



International Federation of Chemical, Energy,
Mine and General Workers' Unions

MMSD
Workshop On
Managing Mineral Wealth
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London

FRED HIGGS, ICEM General Secretary



ICEM

- **HQ** - Brussels

- **Regional Offices:-**

North America - Washington

Latin America - Rio de Janeiro

Africa - Harare

Asia Pacific - Seoul

Eastern Europe - Moscow



ICEM – *What It Is & is not*

- **20 million members**
- **From 400 affiliated organisations**
- **In 110 countries**



Social, Economic, Safety & Environmental Sustainability

ICEM Key Approach

1. Essential for the long term stable employment of our members.
2. We will not be undermined by ignoring, or seeking to defend the undefendable.
3. Less likely to be achieved, without including as full stakeholders workers and their trade unions representatives at local, national and international level.



Workers & Their Trade Unions Contribution to Sustainability

At Workplace Level

- Pursue with their employer the compliance with international standards in many areas including the following:-

Protection of workers rights

Equal opportunities

Eradication of poverty

Safety & Environment



Workers & Their Trade Unions Contribution to Sustainability

In The Local Community

- If workers and their representatives are fully involved and able to exercise real influence at the workplace, they can be the best possible ambassadors for the enterprise within the community.
- Local trade union representatives are often politically active within their communities.



Workers & Their Trade Unions Contribution to Sustainability

At National Level

- Unions provide to workers and representatives expert advice, support and training, assisting them to acquire information and skills needed to effectively interrelate with employers.
- Responsible, progressive employers should welcome this not fear it.
- National unions are highly likely to have political influence at national and often at region level.
- This influence is often used to assist in political debate on issues such as enterprise sustainability.



Workers & Their Trade Unions Contribution to Sustainability

At International Level

- The ICEM develops global policies and campaigns on the issue of sustainability.
- Such policies could be developed following consultation with the respective industry.
- We play an active part in the global debate on this issue with many national governments, intergovernmental institution such as the UN, ILO, WHO, OECD, WTO, and others.



Final Comment

The problems of sustainability will continue to manifest themselves at national level. But increasingly the answers will be determined at international level.