



# Case Study: Respecting Intangible Cultural Heritage at Merian Mine

Global Center for Indigenous Community Relations

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Respecting the customs and cultures of Indigenous communities is one of the guiding principles of Newmont's Global Center for Indigenous Community Relations. While what respect for customs and cultures looks like differs from community to community, Newmont strives to establish systems and practices to ensure that Indigenous customs and ways of life are respected across all of our sites. One of the ways that we have applied this value is through the establishment of cultural heritage protection measures.

Newmont follows the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) definition of cultural heritage, which is the legacy of physical science artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Cultural heritage is the places, objects, knowledge and practices of cultural significance. More specifically UNESCO defines intangible cultural heritage as transmitted from generation to generation and is constantly recreated by custodial communities in response to their environment. It provides a sense of identity and continuity and can be manifested through: oral traditions and expressions, including language; spiritual and religious beliefs, ceremonies and practices; performing and visual arts; social practices and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional handicrafts and foods.

An example of intangible cultural heritage protection can be found at Newmont's Merian mine in Suriname. Newmont is committed to partnering and working with the Pamaka community, of which approximately 1200 community members live and work in the area where the Merian mine operates. The Pamaka community's burial ceremonies represent an important example of intangible cultural heritage. The burial ceremonies are of high cultural importance, that require wide community participation to strengthen and maintain familial relationships. The ceremonies can last from two weeks up to three months and are an important time where community members come together. Due to the high level of employment of Pamaka community members at the Merian mine, Newmont wanted to take action to recognize this form of intangible cultural heritage and work with the community to ensure that the value of the ceremony is protected. Without addressing how to protect the cultural heritage of the burial ceremonies many local employees were missing ceremonies due to on-site rotation procedures and no form of respect and or participation was being facilitated by the site.

In response to this, Newmont gathered information from the community to learn about their expectations surrounding the burial ceremonies, developed a Cultural Support Standard Operating Procedure, and embedded these practices on site. The Cultural Support Standard Operating Procedure encourages Newmont to show respect in a culturally appropriate manner and establishes practices to support Newmont's participation. For example, the company will ensure that there is representation at burial ceremonies to show respect on behalf of Newmont and provides mechanisms for specific employees to participate as appropriate. The establishment of protection procedures demonstrates Newmont's respect of the Pamaka's intangible cultural heritage and respect towards burial ceremonies.

Beyond the Merian mine, Newmont has formulated a company-wide Cultural Heritage Standard that sets the minimum requirements for the identification, protection and management of Cultural Heritage within Newmont's areas of influence to protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage values and prevent unauthorized or undesired impacts by Newmont's employees and contractors. The protection of cultural heritage is a vital step in respecting the customs and culture of Indigenous communities and the protection of cultural heritage at Merian demonstrates how integrating practices and policies to respect cultural heritage entrenches these values at our site operations and within the company at large.