Some mine workers who were interviewed felt that Inuit employees were experiencing discrimination. Interviewees felt that the Inuit working at the mine were not being promoted as often as non-Inuit employees. They expressed the idea that some foremen try to get Inuit workers to quit by giving them unskilled and "boring" jobs. There is some recognition, however, that Inuit workers might get only entry-level unskilled jobs because they lack seniority. One interviewee felt that some discrimination could be curtailed if non-Inuit workers received education about the Inuit people.

Some workers also believe that Inuit workers are not advancing quickly enough on the job:

...the Inuit are still the same on low low, and they're not going up
They're not going up, very slowly, abut... maybe they're going up very slowly, but we still on the...on the porch. We're not really in yet.

There is also a perception among some interviewees that Inuit mine workers get the worst jobs at the site:

...the Inuit are always the last person, the last people to do the job, I mean, French people they get the good machines, the Inuit people usually get the old machines and the bad machines and the dirty, dirty jobs. Even [if] they are very qualified to do a good, to do a better job.



Some interviewees felt that these bad jobs are given to the Inuit in order to get them to quit:

...the bosses they usually trying to make Inuit bored just to let them quit, that what I see all the time up there.

However, some workers recognize that they get unskilled and “boring” jobs even after their training because they lack the seniority that their co-workers have. One interviewee states this point of view in the following statement:

I passed the training, but when I supposed to do the job, they put me on the level of the last person to do it, like drive that machine, so that’s like a ...I’m smaller than these guys, like, I understand because they been working longer than me...

Perhaps one action which may decrease the amount of perceived discrimination against Inuit workers at the mine site is an education program for non-Inuit workers. The following statement reflects this point of view:

...it could be improved maybe more good communication and the people from south when they’re going up, they have to realize that all the problems are like that and they have to have good communication with Inuit people when they come up and tell them what we are and what we do and how we want to work together, maybe will be more less problems between Inuit and French people and English people.

3.2.4 WORK SCHEDULE

Interviewees spoke about how the work schedule at the Raglan mine compares to the schedules of past mining activities. There is a feeling that Raglan’s work schedule is much better than that of previous operations.



This feeling is seen in statements such as:

...at that time people worked for a long time before going home. Now they have established a very favourable schedule, a really good schedule has been established by the mining company for the mine, like they are working at the mine for only one month and taking two weeks off at home.

Some workers, however, still felt that the period between work shifts was too short. They spoke of having to take care of their house and family between shifts, allowing for little free time. This dissatisfaction with time off is seen in statements such as:

Yeah, those two weeks have been, yeah, quite short, yeah. Little bit short.

And,

Like fixing things and go hunting for the next trip, like, I have to make, like, I have to catch some caribou and fish before I leave for my family so they can have some country food while I'm gone.

3.2.5 JOB STABILITY

There is a perception that younger employees are more prone than older workers to quitting their jobs. Homesickness and personal problems are cited as possible reasons for quitting:

Nowadays the youth whenever they want to go home they just up and quit their jobs, due to homesickness or problems in areas of the life, the older generation aged around forty-seven and fifty years old are much better employees. And they can take their responsibilities very serious.



3.2.6 MINE SITE IMPACTS SUB-SECTION SUMMARY

The drug and alcohol ban at the Raglan site is seen as a very good thing, especially because many interviewees remember the negative effects that alcohol had on the work environment of previous mining operations. However, the mine site still has its problems, including difficulties associated with the various languages spoken at work. The hiring of bilingual (French-Inuttitut) foremen is suggested as a possible solution to these problems.

Some mine workers who were interviewed felt that Inuit employees were experiencing discrimination. Interviewees felt that the Inuit working at the mine were not being promoted as often as non-Inuit employees. They expressed the idea that some foremen try to get Inuit workers to quit by giving them unskilled and “boring” jobs. There is some recognition, however, that Inuit workers might get only entry-level unskilled jobs because they lack seniority. One interviewee felt that some discrimination could be curtailed if non-Inuit workers received education about the Inuit people.

Despite the difficulties of long work schedules, interviewees recognized that the Raglan schedule is much better than that of previous operations.

Finally, younger workers are seen as more prone to quitting their jobs than older workers.

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4.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The analysis of the environmental, economic, and social issues and concerns regarding the Raglan mine, as expressed in the 4 individual and 2 group Kangirsuk interviews, can be summarized in the following manner.

In relation to physical impacts, the Inuit of Kangirsuk are concerned about the effects on the environment of previous mining activities undertaken within the region since the 1960's. Interviewees also expressed concern over the potential impacts that the present mining operation may have on the land and its ecosystems. Mine tailings are feared to be a contaminant of both water and air.

Interviewees expressed interest in the monitoring of physical impacts of the Raglan mine. Atmospheric studies should be initiated, analyzing, "...the wind, to determine prevailing direction, and see how strong it normally is."

Concerning the economic impacts of the mine, community members recognize that the income made at the mine will have many benefits. Among these benefits are an increased ability to go hunting and increased economic activity for the community's retail stores.

However, some community members are not satisfied with the amount of economic activity the mine is generating for them. These people believe that local businesses would experience further benefits if more Kangirsuk workers were hired by the mine.

Concerning the use of compensation money arising from the Raglan Agreement, interviewees spoke of the need for a community-wide benefit.

As for the social impacts in the community, interviewees recognized that families sometimes feel the negative impacts of having a spouse work at the mine. Children can be neglected, and couples can feel the stress of separation when a spouse



