

Creating an Inclusive and Empowering Space for Women in Mining: Hudbay Peru's "Unidas" Program

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The mining sector faces significant gender equity challenges. In Peru, despite a 30% increase in mining employment over the last decade, women's participation has risen by only 1%. As a result, women make up just 6% of the industry's total workforce and earn an average of 4,000 PEN (Peruvian sol) less annually than their male counterparts¹.

Beyond representation, women also face systemic challenges, including workplace harassment, sexual harassment and difficulties returning to work after maternity leave.

To address these barriers, Hudbay Peru launched the Unidas (or "United") program in 2024 – a platform created by women for women to foster inclusion, support and empowerment within the Company. This initiative provides a safe space for participants to share experiences, build solidarity and collectively reflect on their challenges.

With the program's core focus on sisterhood, parity and empathy, participants engage in structured group sessions of 5 to 15, guided by a trained facilitator. Meetings occur in confidential "safety rooms" to ensure privacy, and resources such as empathy maps and communication tools like WhatsApp groups enhance interaction and trust-building. After a February test meeting took place, several sessions were held throughout 2024, "Unidas" meeting with participation rates ranging from 12% to 15%.

The topics, suggested during the program development phase, included the following:

- Stopping harassment – Tools to address and prevent sexual and workplace harassment
- Balancing work and family – Practical strategies for navigating family responsibilities alongside career demands

- Returning to work post-maternity – Support for reintegrating into the workplace after leave
- Effective communication – Skills for addressing workplace conflicts constructively

Building a Foundation for Cultural Change

The program aims to dismantle feelings of isolation, strengthen decision-making skills, and promote diversity and positive relationships by encouraging open dialogue and trust. Through this initiative, Hudbay Peru is not only laying the groundwork for long-term cultural change but is also creating a pathway for a mining environment where women feel heard, valued and supported.

Notably, organizers noticed participants liked sharing personal experiences and observations at the conclusion of each session in a safe place. In 2025, organizers will encourage these moments of reflection when sessions resume on a bi-monthly basis. They will also implement improvements noted in 2024, including drawing on more male participation.

“I am convinced that these types of programs not only open doors but also foster an inclusive and respectful environment towards women. What I value most is that it not only focuses on the professional field but also on the personal well-being of women, giving us the tools to balance both aspects of our lives.

I hope that this program continues to be a source of inspiration and growth for many more women and that it continues to transform the organizational culture towards a more just and equitable one.”

~ Unidas participant