

ENHANCING COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN THE MINING SECTOR: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE



Translated by:





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INTRODUCTION

A close-up photograph of tall grasses, likely a type of reed or bamboo, with a warm, golden-yellow light filtering through them. The grasses are in sharp focus in the foreground, showing their long, slender blades and some developing seed heads. The background is a soft, out-of-focus wash of yellow and green, suggesting a dense field of similar vegetation. The overall mood is serene and natural.

INTRODUCTION

I

The interrelationship between the environment and the social context is undeniable and complex. Human activities, such as mining and extracting raw materials, can significantly impact both spheres.

In the case of mining, is a crucial industry that supplies highly valuable natural resources, although it can also generate negative consequences for both the environment and the social context in which it operates. These environmental impacts can directly affect local commu-

nities that rely on the natural environment for their sustenance and quality of life.

In addition to direct impacts on the environment and human health, mining can also have economic, social, and cultural effects on local communities. For example, in terms of

All companies have a relationship of dependency and impact with the social and environmental context, either through their direct activity or their value chain.





economic effects, mining can generate employment and economic opportunities. However, on the other hand, it can also lead to economic dependency on a single resource and fluctuations in international prices. Regarding social and cultural changes, communities may experience structural changes due to the migration of workers and the influence of new industries.

It is important to recognise the interdependence between the environment and the social context and to seek a sustainable balance that allows the responsible exploitation of natural resources while ensuring the well-being of local communities.

This entails the implementation of sustainable mining practices, compliance with environmental and social regulations, and the involvement in decision-making processes of the affected communities.

Currently, there is a social demand for actions adapted to technical and scientific requirements, and there is greater awareness, concern, and sensitivity towards environmental and social issues by society. Consequently, the industry has progressed in understanding and acknowledging the need to balance its economic requirements with environmental concerns and the cultural heritage of communities near mining sites. In this regard, in recent years, more constructive relationships, based on respect, commitment, and mutual benefit have been developed.

In this context, the Mining and Life Foundation has emerged to promote this new way of acting. Sustainable development requires a commitment from the entire society, from all its components and organisations.

This guide focuses on the connection between mining companies and the social environment. The social environment consists of communities or individuals residing

or working in areas impacted by or at risk of being affected by mining operations. It's important to recognize the diversity within the social environment to understand the various vulnerabilities, concerns, and interests of the nearby populations.

Mining companies are becoming increasingly aware of how they can contribute to the sustainable development of communities. This is achieved by aligning their operations with integrative management practices that en-

hance the quality of life for their workers, their families, and their community. This approach aims to promote economic growth, improve competitiveness, and ensure the protection of the environment and social well-being of the surrounding areas.

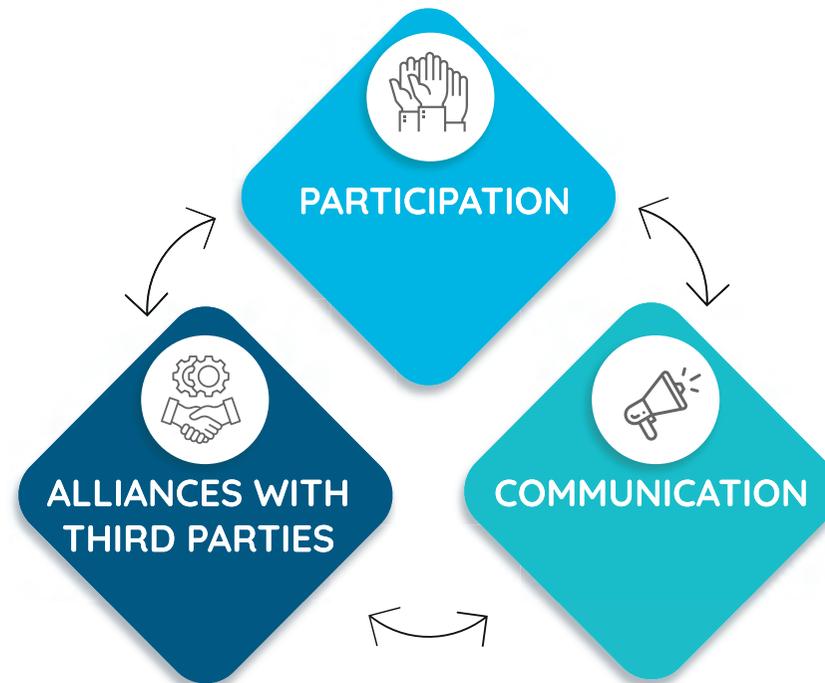
To foresee and prevent negative impacts on the social environment, it is important to establish a process of timely and effective participation with interested groups. It is also necessary to develop open communication, facili-

tating the exchange of experiences. Moreover, the importance of establishing alliances with third parties outside the sector has been widely demonstrated. Finally, internal communication and environmental education (within the sector) are fundamental to establishing effective preventive and corrective actions.

This guide addresses the following points:



Figure 1.
Developed within this guide.



PARTICIPATION



PARTICIPATION

2

The international community recognises the importance of public participation in the processes of drafting plans, programmes, and projects. The Rio Declaration of 1992 was a significant milestone, where it was declared to be the “best way to address environmental issues.” Subsequently, the Aarhus Convention (1998) on access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters established the foundations in the international community.

Traditionally, local participation has involved one-way communication and reactive responses to environmental situations. The analysis of the social environment in mining projects has typically been conducted without involving the local population.

It is increasingly recognised that the involvement of social actors is crucial for the success of projects. Past experiences have demonstrated that extensive engagement at the local level can have a positive influence on projects. For instance, conducting such activities initiates a process that fosters authentic relationships built on mutual respect, shared concerns, and common goals among the company, the community, and other stakeholders.

Recognising the expectations and interests of relevant stakeholders and directly involving them is key to ensuring that companies, nature, and society benefit mutually. The foundations of the relationship should focus on the values, objectives, and concerns of the affected population. For example, communities located in rural, depopulated and ageing areas may be concerned with employment issues. While, in other areas, people may be more concerned with the quality of life and the impact of mining on local environmental values or their properties.

If neighbourhoods feel involved in their own environment and future, through participation actions and decision-making processes to reach a consensus, a trusting relationship will be forged.

Moreover, participation in projects can be transformative for people outside the sector. For example, when people volunteer in a restoration project, they can develop a sense of belonging to the restored space. Local communities (both rural and urban) benefit when mine restoration strengthens environmental values in their surroundings, as it generates ecosystem services that directly impact the areas nearby. Additionally, it can provide employment opportunities in the short and long term, creating positive economic and ecological feedback loops.

This commitment to participation and communication should be carried out throughout the entire project, to meet social expectations, build capacities and a sense of belonging, and maintain support and benefits resulting from this relationship.

The collaborative construction of dialogue and trust among all parties promotes respect for different viewpoints and types of knowledge. It also maintains interest and commitment throughout all phases of the project.

Community Engagement: To facilitate dialogue with the local community, companies can organise communication programmes to inform residents about their operations, environmental impacts, and mitigation measures adopted. This fosters transparency and mutual trust, allowing the community to participate in decision-making and contribute their knowledge and concerns.



Finally, while the mining sector increasingly recognises that the participation of communities and NGOs in the processes of defining mitigation measures or developing social projects is essential and beneficial, there is still much progress to be made in sharing decision-making proces-

ses on other aspects of management. However, different stakeholders may be reluctant to accept consultation processes until their concerns are addressed in project decision-making processes.

Figure 2.

Advantages of Social Participation for a Mining Company

1. **Company Image Improvement:** Public participation generates trust with suppliers, partners, stakeholders, customers, and the community at large, enhancing the company's image.
2. **Identification of Opportunities and Challenges:** Public participation provides valuable insights into the community's needs, desires, and concerns, enabling the identification of business opportunities and the adjustment of strategies and operations if necessary.
3. **Generation of Innovative Ideas:** Opening up to public participation leads to the generation of innovative ideas and creative solutions to business problems.
4. **Increase in Loyalty and Commitment to Human Resources:** Public participation improves the sense of belonging and pride among employees, which can enhance their productivity and commitment.
5. **Reduction of Conflicts and Tensions:** It helps in identifying potential conflicts and tensions in advance and promotes the prompt and appropriate resolution of these issues.

2.1 ENGAGING WITH THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

There are various ways to interact with the local environment:

- **Information:** This involves the one-way flow of information from the company to the environment, creating a unidirectional relationship.
- **Consultation:** In this approach, the company asks for and receives feedback from stakeholders. Prior information about the topics for consultation is necessary, leading to a limited bidirectional relationship.

- **Active Participation:** This level of engagement involves stakeholders playing a role in the development and decision-making processes, such as proposing alternatives. However, the final decision and responsibility still lie with the company. This creates a more complex bidirectional relationship based on co-participation.

Companies wishing to establish a truly participatory relationship with the community should do so from a position of listening and understanding. The dialogue should be bidirectional and transparent throughout the project, listening and responding to the issues that arise.

Additionally, this communication should occur periodically and regularly, or whenever a change arises, such as an expansion of a quarry, an extension of activity, the execution of a part of the restoration, etc.

The communication process should be established closely, trying to avoid communication barriers, such as using overly technical language. Additionally, the participation of all community members who wish to participate is important, so the timing, location, etc., are an important factor to consider to allow the participation of women, older people, etc.

Another relevant factor is the community's ability to participate effectively. It may be necessary at the beginning of the process to take some steps to help the community and the company establish a solid foundation:

- All actors must have all relevant information accessible and understandable.
- The norms and rules of participation must be clear and assumed by all (mutual respect, listening capacity, objectives, and timelines of the process, etc.).

At the local level, developing communication and participation processes is an effective way to promote community awareness, skill development, and active participation. Inclusive processes involving diverse actors help bring different groups closer together, generating trust and creating a conducive environment for constructive dialogue and collaboration among all parties involved.

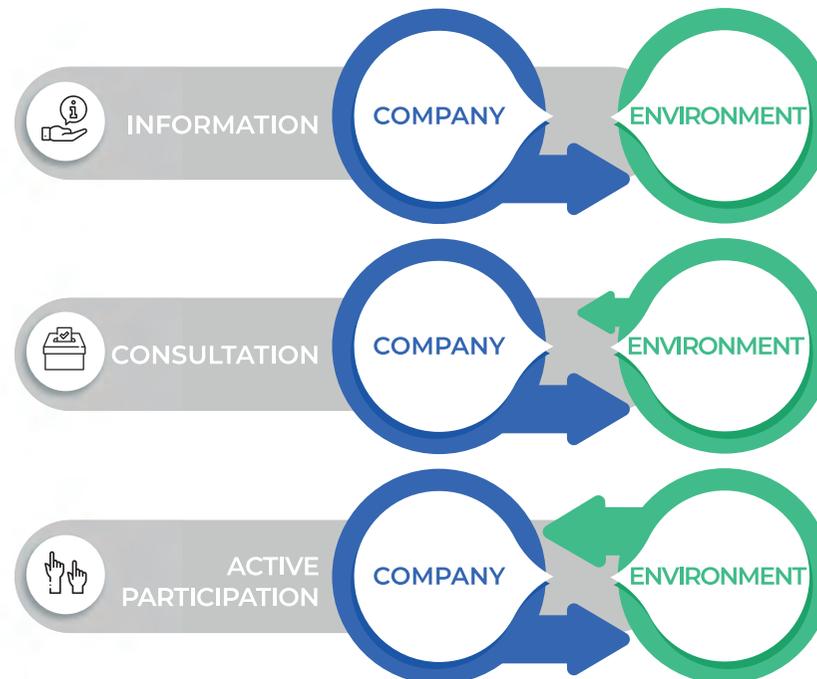


Figure 3.
Forms of interaction
between the company
and its environment.

Figure 4.
Practical examples of when to inform, consult, or open participation.

SCENARIO EXAMPLES	SPECIFIC ACTIONS	INTERACTION WITH THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT
<p>1 Strategic decisions with internal impact</p> <hr/>	<p>Changes in company leadership, organisational restructures, changes in business strategy, etc.</p> <hr/>	<p>Information (press releases, social media, direct communications with local actors such as municipalities) highlighting the value of the changes.</p> <hr/>
<p>2 Development of policies and standards</p> <hr/>	<p>New standards or codes of conduct, equal opportunity policies, labour practices, etc.</p> <hr/>	<p>Information (press releases, social media, direct communications with local actors such as municipalities) highlighting the value of the changes.</p> <hr/>
<p>3 Strategic decisions with external impact</p> <hr/>	<p>Expansion plans, acquisitions or mergers, significant changes in mining extraction and exploitation strategy, etc.</p> <hr/>	<p>Consultation with stakeholder representatives who might be affected by the plans. Participation if potential conflicts and disagreements or opportunities to generate innovative ideas that add more value to the project are detected during the consultation phase. Information once the consultation or participation phase is completed, communicate the results, providing visibility to the participants in the process.</p> <hr/>
<p>4 Impact on the community or the environment</p> <hr/>	<p>New extraction projects, industrial facility expansions, mining site restoration projects, etc.</p> <hr/>	<p>Participation of the affected stakeholders from the beginning. Information once the participatory process is completed, communicate the results, providing visibility to the participants.</p> <hr/>
<p>5 Conflict or problem resolution</p>	<p>Social conflicts due to noise, emissions, environmental impacts, etc.</p>	<p>Participation with the affected stakeholders and, if necessary, with the help of an independent professional who can participate as a mediator. Information once the participatory process is completed, communicate the results, providing visibility to the participants.</p>

Figure 5.
Levels of Participation.



2.2 PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES

Participatory processes are a series of meetings defined within a specific time frame to promote debate and contrast among different actors and to gather their opinions and proposals regarding a specific action.

A participatory **approach seeks to promote the active participation of the target audience in the different decision-making processes**, including planning, implementation, and evaluation. This approach can be applied to some or all of these steps, depending on the circumstances and specific objectives of the project or policy in question.

The target audience can be composed of diverse groups, such as citizens, stakeholders in a particular project or policy, subject matter experts, public administration representatives, or private industry members. The purpose is **to involve all relevant parties to obtain a more comprehensive perspective**, ensure the representation of different interests and needs, and generate more robust and consensual solutions.

Through this **approach, the aim is to empower affected individuals and communities in the decision-making process**, providing them with a space to express their opinions, share knowledge, and collaborate in finding solutions that meet diverse expectations and concerns. Thus, promoting greater transparency, legitimacy, and accountability in the process.

Its outcome does not have to necessarily affect the project's decisions and execution, but indeed to explain how the results will be applied to the final decision to manage the participants' expectations.

Typically, participatory processes can be structured into five major phases:

:

- 1. Design and Planning Phase:** Identify stakeholders, establish structures (e.g., working groups) to execute it, determine objectives, choose the type of tools to be used, and design and plan the process.
- 2. Information and Communication Phase:** A time to inform participants about the topic, the participatory process, its objectives, and the importance of each party's participation.
- 3. Consultation and Debate Phase:** A stage of promoting dialogue and contrasting arguments, where participants' contributions are gathered. The most appropriate and diverse methodologies should be used to reach all affected groups.
- 4. Feedback and Internal Evaluation Phase:** Communicate results to the participating individuals and entities for their validation and review, and once the process is completed, communicate to the rest of the community.
- 5. Monitoring and Evaluation Phase:** Follow-up on the development of the process results transparently so that any person or entity that has participated can understand the status of the implemented measures.



2.2.1 Building a Strategic and Effective Participation Model

1) Design and Planning Phase

Building a strategic and effective participation model requires careful planning and consideration of several key elements:

1. Establish a project management team.

2. Set clear objectives: Define the specific objectives to be achieved through participation. These may include generating innovative ideas, obtaining feedback on projects, promoting collaboration among different groups, or fostering transparency and accountability. Having clear objectives will facilitate the design task.

- a. *Tasks and motivations (Why?)*
- b. *Aspects to address (What?)*
- c. *Goals and desired outcomes (For what purpose?)*
- d. *Participants (Who?)*
- e. *Scope of participation and process transparency (How far?)*
- f. *Resources and deadlines (How much and when?)*

3. Define the scope and focus of the public participation process.

4. Identify key participants: Identify the groups or individuals who will be directly affected by the decisions made. This may include citizens, civil society organisations, public officials, and other relevant actors. Understanding their needs, interests, and concerns to adapt participation strategies to their specific characteristics is essential.

5. Select consultation methods. Choosing the methodology is key to achieving the objectives and meeting the needs of the identified participants. In-person meetings, focus groups, surveys, online debates, or any other tool that facilitates active participation and opinion expression should be used. Each consultation method has its advantages and limitations, and the appropriate choice will depend on the characteristics of the stakeholders, the nature of the topic, and the available resources. Below are some considerations for selecting the most appropriate consultation method (see section 2.2.2 Techniques for Participation):

- a. *Diversity of stakeholders: If stakeholders are diverse and located in different geographic areas, it may be appropriate to use online methods, such as surveys or virtual participation platforms, to ensure that as many people as possible can participate regardless of their physical location.*
- b. *Access to technological resources: If stakeholders have limited access to technological resources, such as the internet or electronic devices, traditional methods, such as in-person meetings or focus groups, may be more effective in ensuring everyone's participation.*

c. *Sensitivity of the topic: If the topic to be discussed is highly sensitive or delicate, it may be more appropriate to use face-to-face consultation methods, such as in-person meetings or individual sessions, to create a safe and trusting environment where people feel comfortable sharing their opinions.*

d. *Number of participants: In a participation process that involves a large number of people, online methods, such as surveys or virtual forums, may be more efficient in gathering and analysing large amounts of information.*

e. *Depth of discussion: If a more in-depth and detailed discussion on a specific topic is sought, in-person focus groups or workshops can allow closer interaction and a richer exchange of ideas and perspectives.*

f. *Time constraints: If time is a critical factor, online methods may be faster and more efficient in terms of data collection and analysis, while in-person meetings may require more planning and organisation time.*

g. *Desired level of interaction: If greater interaction and collaboration among stakeholders are sought, in-person methods, such as participatory workshops or working groups, may be more effective in facilitating communication and teamwork.*

6. Define funding.

7. Establish suitable deadlines and allocate necessary resources to ensure the process runs smoothly.

2) Information and Communication Phase

1. Recruit participants and promote the event.

2. Establish effective communication channels:

Create clear, bidirectional, and accessible communication channels for the target audience to inform participants about participation opportunities, collect their contributions, and provide feedback on how their contributions are used. This can include using websites, social media, in-person meetings, newsletters, suggestion boxes, or even mobile applications.

3. Provide relevant and accessible information:

Access to information is necessary to understand the issues under discussion. Create and provide clear and concise materials that explain the context, available options, and potential consequences of decisions.

3) Consultation and Debate Phase

1. Promote diversity: It is important to ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

2. Inclusion and impartial facilitation: During consultation and debate sessions, it is necessary to ensure that all participants have equal opportunities to express their views. One alternative is to have the coordination and facilitation of this process carried out by an impartial entity with no conflicts of interest regarding the matters being discussed, ensuring that all voices are heard and no particular group is favoured. Facilitation should be neutral and focused on promoting constructive dialogue.

3. Documentation and record-keeping: Notes and records of discussions, opinions, and results allow for a complete view of the topics addressed and the concerns raised, which is very useful at the end of discussions and for the next phase of the participatory process.

4) Feedback and Internal Evaluation Phase

It is important to conduct a final evaluation to understand the main impacts and results generated from the participatory process, as well as any obstacles that may have arisen.

1. Communication of results: Provide all stakeholders with clear and transparent information about the results of the participatory process. This includes how their contributions and opinions have been used in decision-making, what actions have been implemented, and what the next steps are.

2. Evaluation of process effectiveness: Evaluate how the process was carried out, whether the established objectives were achieved, the quality of participation, and the satisfaction of stakeholders. Identify strengths and weaknesses of the process to improve future initiatives.

3. Identification of lessons learned: What has worked well and could be improved in future participatory processes.

4. Stakeholder Feedback: Collect the satisfaction levels of stakeholders, whether they feel their opinions have been heard, and if they consider the process significant and valuable.

- 5. Adjustments and Improvements:** Incorporate lessons learned and suggestions from stakeholders to enhance the quality and effectiveness of participation.
- 6. Final Report and Dissemination:** Develop a final report that summarises the results of the participatory process, the evaluation, and lessons learned. Disseminate this report to all stakeholders and the general public to promote transparency and accountability.

5) Monitoring and Evaluation Phase

- 1. Monitoring Actions and Implementation:** Regularly follow up on the actions and decisions taken during the participatory process. Verify whether they are being carried out appropriately and achieving the expected impact. Identify any possible deviations or issues and take corrective measures as necessary.
- 2. Evaluation of Results and Effectiveness:** Evaluate the outcomes obtained from the actions implemented based on the objectives established during the consultation and debate phase. Analyse

whether the desired results have been achieved and whether the concerns raised by stakeholders have been addressed.

- 3. Impact Measurement:** It is important not only to collect data on the impact of the problem or issue addressed by the participatory process but also on the strengthening of trust and improvement of collaboration.
- 4. Accountability and Transparency:** Transparently communicate the evaluation results and the adjustments made, both to stakeholders and the general public.

Figure 6.
Steps of a participatory process.



2.2.2 Techniques for Participation

Below are some useful and widely used techniques in participatory processes:

Consultations and surveys allow the collection of opinions and perceptions from stakeholders on specific topics. They can be conducted in person or online and help gather both quantitative and qualitative data to support informed decision-making.

Focus groups bring together a representative group of people with common interests or experiences to explore topics in depth. These groups provide detailed perspectives, identify concerns, and generate specific solutions.

Dialogues and debates facilitate open discussion and idea exchange among different stakeholders. They focus on mutual respect and understanding of different viewpoints, aiming to find common ground or consensus solutions.

Online platforms and social media provide virtual spaces for stakeholders to connect, share information, and participate in discussions. These tools allow for broader audience engagement and facilitate remote participation and idea exchange.

Working groups and committees consist of representatives from different stakeholder groups. They work together to identify problems, find solutions, and make decisions. These structures promote collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Public hearings provide an opportunity for stakeholders to present comments and opinions on a specific to-

pic in a public setting. They boost open and transparent participation, providing a forum to express their concerns and viewpoints.

Pilot projects and joint working groups involve collaboration among different stakeholders to implement and evaluate solutions in a practical setting. These initiatives promote active participation and enable the co-creation of solutions.

SWOT Analysis, explained in section 4.1.1.

Below are more detailed examples of the most common techniques:

1. Working Groups

This format allows for a very natural conversation in which topics develop fluidly. Even if a problem arises due to differences of opinion or deviation from the topic, there are moderators to keep the discussion on track and ensure rules are followed, all members participate, and goals are met.

Properties of a working group:

- No hierarchies
- Having a moderator
- Participation is encouraged

2. Brainstorming

This simple technique leverages the spontaneity, motivation, and creativity of the attendees, gathering their initial ideas on the topic under analysis.

It is a strategy where there is no group debate or discussion during its development; instead, the leader invites participants to share their initial contributions on the topic to be discussed.

All ideas are valid and are reflected on a board or flipchart, noted down for everyone to see.

At the end of the 'storm', it is advisable to recap, and at that moment, depending on what the next steps will be, thematically organise the ideas, testing which ones have the most acceptance. This way, the foundation is laid for taking advantage of them and deepening them in other moments.

Brainstorming works if numerous and varied contributions are received and if the climate of trust is maintained, avoiding the monopoly of contributions.

3. Consistency or Coherence Assessment Matrix

This is a technique that helps us make decisions about various actions we are considering within the process. The idea is to evaluate the different alternatives based on a series of criteria that we have previously decided on, relevant for decision-making. Thus, we will be evaluating if each of the proposals is consistent with our general vision or core ideas for the municipality, neighbourhood, or territory we are working on.

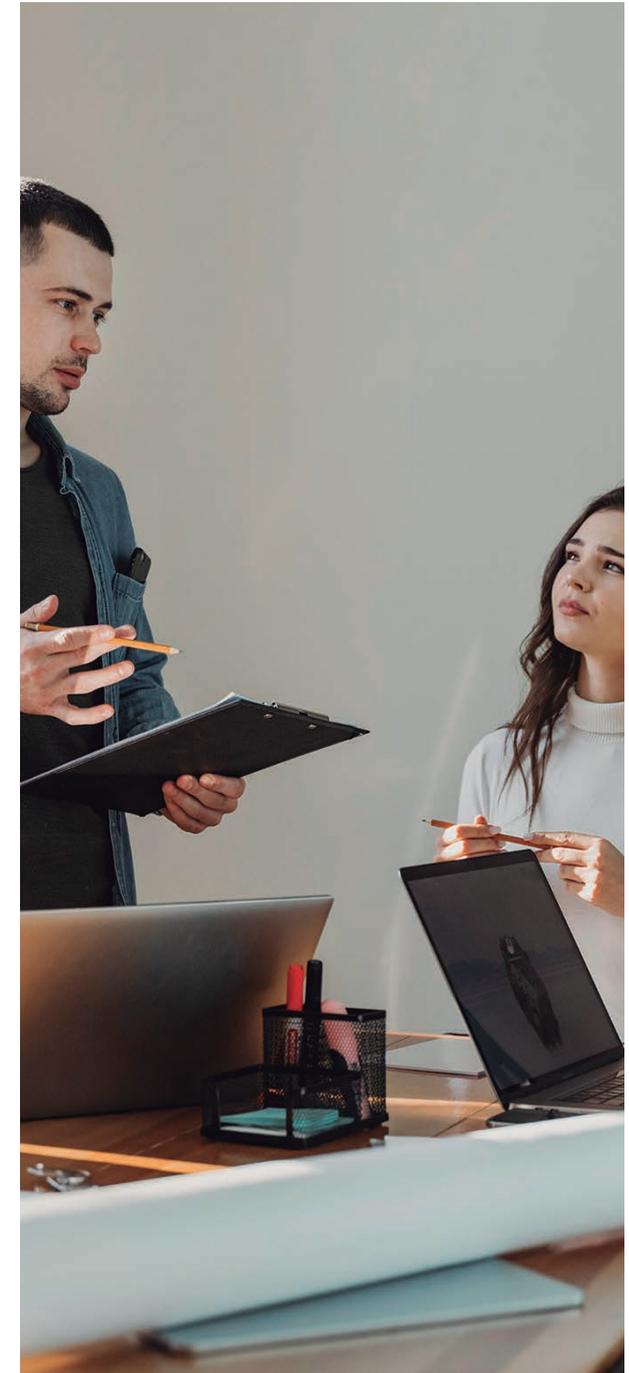
The goal of this technique is, therefore, to ensure that the contemplated actions maintain consistency with the vision and objectives. A matrix is created, where on the horizontal axis the four or five main objectives of the Plan are placed, stating those core ideas that seem important to preserve in everything that is done.

Implementing this technique helps to enrich proposals, refine them, make them more interesting, or achieve greater consensus on their implementation.

Figure 7.

Brainstorming Key Points.

1	Preparation	It is crucial to clearly define the objective or challenge for which ideas are being generated.
2	Criticism-Free Environment	It is important to foster an open and trusting environment where all participants feel comfortable sharing ideas without fear of being judged or criticised, avoiding negative comments.
3	No Incorrect Ideas	The goal is to be imaginative and think unconventionally. All ideas are welcome. Supposedly incorrect responses can be the starting point for innovative solutions.
4	Quantity Encouragement	The more ideas there are, the greater the chances of finding creative solutions.
5	Idea Construction and Combination	One idea can trigger associations or inspire other ideas. This technique stimulates collaboration and collective construction to enrich proposals.
6	Visual or Written Stimulation	It is important to use visual tools, such as boards or flipcharts, to record ideas visibly for all participants. This helps maintain a record of generated ideas and facilitates the visualisation and connection of concepts.
7	Divergent Thinking Before Convergent	During brainstorming, the objective is to generate as many ideas as possible without worrying too much about their viability or feasibility. Divergent thinking allows exploring different approaches and possibilities before selecting the best ideas for further development.
8	Equal Participation Stimulation	All participants should have the opportunity to share their ideas and feel included in the process.
9	Idea Recording and Follow-Up	The final objective is to record all ideas in a clear and organised manner for later review. This facilitates pattern identification, evaluation, and selection of the most promising ideas for further development.





ALLIANCES WITH THIRD PARTIES

ALLIANCES WITH THIRD PARTIES

3

To learn, achieve goals, and improve performance in local social and environmental management, it is essential to share experiences and collaborate with other entities in a relationship of mutual support.

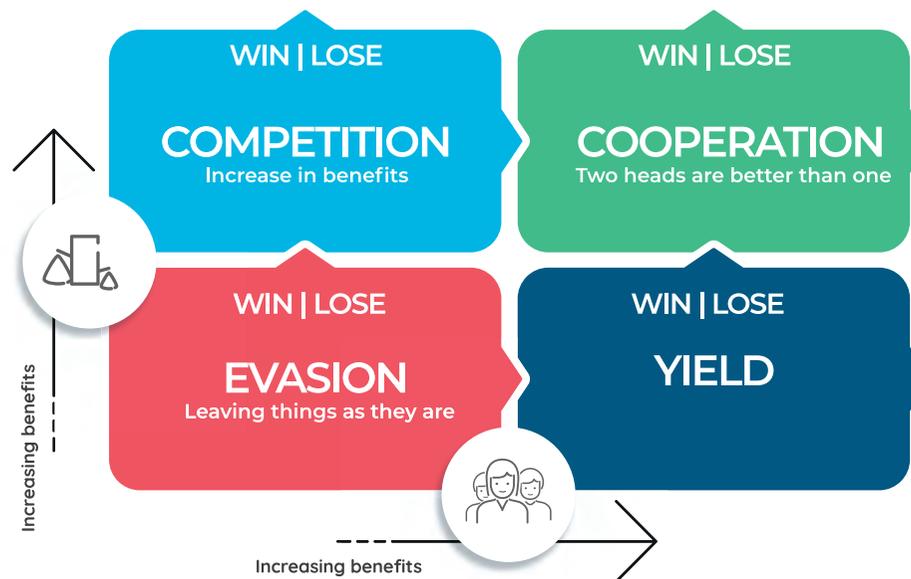
There are multiple initiatives, and it is proven that third-sector entities, specialised companies, and other groups can act as independent intermediaries facilitating communication between the company and the environment and vice versa, providing rigorous and reliable information and experiences and implementing actions through collaborations with the company and other sectors of society.

Collaboration with local communities includes all types of key actors, from other companies to non-profit entities,

research entities, experts, public administrations, or the general public. Some alliances may start from different or opposing viewpoints. However, these divergent points enrich mutual knowledge and can lead to a trusting relationship. Having different perspectives can be very useful to understand the business environment, develop knowledge, detect new previously unknown opportunities, act on risks, aid in internal and external communication of companies, develop actions or collaborative projects, perform follow-ups, or project monitoring, etc.

The collaboration options are very diverse depending on the pursued objectives and the desired level of involvement.

Figure 8.
Potential Advantages of Establishing Relationships with a Stakeholder Group.



Possible alliances include:

- **Environmental Organisations:** Collaborating with organisations dedicated to the conservation and protection of the environment can be highly beneficial. These organisations can offer technical advice, participate in joint projects to restore mining sites and promote responsible practices within the sector.
- **Academic Institutions:** Establishing alliances with universities and research institutions can be valuable for developing joint research on sustainable extraction methods, mining site restoration techniques, and environmental impact mitigation technologies. Additionally, environmental education and training programmes for sector workers can be organised.



- **Technology Providers:** Working with providers specialised in environmental technologies can help develop and implement innovative solutions in mining operations. This includes the adoption of more efficient machinery and equipment, waste and water management systems, and environmental monitoring technologies to evaluate and reduce operational impact.
- **Local Communities:** Establishing a collaborative relationship with local communities is essential for the sustainable success of mining operations. This involves maintaining open and transparent communication, involving communities in planning and decision-making, and investing in sustainable development programmes that benefit the general community.
- **Environmental Services Companies:** There are companies specialised in environmental and social services, such as mediation, participatory process development, environmental impact assessment, human resource team management, water and air quality monitoring, and waste management. Establishing alliances with these companies can help ensure regulatory compliance, improve operational management, and demonstrate commitment to sustainability.
- **Local Administration:** The relationship with local administration is also relevant in the context of the social environment of mining operations. Administration can provide valuable information about legislative requirements, and best practices in the specific context, and contribute by giving the point of view and concerns of the local population.

- **Employees:** These are the people who are in the social environment and interact with the environment and people around mining operations. They are the ones who will implement corrective, mitigating, or restoration actions, being their role crucial for success.
- **Direct and Indirect Clients:** These are stakeholders particularly connected with sector companies and the environment, as they need the final products to be incorporated into their production cycle.

Figure 9.
A Win to Win Strategy

A Win to Win Strategy

Working with other entities allows:

- Understanding and learning about the environmental and social risks and opportunities presented by mining operations.
- Boosting the trustworthiness of information.
- Building support beyond the industry.
- Developing pioneering projects or case studies.
- Crafting rigorous and reliable communication content.

There are numerous ways in which a company can collaborate with other organisations: participating in joint projects, collaborating through platforms, making territorial custodianship agreements, and creating spaces for exchange and knowledge. In this sense, restoration and environmental management projects of mining operations can be laboratories to test, demonstrate, and establish best practices in conservation and biodiversity management.

Alliances can and should occur throughout the entire lifecycle of mining operations:

Design Phase: During the design phase, stakeholders can provide information and local context for

the Environmental Impact Assessment (e.g., helping to generate a more complete and accurate baseline); detecting social or environmental values that at the national or international level may not be as recognised but are considered relevant locally; providing traditional local knowledge; proposing and evaluating alternatives; local or national NGOs can be relevant allies in consultative processes before initiating a project.

Exploitation Phase: During the exploitation phase, alliances can allow for the monitoring of implemented practices (e.g., designing a specific monitoring programme for the actions taken and the specific objectives of each project; executing this monitoring with

the expertise of experts), helping to perform adaptive management to unforeseen events, detecting new opportunities and interests; and proposing actions in biodiversity or social relevance for the moment.

Abandonment Phase: During the abandonment phase of mining operations, alliances can play a crucial role in designing the final project restoration, complying with administrative objectives, ensuring maintenance and follow-up, and generating knowledge about the success of program implementation. Involving stakeholders can help ensure that the mitigation and corrective measures developed address impacts that are important to people and the environment.



COMMUNICATION



COMMUNICATION

4

Communication is an essential driver of the previous actions; therefore, having a corporate communication strategy is indispensable.

Creating a good communication network with the environment, regardless of the company's size or resources, leads us to the goal of this document: to be an integral part of the local context and promote awareness of the importance of mining in daily life, always with sensitivity towards the needs of the social environment.

This section proposes initiatives for establishing stable communication channels, providing guidelines and tools that are accessible to any company, regardless of its organisational structure.

It also develops communication pathways to generate a change in the perception of the extractive sector,

highlighting its power to improve practices related to the environment and sustainability, making the benefits of all kinds arising from mining activities more tangible for its immediate surroundings.

Mining is an indispensable part of society's functioning; therefore, establishing a dialogue with the social environment and being sensitive to its needs makes mining a proactive model. It is a sector that is constantly adapting to new realities and environmental needs, without neglecting a society increasingly aware and sensitised to the environment. Therefore, in this context, the mining sector should ask the following questions:

- What does society expect?
- What is being offered?
- How can it be improved?



4.1 PLANNING RELATIONS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

The first step to generating a corporate communication strategy will be planning, that is, how the mining industry will face the generation of new relationships with the environment.

To plan, it is necessary to approach the realities of the environment. Therefore, conducting a prior evaluation to identify the social impacts related to mining is the best strategy.



One of the tools that can be used is the Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

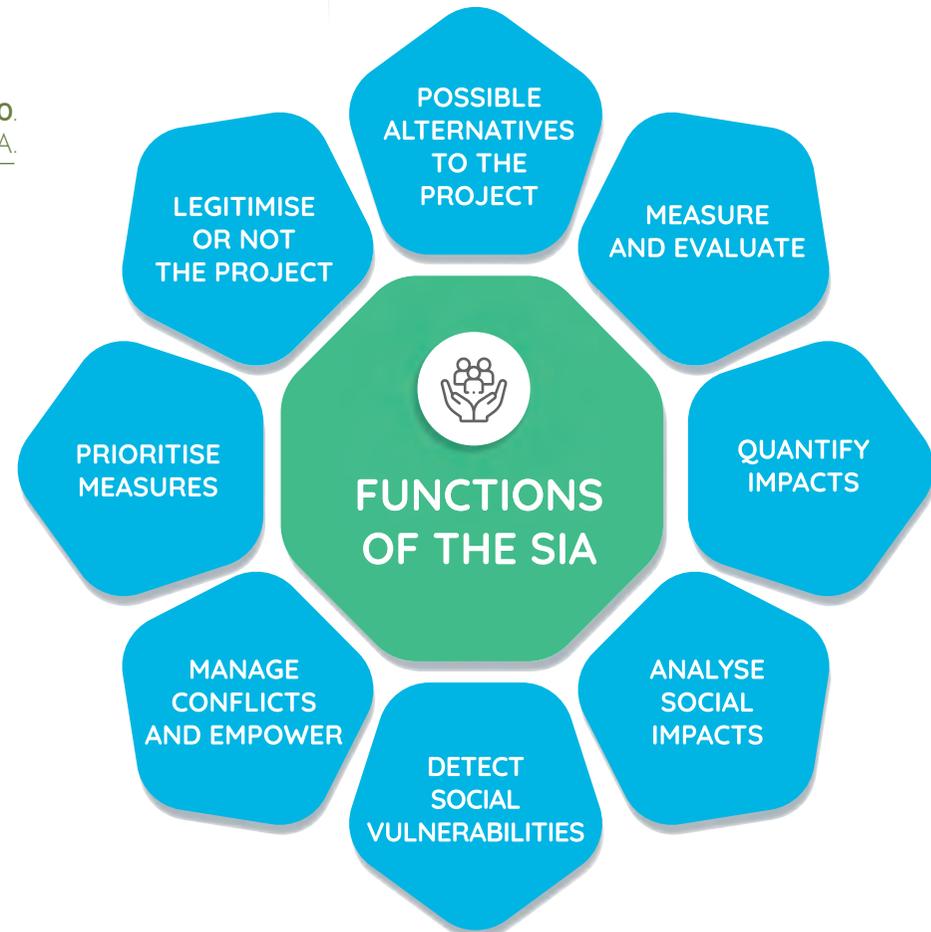
It is an instrument focused on identifying tension points and proposing solutions before conflicts arise.

SIA Action Lines:

- Identify, analyse, and evaluate the social and environmental impacts produced by the project on the community.

- Develop and evaluate alternative actions to the official development plan.
- Propose measures to mitigate negative impacts.
- Achieve greater understanding and awareness of the project and its repercussions.
- Increase knowledge of the project's development.

Figure 10. Functions of the SIA.



4.1.1 How to Conduct a SWOT Analysis?

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is a simple and widely used strategic analysis tool in decision-making for all types of organisations and companies. It can be a very useful planning tool and help in generating a positive image.

It analyses four factors:

- Internal Factors:
 - Weaknesses
 - Strengths
- External Factors:
 - Opportunities
 - Threats

When preparing a SWOT analysis, it is essential to clearly define the objective to be achieved and conduct a subsequent reflection on the necessary strategic changes.

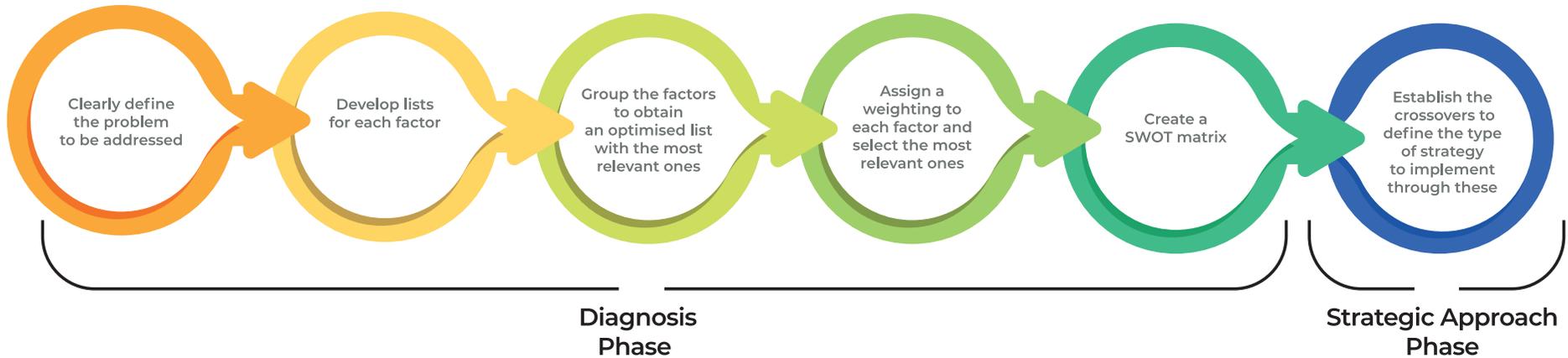
By analysing the external environment and the internal characteristics of the extractive activity, this business management tool allows for a graphical representation of the company's strengths and weaknesses.

Figure 11.
Factors of a SWOT Analysis.



Figure 12.
Phases of a SWOT Analysis.

SWOT Analysis



1. Internal Analysis. Aspects dependent on the organisation.

- **Weaknesses: Constitute limiting aspects of development capacity.**
 - o Low salaries
 - o Old equipment
 - o Lack of training
 - o Quality issues
 - o Reactive management
 - o Misused working capital

Knowing the weaknesses of the company allows the creation of corrective measures and turns these weaknesses into drivers of change. Additionally, it is very important to communicate both positive and negative aspects, assuming the faults and communicating improvement activities.

Figure 13.
Examples of actions to address different weaknesses to improve the positive image associated with the company.

POSSIBLE CORRECTIVE MEASURES	POSITIVE IMAGE ASSOCIATED
Improve safety and health conditions	Interest in the well-being of the employees.
Job creation	Concern about the employment needs of the population.
Conduct training	Growth opportunities for employees.
Develop awareness campaigns	Motivation to improve results.
Implement corporate volunteering	Concern for the environment and interest in the well-being of the local community

- **Strengths: They gather the set of internal resources and their own competitive advantages.**

- o Good working environment
- o Proactive management
- o Market knowledge
- o Large financial resources
- o Good product quality
- o State-of-the-art equipment

Identifying the sector's strengths is important to adequately plan a communication campaign or relations with society.

Strengths should serve to build a positive image of the company.

2. External Analysis. Aspects not dependent on the organisation.

- **Threats: All external factors that can hinder execution or endanger the viability of the activity.**

- o Labour disputes
- o Unfavourable regulation
- o Legislative changes
- o Aggressive competition

- **Opportunities: External factors that favour development or provide the possibility for the implementation of improvements.**

- o Favourable regulation
- o Weak competition
- o Unattended market
- o Product demand

By crossing each of the factors, we obtain four questions to focus and design our strategy::

- **Strengths x Opportunities:** How shall strengths be used to take advantage of opportunities?

- **Strengths x Threats:** How shall strengths be leveraged to minimise threats?

- **Weaknesses x Opportunities:** How shall weaknesses be overcome by taking advantage of opportunities?

- **Weaknesses x Threats:** How shall weaknesses and threats be minimised?

The logical sequence of a SWOT is to try to convert threats and weaknesses into strengths and opportu-

nities through strategies and planning, and in turn, use the defined strengths and opportunities to mitigate the weaknesses and threats found.

It is important to note that the defined strategy must be realistic and consistent with the company's objectives and mission and must consider the available resources and limitations. Additionally, it is essential to establish monitoring and evaluation indicators to measure the impact of the implemented actions and adjust them if necessary.

Critical Success Factors (CSFs). For any business, a limited number of areas where results, if satisfactory, will ensure the organisation's competitive performance.



Figure 14.
Example: SWOT Analysis of a Mining Company in Peru

INTERNAL FACTORS		EXTERNAL FACTORS	
STRENGTHS		OPPORTUNITIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company uses cutting-edge technology that enables optimal economic exploitation. • It uses broader environmental technology based on scientific knowledge, resulting in successful restorations. • Strong emphasis on safety policies that result in a safe working environment. • It manages stakeholders or interest groups well. • It is socially responsible (Applies a responsibility code). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High prices of mineral resources with a stable trend. • Exchange of professional experience within the company for growth development. • Strategic alliances: in the international mining sector, mergers and acquisitions have become a way to enter new markets or expand negotiation capacity. • Peru is a mining tradition country where experienced workers are found at all levels, from executives, professionals, and technicians to experienced mining workers. • Peru is one of the most attractive countries for mining investment. 	
WEAKNESSES		THREATS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It presents some conflicts and differences of interest with local communities. • It faces misunderstandings and different interpretations about the mining process. • The deposit is very complex. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a certain fragility in the country's politics. • The price of mineral resources can vary. • There are substitute products. • Presence of social conflicts between communities and mining companies. • Mining centres are located in rural areas with less access to services, requiring investments for operation development. • Loss of highly qualified professionals: due to migration to other national and international companies with greater attractiveness. 	

Based on this SWOT analysis, the company could consider different strategies. For example, it could develop actions to improve its international presence and increase its reach outside the country.

On the other hand, it could explore the possibility of establishing consultation groups and making investments to create services in rural areas where mining operations are located, to establish local alliances and

change the social perspective of the company in the environment.

4.2 DEFINING OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The next step in preparing a corporate communication strategy is to generate specific communication objectives and goals to guide its structure.

Goal: Describes the desired relations with the community after the communication effort. E.g. a greater understanding of the importance of the extractive industry; greater knowledge of safety measures and environmental values in quarries; involving the population in environmental actions.

Objectives: Defined steps to achieve the goals. Its formulation is important and should be clear, realistic, measurable, and revisable.

4.3 WHO ARE THE STAKEHOLDERS?

Selecting the appropriate stakeholders is a strategic decision that can influence achieving the predefined objectives and goals. Different types of stakeholders should be considered for each type of audience and communication process. Stakeholders are selected while creating communications.

- Stakeholders directly or indirectly linked to the activities of the sector's company.
- Stakeholders linked to the company's objectives.

Therefore, it is advisable to identify and select the stakeholders of the communication programme according to the needs of the communication plan.

Communication exchange is essential for any company to integrate into the social framework of the community and create a positive image of its activities. Communication should be both internal and external.

- Internal communication targets the company's workers to promote their commitment and determine the degree of satisfaction within the company. It also involves them in the actions carried out by the company, giving them the extra benefit of being internal stakeholders within their social circle.
- External communication, on the other hand, aims at a broader and more diverse audience, so messages must be clear and concise, leaving little room for modification.

This guide focuses mainly on external communication, but it also includes a section on how to handle internal communication within the company:

4.3.1 Internal Communication and Awareness

The overall action of the company is shaped by the independent or collective actions of the human resources that constitute it. Therefore, the people who make up a company are a key element for the success and sustainability of the projects and actions that a company undertakes.

When talking about the social and environmental surroundings of mining operations, human resources are an important group of interest in building the company's strategy and must be considered as such. In addition to being involved in various processes and operations, workers are also the visible face and, in many cases, the people in direct contact with the environment and the local community.



Communication and education play a crucial role within companies. Thanks to them, it is possible to achieve:

- 1. Raise Awareness of Environmental and Social Impacts:** Helps create awareness among employees and company management about the negative environmental impacts that can arise from extractive activity. This includes soil degradation, local economic dependency on a single resource, changes in social or cultural structure, alteration of natural ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, and the impact on water resources. By understanding these impacts, companies can take measures to minimise them and develop more sustainable practices.
- 2. Regulatory Compliance:** Environmental and social awareness is essential to ensure compliance with related laws and regulations. Employees

should be informed about applicable standards, such as extraction restrictions in protected areas or the obligation to conduct environmental impact studies. This helps maintain a positive reputation with authorities and the community.

- 3. Efficient Resource Use:** Promote more efficient practices in resource use among employees. They can learn extraction techniques that minimise waste while maximising the recovery of useful materials in addition to energy and water-saving measures.
- 4. Biodiversity Conservation:** Environmental training helps companies understand the importance of conserving local biodiversity. This involves identifying and protecting areas of high ecological value, managing environmental assets present at the quarry, applying restoration plans for degraded habitats, and avoiding the alteration of sensitive areas.

4.4 DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

To create a communication campaign, it is necessary to:

1. Evaluate the characteristics of the environment (including the public).
2. Establish clear and achievable objectives.
3. Generate specific and concise messages, consistent with the recipient's level and the evaluated needs.
4. Define the communication channels.
5. Measure and assess the message's impact through questioning or a final satisfaction survey.

It is essential to generate an effective communication campaign, considering the recipients' needs and making them feel involved. By showing that their needs are being listened to, the communicator obtains a reference of whether the message has been correctly received.

The structure for creating a communication campaign includes the following parts:

Figure 15.
Structure of a communication campaign

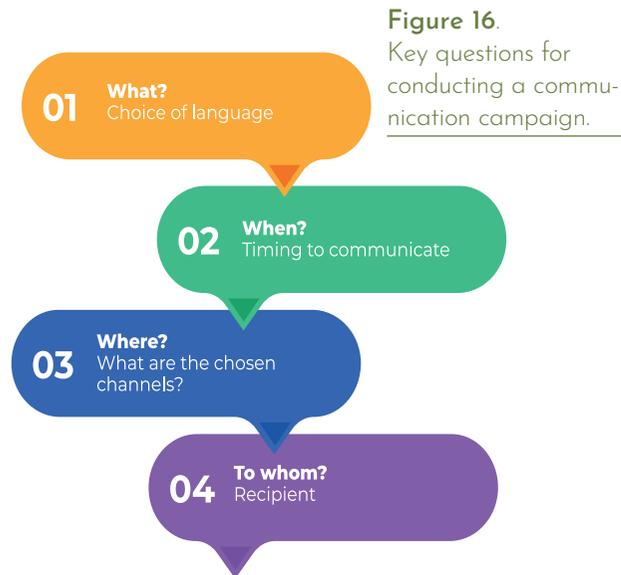
1. Analysis of the recipients.
2. Message development.
 - a. What language to use?
 - b. Adapt the message to the public.
3. Choice of communication channel.
4. Evaluation of effectiveness.



4.4.1 Analysis of the Recipients

Investigating the recipient helps ensure that the message reaches the right people and that they absorb and/or act on the information. Relevant questions are: Who is the target audience? What motivates my audience? What influences them?

The communicator must be clear about the messages to be transmitted. When planning a line of argument, it must be clear, concise, and transparent, thereby achieving greater credibility and reliability in the exposed message. It is important to establish realistic and specific objectives (for example, "Reduce energy consumption by 5%" instead of "mitigate climate change"). It is also relevant to define the changes that will help achieve these objectives.

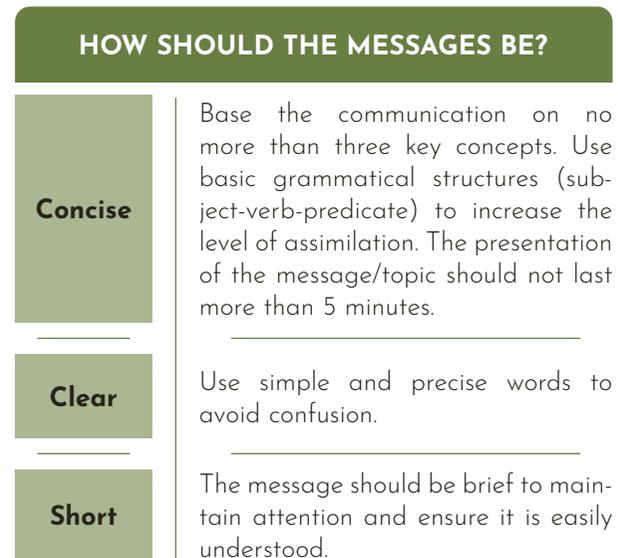


4.4.2 Creating a Clear and Concise Message

The message must be adapted to the interlocutors based on their concerns, interests, levels of knowledge on the subject, cultural levels, ages, etc.

Information and communication will depend on whether the interlocutors are involved or not. Therefore, it is important to identify key people who lead the group and generate opinions, as they should be the main objectives of the actions. By defining them, we will know what type of communicator we need.

Figure 17.
Criteria for Creating a Communication Message.



Once the communicator and the recipient have been decided, we move on to the question What to inform? The messages must be elaborated to be valid both for expressing different points of view on important issues for the company and for responding to questions raised by the local community.

Message Rules:

- Choose one or two key messages that structure the content of the communication campaign.
- When presenting technical data, be brief and precise.
- Add anecdotes or personal experiences to address the opinions of interlocutors on the possible risks of the exploitation.
- Avoid confrontation with data.

The next question to consider is How to inform? Here the importance of language comes into play: it must be precise and rigorous, yet close, honest, and empathetic.

It is necessary to:

- Listen to the recipient to adapt the language and know where to reinforce the message.
- Present knowledge of their concerns, demonstrating that this type of communication deals with them: "We know the need and act."
- Support with bibliography, images, videos, etc.

There are different formats to convey the message

- Verbal: With debates, colloquia, conferences, etc.
- Written: Internal and external reports.
- Audiovisuals: Videos, infographics, etc.

4.4.3 The Communication Channel

The impact of the message will depend on the communication channels used. It is important to identify how the target audience prefers to receive the information.

Three main types of communication channels can be used:

- Mass media.
- Digital communication.
- Interpersonal communication.

Below is a table showing the advantages and disadvantages of each channel:

Figure 18.
Examples of communication channels and their advantages and disadvantages.

CHANNEL	EXAMPLE	BENEFITS	CONS
Mass media	Press, radio, magazines, television.	Faster to reach certain audiences and can provide lots of information.	Limited exposure to one day and variation depending on the chosen channel.
Digital communication	Social media, internet.	Great reach in a short time and easy adaptation to the target audience.	Requires the target audience to be connected and search for information. High saturation and need for high-impact formats to attract attention.
Interpersonal communication	Face-to-face or virtual meetings.	Promotes dialogue. Personalised and attractive.	Limited temporal exposure. Reaches a smaller number of people.



4.4.4 Effectiveness Evaluation

Measuring and evaluating allow us to detect whether the planned activities took place and if the expected objectives were achieved. Additionally, it serves as feedback for subsequent campaigns.

As mentioned earlier, the need to set specific objectives is important, as this is one of the metrics by which the effectiveness of the campaign can be assessed.

If the campaign is carried out on digital platforms, metrics related to web traffic can be used, such as the number of impressions, reach, engagement (likes, comments, shares), link clicks, and online opinions.

In face-to-face events, the number of attendees and the quality of debates.

Media coverage through internet searches or news summary services.

Additionally, KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) can be established, which are specific metrics that evaluate the effectiveness of campaigns and know if the objectives are being achieved. KPIs must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

Figure 19.
Phases of a communication plan.



4.5 EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

- **Presence on Social Media and Websites**

With this kind of action, the sector reclaims the space for communication on social networks, making it easier to communicate actions taken, milestones achieved, and future collaborations.

- **Participation in Technical and/or Outreach Communications**

Engaging in this type of project provides excellent visibility and a positive reputation. It also allows for the gathering of up-to-date information to implement the best practices in the industry. For instance, one can join organisations like environmental associations or take part in forums from external sectors.

- **Establish Collaborations or Agreements with Different Stakeholders**

This aspect is discussed more extensively in Chapter 3. Alliances with Third Parties.

- **Employee Involvement and Awareness**

Employees are the main generators of a positive image, being linked to the local environment of mining operations. Additionally, their role is crucial for the success of implementing environmental and social measures throughout the life of the quarry.

- **Training**

Plan training aimed at both human resources of the company and the local population. Currently, in ad-

dition to mandatory training (e.g., risk prevention), it is essential to carry out awareness and communication campaigns on positive social and environmental actions carried out by the company. Also, it is recommended to communicate aspects related to the application of better techniques for the environment, such as invasive species prevention plans or knowledge about existing biodiversity in mining operations.

On the other hand, training conducted for the surrounding environment (local population, unemployed, children, local associations...) is also positive, as it presents the company as committed to the socioeconomic well-being of the area and shows a willingness for transparency.

- **Corporate Education and Awareness Programs**

Environmental education programs involve creating activities to raise awareness about ecology among the staff of the organisation and the communities in which they operate. In this context, particular emphasis on environmental education is placed, as the environmental impacts of extractive operations are a major concern for the local community and are often directly linked to social impacts in the area.

First, it is necessary to specify both the space, content, and duration of the activity. The methodology to be used in the training should be chosen. To define the methodology, the context in which the activity will be developed must first be analysed, whether, for example, rooms are available for training or if training will be conducted via teleconferencing.

- **Workshops or Working Groups and Participation Processes**

Although this point has been addressed in Chapter 2. Participation is relevant in the context of communication.

A working group places interlocutors in the same space to reflect on a specific topic. It is always aimed at reaching agreements, in the sense that the discussion itself modifies what is being discussed.

The central part of this activity is precisely dialogue: the possibility to express and listen. Therefore, everything necessary must be facilitated for this condition to be met.



Companies can take advantage of various alternatives to incorporate into their communication.

• Awareness Campaigns

Awareness campaigns will be used for information or sensitisation activities of the public related to the thematic field to be addressed (ecological restoration, biodiversity, company operations, local culture, etc.). These campaigns can provide valuable data on society's concerns and anxieties regarding the company's activities. Campaigns are regularly organised aimed at:

- Respect for the environment.
- Promoting safe working conditions.
- Relevance of the social environment.
- These sessions aim to inform about the existing relationship between the company and the social and environmental context. Understanding its importance, the reason for certain external changes in the way of working and the initiatives in which it participates will facilitate comprehension and potentially increase the success of communication actions.

• Technical or Thematic Visits

Field visits can inform about technical aspects or deal with specific issues. They can be targeted at people outside the company as a communication and internal awareness action. The focus of these actions would be to share experiences, inside and outside the sector, show the projects carried out, the achievements obtained, and how knowledge is shared.

• Volunteer Programs

It is recommended to invite relevant stakeholders or employees (corporate volunteering) to be part of the company's commitment to directly protecting biodiversity through their participation in specific field actions.

• Creation of Dissemination Materials

Regardless of the training, visits, and courses offered, having a list of downloadable dissemination materials always generates trust, as it is considered a reference source.

Creating these materials, which can be for different audiences (general public, technical, or scientific), facilitates the search for information about extractive activities and a better understanding of the opportunities this sector creates. Additionally, it is essential to share experiences and successful projects within the sector, as well as less successful initiatives, to learn better practices and avoid errors.

The material can be created by the company itself, through partnerships with third parties or reference documents. The material can be both audiovisual and reading material. A virtual library would be a documentary area where the company offers transparency.

Information and materials that may be of interest:

- A gallery of historical and current images, showing environmental improvements compared to the past.
- Measures and projects carried out.
- Achievements, certifications, and positive results of environmental and social actions.
- Videos of workers describing their work area and the skills required to perform it.
- Download Area
- Manuals or educational material about the company.
- Calendar of Social or Environmental Activities.
- Updated News Board

After its restoration plan, the mining operation could generate outreach materials, such as explanatory panels or a "field notebook," marking restored areas, the vegetation and fauna present, and a list of recommended routes, not only for the restored area but also for the quarry location, thereby generating greater knowledge of the environment.





PREVENTION
AND RESOLUTION
OF CONFLICTS

PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS

5

A conflict is a situation in which two or more people (or groups of people or entities) perceive that their respective interests are incompatible, either wholly or partially, opposing and mutually exclusive, creating a state of prolonged opposition.

Mining often faces conflicts due to its nature and its social, environmental, and economic implications, as well as various social prejudices. These conflicts can arise between different stakeholders and relate to a variety of issues. Below are some common conflicts:

1. Conflicts with Local Communities.

Mining often has significant impacts on local communities, such as the loss of agricultural land and changes in traditional livelihoods. These impacts can generate tensions and conflicts between mining companies and affected communities, especially when community concerns and rights are not adequately addressed.

2. Disputes over Access to Natural Resources.

Mining involves the extraction of minerals, water, and land. These activities can generate conflicts regarding property and access to natural resources, especially when there are competing interests between mining companies, local communities, and other stakeholders.

3. Environmental Impacts and Health Concerns.

Mining can have significant impacts on the environment, such as water and air pollution, deforestation, soil degradation, and loss of biodiversity. In

this context, environmental groups, conservation organisations, and communities that depend on these natural resources are usually the most involved.

As mentioned in this guide, it is important to address these conflicts proactively and participatively, involving all stakeholders in open and constructive dialogue. Active participation of affected communities, civil society organisations, mining companies, and the administration is essential to find sustainable and equitable solutions.

Generally, when social participation, transparent communication, and collaboration with interest groups are internalised in the company's culture, conflicts either do not arise or are anticipated in a way that solutions are found relatively quickly. However, there are circumstances where these confrontations are inevitable, and companies must be prepared to face them.

In the face of a conflict, it is important to have an effective strategy to address and resolve it constructively. Below are some key points:

1. Recognise and Understand the Conflict. Identify and acknowledge the existence of the conflict. Understand the underlying causes, the interests of the involved parties, and each party's specific concerns. Conduct an objective analysis of the situation to have a clear view of the conflict.

2. Open and Respectful Communication. Establish communication channels with all involved parties. Promote an environment where all voices can be heard and opinions and concerns are respected.

Encourage active listening and avoid confrontation or personal attacks. Clear, concise, and honest communication is essential for any conflict resolution process. To achieve this, it is helpful to:

- Be clear and concise in communications.
- Listen carefully to the other party's communications.
- Use conciliatory language.
- Seek common ground and opportunities for consensus.

3. Identify Interests and Needs. Empathize. Understand the motivations behind each position and seek common areas of interest or potential points of agreement. To resolve a conflict, it's essential to understand the other party's perspective. This means actively listening and trying to understand different points of view. To do this, it's important to:

- Show interest in the other party's perspective.
- Avoid interrupting or judging.



- Ask questions to clarify and better understand the situation.
- Express understanding and empathy.

4. Explore Options and Solutions. Invite the involved parties to come up with ideas and proposals. Evaluate the different options in terms of their feasibility and capacity to address the concerns of all parties.

5. Negotiation and Consensus-Building. Seek common ground and work towards a mutually acceptable agreement. Encourage collaboration and commitment to reach a consensus. Collaboration is key to finding satisfactory solutions for all parties. Be willing to give and work together to find common ground. To do this, it's recommended to:

- Be flexible and open to new ideas.
- Look for solutions that benefit all parties.
- Be willing to make compromises.

6. Implement and Follow-Up. Once an agreement is reached, it is important to establish clear plans and responsibilities for all involved parties.

7. Evaluation and Learning. After resolving the conflict, it is crucial to evaluate the process and the results obtained. Reflect on what worked well and what could be improved in the future, and draw lessons from the conflict to strengthen problem-solving and conflict management in the future.

Each conflict is unique and may require specific approaches and strategies. It is important to maintain an open mindset, show empathy towards the concerns of all par-

ties, and seek fair and equitable solutions. Effective conflict resolution can strengthen relationships, build trust, and generate positive outcomes for all involved parties.

Specific Strategies

In addition to the general principles mentioned earlier, there are specific strategies that can be useful in resolving conflicts within companies and organisations. These include:

- **Consultation as a Preliminary Tool:** It is important to consult with the affected parties before making any decision that could impact them. This can help to prevent conflicts or, at least, to reduce their severity (see section 2.1 Engaging with the Local Environment for more details).
- **Active Listening:** Paying close attention to the concerns of the other party is essential for conflict resolution. This means paying attention to what the other person is saying, even if not agreeing.
- **Objective Information:** Having objective information about the conflict can help find common ground and solutions based on facts rather than emotions.
- **Dialogue-Focused Approach:** Dialogue is essential for resolving conflicts constructively. This means being willing to talk and listen to the other party.
- **Third-Party Mediation:** In some cases, it may be helpful to involve a neutral third party to help resolve the conflict. A mediator can assist the parties in

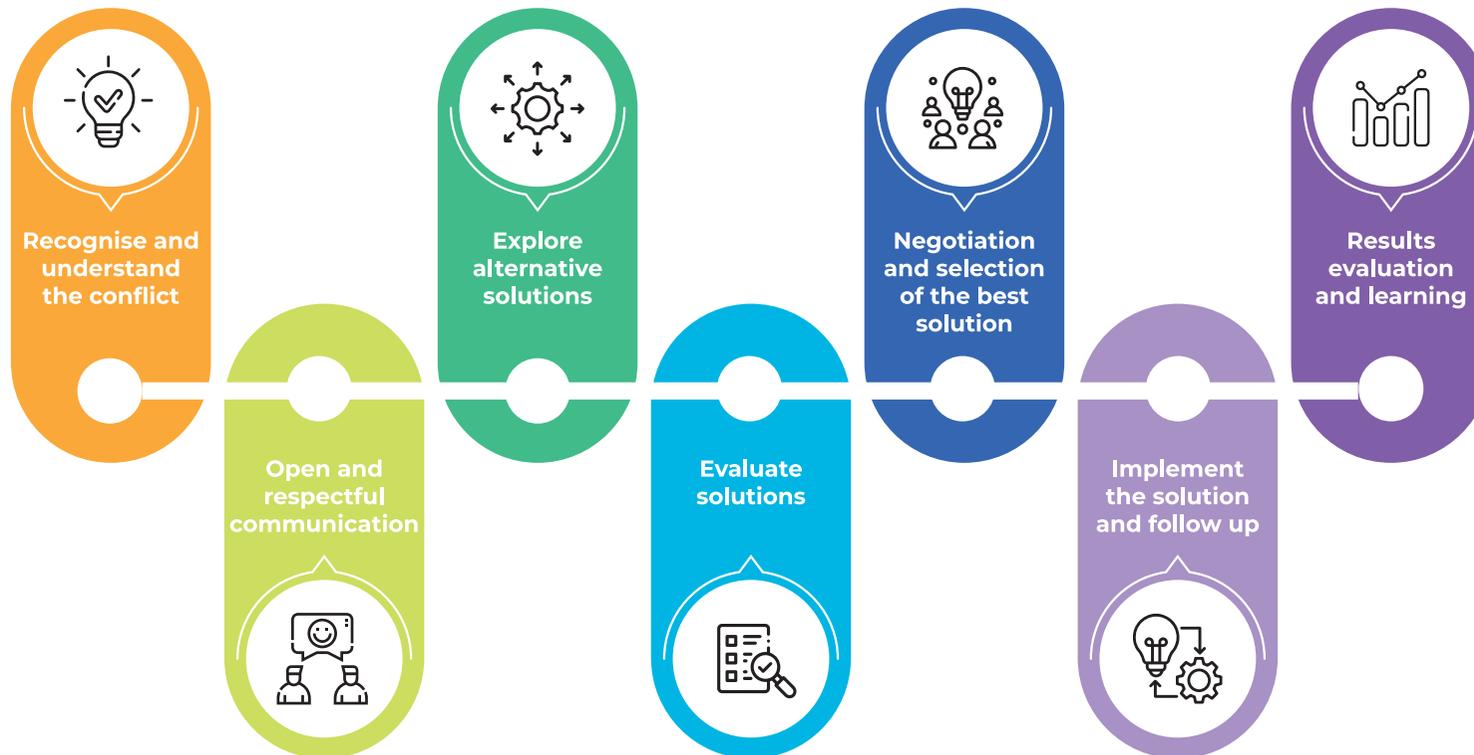
communicating and finding a mutually acceptable solution (see Chapter 3. Alliances with Third Parties for more details).

- **Meetings and Communication Forums:** Meetings and forums can provide an opportunity for affected parties to communicate and work together to find a solution. These meetings should be well-organised and directed to be productive.

- **Strategy in a Participatory Process:** If the conflict is resolved through a participatory process, it is important to prepare an appropriate strategy to manage it. This strategy should include actions to inform and educate the public about the process, as well as to manage the expectations of the involved parties (see section 2.2 Participatory Processes for more details).

Although conflicts may inevitably arise, companies and organisations can address them constructively and collaboratively by applying effective strategies. These strategies not only help resolve conflicts but also turn them into opportunities for growth and continuous improvement.

Figure 20.
Conflict resolution



CRISIS SITUATIONS

A photograph of a long row of white chemical drums in a warehouse. The drums are arranged in a perspective line, receding into the background. Each drum has a red diamond-shaped hazard label on its side. The drums are stacked on top of each other, and some are on black pallets. The lighting is soft, and the background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the drums in the foreground.

CRISIS SITUATIONS

6

A crisis is any situation that negatively affects the company, whether due to actions or omissions by the company or third parties or due to natural causes, such as:

- A serious or fatal accident.
- An environmental accident.
- Workers' strike.
- Unrested atmosphere causing demands or demonstrations.
- Fake news.
- Sanctions for non-compliance with legal obligations.
- Conflicts with the administration.

6.1 PREVENTION

The best way to manage a crisis is to prevent its occurrence. Avoiding such situations is crucial for maintaining the company's stability, reputation, and long-term success. Some strategies and key steps to prevent a business crisis are as follows:

Identification of potential risks

First, the company should conduct a thorough risk analysis to identify possible threats that could affect its productive activity. These risks can include internal factors (such as operational or management problems) and external factors (such as changes in the economic environment or regulations).



Risk Management Planning

Develop a risk management plan that mitigates identified risks. This may involve adopting control policies and procedures, establishing relationships with key stakeholders, diversifying the product or service portfolio, or implementing safety measures.

Internal Communication and Training

Training is essential. Resources should be provided to all company personnel to ensure they are prepared for crises, communicating risk management policies and procedures, and responding to potentially critical situations.

Regular Supervision and Audits

Like all company management systems, it is important to conduct audits and periodic reviews to detect problems before they escalate into crises.

Stakeholder Relations

As discussed in previous sections of this guide, open and constructive relations with different stakeholder groups (clients, suppliers, local population, conservation groups, regulatory bodies) help prevent problems before they escalate into a crisis.

Crisis Communication Plan

In the event of a crisis, the company should be prepared with a crisis communication plan that includes how to communicate internally and externally, as effective communication can mitigate the negative impact of a critical situation.

Financial Backup

Maintaining solid financial management and having financial reserves to face unforeseen situations is key, as financial stability helps cushion the impact of a crisis.

6.2 REACTION

In case a crisis occurs, it is important to act with speed, efficiency, and transparency based on the crisis manual or pre-developed action plan.

Resolving these crises will depend partly on the company's credibility, the soundness of its actions, and the assumption of responsibilities (work that must be done before the crisis arises).

6.2.1 Action Plans

Companies must be prepared to manage any problem that arises from a crisis, and to do so, it is essential to have technical plans to address these situations. It is crucial to have a crisis action plan that defines the roles and responsibilities of different departments within the company or organisation, as well as to establish the actions to be taken in the event of a crisis.

The crisis action plan should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

Figure 21.
Sequence in a Crisis.



- Definition of what constitutes a crisis for the company or organisation, developing a list of the most likely crises to occur in the company.
- Analysis of potential risks that could trigger each type of crisis.
- Detailed description of the actions to be taken at each stage of a crisis.
- A list of resources (both human and technical) required to manage each crisis.

In designing these plans, it is essential to develop a good communication strategy, both external and internal, addressing issues such as the following:

- Informing the public about how the company has responded to resolve the situation.

- Communicating that there is a team of people and professionals exclusively dedicated to resolving the issue that has arisen.
- Providing alternatives to usual procedures if necessary (organisation, responsibilities, locations, equipment, machinery, etc.).
- Conveying security to employees and the public.

In this regard, there are some key aspects of communication during crisis moments that need to be taken care of especially, which below explained:

Selection of a Spokesperson

Each type of crisis should have a spokesperson. This person should be an expert with good communication skills,

able to speak calmly and with confidence in public. This must be a single person to achieve coordination in the messages issued. Additionally, it is recommended that the spokesperson be a specialist, preferably someone with an objective perspective on the problem that has arisen.

Message Coordination

It is fundamental that the messages issued by the company are coordinated to avoid confusion or contradictions. The company should be the first to inform about the situation. Additionally, it should do so in an objective, clear, and transparent manner (through informative notes, brochure printing, issuing statements, press conferences, etc.).



Addressing the Media

Conflicts or crises, depending on their severity, can reach the media. Addressing the media offers significant benefits in responding to news or interviews that directly affect them.

This requires prior preparation, especially for live cases, as the response speed must be brief and clear.

When addressing the media, it is important to:

- Develop concise and easily reproducible messages.
- Anticipate possible interview questions, preparing robust responses.
- Know the editorial stance of the medium which is broadcasting.
- Be accessible and receptive to reporters.
- Offer alternative information sources to facilitate balanced reporting.
- Demonstrate confidence in the opinions expressed.

It is fundamental that the information provided is clear, objective, solid, and concise. There should be no unanswered questions. Although these issues can be challenging to address, in such cases, it is recommended to:

- Carefully measure the messages, avoiding disparagement.
- Seek expert support.
- Rely on the spokesperson.
- Use an appropriate tone.
- Clarify controversial points.

6.2.2 Key Steps in a Crisis Situation

When a crisis arises, the steps to follow are:

1. Confirm the existence of a crisis.

Verify through technical and human means the emergency and whether it corresponds to any of the potential crises identified in the action plan.

2. Evaluate the situation.

Assess the severity and scope of the crisis. Understand the causes and triggering factors, as well as possible impacts on people, assets, reputation, and operations of the organisation. It is important to gather relevant and updated information to make informed decisions.

3. Build up a crisis management team.

This team should include key individuals from different areas of the organisation identified in the action plan. The team must have the authority and

capability to make quick decisions and coordinate the necessary actions to address the crisis. Roles and responsibilities should be clearly assigned to team members before the crisis.

4. Effective communication with stakeholders.

Based on the action plan, the company should have a clear and effective communication plan to inform both internal and external stakeholders about the crisis. This plan should provide regular and precise updates on the situation, actions taken, and mitigation measures implemented. It is important to use appropriate communication channels to reach all stakeholders.

5. Decision-making and immediate action.

Based on the situation and available information, quick and effective decisions must be made to address the crisis, prioritising the safety and well-being of the involved individuals and protecting critical assets.



6. Coordination and Collaboration.

The objective is to work closely with external agents, competent authorities, and other relevant organisations to address the crisis in a coordinated manner. This involves sharing relevant information, coordinating efforts, and leveraging available resources for an efficient and effective response.

7. Evaluation and Learning.

Once the crisis is under control, a thorough evaluation of the response and outcomes must be conducted. This involves identifying lessons learned and areas for improvement, using this information to update crisis management plans and strengthen preparedness for future crises.

8. Reputation Management.

Managing reputation during and after a crisis is crucial. Companies must communicate transparently and proactively, showing empathy and taking responsibility for any negative impacts. Efforts should be made to rebuild trust and the organisation's image through consistent and positive actions.

Every crisis is unique and may require strategies tailored to the specific situation. Prior preparation, rapid response capability, and effective communication are key elements for successfully managing a crisis. If necessary, expert advice on crisis management can be sought.



CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

7

Few sectors face a greater challenge than the relationship between mining companies and their social environment. On one hand, this relationship with the surrounding society and environment is complex. On the other hand, various local stakeholders, such as the administration, conservation organisations, employees, and the local population, are involved in this environment. Additionally, each mining project and its surrounding environment is unique.

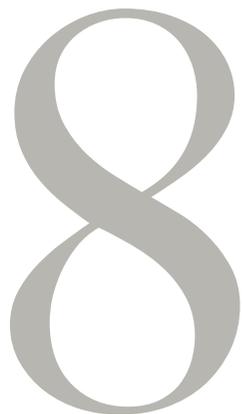
Society now requires more responsible action. The mining sector has made significant progress in managing its relationship with the environment and society, both internationally and nationally. However, it is crucial to continue developing actions, methodologies, and commitments with the surrounding environment of mining operations.

To build a positive and reliable relationship with the community, it's important to address several key aspects. Firstly, implementing effective participatory processes will help the local community feel heard. Secondly, establishing open communication channels will foster transparency and the exchange of experiences. Thirdly, forming alliances with third parties outside the sector, such as conservation NGOs, research institutions, and local administrations, will be beneficial. These alliances will promote the acquisition of accurate information, the development of environmental projects, and responsible communication.

The mining sector needs to prioritise environmental and social awareness. This includes sharing best practices, exchanging success stories, and involving field workers who have direct contact with the environment and the local population.



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