

A Cartoon Summary of the Toolkit Companion

**MINING, DEVELOPMENT AND
ENVIRONMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA**



Mining, Development and Environment in Central Asia: A Cartoon Summary of the Toolkit Companion

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This cartoon summary of the toolkit companion illustrates a variety of situations in the mining sector of Kyrgyzstan and beyond, and reinforces the ideas that the toolkit companion covers in detail. The project team hopes that the cartoons make the issues more accessible to the various parties, and that – through the cartoon lens – the parties may see themselves as others see them. By their actions and inactions, each of the players involved in mine development can influence the potential for the conflicts that promote instability and social inequality and contribute to environmental insecurity. Like the toolkit and its companion, this cartoon summary promotes

the idea that cooperation among the parties, transparency and a rigorous analysis that integrates environmental and social impact assessment are the keys to success for responsible development in the mining sector. The ideas for cartoons come from different mining sector experiences, and are informed by the project work in Kyrgyzstan.

Cartoons were designed by Ruslan Valitov (“White Crow” Design Studio, Bishkek, KYRGYZSTAN) with inputs from Zoï Environment Network (Geneva, SWITZERLAND) and Kyrgyz Mining Association (Bishkek, KYRGYZSTAN).



Unscrupulous mining companies deal only with authorities and ignore the local population as potential partners.



Some mining companies have angered local residents over the years by acting as speculators – sitting on their licences and then reselling them – so that little mining is done and the owners change frequently.



The mining companies' promises related to local development and local population go unfulfilled.



The local population does not always have the relevant qualifications for the mining companies' recruitment needs.



Local people do not distinguish among mining companies on the basis of size or type (even though the companies may have different resources, capacities and procedures to respond to local population needs).



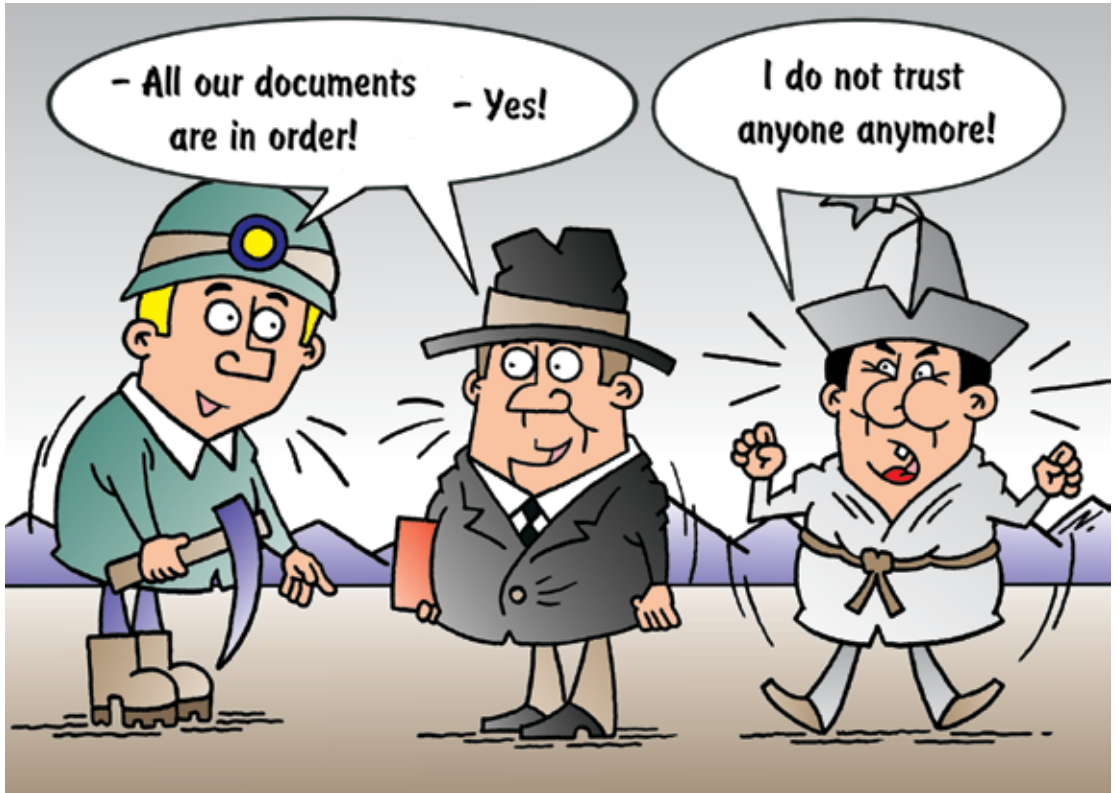
Mining companies often speak and present data in language that is too technical for the local population.



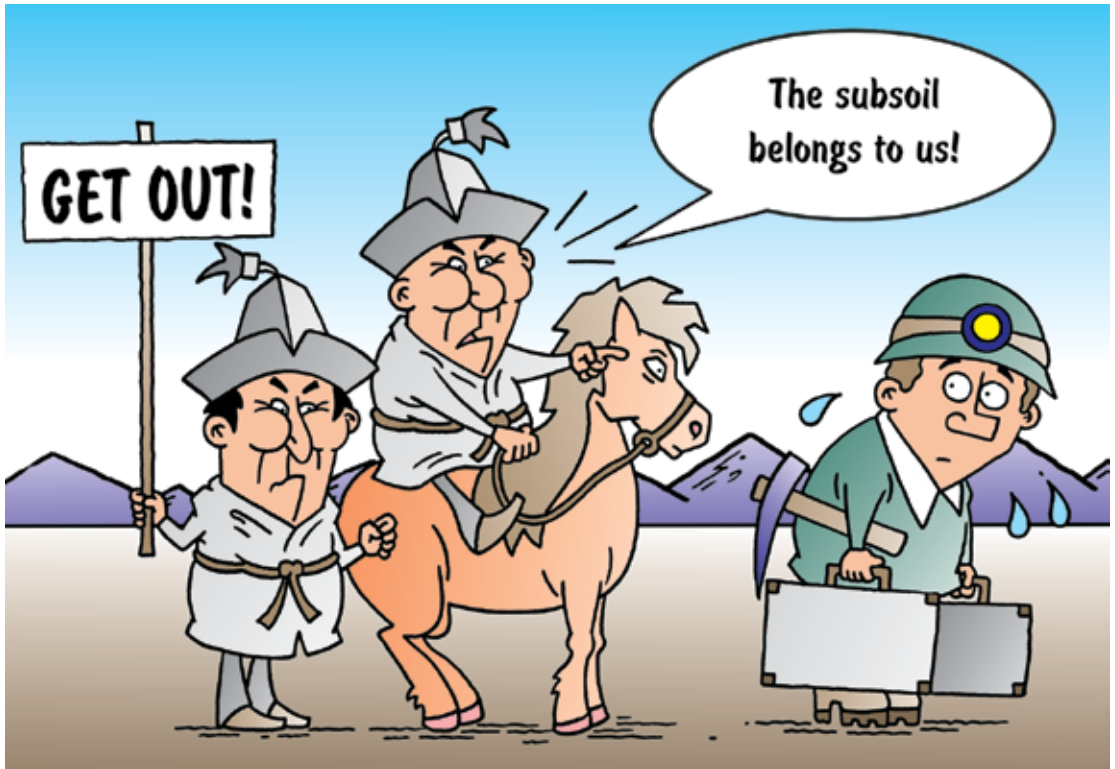
Some mining companies provide insufficient information to the mass media and local people on their activities, environmental and social performance.



Some of the local population opposes mining on principle.



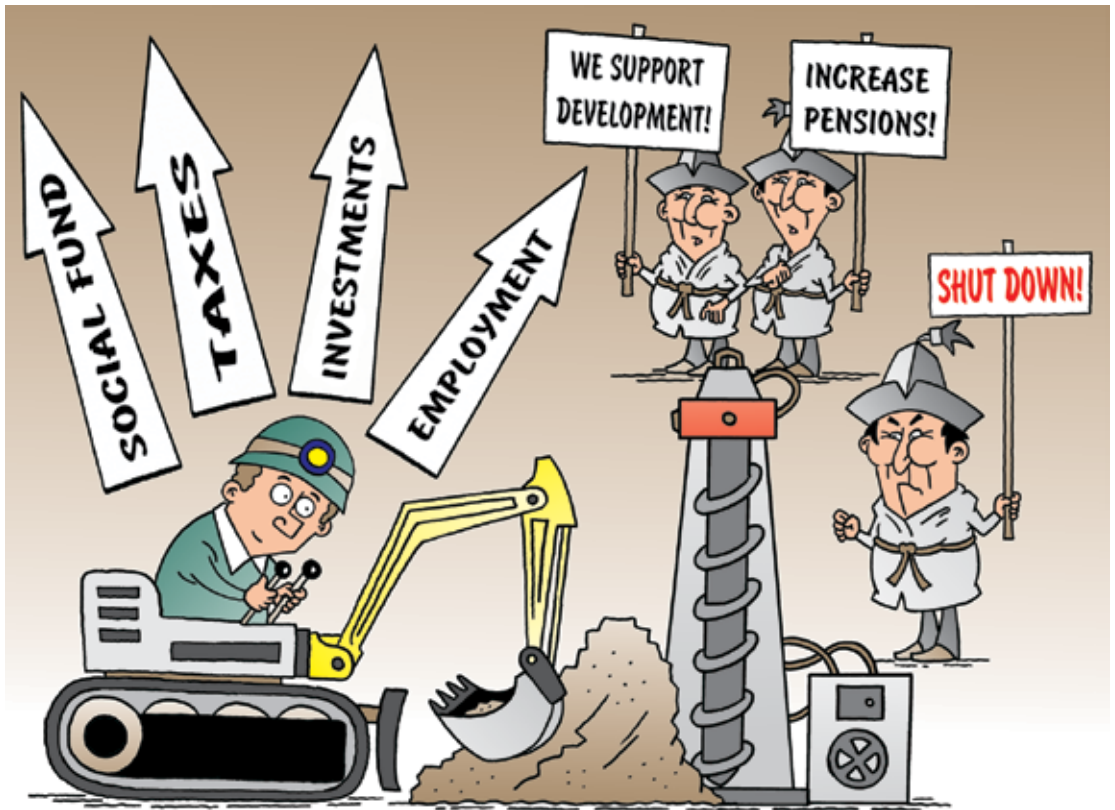
The anticipated environmental impacts of mining are often exaggerated and are not based on facts or evidence and sometimes the population does not trust the data from the mining companies or the authorities.



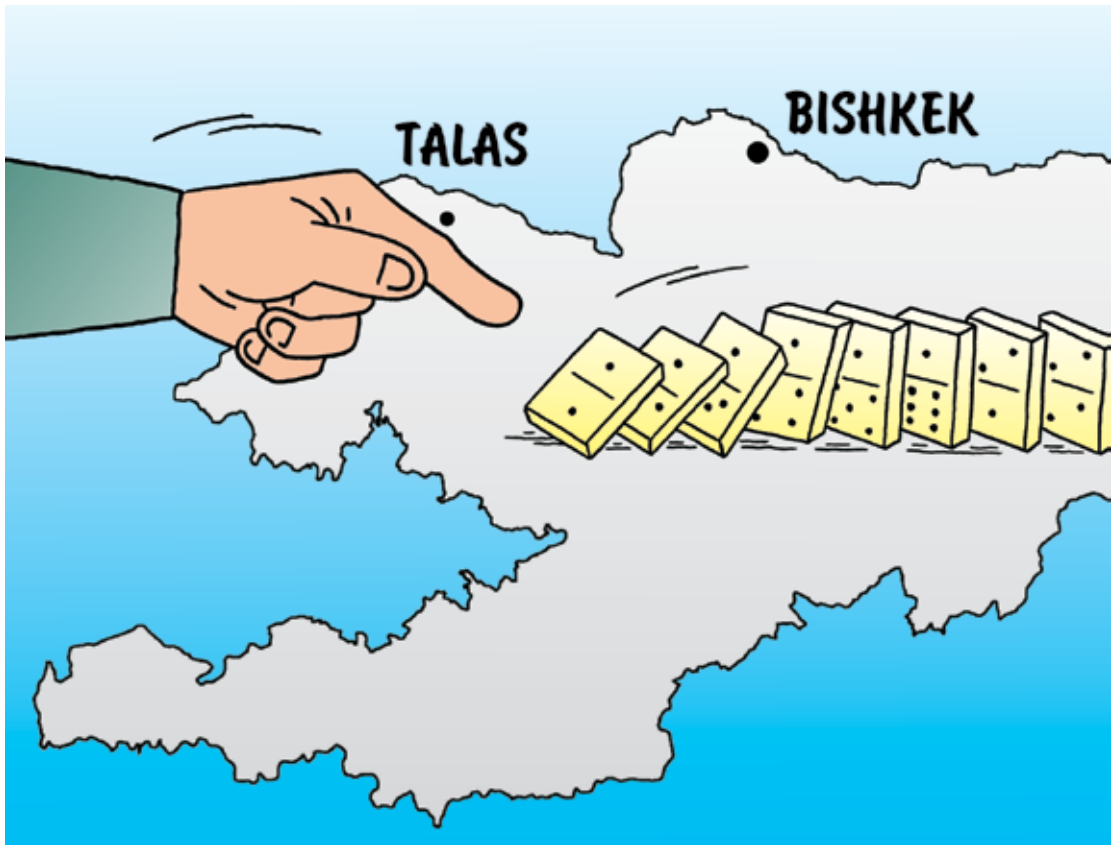
Local elites or a dissatisfied population may attempt to take over the mineral deposit or force out the owners.



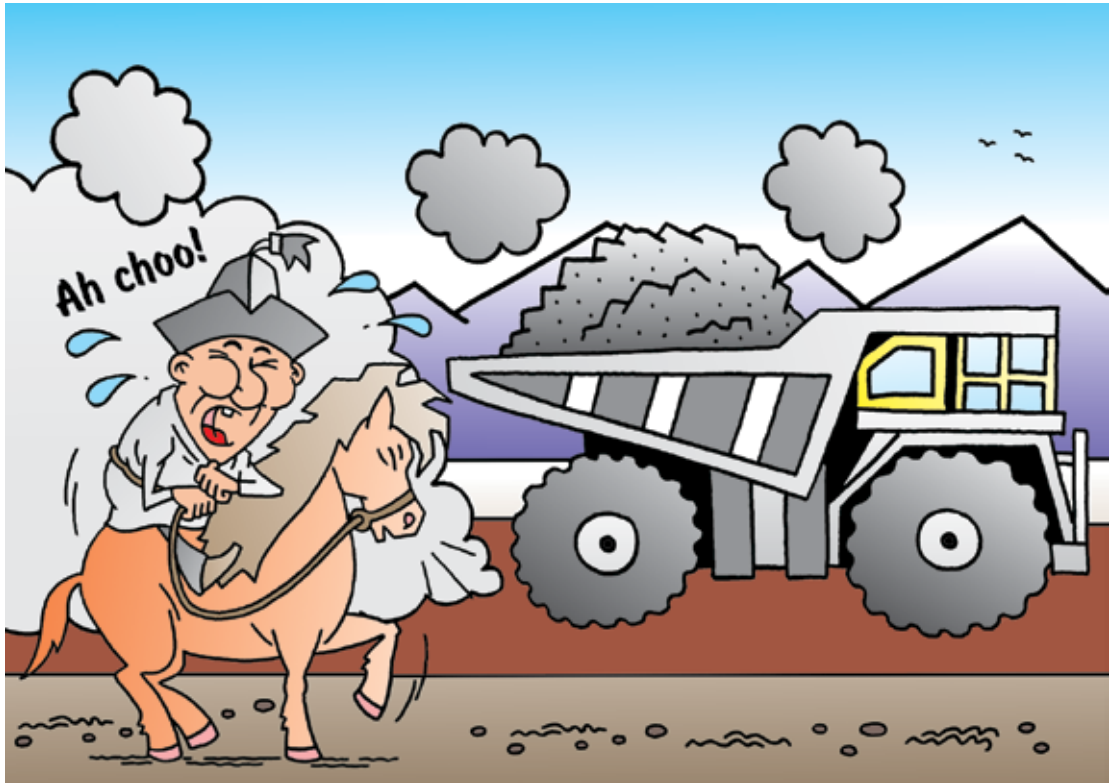
Sometimes mining companies prefer to buy the support of local officials or influential groups, but this approach alienates local populations.



Mining is an important economic sector at the national level, and protests that result in suspensions or delays of significant mining projects affect the whole country.



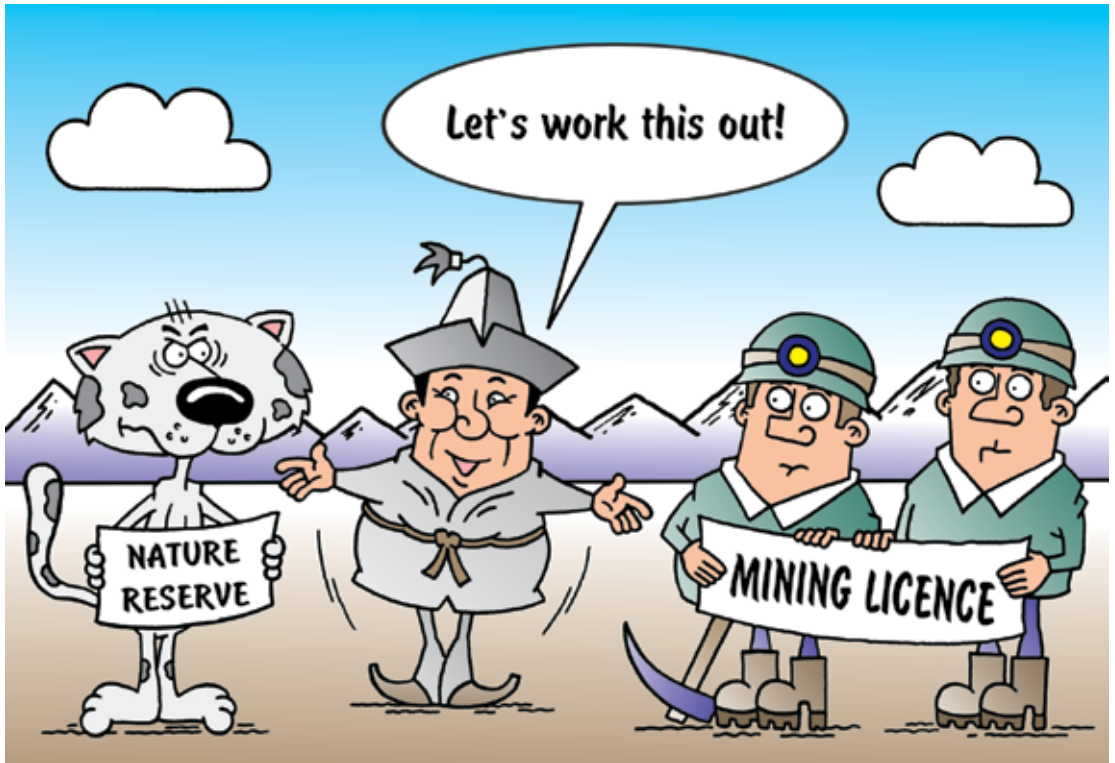
In a domino effect, mining conflicts started in a few places and gradually spread across the country, fuelled by political and economic instability.



Destruction of local roads, limited support from mining companies to improve infrastructure and dust formation by mining trucks and operations are among the leading complaints of the local residents.



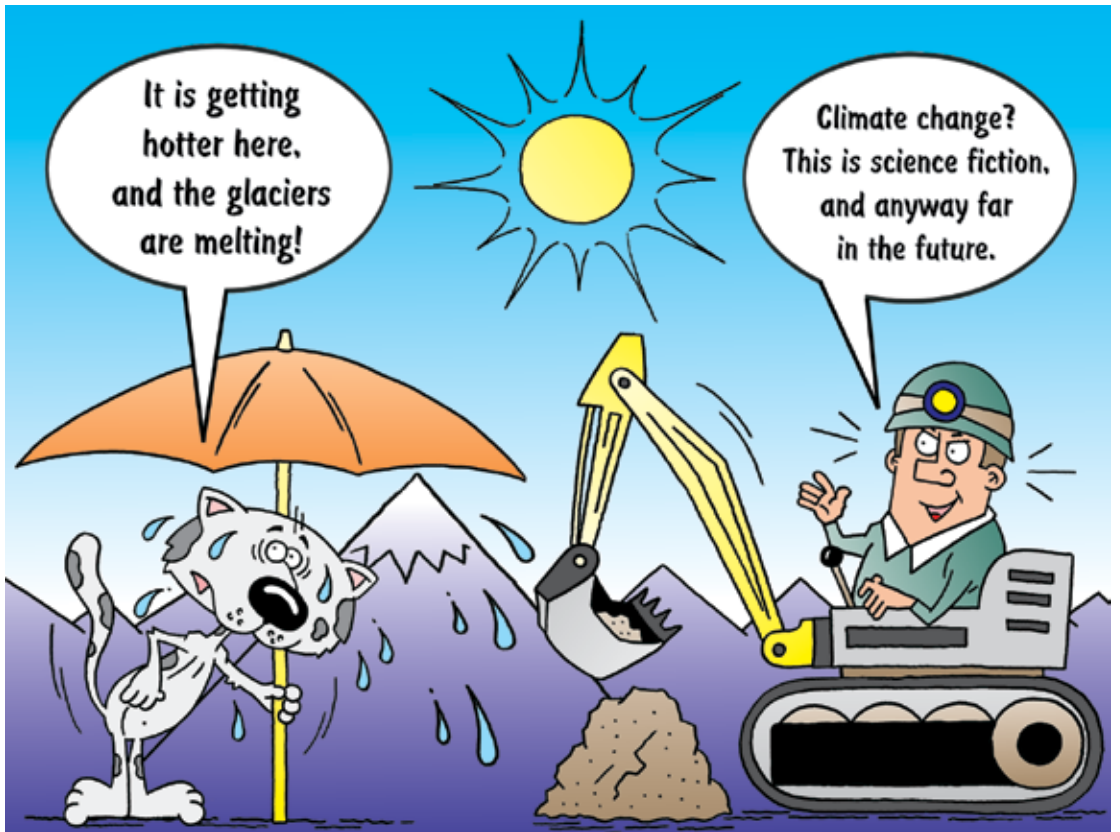
Local people often oppose mining in environmentally sensitive ecosystems such as mountain forests and rivers, where impacts on water quality and biodiversity can be serious.



The laws and regulations on the use of subsoil, land allocation and environmental protection are sometimes confusing and inconsistent and so are the maps.



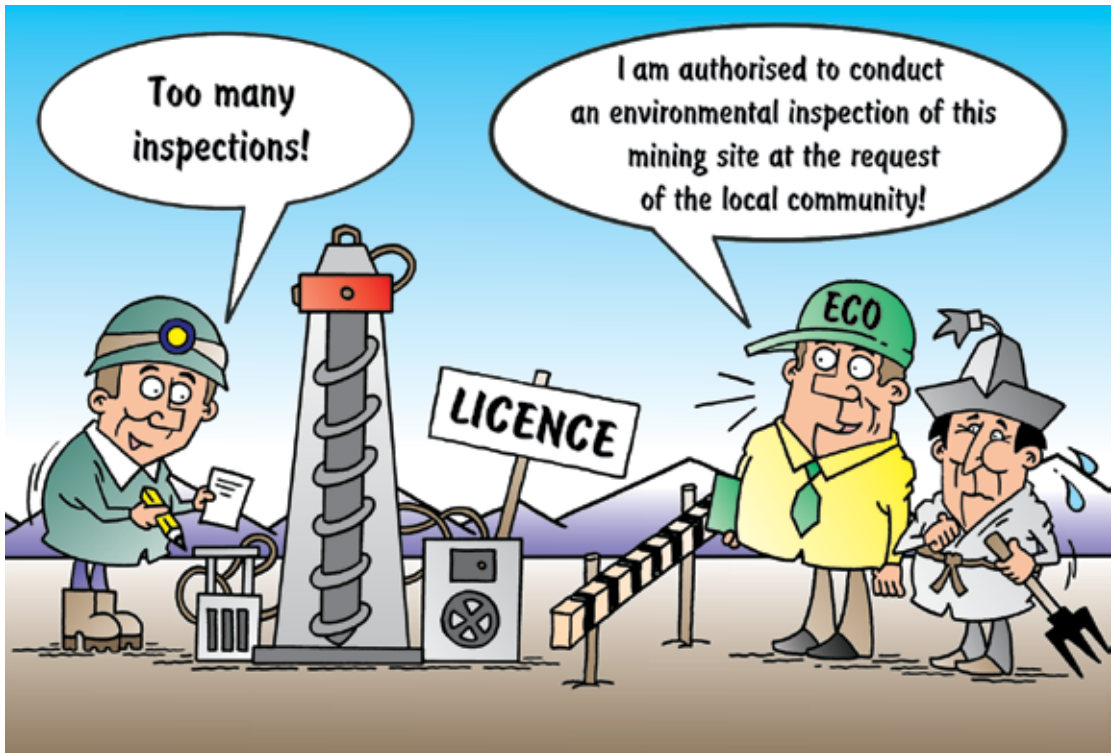
Local residents want mining companies to guarantee that they will conduct remediation when a mine is closed.



Climate change impacts need to be taken seriously in the long-term planning of mining projects, especially in high mountain environments.



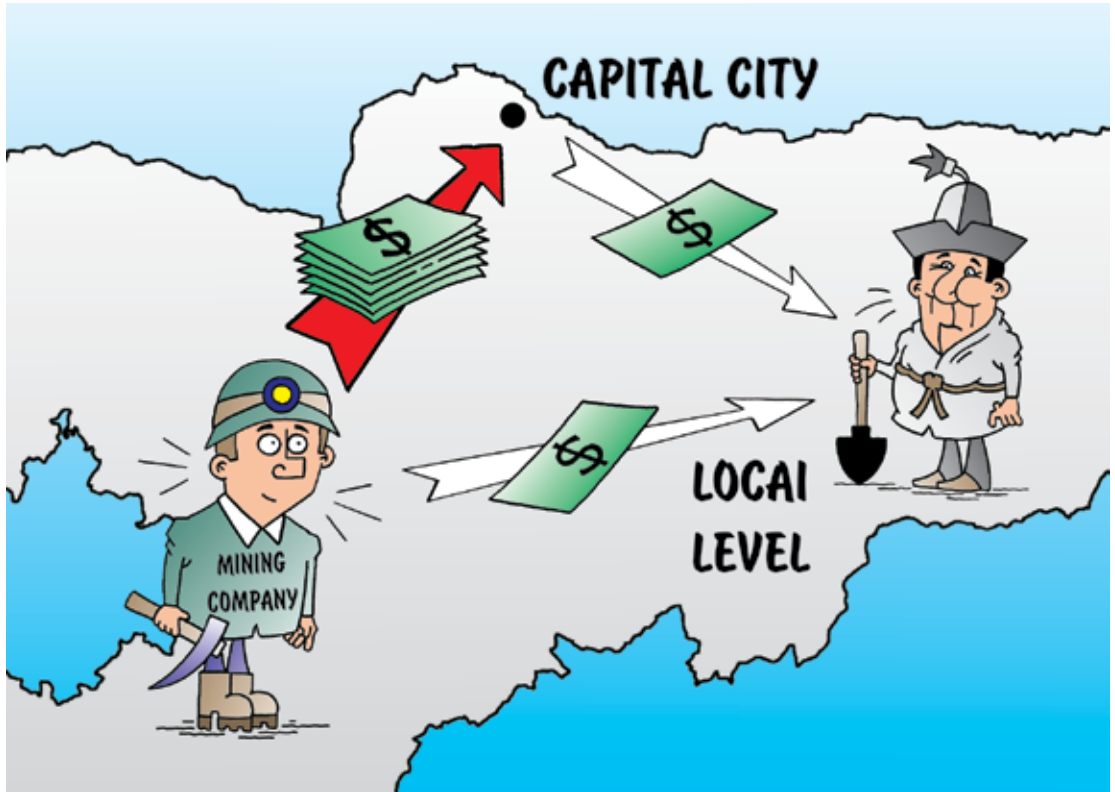
Mining companies often lack local field offices with the capacity to answer questions from local residents and to make operational decisions.



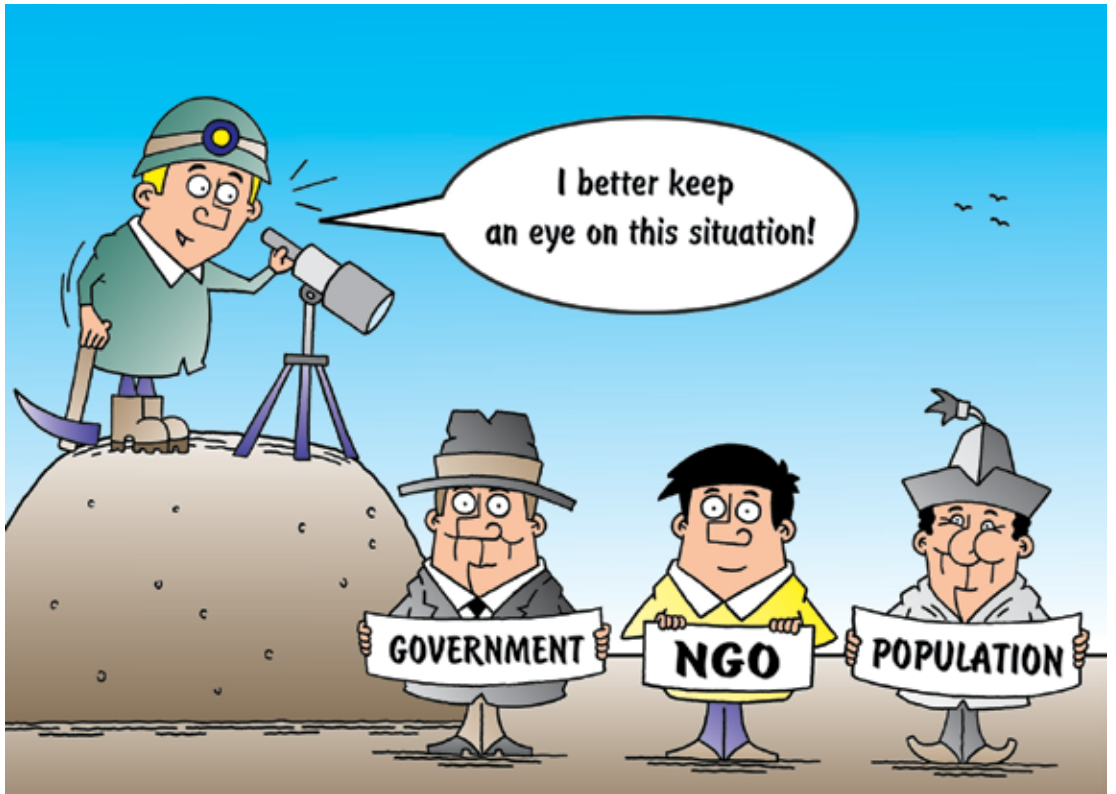
Some companies obtain a mining licence, and then tend to forget or ignore environmental regulations and try to stop environmental inspections. In fairness, the responsibilities and procedures for environmental inspections can be confusing or duplicative among institutions.



The general acceptance of an environmental impact assessment is a good start, but mining companies also need an acceptable social impact assessment: for continuing success, a company needs a social licence to mine.



Mining companies pay national and local taxes, but because the local population does not see the benefits, companies have started making direct contributions to local communities.



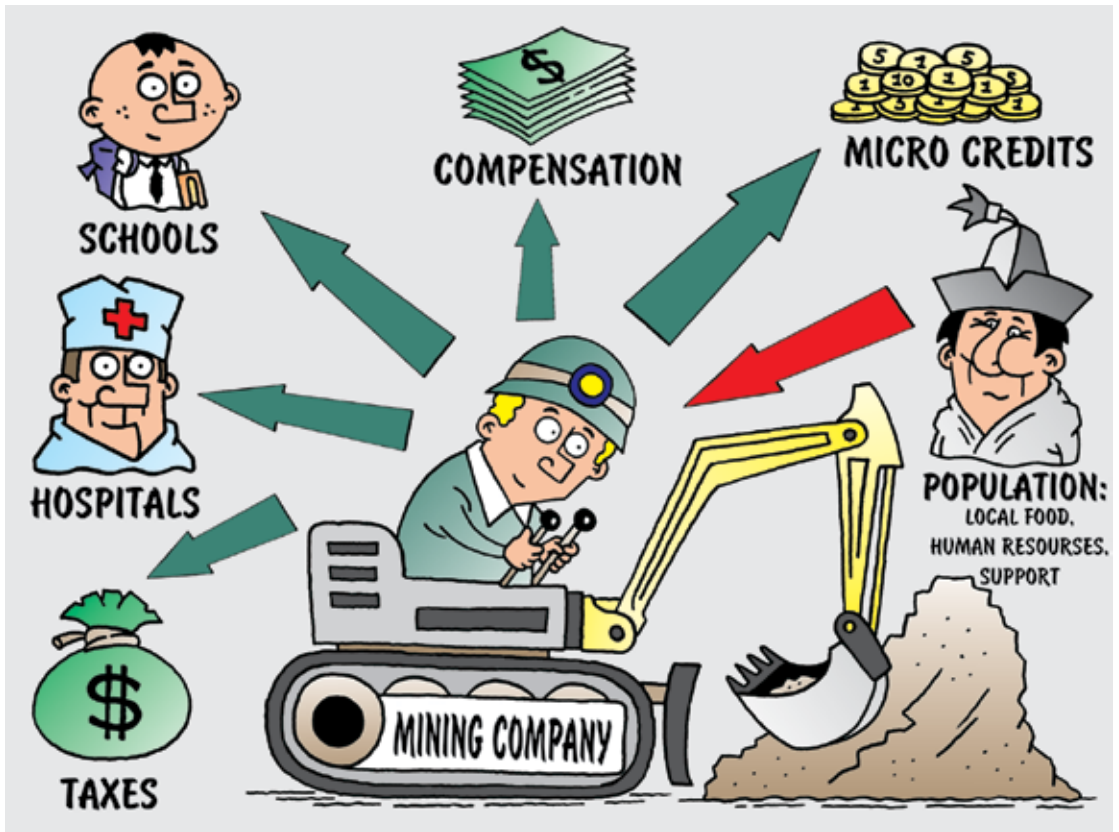
Mining companies should continuously monitor and respond to the concerns of major groups and changes in the national or local situation.



Transparency, inclusiveness and trust all depend on stakeholder identification and dialogue.



Environmental impact assessment in the mining sector should be integrated with social impact assessment to lead to a comprehensive action plan.



Local populations provide food, human resources and support for mining operations in exchange for mining company sponsorship of social projects, support for local investments, compensation for damages and payment of local and national taxes.

