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The Scoping Process and Preparation of Environmental Assessments

GEMS Environmental Compliance-ESDM Training Series
Jordan ▪ April 2016

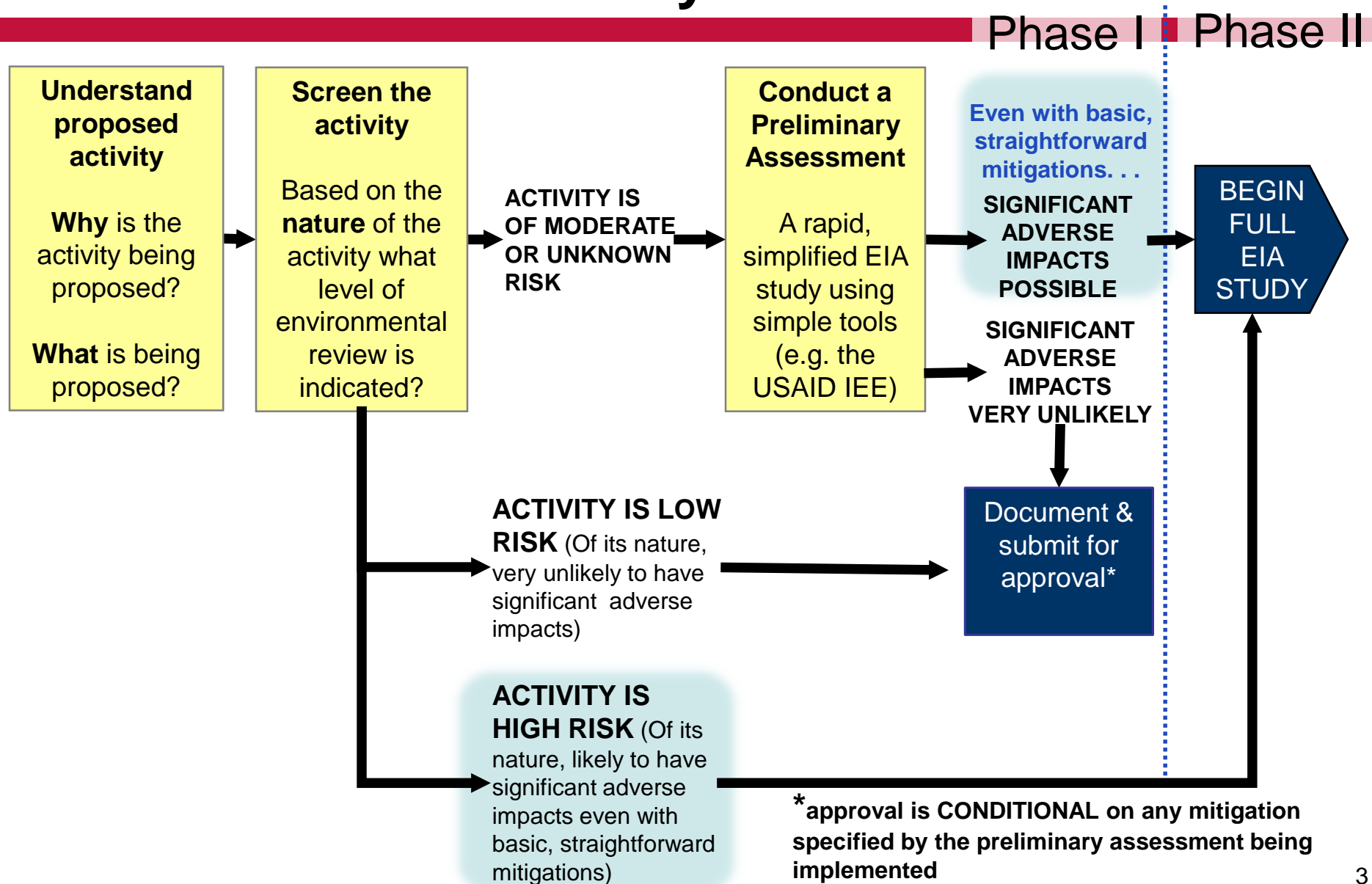
Session Objectives:

- Understand the fundamental role of scoping in the EIA process
 - *What is Scoping?*
 - *Why do we undertake Scoping?*
 - *When do we undertake Scoping?*
 - *Who should be involved?*
 - *Who pays?*
- Understand expected results from the Scoping process and how those results are used



EIA Process Review:

Routes to a full EIA study





Review: the IEE = USAID's "Preliminary Assessment"

An approved IEE = an approved determination for each activity covered

	Meaning
NEGATIVE DETERMINATION	Significant adverse environmental impacts very unlikely
NEGATIVE DETERMINATION WITH CONDITIONS	With specified mitigation and monitoring, significant adverse environmental impacts very unlikely
POSITIVE DETERMINATION	Significant adverse environmental impacts are possible
DEFERRAL	Not enough information to evaluate impacts

A **positive determination** triggers a full EIA

IMPACTS NEED NOT BE DIRECT.

SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE INDIRECT OR CUMULATIVE IMPACTS WILL TRIGGER A PD.

The Full EIA in USAID – EAs, PEAs, and REAs

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

Used to assess the environmental effects of a specific project or action

- For example, an EA to evaluate a single irrigation or health clinic project

PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (PEA)

Used to assess the environmental effects of a class of similar actions

- For example, a PEA to evaluate construction of multiple schools; or
- A PEA to evaluate Sustainable forest management plans

RAPID ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (REA)

Used to assess, define, and prioritize the potential environmental impacts in **disaster situations**

- For example, Earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, landslides

When is a full EA needed?

1

- During PAD development, if/when the team proposes activities which fall into the high risk category

2

- When an IEE indicates that significant adverse impacts are possible (a positive determination)

3

- When a sub-project review form (e.g., ERF or ERAC) indicates an activity is high risk

Coordination with host country government

The large majority of host countries now have EA policies and procedures

Most projects that require an EA under Reg. 216 will also require a full EA under host country procedures



Collaboration with local Governments can facilitate the environmental analysis process for the Implementing Partners and USAID staff.



Scoping: A **first step** for development of Environmental Assessments



Scoping: Determine the significant issues to be addressed in the EA.

Scoping Statement:

- Scope and significance of issues to be analyzed – includes social impacts.
- **Issues** that do not need to be addressed
- Schedule and format of the EA, expertise needed
- Proposed methodology
- Stakeholder engagement strategy



Public consultation is not required by Reg. 216. However, good practice & most host countries require it during scoping.

Why Scoping?

CFR 216.3(a)(4) states:

*“After a Positive Threshold decision has been made...the originator of the action shall commence the process of identifying the significant issues relating to the **proposed action** and of determining the scope of the issues to be addressed in the Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement.”*

Purpose of Scoping

Scoping:

1. Sets the stage for the EA, in terms of data, information needed, stakeholder consultations, and possible alternatives that address the same **Purpose and Need** as the proposed action.
2. Helps identify potential issues and concerns related to the project that will need to be considered further in the EA.
3. May help refine the proposed action.
4. Engages with stakeholders to both solicit input and keep them informed as to the project's progress

When does Scoping start?

Scoping should begin “as soon as practicable” per CFR 216.3(a)(4)



Scoping Statement vs EA Content

SCOPING

- ID impacts requiring further investigation
- Possible alternatives
- Preliminary baseline information
- Preliminary methodology for the EA
- Consultations
- Timeline, expertise, and approach for the EA



EA

- Scope of the assessment
- Stakeholder engagement process
- Describes & evaluates the baseline situation
- Purpose & Need of the proposed action
- Identify & analyze alternatives
- Identify & characterize potential impacts of the proposed activity
- Develop a mitigation and monitoring plan
- Communicate and document the evaluation process

Stakeholder Engagement

- **Goal:** to communicate and inform in an inclusive manner and gather information from stakeholders
- Important for engaging the individuals, groups, and communities, among others, that may be affected by the proposed action
- Should be commensurate with the scale of the project
- Utilize a variety of communication tools, including radio, newspaper, meetings, open forums, websites, letters, phone calls...



Stakeholder Engagement: Who to engage?



- Representatives of host country governments
- Public and private institutions
- USAID Mission staff
- USAID REA and/or BEO

- Leaders, groups, and individuals from nearby communities
- Potential beneficiaries

*Can you think
of other
possible
stakeholders?*



Defining Issues via Scoping

- An **issue** is derived from specific activities described under the Proposed Action.
- The **issue should be phrased as a cause-effect statement** relating to actions under consideration
- An issue statement should describe a specific action (cause) and the potential environmental impact(s) arising from that action (effect)

Example of an Issue

Issue: A 20 km section of road is going to be repaired and rehabilitated and will require removal of vegetation along the sides of the road.

The road passes through a protected area, home to an endangered mammal; vegetation removal will impact their habitat.



Causative action: Removing vegetation

Effect: Loss of habitat

Cause and effect: Removal of vegetation decreases habitat for the endangered mammal.

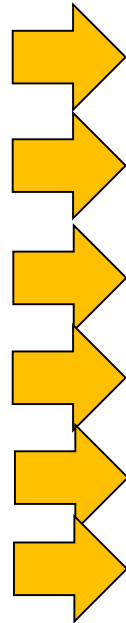
How are issues eliminated?

- **Any issues eliminated from further analysis should be documented in the Scoping Statement as “issues considered, but dismissed.”**
- **Issues that do not need to be further analyzed:**
 - *Outside the scope of the Proposed Action or Purpose and Need*
 - *Irrelevant to the decision that will be made*
 - *Already decided by law, regulation, or other higher level decision*
 - *Speculative and not supported by scientific evidence.*
 - *A general comment, opinion, or position statement.*

Example: What Would Scoping Entail?



- ID impacts requiring further investigation
- Preliminary baseline information
- Possible alternatives
- Preliminary methodology for the EA
- Consultations
- Timeline, expertise, and approach for the EA



Methodology for EA

1. Evaluate viability of alternative

Consultations

1. Conservation NGOs
2. Environmental Management/Natural Resource

Expertise Needed

1. Roads/Civil Engineer
2. Ecologist
3. Social Scientist
4. Others?

Scoping Statement Content

Content

- Brief description of the affected environment/baseline, existing conditions, purpose and need, and the specific proposed actions
- Identify significant issues related to the proposed action
- Document issues outside the scope of the proposed actions
- Timing for preparation of the EA
- Planning and decision-making schedule
- Description of how the analysis will be carried out
- Ideal composition and/or expertise needed for the EA

BEO approves both the
Scoping Statement and the EA