

Successful local engagement for responsible mineral production in high-risk areas

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In this session, IMPACT's executive director, Joanne Lebert, will share the experience of the non-profit in transforming how natural resources are managed in areas where security and human rights are at risk. Specifically, the presentation will provide policymakers and private sectors with examples of what successful engagement at the local level looks like with mining communities and how they can support responsible mineral production in conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

IMPACT's work has led to the first traceable, legal, and conflict-free artisanal gold from the Democratic Republic of Congo available on the international market. However, IMPACT's approach to reaching this milestone, and ensuring it is sustainable for the long term, has focused on local and inclusive ownership.

The organization has focused its approach on the artisanal gold supply chain - bottom up. The project has been built with all community members, including miners - women and men - as well as local and customary chiefs, and supporting the local mining cooperative.

Importantly, IMPACT has ensured that the bottom up approach includes a focus on gender equality. Starting with research to understand women's roles in the community and mining to training on women's rights, and now supporting women to organize and take on leadership positions - by investing in women's economic empowerment, it provides an opportunity for transformative change.

The session will also discuss the importance of the need for data and evidence to monitor impact and engagement, by spotlighting IMPACT's monitoring and evaluation system in place, alongside traceability and due diligence that allows for gender-disaggregated socio-economic data to assess community well-being. The success of your engagement at the local level needs to be supported by data. That will help ensure your mineral production from a high-risk area is truly responsible—when you have evidence to back it up.

Joanne Lebert