

Social Responsibility in Geoscience and Mining Education

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There is a need to introduce socially responsibility programs into the university geosciences and mining engineering study curricula that aims to make the students aware that knowledge is not only a technical pathway to professional qualifications but also for them to have the capability to engage society, as these students on graduation and employment are often the first point of contact with communities in their research and work.

A practical way to apply this social responsibility awareness and capability is in their applied field studies where students, with the essential assistance of staff, utilize some of their time to reach out to the local community and engage, invite and inform them to be stakeholders in the project. This could be introduced in the field trips and as the student progresses to their final year, the field project report and thesis would include an important community relationship component. This experience will lead to geologists and mining engineers with additional, important social responsibility and ethical qualifications that will serve them, their communities and country well into the future for sustainable outcomes. This initiative should be supported by the government, civil society, NGOs and especially by industry in regard to their corporate social responsibility concerns

A follow-up student / staff community based pilot project should be organised to gain stakeholder information where the selected local community is engaged and offered to be involved. The pilot project led by the students and staff would undertake visits to the community with surveys and questionnaires with appropriate communication resources and material to make them aware of the student's project and how they can be essential stakeholders for mutual benefit. The special community human rights needs in regard to outreach to semi-literate / illiterate folk, the disadvantaged and balanced gender participation should be encouraged.