



■ Glencore - Lion Smelter

# WOMEN IN MINING

White Paper

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**MINERALS COUNCIL**  
SOUTH AFRICA



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The participation of women in business has been shown to positively influence the bottom line of companies and to contribute to enhanced sustainability

# BACKGROUND



Women account for  
**12%**  
of the mining industry



In mining companies,  
gender-inclusive workplaces  
are generally safer



The mining industry needs to  
do more to attract and retain  
women at all levels

While the lack of female representation is a global business problem across industries and geographies, it is a significant concern in the South African mining industry.

Women make up just 12% of the mining industry, which places the industry behind others in the country (Department of Labour, 2018). South Africa also lags behind other mining countries such as Australia and Canada, which, though still relatively low, have a slightly higher representation of women in mining at 17% and 16% respectively.

The participation of women in business has been shown to positively influence the bottom line of companies and to contribute to enhanced sustainability. Critically for mining companies, gender-inclusive workplaces also lend themselves to being safer (WIM Canada, 2016).

Mining companies are becoming increasingly aware of both the business and moral imperative of enhancing the representation of women across all levels and are attempting to increase the numbers of women through various initiatives. While there has been much improvement in business in general, the mining industry still struggles to attract and retain women at all levels of employment. Research has shown that once employed, on-the-job challenges at mining operations lead to women leaving mining roles. (Benya, 20016; RMI, 2008)



# SITUATION ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN MINING

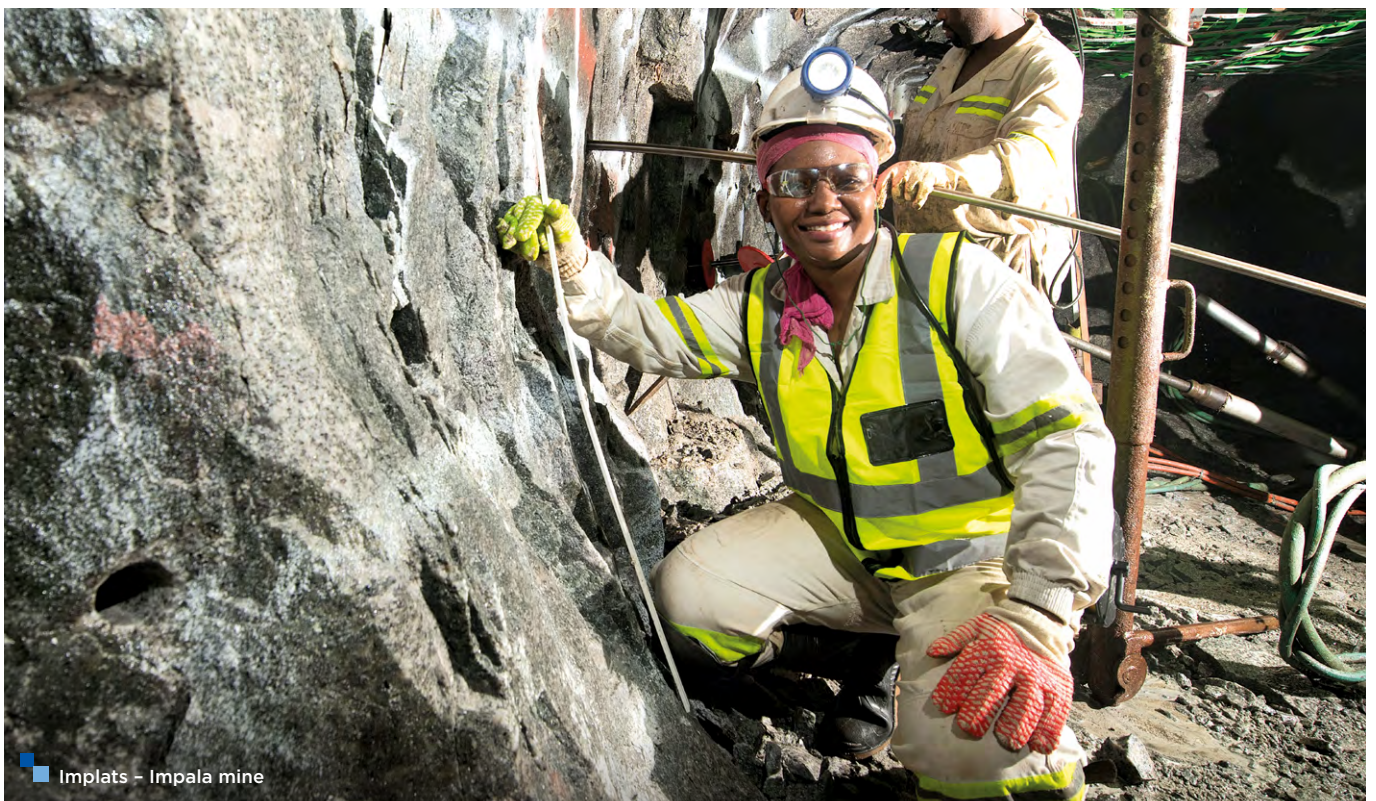
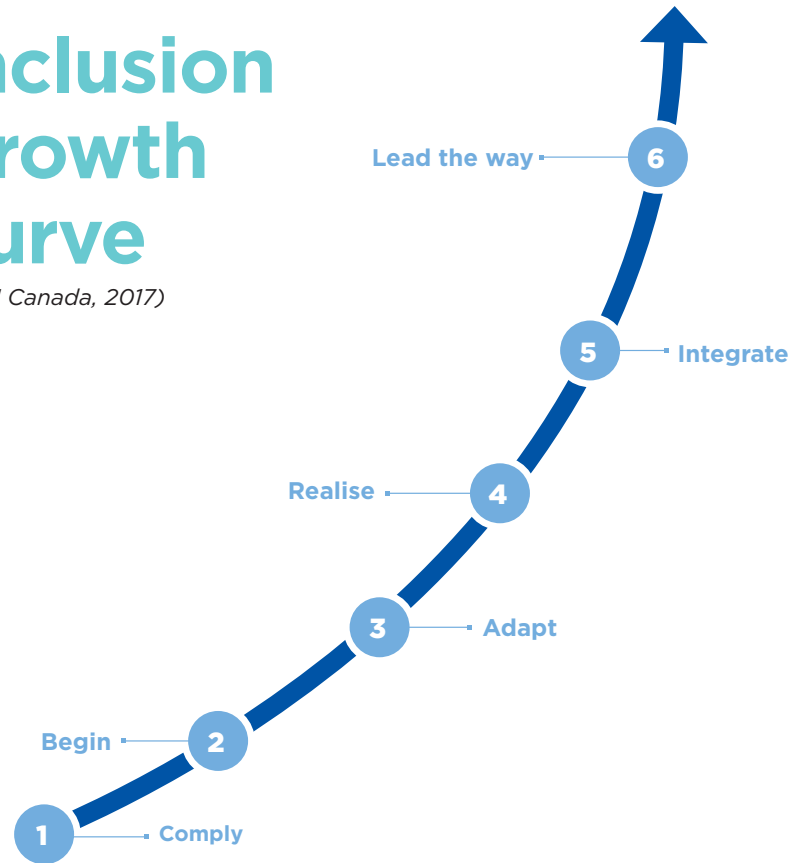
Most Minerals Council members have programmes, policies and strategies on women in mining in place.

These efforts position companies at different points on the inclusion growth curve proposed by WIM Canada (2017). This framework, which is based on the unpublished work of MacBride-King and McLean (2006), allows mining companies to holistically assess where they are on the journey towards gender equity.

Depending on which stage of the continuum a company is positioned, proposed next steps are provided to further the strategic aim of gender equity. The recommended steps do not fit every company perfectly and are intended to serve as a guideline and to generate ideas.

## Inclusion growth curve

(WIM Canada, 2017)



# A SEPARATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE IS WARRANTED TO ADDRESS ISSUES THAT PERSIST FOR WOMEN IN MINING

Although progress has been made in increasing the percentage of women in the sector, targets for black and coloured women are still not being met in most instances. This is however not the case for white and Indian women as their percentage is beyond the respective national or provincial proportion of economically active population and companies will not be credited for employing them.

The Mine Health and Safety Council (MHSC) still deals with issues relating to ablution facilities, sexual harassment, personal protective equipment, the impact of mining on reproductive health, and the requirements of physical work. The MHSC plans to establish a separate advisory committee on women in mining, which will report directly to the Minerals Council.

From company reports and the survey conducted by the Minerals Council in 2019, it was noted that:

1




The most successful women in mining programmes are led by CEOs

2




It is more difficult to drive transformation for women in contractor companies

3



The mechanisation of mining methods could lead to a levelling of the playing field between men and women

4



A gender pay gap exists in some companies

5

The most common challenges identified are physical capacity, pregnancy and maternity leave, and workplaces not accommodating the needs of women (such as through sanitation and ablution facilities, safety and security, and childcare facilities)

The MHSC plans to establish a separate advisory committee on women in mining, which will report directly to the Mine Health and Safety Council.



## PRIORITIES

1. Promote gender diversity and inclusion at all levels, from top management to the lowest skilled workers
2. Help women to attain their full potential and to close the gender pay gap across total remuneration and bonuses
3. Develop policies and programmes that advance and protect women, e.g. policies on gender-based violence, sexual harassment and alternative placement during pregnancy
4. Adapt workplaces to accommodate women, including:
  - a. Ablution facilities
  - b. Sanitary bins and emergency sanitary pads
  - c. Lockable toilets
  - d. Changing rooms
  - e. Child-care and lactation rooms
  - f. Ensuring safety of women (through improved security, moving away from crowded cages, and the installation of alarms and cameras)
5. Recognise and adjust for the different physical capacities of women



## NAME OF GUIDING DOCUMENT

Minerals Council South Africa White Paper on Women in Mining



## PURPOSE

Streamline strategies of the mining industry to advance women in mining by focusing on advancing women representation and encouraging decisions that are in the best interest of women



## CONTEXT

The White Paper recognises that women in mining is situated within the wider context of gender mainstreaming and diversity management, which includes the LGBTQI+ forms of gender identification. Initial activities will, however, be focused on women in mining

# ACTION PLAN

The following steps have been identified to guide the activities of member companies:

1



Run diversity and inclusion programmes that include men

2



Develop guidelines for women in mining for the industry

3



Include women in mining KPIs in performance plans for senior management

4



Ensure job shadowing, training, recruitment, retention, talent pools and succession planning

5



Review and adapt workplaces to ensure that the needs of women are catered for

6



Review physical work capacity requirements to be in line with the capabilities of women and re-engineer work processes to achieve this aim

7



Establish collaborations with relevant partners that advance the cause of women in mining, e.g. MHSC and WIMSA

## THE ROLE OF THE MINERALS COUNCIL

The Minerals Council is responsible for:

Consolidating data on company performance progress on inclusion of women in mining

Conducting periodic surveys and research on priority areas

Developing policies and advocating for these policies

Providing a platform for networking and the dissemination of best practices

Communicating openly to drive challenges and celebrate successes



### Structure

Develop a women in mining task team that draws from member companies and the Minerals Council that will oversee the implementation of the White Paper as well as its monitoring and evaluation.



### Funding

The Minerals Council is funding the implementation and monitoring of this plan.

## CONTACT DETAILS

### MINERALS COUNCIL SOUTH AFRICA

T +27 11 498 7100  
E [info@mineralscouncil.org.za](mailto:info@mineralscouncil.org.za)

### MEDIA

T +27 11 880 3924  
E [mineralscouncil@rasc.co.za](mailto:mineralscouncil@rasc.co.za)

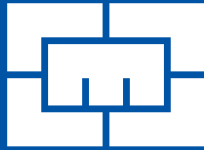
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Rosebank Towers, 19 Biermann Avenue  
Rosebank, Johannesburg, 2196  
PO Box 61809, Marshalltown 2107

[www.mineralscouncil.org.za](http://www.mineralscouncil.org.za)

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