



Break the Bias

The importance of Gender Diversity and Inclusion in the South African Mining Industry

Organised Labour perspective

8 March 2022



MINCOSA issued a White Paper: **WOMEN IN MINING** (March 2020)

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



PRIORITIES

1. Promote gender diversity and inclusion at all levels, from top management to the lowest skilled workers
2. Help women to attain their full potential and to close the gender pay gap across total remuneration and bonuses
3. Develop policies and programmes that advance and protect women, e.g. policies on gender-based violence, sexual harassment and alternative placement during pregnancy



PRIORITIES

4. Adapt workplaces to accommodate women, including:
 - a. Ablution facilities
 - b. Sanitary bins and emergency sanitary pads
 - c. Lockable toilets
 - d. Changing rooms
 - e. Child-care and lactation rooms
 - f. Ensuring safety of women (through improved security, moving away from crowded cages, and the installation of alarms and cameras)
5. Recognise and adjust for the different physical capacities of women

A good **action guide** to assist member companies, was also developed, however it is noted that it does not include any base line or annual audits by each member company to measure its company's progress.



We often talk about gender diversity and inclusion during workshops, but it should lead to **actions**, not just today, but every day!

Let **us** take action to level the playing field. For example, let's consider the following:

- PPE for women in mines, as we are here today there are still women working in mines who do not have access to appropriate PPE for women such as two-piece overalls!
- Another serious concern is that women are still exposed to incidents of sexual harassment and GBV!
- Women's dignity are still under threat as separate facilities underground such as toilets are not always in place - Rescue bays often are not conducive for women and cages are still areas where women are forced in with men who leave women open to abuse.

We should put our words into actions and challenge stereotypes, it is up to us to stand up against bias!

Gender Diversity and Inclusion - stereotyping





We need to take hands and together act on disrespect, bias, and inequality!

We must create a gender equal world.

Equality does not mean that we as women are not different, it just means that our differences need to be valued and celebrated!

To accept, respect and value each other's uniqueness and contributions – to value a round pizza, packed in a square box and cut into a triangle!

In breaking the bias we also have a role to challenge stereotyping female roles:

- as a women if you attend a senior discussion some might think your role is to serve coffee and tea... Yes, it still happens today!
- As a women, how do you treat other women in the business world – do you value, respect and act positively towards other women and their views?
- Do you as a women see obstacles or opportunities? (Remember, age is not an obstacle and gender also not).



Women, take responsibility and **empower yourselves**, get small things that may limit your progress and development out of the way - if you are still depending on others for transport because you don't have a drivers licence, take the responsibility to change that.

Bias should be replaced by inclusiveness and as such we need to look at realities and we need to **relook our programmes** and **policies** to evaluate whether if it is still on par and achievable – audit processes are one such tool.



We must look at the progress made with initiatives such as:

- ✓ Female representation at Board level in the SAMI;
- ✓ Female representation at middle management (on way to Board level);
- ✓ Women career development programs;
- ✓ Women networks to advocate a gender sensitive work environment and to recommend policies, but also to acknowledge our achievements, to build confidence in our abilities and to support each other more.
- ✓ Roll out of training including online training sessions on awareness around safety and equality;
- ✓ Small business development programmes – for example: when are we going to see initiatives that support female transport (taxi) operators?
- ✓ Women's health programmes, including reproductive health;
- ✓ Care facilities for the children of working mothers, etc.



Let's take action,
please take out your cell phone and send a whatsapp / SMS
/ email to at least one woman who has inspired you or
enhanced your life!

whether it is personal or work related
as they are all part of our journey and should be
appreciated and celebrated!



Thank you!