USING MONITORING AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

When undertaking an initiative to improve the inclusion of women, an evaluation plan will help to keep the initiative on track, continuously improve the effort, and demonstrate the business benefits.

The following suggestions outline a comprehensive assessment process. Typically a few strategic indicators will have been chosen at the outset of the initiative. Using these for follow-up monitoring will help to keep the initiative on track toward its original objectives.

Wherever possible, make good use of information that already exists; leverage current business measurement processes.

Indicators of Implementation Progress

An important foundation for monitoring the effectiveness of a gender inclusion initiative is to track the achievement of key steps. This level of follow-up will help ensure account-ability for completing planned activities, just as with any other business undertaking. Track-ing can also be an effective vehicle for building commitment and minimizing resistance, by giving an opportunity to showcase departments or work groups that have taken mean-ingful steps.

Depending on the steps in your particular gender initiative, implementation indicators to consider include:

Progress against schedule and budget	• How is the initiative progressing, in comparison to the project plan?
Engagement	• How widespread is the interest and support? • Who has been involved? • How many work teams, departments, companies, training institutions, etc. have participated? • What interesting actions have been taken?
Findings	What has been learned about challenges and opportunities for becoming more inclusive of women? • What barriers have been addressed? • How have these findings affected the action plan?
Adjustments and Next Steps	What comes next?

Indicators of Change

As the initiative moves forward, there should be early-, mid- and long-term indicators of progress toward a more gender-inclusive workplace or industry. Monitoring the progress of change will typically start with measurements that tie directly to the primary objective for the initiative, or any targets that were established. However, it is also important to track other indicators that might uncover unanticipated changes. For example, a regional proj-

ect to encourage young women to pursue training in skilled trades can be monitored by tracking enrolments in the local college. Important other indicators to monitor could include completion rates for training, numbers of graduates who receive and accept job offers, and turnover rates of those hired.

Sometimes the results of changes will not be seen for several months. Consider the interim results that will show that there is progress toward the desired future state. In order to take action on the results of the monitoring, it will be helpful to break down the change into logical stages or checkpoints.

Awareness	What is the level of awareness about the initiative, among the relevant audiences? How well do people understand what the initiative is about and what it means to them?
Commitment	How widespread is the commitment to the change? Are people willing to do things differently?
Application	How well have the new practices been implemented? Has the intended change actually taken hold in the targeted work sites, companies or stakeholder organizations?
Results	Have the metrics shown a positive change compared to the baseline measurements?

Indicators of Business Impact

Reinforcing the business case for an inclusive workplace also requires tracking those signs that the change is having a meaningful impact on operational results that matter – at the work site, in the company, or across segments of the industry. Often, these measurements will form part of the baseline that was established when the initiative was launched.

Tips and reminders:

- *As with the indicators of change (above), it is important to watch for unanticipated changes in business results. Be open to uncovering negative impacts, too, so that they can be investigated and addressed.*

- *It will not usually be possible to say with any certainty that the business impact was a direct result of the gender inclusion initiative. Collecting complementary data will often help to demonstrate a link between the actions that were implemented and the results that were achieved.*

As a reminder, the business case measurements that might have been collected as base-line measures would be important points of comparison, possibly including:

Talent Pool	The talent pool business case, including the organization's recruitment and retention track record: • Numbers and quality of applicants • Hard-to-fill openings • Turnover costs
Business Operations	Specific productivity and performance indicators that are strategically important to your site, company, or aspect of the industry. Choose up to three indicators that could feasibly show some improvement resulting from

	enhanced collaboration, reduced stress or absenteeism, greater innovation, etc.
External	Indicators of the company's reputation, such as: • External stakeholder assessments of the company's track record on gender diversity and inclusion • The company's reputation in the industry or the community • The perspectives of potential employees (students, job seekers, industry professionals) and influencers (educators, search firms, agencies)
Safety, Health and Wellness	Indicators such as: • Accident and injury rates • Equipment damage rates • Absenteeism • Health benefits costs

Reporting on Results

Sharing the results of your initiative – at various points during the implementation – will help to build momentum and create a greater understanding about gender inclusion.

Follow through on the communication and engagement plan that was created at the start of the initiative. Connect with key audiences on topics of importance to them. Maintain a two-way dialogue characterized by honest conversations.

Consider these other tips in reporting on your results:

• *Use multiple approaches to connect with a variety of audiences. Stories, best practices, financial results, simple video testimonials and infographics can all help to bring the results alive for people.*

• *Select spokespersons who are credible with the audience.*

• *Ensure that both men and women are involved in describing the initiative and its impact on the business.*

• *Whenever possible, integrate the results into ongoing communications about other business issues. Demonstrate that gender inclusion is a core business issue.*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	
Name	**About**
Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) – *Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Works* – Toolbox and eLearning Suite **http://www.mihr.ca**	The Gender Equity in Mining (GEM) Works – Learn to Make a Difference e-learning program supports change agents in applying the GEM Works Toolbox to update policies and practices to identify and remove unintended barriers. For additional tips on evaluating the results of a gender inclusion initiative, see the Toolbox and also Module 4 of the e-learning program.

ALSO SEE

• Using Baseline and Readiness Assessments

• Getting Started on a Communication and Engagement Plan

• Setting "Targets with Teeth"

• Capturing and Sharing Stories for Change