



The Mining Association | L'association minière
of Canada | du Canada

**Mining Association of Canada Brief on Resource Development and Violence Against
Indigenous Women and Girls**

Submitted to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women

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The Mining Association of Canada (MAC) is the national organization representing the Canadian mining industry, comprising companies engaged in mineral exploration, mining, smelting, refining and semi-fabrication. Our members account for most of Canada's production of base and precious metals, uranium, diamonds, steelmaking coal, and mined oil sands. In Canada, MAC members are among the largest industrial employers of Indigenous peoples and are major customers of Indigenous-owned businesses. Beyond MAC, the over 500 mining relationship agreements with Indigenous communities in place are helping to advance economic reconciliation.¹

MAC COMMITMENTS AND PRACTICES

Incidents of violence and harassment targeted at Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are unacceptable and cross-societal issues that, unfortunately, occur in communities and workplaces – including in the context of natural resource development.

In Canada, mining takes place in proximity to Indigenous communities, with a significant representation of Indigenous peoples in its workforce. Despite the efforts and progress to increase female representation and diversity, the industry continues to be male dominated. The mining sector has a responsibility to ensure that mining facilities, industrial camps and corporate offices are welcoming, inclusive, safe spaces for Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

MAC members have publicly committed to providing safe and healthy workplaces and taking company-specific actions to strengthen equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).² Additionally, MAC members are committed to collaborating with communities of interest, including underrepresented groups, to identify and address potential adverse environmental and social impacts and enhance community benefits of mining.³

Strengthening Requirements for MAC Members

Notable action has come by way of updates to *Towards Sustainable Mining* (TSM), a globally recognized sustainability program that supports mining companies in managing key environmental and social responsibilities.⁴ TSM's *Indigenous and Community Relationships Protocol*⁵ includes specific criteria designed to facilitate collaboration between mining companies and communities to identify and mitigate potential social impacts. MAC members also report on the implementation of site level response mechanisms and efforts to ensure that employees have skills in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-discrimination. The development and implementation of this protocol has been guided by the advice of a national Community of Interest (COI) Advisory Panel, which includes representatives of Indigenous organizations.⁶

MAC is currently working with the COI Panel, EDI experts and other national mining associations to develop measurable EDI TSM performance criteria for mining facilities and are exploring what constitutes good practice in the following areas:

- Corporate commitments, governance and accountability;
- Effective systems to foster a workplace culture of EDI;
- Processes to foster safe and respectful workplaces, mitigating and addressing both psychological and physical risks; and
- Data collection, public reporting and performance measurement of EDI.

Implementing Company-level Initiatives

MAC members are working to improve systems through various initiatives. For example, Rio Tinto recently released a detailed report, *Everyday Respect*⁷, with the findings of an independent review of its workplace culture in 2021 and recommendations for the company to improve how it prevents and responds to discrimination and unacceptable behaviour. This report and Rio Tinto's response have generated industry dialogue and collaboration on issues related to workplace harassment, racism and bullying and are influencing how other companies address similar issues. Examples of other MAC member initiatives can be found on MAC's website.⁸

Developing Industry Guidance and Tools

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) has undertaken a project focused on addressing sexual harassment in the Canadian mining sector.⁹ MiHR has conducted research and is creating educational material to support the identification of policies and practices for preventing sexual harassment/violence, responding to allegations and creating inclusive and safe workplaces. This work complements other MiHR programs that focus on diversity, intercultural awareness, human rights, anti-racism and conflict resolution¹⁰ as well as other industry tools such as the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada's gender diversity and inclusion guidance¹¹ and Women in Mining (WIM) Brasil's EDI diagnostic guide in the mining sector.¹²

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a number of opportunities for the government, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples, businesses and provincial/territorial governments, to encourage systemic change throughout society. MAC recommends action in the following areas:

- Continue to support research and education initiatives to enhance awareness and promote good practices in addressing workplace violence, racism and harassment, particularly as it pertains to Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
- Invest in programming that facilitates inclusion of and opportunities for Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in mining and related activities as part of the development of the national benefit sharing framework, including funding to address racism, support training and development for Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and to support efforts to ensure a safe and welcoming workplace.
- Enhance guidance and training on conducting gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) assessments for natural resource projects.

MAC remains committed to working with Indigenous organizations, governments and other sectors to advance the implementation of effective practices that address social impacts of natural resource development and would welcome opportunities to collaborate on the above recommendations as well as other initiatives being contemplated.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Natural Resources Canada, Lands and Minerals Sector – Indigenous Mining Agreements: <https://atlas.gc.ca/imaema/en/> (accessed: April 28, 2022).
- ² Mining Association of Canada, *Canadian Mining: Our Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion*: https://mining.ca/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2021/11/MAC-statement-on-inclusion-and-diversity.pdf (accessed April 28, 2022).
- ³ Mining Association of Canada, *Towards Sustainable Mining: Mining and Indigenous Peoples Framework*: https://mining.ca/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2021/06/FINAL-Framework-Mining-and-Indigenous.pdf (accessed April 28, 2022).
- ⁴ Mining Association of Canada, *Towards Sustainable Mining Progress Report*: <https://mining.ca/towards-sustainable-mining/tsm-progress-report/> (accessed: April 28, 2022).
- ⁵ Mining Association of Canada, *TSM Indigenous and Community Relationships Protocol*: <https://mining.ca/towards-sustainable-mining/protocols-frameworks/indigenous-and-community-relationships/> (accessed April 28, 2022).
- ⁶ Mining Association of Canada, *Community of Interest Advisory Panel*: <https://mining.ca/towards-sustainable-mining/how-tsm-works/community-of-interest-advisory-panel/> (accessed: April 28, 2022).
- ⁷ Broderick, Elizabeth, *Everyday Respect*, 2022: <https://www.riotinto.com/-/media/Content/Documents/Sustainability/People/RT-Everyday-respect-report.pdf?rev=db65caa21e6843508b890790fcc8abc4> (accessed: April 28, 2022)
- ⁸ Mining Association of Canada, *Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Canada's Mining Sector*: <https://mining.ca/advancing-diversity-and-inclusion-in-canadas-mining-sector/> (accessed: April 28, 2022).
- ⁹ Mining Industry Human Resources Council, *Safe Workplaces for All: Addressing Sexual harassment in Canadian Mining*: <https://mihr.ca/inclusion-diversity/safe-workplaces-for-all/> (accessed: April 29, 2022).
- ¹⁰ Mining Industry Human Resources Council, *Online Learning*: <https://mihr.ca/training-certification/online-learning/> (accessed: April 29, 2022).
- ¹¹ Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, *Gender Diversity and Inclusion: A Guide for Explorers*: https://www.pdac.ca/docs/default-source/priorities/responsible-exploration/gender/pdac-report-gender-diversity-and-inclusion-2019-final_june-14-2019-for-web.pdf?sfvrsn=aa908c98_4 (accessed: April 29)
- ¹² Women in Mining Brasil, *We Measure What We Value*, 2021: https://wimbrasil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Report_WIM_2021-EN-v2.pdf (accessed: May 2, 2022).