



Q&A of the Launch of the Guide to Gender and Mining

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Hosted by the GIZ Sector Programme Extractives and Development and
Women's Rights and Mining (WRM)

Panelists:

- **Sophie Rickard:** independent consultant and author of the Guide to "Gender and Mining"
- **Mauricio Winkelried:** manager of Solidaridad Network's artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) programme in Peru
- **Rosebella Osei:** Head of Strategy & Planning at International Women in Mining (IWIM)

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**WOMEN'S RIGHTS
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Which new initiative, organization, development would the panelists point to as the most hopeful in achieving gender equality in the minerals sector?

Sophie Rickard:

The uptake and incorporation of gender and the rights of Indigenous people into sector standards and multi-stakeholder initiatives is a positive development, however more work is needed to look beyond numeric involvement of women and Indigenous people and ensure their meaningful participation in development of projects and policies. The expansion of Women in Mining initiatives is also very positive and more support needs to be channeled toward WIMs and CSOs working on gender issues in a country and/or mine specific context.

Mauricio Winkelried:

The work of IGF and the DELVE initiative (Pact + WBG) stands out because they effectively bridge the gap between real-world experiences and academic rigor. They achieve this by collecting valuable inputs directly from women miners' organizations at the grassroots level, while also employing robust qualitative assessment methods.

What are the main barriers to implement gender-responsive policies in the extractives at government level?

Mauricio Winkelried:

Public officials often lack awareness of how to integrate a gender perspective when delivering public services, especially in rural areas where traditional gender roles persist. This is a significant barrier to true inclusivity.

This challenge is evident in Peru's ASM sector. National regulations fail to acknowledge the specific roles women play in mining. At the local level, officials providing technical assistance do not recognize *pallaqueras* as miners and neglect gender considerations (like time constraints and dual responsibilities) during training sessions.

Even the most inclusive regulations are ineffective if those responsible for implementation lack awareness of gender issues. Addressing this knowledge gap is crucial for achieving equitable outcomes.

Sophie Rickard:

Coordination and ownership are challenges. It is not always clear which government department should lead on gender-related issues. Gender issues in the mining sector are diverse and do not sit concretely within one government ministry – it would not be appropriate, for example, for the Ministry of Mines to lead on issues relating to GBV as other ministries have expertise, but a Ministry of Mines would need to be aware that there are GBV risk factors in the sector.

Clear identification of gender related issues within a given context is needed, with clear allocation of responsibilities and coordination between departments and ministries of how to address and respond to these issues. Without this, there is a risk that gender related issues are not taken forward, or that ministries either assume another department is dealing with said issue, or actively try to pass the issue off to another ministry. The reality is these are issues that require a whole of government response.

Given concerns about climate change and ongoing trade inequality between global south and north: What is your vision of a 'gender equality' future in the mining sector that the panelists hope to see through their work (and/or the work of other organizations)?

Sophie Rickard:

Extractive trade and economic practices have fueled climate change, led to dispossession and often entrenched inequality. A vision for an equal future in the mining sector to me, is one where every actor recognizes the differential impacts that the sector has on women and Indigenous people and acknowledges that to overlook this is to entrench inequality; and where responses from companies, government, civil society and other stakeholders incorporate this understanding from the outset, without having to 'add' gender considerations later – often after the harm has occurred.

Mauricio Winkelried:

Two key factors will determine the future of gender equality and fairer value distribution in mining value chains:

- **Women Miners' Data Ownership:** Empowering local women miners' organizations to collect and own data on gender issues within the value chain. This data will be crucial for advocating for their rights and ensuring their voices are heard throughout the value chain.
- **Downstream Actor Engagement:** Genuine interest from companies further down the supply chain is essential. This includes valuing the data women miners provide, paying a fair price for it, and integrating it into their ESG performance monitoring systems.

While philanthropic projects supporting women miners are valuable, the future lies in a more sustainable partnership. Downstream actors can contribute by investing in women miners as data providers, not just as beneficiaries. This creates a win-win situation: women gain a stronger voice, and downstream actors gain valuable insights for their ESG goals.

Regarding ASM Cobalt in DRC, there are so many salient human rights risks on and around the mines and unfortunately one project cannot address everything at once. There are no women working on the mines we work with and the cobalt is not washed on every mine, so there is often no direct involvement of women on the mines. Are there any examples you can share of how gender-based violence around ASM mines can be effectively tackled?

Mauricio Winkelried:

Our experience in Peru shows that strong local women miners' associations can create positive ripple effects beyond their own membership. Some of these empowered organizations have successfully facilitated access to crucial social services like community kitchens, childcare, and networks against gender-based violence (GBV) for their entire communities.

While strengthening these organizations improves women miners' bargaining power with stakeholders in the mining value chain, such as local mines and traders, this can also help them to become powerful advocates for their communities' needs. They can more effectively communicate with government agencies (municipal and district) regarding social protection services. Local authorities, in turn, see these women's groups as valuable allies in delivering these services.

Based on this Peruvian experience, DRC has a similar opportunity. If the government provides GBV prevention and response services in cobalt mining regions, local women's organizations can play a crucial role in directing these resources to their communities. They can coordinate training for community members on GBV prevention, help to establish support networks for victims, and raise awareness among local mines about the significance of this issue.

Sophie Rickard:

One project cannot address every issue through its activities, but all projects should be aware of the salient human rights issues in the sector they work on and be ready to prevent and mitigate human rights risks. Given the evidence of GBV in the DRC's ASM sector, it will be important to ensure the project is well placed to prevent and respond to GBV risks, even if this is not an explicit component of the project. This can include mapping and making linkages with local service providers; local Women in Mining groups and women's rights groups and understanding their capacity to respond. It may also help to advocate for funding or set aside some direct flexible support for women's groups. Women's groups are often called on for their expertise, but consultation and coordination is time intensive and women's groups are often under-resourced and under-funded. Effective GBV work needs to address both prevention and response. Depending on the nature of the project, there may be opportunities to embed prevention activities into it.

Regarding all noted barriers such as cultural, political, and economic. Where to get sustainable financial resources to support women in the ASM? One of the main barriers remain the financial resources to organize women, support them to ensure economic empowerment (in the case of Liberia, West Africa).

Sophie Rickard:

Funding is a challenge and as 'gender and mining' becomes a more established field, funding may grow, but so too may competition for funding. It will be important to ensure that civil society and WIMs with a track record of working on gender, women's rights, Indigenous rights and LGBTIQ+ rights, do not get crowded out.

Donors and other partners can help by ensuring they earmark funding for gender and ASM activities, even in ASM initiatives that are not explicitly focused on gender. Smaller, unrestricted grants provided directly to groups led by women, Indigenous peoples and members of the LGBTIQ+ community in the medium term can help these actors strengthen their institutional structure, ensuring their longer-term sustainability.

Mauricio Winkelried:

Downstream actors in the value chain hold immense potential to drive success stories in gender empowerment. The rise of technology in rural areas in developing countries creates exciting opportunities. In this context, the private sector can empower women miners' organizations to collect and sell ESG data, while strengthening their voices within the value chain. This data offers downstream actors valuable insights into gender dynamics within their supply chains, enabling them to enhance their ESG performance and achieve sustainability objectives.

This innovative approach deserves further exploration. Here are some ways the private sector can participate:

- **Invest in Training:** Provide training programs for women miners' organizations on data collection methodologies and best practices.
- **Develop Data-Sharing Platforms:** Create secure platforms for women miners to collect, store, and sell their ESG data to downstream actors.
- **Pilot Programs:** Initiate pilot programs to test the effectiveness of this approach and refine it based on learnings.

Question to Mauricio: Solidaridad and other partners have done a lot of work to raise the visibility of *pallaqueras* (reports, videos, events and other forms of communication). How much of an impact has this strong focus on communication –making visible the invisible– had on the *pallaqueras* themselves and the wider ASM agenda? It seems that the policy framework hasn't really changed. Has anything changed? And what would be the lessons for other ASM and mining spaces?

Mauricio Winkelried:

A pioneering study on *pallaqueras* by Solidaridad and Red Social in 2016 showed that strong communication campaigns can raise awareness and encourage policymakers to create inclusive regulations. This study led to a local regulation recognizing *pallaqueras'* work and allowing them to sell their products, albeit in just one region in Peru.

However, political changes after the regulation's publication blocked proper follow-up and local actor involvement. The regulation wasn't implemented effectively and failed to achieve its goals.

This experience teaches us that awareness campaigns need more. We need to build capacity for both public officials, to effectively implement new inclusive regulations, and civil society, to monitor implementation and hold public officials accountable.