Inclusion and Diversity for Prosperity and Social Cohesion of Mining and Communities

As part of TWIN Global in September 2018, the Development Partner Institute and our supporters invited a diverse group of 25 people, from within and outside of the mining sector, to join the DPI Advisory Council in exploring ways to enhance inclusion and diversity for the mining sector and surrounding communities and regions. We set out to contemplate relevant challenges and opportunities that confront mining communities and companies and to identify ways to overcome barriers through creativity, technology, and innovation.

Background

When operated well, mining contributes to the shared growth and prosperity of countries, communities, and companies around the world. Inclusion and diversity are becoming a priority for the sector, in line with global evidence that high-performing organizations incorporate diverse teams and inclusive approaches in both their day-to-day operations and in long-term decision-making. Harmonious and healthy communities are also diverse, allowing different cultural perspectives to merge and blend so that people feel valued and able to meaningfully contribute.

Lack of inclusion and diversity is a significant economic issue for countries around the world, impeding development. A McKinsey Global Institute report of 2015 estimated that global GDP could be advanced by $12 trillion by promoting women’s equality alone. An OECD Development...
Centre report of June 2016 said that “gradually reducing discrimination in social institutions could lead to an annual average increase in the world GDP growth rate of 0.03 to 0.6 percentage points by 2030.”

Leading mining companies and communities are working together to overcome existing barriers. These barriers can be acute, such as in regions where there is limited economic diversification and where the opportunities for people to contribute are narrowly defined. Challenges are exacerbated where there are cultural barriers to full workforce participation, where certain community groups are marginalized, or where decision-making is concentrated among a few people with limited cultural diversity or thinking styles. The broader goal in addressing these matters is to create a mining sector that contributes fully to economic prosperity for economies and communities as well as operators.

Key insights from the conversation

To kick-start the conversation at our session, we invited Chico Tillmon, Executive Director of YMCA Chicago’s Youth Safety and Violence Prevention initiative in Chicago, to contribute his powerful insights built on his experience of working to create cohesive communities. Key points that arose from this discussion were that mentorship has an extraordinary capacity to build inclusion with the role of mentors to help, encourage, inspire, and correct. Education is a crucial pathway to inclusion and diversity. Providing people access and giving them a seat and voice at the table requires relinquishing power, which can be difficult for organisations to truly grasp beyond the superficial. Exclusion can be institutionalized within existing systems, so promoting inclusion often requires working within the system first, in order to change it. Top down frameworks can entrench exclusion. Access and opportunity are key drivers for prosperity and inclusion, but it is ultimately about trust and hope.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A conversation followed on inclusion and diversity challenges and opportunities in the context of mines and communities. Four speakers offered diverse perspectives: Sheila Khama as a Senior Mining Executive and Policy Advisor, Paul Schmidt Schroth of Torex Gold, Katie Fergusson, of De Beers, and Dr Nicholas Pearce from Northwestern’s Kellogg School of Management.

They offered insights on the challenges of cultures in different communities and advocating for inclusion when the learning curve can be short within expectations of productivity. We talked about what we can do to “expand empathy,” as this a critical underpinning to inclusion and diversity. Empathy enables us to go beyond deeply-held cultural beliefs – such as the belief that women can’t be leaders or have families while working – and effect change. We must require people in business to have the confidence to engage empathetically; this is not a “nice to have,” but is a necessary precursor to inclusive and healthy mining communities and operations. A seat at the table may not mean a voice at the table; addressing that means creating room intentionally and empathetically for people so that diverse voices can be heard in ways that positively influence mines and their role in communities.

It is easy to unintentionally be exclusive. One speaker reminded us that we tend to judge ourselves based on our intentions and others on their impact. To make progress, we need to assume positive intent and be mindful and intentional ourselves. Often, people have the idea that you can get diversity through inclusion; inclusion is the ultimate goal and diversity is a side effect. However, if you focus solely on inclusion, you can create harmonious homogeneity.

As we automate and digitize mines, we face a new challenge of how to equip local communities with skills so they can access future opportunities; we need to focus on reaching people earlier and consider inclusion and diversity so that people can thrive as technology proliferates.
There are opportunities to look beyond mentorship to sponsorship. A lot of women and people of color are over-mentored and under-sponsored. Sponsorship provides access and allows relationships to be built.

**CREATIVITY, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION**

Our third panel focused on transforming inclusion and diversity through creativity, technology, and innovation. Speakers again brought diverse insights and included Veronica Nyhan Jones of the IFC, Naadiya Moosajee of Womhub, Liesel Kirsten of Canpro, and Ash Agarwal from Uptake.

Speakers emphasized the power of storytelling and letting people tell their own story. For example, cheap and amazing video and smart-phone technology put in people’s hands shows that the only limitation is imagination. They also spoke to the democratization of access to information. People want a voice, and if they can interact and be heard it reduces volatility and increases connections. There is also vast potential in the power of big data and analytics to solve problems. New technologies can fix problems and create new opportunities in a world where economic diversification is a key to long-term community survival and prosperity.

The digital world opens up both opportunity and challenge. In a world awash with data and information, it has never been more important to empathetically find ways to incorporate different perspectives. We need to make sure people are informed – they cannot participate in the decision-making process if they are not informed, and often can’t decide to get informed if someone has not made them feel connected.

Our speakers also emphasized the importance of youth. As demographics shift, youth cannot be dismissed because of inexperience; nor can experience be dismissed because of age.

Finally, we discussed the often asymmetrical relationship between a mine and its host community. It is not just about income and power, but about choices, opportunities to engage, having networks and resources. Where communities are dependent on a mine, resentment and conflict and operational impacts can occur. Recognizing this and finding ways for unification and to work through the resentment is critical. When we focus solely on management, employment, and supply development, but don’t consider the whole community, we miss an opportunity to advance relationships.

Bringing the digital world to communities opens up opportunities, increases the symmetry between mines and their host communities and opens up the world to communities which the physical environment cannot do.

**Where to go from here**

We can collectively leverage the power of stories, sharing so that people aren’t starting from scratch. We can commit to providing mentorship and sponsorship in communities. We can create room for mining and other sector leadership to understand the value of inclusion and diversity – changing the narrative from a need for gender parity to one around the economic benefits and value.
We can learn more about communities to get better at creating opportunities for inclusion and diversity, and to identify and overcome barriers, from investment in infrastructure and training to management and operations.

There are headwinds that we need to address, including the gap in meeting expectations of mining, the trust deficit, lack of engagement, and others. Technology can play a role in enabling connection and engagement. We can create economic opportunity by bringing the lens of investors, allowing for the economic opportunity of our communities to be translated.

At the DPI, we will create future opportunities to incorporate inclusion and diversity into our conversations at international, national and regional levels, further exploring and sharing related questions and ways that empathy, creativity, technology, and innovation can support diversity, community inclusion and education.

We can see that building new ideas for sharing will be critical to achieving the broader purpose of creating true partnerships around resources and through collective engagement and collaboration to create stability & economic prosperity.

We will continue our work in broadening the range of stakeholders engaged in the conversation about inclusion and diversity, to include communities, investors, and others.


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**About The Development Partner Institute**

The Development Partner Institute (DPI) was established in 2016 to engage players across the mining ecosystem to build bridges amongst stakeholders and advance innovative thinking about the role of mining in society. It built on almost five years of groundwork convened by KIN Global, the precursor to TWIN Global.

For more information, visit [www.dpimining.org](http://www.dpimining.org)

**About The World Innovation Network**

The World Innovation Network (TWIN) is an invitation-only community of innovation and growth leaders from across sectors and geographies. In addition to other activities, TWIN convenes annually for a summit in Chicago from 25 countries and all sectors: business, government, non-profit, the arts, academia, defense. Our group includes leaders at the most senior levels of their organizations, as well as select individuals making differentiated impact around the world.

For more information, visit [www.twinglobal.org](http://www.twinglobal.org)

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We are grateful to all who contributed their insights and perspectives and to our supporters of the Development Partner Institute in 2018.