

## COVID-19: MINING WITH PRINCIPLES TO ADDRESS A HEALTH AND SOCIAL CRISIS

The COVID-19 pandemic is the defining global health crisis of our time, with governments and health services alike racing to slow the spread of the virus. But COVID-19 is much more than a health crisis. By stretching and stressing the capacity of each country it touches, COVID-19 has the potential to create devastating social, economic and political crises that will have lasting repercussions.

Every day, people are losing loved ones, jobs and income, with no way of knowing when normality will return. We all have a part to play in 'flattening the curve' of the virus and laying the groundwork for recovery. ICMM company members are taking action to respond to the crisis with tailored and focused strategies, which are being adopted in accordance with public advice and the local situation. These positive actions typify the values of our members, who already set high standards for themselves, as evidenced by their commitment to meeting ICMM's enhanced membership requirements.

As the world adjusts to the many challenges brought about by COVID-19, ICMM will continue to collaborate, listen and learn from others to support members and the wider industry with their response to COVID-19. Only by doing so can we respond effectively to wider societal expectations and supply the minerals and metals that are so critical for our global economy and continued low-carbon transition.

This briefing demonstrates how the mining and metals industry is supporting nations, communities and supply chains as they persevere and then start to rebuild, and is illustrated by examples of some of the actions taken by ICMM company members – for more information visit the ICMM website (<https://www.icmm.com/covid-19>).

ICMM is uniquely positioned to encourage closer collaboration and rapid knowledge sharing between industry leaders. In so doing, ICMM can help company members to alleviate poverty, and give people access to a better life. ICMM brings together 27 mining and metals companies and over 35 national and regional associations – giving us a truly global reach. All member companies are represented on our Council of CEOs (our highest decision-making body).

Created in 2001, at a time when the mining industry urgently needed to recognise external concerns and to act more responsibly, ICMM is at the forefront of efforts to raise performance standards and enhance the contribution of mining and metals to society. All ICMM company members are expected to implement ICMM's Mining Principles as a condition of membership. Incorporating comprehensive environmental, social and governance requirements, robust site-level validation of performance expectations and credible assurance of corporate sustainability reports, ICMM's Mining Principles seek to maximise benefits to host communities and minimise negative impacts to effectively manage societal challenges.

### Resilience

Many developing countries are yet to see significant increases in the spread of COVID-19, but should the pandemic take hold on the scale experienced by Europe and North America, the effects could be devastating. This is partly because millions in these developing countries live in informal settlements where social distancing will be impossible, and are served by weak institutions and limited health infrastructure.

The economic crisis of COVID-19 is already significantly impacting resource-dependent countries in Africa and Latin America. And unlike the developed economies of Europe and North America, they will not be able to finance a large fiscal stimulus. Overall, more than one in three of the countries, areas or territories where COVID-19 has a foothold<sup>1</sup> are resource-dependent, generating in excess of 20 per cent of their export revenues from minerals and metals or hydrocarbons, and where resource rents (ie the difference between revenues and extraction costs) amount to more than 10 per cent of GDP. These resource-dependent countries are home to almost 30 per cent of the global population based in some of the world's poorest nations, with 230 million people living in extreme poverty on less than \$1.90 a day.<sup>2</sup> How industry supports communities and workers during the crisis and beyond will be pivotal.

1. As of 28 May 2020, the World Health Organisation records that 216 countries, areas or territories have Coronavirus disease (COVID-19). This compares with the finding published in ICMM's 2018 report 'Social Progress in Mining-Dependent Countries: Analysis through the lens of the SDGs' that in 2015, 81 countries across the world could be considered resource dependent. See WHO (2020), Coronavirus [Online]. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019> and ICMM (2018), Social Progress in Mining-Dependent Countries: Analysis through the lens of the SDGs [PDF]. Available at [http://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/180710\\_revised\\_spimdcgs.pdf](http://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/180710_revised_spimdcgs.pdf)

2. ICMM (2018), Social Progress in Mining-Dependent Countries: Analysis through the lens of the SDGs [PDF]. Available at [http://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/180710\\_revised\\_spimdcgs.pdf](http://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/180710_revised_spimdcgs.pdf)



ICMM company members have donated more than US\$315 million to global response efforts through COVID-19 funds and individual company donations to national relief efforts. This figure only scratches the surface of work being undertaken by members and does not include costs for donations of goods in kind (eg care packages, medical equipment and personal protective equipment [PPE]), provision of company facilities or support for emergency critical infrastructure. It also does not include financial contributions from joint ventures and salary sacrifices made by senior management teams.

As the world sets out on the road to recovery, the mining and metals industry can, by coming together with government, civil society and the private sector, help communities to persevere and rebuild, and in doing so build back better. In striving for this end, industry can be at the forefront of endeavours to upskill workers, strengthen services and develop infrastructure to ensure local resilience in a changing world.

Resource-dependent countries are particularly vulnerable to shocks to the global economy as they are reliant on strong commodity prices to finance their budgets and service their debt burden. Since the start of the outbreak oil prices have declined by more than 50 per cent, and most metals and minerals by 20 per cent<sup>3</sup>, as a result of economic lockdowns and job losses sharply contracting demand for consumer goods.

While many resource-dependent countries have been able to manage historical financial crises by taking advantage of low interest rates and significantly increasing government debt – particularly between 2008 and 2019 – this is unlikely to be the case this time round. They are entering this crisis with already high debt levels and significant refinancing risk.

Even if the pandemic is contained, it is unlikely that many commodity prices will rebound very quickly amid growing stockpiles of metals and minerals<sup>4</sup> and a deceleration of economic growth in China, which accounts for half of global metal demand.

In this context, it has never been more important that the mining and metals industry helps to build local and national resilience through its actions. As the global community responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, ICMM members have actively supported community services and needs, both in making significant donations to COVID-19 funds and in delivering practical support.

### Direct support for communities

Despite unprecedented progress against poverty, with the number of people living in extreme poverty declining by more than half in recent decades, falling from 1.9 billion in 1990 to about 736 million as of 2015<sup>5</sup>, even before the pandemic many in society still lack the necessities to thrive. COVID-19 threatens to undo progress achieved towards sustainable development. This is because poverty is more than a lack of income and resources. It manifests itself in hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion, and a lack of participation in decision-making. All areas of human development have been affected, albeit to varying degrees, both directly and indirectly by COVID-19.

As things stand, COVID-19 is overwhelming public health systems even in developed countries. It will almost certainly do the same in countries with under-developed health systems, where access to even the most basic public health interventions like frequent handwashing are not guaranteed. This weakness is often mirrored by a lack of access to social protection resulting in economic, gender and social inequalities being exacerbated. Mining can help reduce poverty through direct employment, sourcing goods and services locally and the payment of taxes and royalties, which enable the development of essential social and economic infrastructure.

Drawing on its experience of managing other crises – including outbreaks of Ebola, tuberculosis and malaria, and catastrophic health and safety events – and supporting sustainable development often in remote contexts, the mining and metals industry is well placed to support local communities and make a positive contribution to society through this extraordinary period. Meeting an unprecedented

3. UNDESA (2020), Commodity exporters face mounting economic challenges as pandemic spreads: Urgent, pre-emptive measures needed to address twin economic and health crisis [PDF]. Available at [https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/PB\\_60.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/publication/PB_60.pdf)

4. World Bank (23 April 2020), A Shock Like No Other: Coronavirus Rattles Commodity Markets [Online]. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/04/23/coronavirus-shakes-commodity-markets>

5. UNDP, Goal 1: No Poverty [Online]. Available at <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-1-no-poverty.html>

challenge requires unprecedented unity, empathy and consideration for one another. Around the world we have seen those qualities on display, from ICMM members supporting public health systems and affected households and businesses to providing financial assistance.

- In consultation with South Africa's Department of Basic Education, school principals and teachers, **African Rainbow Minerals** is working with local schools to support education. Schools in the poor rural and urban areas which do not have internet access or facilities are being provided with study guides, scientific calculators, dictionaries and other educational equipment and facilities. This includes building additional classrooms, computer centres and laboratories in all the nine provinces of South Africa to assist managing the excessively high number of students to a classroom in many schools. **Sibanye Stillwater** is also supporting education in South Africa by financing a sanitisation and catch up programme in North West, Free State and Gauteng worth ZAR3 million (US\$171,000).
- **Barrick Gold** has consulted with local, regional and national partners to establish and respond to the unique needs of each jurisdiction and ensure effective and accurate information, relating to the virus, is communicated to key leaders, local authorities and community members. In Papua New Guinea, for example, Barrick Gold is engaging with the Enga Provincial Health Authority to determine gaps in capacity and how the Porgera Mine can support. Similar activities are happening in Veladero, Argentina and Pueblo Viejo, Dominican Republic among others.
- In Western Australia, **BHP** has committed AU\$300,000 (US\$200,000) to Lifeline WA to help the organisation deliver an essential suicide prevention service at a time of heightened stress and anxiety. This contribution, made through newly established Vital Resources Fund, was established to support regional Australian communities facing significant challenges as a result of COVID-19. **Rio Tinto's** Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOC) is supporting Labrador West Intimate Partner Violence Taskforce to support women in abusive situations needing to self-isolate. IOC made a fully furnished house available to Hope Haven. **Barrick Gold's** Hemlo mining camp has also committed US\$10,000 to support the local Marjorie House women's shelter and US\$20,000 to Superior Northern Victim Services.
- Members are also using their social and communications channels to promote health and kindness in the community. In many locations around the world, the wearing of facemasks is recommended or required. Accessing these is often difficult as supplies are prioritised.

**Freeport-McMoRan** has used its social channels to help people create their own using an old T-shirt. **Gold Fields** has released posters on '10 things that are totally normal to feel right now' to promote a focus on mental-health, hygiene and social distancing. **Norsk Hydro**, in Brazil, and **Vale**, in Canada, have produced puzzles, games, and other play materials to help support communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- At Las Bambas in Peru, **MMG** has donated food and basic necessity packages to almost 6,000 families in the communities in the Apurimac region and communities in the region of Cusco. Las Bambas has also repurposed a dust control unit to disinfect streets in nearby towns, in coordination with local authorities and approved by the Peruvian health authorities. Similarly, **Norsk Hydro** has donated BRL2 million (US\$373,000) in food baskets to municipalities where they operate in Brazil. While in Colombia, **Glencore's** Grupo Prodeco team has worked with local organisations to support vulnerable families by donating 4,700 provisions kits. In South Africa, **Anglo American** and **AngloGold Ashanti** have distributed 11,000 care or food parcels to local communities. **Newmont Australia** partnered with SecondBite, a leading national food rescue organisation that redistributes surplus fresh food to local organisations, to purchase a forklift truck to help the organisation keep up with increased demand during COVID-19. Through its global charity the Alcoa Foundation, **Alcoa** is providing more than \$420,000 to ensure local people have food and access to important support services in Western Australia.

### Support for Indigenous Peoples

It is particularly important that help and support is made available to Indigenous Peoples. In nearly all countries Indigenous Peoples fall into the most 'vulnerable' health category and have significantly higher rates of communicable and non-communicable diseases than their non-indigenous counterparts, high mortality rates and lower life expectancies. Contributing factors that increase the potential for high mortality rates caused by COVID-19 in indigenous communities include mal- and under-nutrition, poor access to sanitation, lack of clean water and inadequate medical services.

Mining-related activities often take place on or near indigenous land. ICMM members want to be good neighbours and good partners – and commit to building constructive relationships with Indigenous Peoples. Recognising the potential vulnerability of Indigenous Peoples to the health and economic impacts of COVID-19, ICMM company members have taken steps to protect the wellbeing of local indigenous communities.

- **BHP** is supporting local Indigenous organisations and services to assist people in returning to remote communities. BHP will continue to work with these communities and government to ensure that people have what they need to stay safe in their communities. BHP has also acted to protect the welfare of vulnerable indigenous mine workers over 50, by supporting measures including discretionary leave to minimise their risks of contracting COVID-19.
- In North America, **Freeport-McMoRan** has donated thousands of medical items to hospitals, medical clinics and organisations in six tribal nations. **Barrick** has committed US\$275,000 to support local communities in Nevada with food supplies and other necessities, particularly those most impacted by COVID-19, including vulnerable older people, people who are homeless and indigenous communities.
- At **MMG's** Las Bambas, the community radio station Radio Surphuy has been active in supporting communication throughout the province of Cotabambas. Providing regular updates, interviews with local and regional

authorities and health personnel, call-in sessions and advice on hygiene and social distancing, the broadcasts are delivered in both Quechua, the local indigenous language, and Spanish.

- **Teck Resources'** Community Response Fund is a dedicated community investment fund for supporting local organisations affected by COVID-19 (such as healthcare and social services). A portion of this fund is specifically dedicated to supporting Indigenous communities. Teck Red Dog Operations has also donated 22 bolts of cotton fabric, thread, and elastic to communities in northwestern Alaska for face masks.
- **Vale** has pledged BRL2.3million (US\$429,000) to support the construction of several quarantine units for ethnic groups including a centre for the Awá, Guajajara and Ka'apor Indians. Vale is also donating cleaning kits to 475 Quilombola families, mariculturists and artisanal fishermen from Sepetiba Bay. In Canada, Vale has put its Voisey's Bay operations into Care and Maintenance to help protect the health and well-being of Nunatsiavut and Innu indigenous communities due to the unique remoteness of the area.

## Support for governments

When the Sustainable Development Goals were launched in 2015 it was established that collaboration on finance, technology, capacity building and trade were required to make progress on ending poverty, fighting inequality, and addressing the urgency of climate change, amongst other key issues. It was understood that sustainable development requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society – no one party can achieve progress alone. This has been reinforced by COVID-19.

Mining companies are among the most sophisticated and experienced of corporate partners in addressing a range of sustainable development challenges and ICMM members have been proactive in partnering with governments to achieve collaborative progress on strengthening preparedness, and targeting prevention and control of the disease.



To support the wellbeing of communities neighbouring mining and metals operations as well as build the resilience of host nations, ICMM members have worked hard to support public health systems and ensure standards of sanitation and hygiene in communities.

- In Botswana, **Anglo American** has made facilities available to government health authorities as treatment isolation centres. They have also made two ambulances available to support wider healthcare efforts in the country. Facilities have also been made available in the town of Luderitz, Namibia. In South Africa, Anglo American has made its Highveld Hospital available for treating COVID-19 cases.
- In South Africa, **AngloGold Ashanti** has donated two hospitals. The first is the fully equipped, 270-bed West Vaal facility near Orkney in the North West province. The second is a West Wits hospital building near Carletonville in western Gauteng, which was closed several years ago during restructuring of its SA Region portfolio. Despite this, the building remains in good condition. The Gauteng Department of Health is working to ensure it is fully equipped and recommissioned in the coming weeks.
- **Codelco** and **Antofagasta** are supporting public health in Chile by making facilities available for field hospitals. Codelco has made the facilities at its El Teniente stadium available; it is a 120-bed facility and will be used by those infected by the virus who do not need highly complex care. Antofagasta is working with the local government to build and equip a community health facility to help with testing in the region close.



- **Freeport-McMoRan's** El Abra affiliate in northern Chile, has donated three respirators and an advanced emergency ambulance to Carlos Cisternas Hospital, alongside donations of PPE. In Peru, Freeport-McMoRan's Cerro Verde operations have provided buses to ferry healthcare workers after public transport was halted and contributed towards the purchase of 500,000 test kits and 10 non-invasive CPAP ventilators.
- **Minera San Cristóbal** has made a donation of PPE to the Bolivian Government to support health centres treating cases of COVID-19. The donation includes an automatic respirator, 500 units of disposable boots, 100 protective lenses, 400 covers shoes, 2,500 surgical masks, 2,500 pairs of disposable gloves and 2,500 disposable caps, and will be shared among second and third level hospitals.
- In Papua New Guinea, **Newcrest Mining** is supporting the New Ireland Provincial Health Authority in their preparedness for COVID-19 by donating PPE and essential hygiene supplies. Regular shipments will be shared over the coming months through a partnership with Australian Doctors International. They have also donated critical oxygen regulators to the National Capital District Provincial Health Authority.
- **Polyus** has established a RUB1 billion fund (US\$14.35 million) with the Far East Development Fund (FEDF) to finance activities to prevent the spread of the virus. The initial RUB250 million (US\$3.5 million) tranche invested will finance initiatives including the procurement of personal protective devices and medical equipment for local hospitals in the Magadan and Yakutia regions in Russia. They have also donated 45 medical ventilators to hospitals in the regions where it operates to treat COVID-19 patients suffering from severe pneumonia.
- **Teck Resources** is working in collaboration with government agencies to procure 1 million KN95 masks for Canada's healthcare system in British Columbia. This is alongside the creation of a US\$20 million global fund to provide direct support to critical services in communities where Teck operates. Similar funding programmes have been available by **Glencore** (US\$25 million) and **Newmont** (US\$20 million).
- In Brazil, **Vale** has procured and donated 5 million rapid test kits and more than 30 million pieces of PPE to the Brazilian federal and six state governments for a total investment of BRL\$500 million (US\$98 million) to help tackle the disease in the country.

## Essentiality

The contribution of metals and mining to every aspect of our modern world has enabled the production of medicines and PPE. It has also built the communications infrastructure that has allowed us to stay in touch with family, friends and colleagues. The development and implementation of these services, and demand for other services such as energy production from coal, requires a robust industry built on strong foundations that can adapt to the different challenges that may occur now and in the future. For this reason, during the pandemic different mining jurisdictions have given the mining industry essential status to responsibly maintain critical manufacturing and energy services.<sup>6</sup>

Beyond these materials that we all rely on, the mining and metals industry is essential for the health and wellbeing of many resource rich countries, and even more so to those that are resource dependent. In a survey conducted by PwC for ICMM on member payments of corporate income tax and royalties between 2013 and 2017, it was found that companies had paid over US\$100 billion to public finances in the 50 countries they operate in. This equated to US\$72.5

billion in corporate income tax payments and US\$36.3 billion in royalty payments.<sup>7</sup> Other taxes, not included in the total, such as employment taxes and property taxes can also be significant.

Natural resources such as metals and minerals belong to a country's citizens and extraction of these resources is a catalyst of economic growth and social development in a great many countries. For low and middle-income countries, revenues from the mining sector are particularly important. ICMM's 2018 'Social Progress in Mining-Dependent Countries' report found that in the 25 countries that are specifically mining-dependent, people are now generally healthier, better educated, and enjoy improved access to affordable and clean energy, water and sanitation, and telecommunications and financial services.<sup>8</sup>

The tax report also notes that growth of the mining sector through new investment improves living standards in some of the poorest countries in the world. In this context, it is essential that the mining and metals industry remain open to fulfil the social need for its products, and to act as a responsible partner of governments in managing the economic cost of COVID-19.

6. As of 28 May 2020, countries where members have operations that have granted mining critical status are Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, South Africa, and USA.

7. ICMM (2018), ICMM Members' Tax Contribution: Focusing on corporate income tax and royalties [PDF]. Available at [https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/181217\\_icmm\\_tax-rates-in-the-mining-sector.pdf](https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/181217_icmm_tax-rates-in-the-mining-sector.pdf)

8. ICMM (2018), Social Progress in Mining-Dependent Countries: Analysis through the lens of the SDGs [PDF]. Available at [https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/180710\\_revised\\_spimdc.pdf](https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/180710_revised_spimdc.pdf)

## Supporting local businesses

The COVID-19 crisis has put extraordinary pressure on employers and private sector businesses to survive and continue to provide decent work. In addition to dealing with the health emergency, it is essential that every effort is made to provide liquidity to firms, especially SMEs, in order to prevent massive bankruptcies, business failures and unemployment, and to take care of the most vulnerable.

This is important not only in the short term, but also in the medium to long term, to manage the economic recession predicted to follow the pandemic. The right kind of support from ICMM members to local providers is helping to protect decent and productive jobs.

Our company members have already implemented several measures to support local businesses and suppliers.

- **BHP** has announced that it will reduce payment terms for small, local and indigenous communities during the COVID-19 crisis in Australia. It will make immediate payments of outstanding invoices. The accelerated payment programme is expected to deliver approximately AU\$100 million (US\$67.3 million) to its small business partners. BHP will also reduce payment terms for more than 1,100 small Australian businesses. Similarly, **South32** is engaging with suppliers to understand the impact on their businesses and work with them to help mitigate this where it can. This includes fast-tracking payments on a case-by-case basis.
- **Gold Field's** South Deep mine in South Africa has also committed to continue to pay small, medium-sized and microenterprise service providers and small-scale contractors the equivalent to ZAR22 million (US\$1.25 million) for the period that it is under care and maintenance. **Sibanye Stillwater** is also supporting local suppliers in South Africa by financing the purchase of ZAR1 million (US\$57,000) worth of PPE.
- **Vale** has announced a series of support initiatives for small and medium sized-businesses affected by the crisis and has advanced BRL521 million (US\$103 million) in payments since the beginning of the crisis. The company also plans to advance payments worth BRL411 million (US\$82 million) to support 3,000 suppliers across Brazil.

## Health and safety

The COVID-19 crisis has put extraordinary pressure on employers and private sector businesses to survive and continue to provide productive employment. While it is important to maintain fiscal resilience, this must not come at the cost of people's health or wellbeing.

Canada's mining sector employs 626,000 people directly and indirectly across the country and it is proportionally the largest private sector employer of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. It is also a major customer of Indigenous-owned businesses, amplifying employment far beyond its direct workers.<sup>9</sup> The role of mining in the economy of Australia is even greater, employing more than 1 million Australians.<sup>10</sup> Currently, no reliable or comparable data is produced for all countries but based on the data that does exist, mining typically contributes only around 1–2 per cent of total employment in a country – rising to 3–15 per cent when indirect and induced employment is included.<sup>11</sup>

In countries where mining operations have continued, ICMM members have worked hard to ensure that the highest standards of sanitation and hygiene have been instigated and enforced. This has had the effect of not only making workplaces safe, but also forms a vital part of the efforts for resilience as these measures ensure that operations can continue.

These measures include, among others, temperature screening at site, implementing increased hygiene measures including social distancing and reduced shift sizes, and providing 24/7 hotlines for employees to seek medical and wellbeing advice – including access to mental health services, given the heightened levels of anxiety caused by the crisis and increased isolation of many workers. The safety and wellbeing of workers is of paramount importance to ICMM collectively and members individually.

- First and foremost, our members are working with and following the advice of governments and national health services and taking appropriate measures to ensure the health and safety of their workforce and the communities in which they operate. Measures to protect employees include mandating working from home where physically possible or instigating different rotas, restrictions on work related travel, quarantine protocols for returning travellers, restrictions on non-essential visits

9. MAC (2020) Statement from the Mining Association of Canada on COVID-19 [Online] <https://mining.ca/press-releases/statement-from-the-mining-association-of-canada-on-covid-19-2/>

10. AWU, MCA, CFMEU (2020), Joint-Statement on COVID-19 [PDF] <https://minerals.org.au/sites/default/files/200402%20Joint%20AWU%20MCA%20CFMEU%20Statement%20on%20COVID-19.pdf>

11. ICMM (2016), Role of Mining in National Economies, 3rd edition [PDF]. Available at [https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/161026\\_icmm\\_romine\\_3rd-edition.pdf](https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/161026_icmm_romine_3rd-edition.pdf)

to operating sites, social distancing measures, and identification and protection of high-risk individuals. Some members are flying their teams to site on charter aircraft so that they can ensure adequate social distancing on planes.

- A number of our members (including **Alcoa**, **Anglo American**, **BHP**, **Newcrest Mining**, **Rio Tinto**, **Sibanye Stillwater** and **South32** among others) have put tight restrictions on all work-related travel and fly-in fly-out (FIFO) workers. BHP, for example, has announced a reduction in FIFO and drive-in drive-out (DIDO) workers travelling to sites, with non-critical employees working from home; changes to rosters; non-residential workers temporarily

relocating interstate; regular health screenings; and reinforcing social distancing and hygiene requirements through daily pre-start messages.

- In Australia, **Rio Tinto** has introduced screening measures at three Western Australian airports after successful screening processes were tested at Perth Airport. Rio Tinto now requires its FIFO workers to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to scheduled departure times to allow for screening, which is overseen by the company's occupational physician. It includes online and face to face health questionnaires, temperature checks and a rapid finger prick blood screen that is performed by a nurse to detect viral antibodies.

## Listening and learning

The global health crisis posed by the COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented event unlike anything we have faced before. COVID-19 has shown that nobody is safe until we are all safe. At a time when more than half of the world's population is using the Internet, it is vital that we take every effort to leave no one behind and use all measures possible to share information.

Mining companies (including ICMM members) often have well established communications channels linked to the areas surrounding mine sites. This is especially true where community members make up the majority of a mine's employees. We are seeing companies use these channels to help disseminate public health information to those who are often hard to reach, and to dispel any misinformation and misunderstanding of the virus.

While this is dependent on the community context, we have seen the use of WhatsApp, local radio stations, mail drops and cartoons to provide accessible information on how the virus spreads. Our members have even used megaphones to share information on how to minimise transmission risk and the latest governmental advice. With face-to-face meetings not currently possible in most countries, we are now seeing members moving to virtual platforms in order to continue an open dialogue with communities. This provides an opportunity to understand priorities, determine how best to deliver support and communicate how to access government support.

ICMM has supported the need for rapid communication by regularly convening our company members and national and commodity association members to share information and guidance and accelerate learning across the industry. ICMM has



facilitated virtual meetings between members and member associations to share information, support and guidance on the challenges being faced by our industry. We have also established a COVID-19 Member Cooperation Network, which is a dedicated platform for member-to-member discussion and knowledge sharing around approaches to managing issues arising from COVID-19. Through this initiative, companies can listen and learn from each other, while association members are able to take away insights that they can share with their members.

This rapid exchange of information and knowledge provides the opportunity to identify areas for cooperation and collaboration guided by two priorities:

- Protecting the health and safety of employees and communities.
- Laying the groundwork now for the longer-term recovery of our workforce, and the resilience of the communities and economies in which we operate.

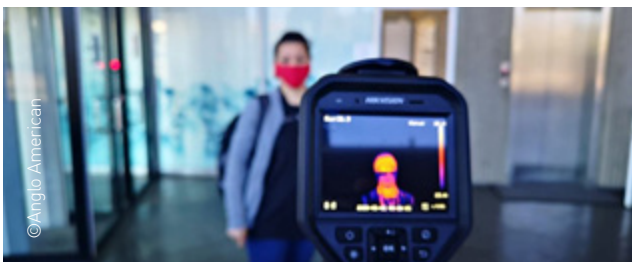
## Life after COVID-19

The role of the mining and metals industry in catalysing sustainable development is significant, supporting local communities to thrive and host nations to accelerate social progress. A speedy, timely and sustainable recovery from the crisis will be critical for maintaining gains in sustainable development and momentum behind the transition to a low carbon-future.

Before the pandemic, renewable energy solutions were becoming cheaper, more reliable, and more efficient every day. If we are to see this positive trajectory continue, it is imperative that sufficient amounts of the minerals and metals required of these new technologies are delivered. In May 2020 the International Energy Agency (IEA) reported that demand and supply of minerals such as copper and nickel were 'delicately balanced' and that there were 'expectations that supply imbalances might emerge in the coming years'.<sup>12</sup> While COVID-19 has lessened demand in the short-term it is certain to return as the crisis begins to ease.

To prevent inadequate supply of the minerals and metals needed for the future, it is important that governments promote policies that allow for a quick return to normal. Such action will not only reinvigorate progress on clean energy but also protect the many regional, local and remote communities which rely on mining both directly and indirectly.

Importing countries need to also strengthen the management of end-of-life products and components to promote recycling or retrieval of valuable minerals. This 'circular economy' ethos rejects the approach of more traditional manufacturing (wherein goods or products are made, used and then disposed of)



12. IEA (2020), Clean energy progress after the Covid-19 crisis will need reliable supplies of critical minerals [Online]. Available at <https://www.iea.org/articles/clean-energy-progress-after-the-covid-19-crisis-will-need-reliable-supplies-of-critical-minerals>

in favour of a more efficient, environmentally sound and sustainable way of thinking that focuses on the careful management of resources. In the circular economy, products are designed for high performance and durability (rather than inbuilt obsolescence) and the use of raw materials is optimised – including the intelligent re-use of any waste products created during the manufacturing process. At the end of a product's life cycle, the resources used to create it are, where possible, recovered, recycled or re-purposed, creating a responsible, restorative and regenerative cycle that 'designs out' unnecessary waste. This, however, will only get us part of the resources we need for a low-carbon future.

Mining companies can and want to be part of the solution for combating climate change. They have done this by individually setting emission targets, increasing their own use of renewable energy and by supporting innovations for cleaner, safer mine vehicles. While COVID-19 will hopefully not be with us forever, how we respond to the climate emergency could affect generations to come.

## Conclusion

Mining and metals are critically important to society – from building resilient infrastructure and promoting sustainable economic growth to supporting resilient and inclusive communities and enabling the innovations needed to address the urgency of climate change – but they must be produced responsibly. As a condition of membership, all ICMM company members are committed to implement ICMM's Mining Principles.

ICMM's Mining Principles define good practice environmental, social and governance requirements of company members that, in turn, support progress towards the global targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change. Building on the values of ICMM's Mining Principles, company members have been pro-active in responding to the demands of COVID-19: moving fast and acting ethically to protect and care for employees and surrounding communities, as an over-riding priority. This is mining with principles.

ICMM is an international organisation dedicated to a safe, fair and sustainable mining and metals industry. Bringing together 27 mining and metals companies and over 35 regional and commodity associations, we strengthen environmental and social performance. We serve as a catalyst for change,

enhancing mining's contribution to society. Every ICMM company member adheres to our Mining Principles which incorporates comprehensive environmental, social and governance requirements, robust site-level validation of performance expectations and credible assurance of corporate sustainability reports.