

Building Better Livelihoods from Mining

Answers to additional questions

In this document, the panellists from the webinar jointly organised by TDi Sustainability and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) answer the questions they didn't have time to address during the live event.



Kassiyet Tulegenova

Safeguards Specialist (Social)
Asian Development Bank

Topics: Labour Standards & Worker Protections

Question 1:

Labour standards, community engagement and capacity building related benchmarks may be shared

Answer:

From ADB's perspective, responsible mining and livelihood outcomes depend on the integrated application of labor standards, meaningful community engagement, and sustained capacity building, guided by the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). Rather than prescribing fixed measurable benchmarks, ADB helps clients develop practical tools to avoid or minimize labor-related risks and impacts – the goal is effective risk management and decent work outcomes, not compliance against a checklist.

ADB's ESS2 on Labor and Working Conditions builds on and updates ADB's commitment to the core labor standards, and is informed by International Labour Standards, including on freedom of association, forced labor, child labor, equal remuneration, and non-discrimination. ADB's policy position is clear: zero tolerance for forced labor and child labor, both of which are hard exclusions under ADB's Prohibited Investment Activities List. The standard requires the development and implementation of a Labor Management Plan to identify the main labor requirements and risks associated with the project and the way in which project workers will be managed.

Community engagement emphasizes early, continuous, and inclusive participation of affected stakeholders, including structured engagement processes and Free, Prior and Informed Consent where Indigenous Peoples are affected. Capacity building is what makes these systems work in practice – ADB supports borrowers and clients to implement labor and community engagement requirements effectively, and helps communities engage more actively and benefit from project opportunities. Strong labor practices, meaningful engagement, and sustained capacity building reinforce each other, and together are what support more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable livelihoods in mining communities.

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Topics: Clean Energy Transition & CMM Value Chain

Question 2:

Could you please provide some examples of workforce models applied for the mining / manufacturing sectors?

Answer:

A few models that ADB has seen work well in the region: pre-employment training partnerships, where companies partner with TVET providers before recruitment begins so local workers are job-ready when the project needs them. Mongolia's experience with Oyu Tolgoi and national TVET reform is an instructive case.

Apprenticeship and mentoring schemes that pair local workers with experienced technical staff in structured arrangements, with defined timelines for local workers to take over roles. These work best when timelines are contractually binding, not aspirational.

Community-based training centres in remote areas where workers cannot access urban TVET institutions, company or government-funded facilities providing recognized qualifications near mine sites.

Topics: Supply chain DD

Question 3:

What's your suggestion to downstream company (like Logitech) to validate the supply chain's mining risk?

Answer:

From ADB's perspective, the framing of "validation" isn't quite right for how ESS2 approaches this – it's not a one-time verification exercise, it's a risk assessment and proportionate response process, applied where a downstream company's primary suppliers include mining operations.

Under ESS2, ADB's borrowers and clients are required to identify their primary suppliers – those providing goods or materials essential to the project's core functions – and assess the labor risks associated with each, particularly child labor, forced labor, and safety issues. Where elevated risks are identified, the client applies proportionate controls to the level of risk, and documents this in a Labor Management Plan.

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Answers to additional questions

Ashley Price
Head of Sustainability
Reko Diq Mining Company



Topics: Community Benefits & Local Employment

Question 4:

How can mining communities directly benefit from big mining projects? Can community development agreements be the answer?

Answer:

There are a range of models for ensuring that local communities benefit from mining developments, but the primary focus should always be on partnering with a range of stakeholders, first and foremost local communities, but also Governments and NGOs. Benefits can also come in different forms, including direct and indirect employment, and socio-economic development. Community development agreements can work, but the most important thing is to ensure that community needs are clearly identified, and that initiatives are well planned, that risks are understood and mitigated and that they are sustainable (i.e. established for the long term)

Question 5:

How can a collaborative approach between mining companies generate more impact on livelihood?

Answer:

Two areas where collaboration between mining companies can maximise positive socio-economic impact are workforce development and community development. Mining developments will typically have similar skills requirements, so co-developing training and development programs can ensure that skills are transferrable across projects (and more widely in a geographic sense). This can be valuable for projects that are in different stages, for example the construction phase of a project will often require a significantly larger workforce than the operations phase, so being able to ensure that workers are trained appropriately means that construction phase skills can be transferred to other projects as they arise. In terms of community development, ensuring that development plans are complimentary can ensure that value from spend is maximised and that programs become more sustainable.

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Head of Sustainability
Reko Diq Mining Company



Topics: Inclusion & Skills Development

Question 6:

Women's employment in mining; Ensuring local employment given the highly skilled requirements.

Answer:

Improving the number of women in the mining sector is a challenge worldwide. There are many barriers; work is typically remote with long periods away from home, the types of roles are often the stereotypical male jobs and what we see in make dominant societies in women not having the same opportunities for education and training. Mining companies need to play a role in breaking down the stereotypes and biases which we know occur in the recruitment process. It is also important to ensure that women feel safe and comfortable on site and that companies explore options for family friendly rosters (this is not always possible or feasible).

GET IN TOUCH



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