

Tipsheet for Organizations: Engaging Communities of Interest



Towards Sustainable Mining: Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces Protocol



(Corporate Criteria)



(Facility Criteria)



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This tipsheet helps organizations understand how to meet the requirements described in the TSM Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces Protocol,¹ related to engaging diverse communities. It also supports organizations in meeting the requirements of the TSM Indigenous and Community Relationships Protocol.² This tipsheet offers a set of principles to guide mining companies' engagement with communities of interest (COI) and the development of COI relationships to enhance corporate EDI efforts.

Developing sustainable, positive and mutually beneficial relationship with COI presents mining companies with opportunities to:

- Enhance understanding and awareness of diverse experiences and perspectives.
- Promote shared responsibility for equitable, diverse and inclusive workplaces.

- Improve existing relationships and reputation while developing new relationships and partnerships.
- Attract talent and investors.

Owing to this, each of the Indicators of the TSM Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces Protocol calls for engaging a broad and diverse cross-section of people, whether internal and/or external to an organization. Mining facilities can develop, leverage and augment relationships with relevant COIs for these consultation and validation purposes.

¹ See: [Towards Sustainable Mining: Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces Protocol](#)

² See: [Towards Sustainable Mining: Indigenous and Community Relationships Protocol](#).

See also the Guide to Community Identity and Collaboration for more detailed advice on engaging with Indigenous communities.





What is a Community of Interest?³

A COI is a group of individuals or organizations that share a common interest. Mining facility COIs may include, but are not limited to, individuals or organizations that have an interest in or believe they may be affected by decisions respecting facility operations. Examples include:

- Equity-deserving groups⁴ (In MiHR's work, this includes women, youth, First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, racialized persons/visible minorities, people who identify as 2SLGBTQIA, persons with disabilities and newcomers/immigrants).
- Local community members.
- Contractors.
- Suppliers.
- Customers.
- Shareholders.
- Regional or national environmental organizations and other NGOs.
- Local, regional, provincial/territorial or federal governments.

Prior to reaching out to a COI, mining facilities benefit from spending time learning about the COI in question to identify any existing links/relationships, potential mutual benefits and/or concerns, as well as how best to engage or communicate with a particular group. For example:

- Facilities operating near Indigenous communities may explore employment and environmental needs and interests as well as local priorities and culture.
- Facilities looking to diversify their workforce may investigate new sources of recruitment, such as agencies that focus on underrepresented groups.
- Facilities seeking to expand their contractor pool may research business referral services, associations, networks or other sources of directories.

Plans for the next steps, including outreach and communications, can be developed after assessing the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and risks associated with engaging with specific communities of interest.

³ The *TSM Protocol on Indigenous and Community Relations* refers to 'communities of interest,' including under-represented groups (p. 20), 'Indigenous communities' (p. 21) and speaks to the concept of 'local rightsholders' (p. 2-3). The *TSM Protocol on Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces* clarifies the usage of terms across the two Protocols (p. 2-3), offers further guidance regarding under-represented groups in mining (p. 13-14), identifying who is local (p. 22) and prioritizing Indigenous rightsholders (p. 24). This Tipsheet uses the phrase Communities of Interest to refer to these diverse groups, among other mining stakeholders.

⁴ A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society, and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes. This may vary based on factors such as geography and sociocultural context.



Photo courtesy of Rio Tinto

Guiding Principles for COI Collaboration

To engage meaningfully with COIs, mining facilities can leverage leading industry practices in community collaborations. Guiding principles for mining organizations in Canada are provided below⁵:



Build relationships by building trust

Take the time required to establish and maintain trust, as this is essential to forming good working relationships that allow collaborative projects to thrive. Collaborations work best when trust is established among all parties to bring equity to discussions.



Collaborate and share decision-making

Share decision-making with COIs, acknowledging that relationships may encompass social, cultural and knowledge-based dimensions. Collaboration often begins with project design and continues through to completion, with relationships maintained even after a project has ended.



Be transparent and accountable, communicating openly

Share motivations, intentions and information with COIs from the start. Clearly outline roles and responsibilities so that collaborators are accountable for collective and individual decisions and outcomes. Establish a process for frequent and ongoing communication with COIs and address any language barriers. Maintain good relationships by regularly updating COIs who are not directly involved in project operations.



Share benefits

Embrace reciprocity and strive to balance any power disparities between all collaborative partners.

5 Adapted from: IPCA Knowledge Basket. (2023). *Beyond Conservation: Principles*. <https://ipcaknowledgebasket.ca/resources/beyond-conservation-principles>

