

## Annotated Bibliography

**AfricaNews. “US Tech Giants Absolved in Cobalt Child Labour Case | Africanews.”**

*Africanews*, Africanews, 6 Mar. 2024,

<https://www.africanews.com/2024/03/06/us-tech-giants-absolved-in-cobalt-child-labour-case/>.

Tech giants like Google, Apple, Dell, Microsoft, and Tesla were officially cleared in a U.S. appeals court of allegations that they aided child labor in cobalt mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The former child miners and their representatives argued these companies knew about abusive labor in their supply chains but did not act to stop it. The court dismissed that argument, saying these corporations only had commercial relationships with suppliers and lacked the power to directly prevent violations. The article also notes how cobalt is essential for batteries in electronics, and that Congo is the world’s top producer, with thousands of children working in dangerous conditions.

**“Child Labor and Human Rights Violations in the Mining Industry of the Democratic Republic of Congo | Human Rights Watch.” *Human Rights Watch*,**

<https://www.facebook.com/HumanRightsWatch>, 14 July 2022,

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/07/14/child-labor-and-human-rights-violations-mining-industry-democratic-republic-congo>.

The article opens up with the serious human rights violations and child labor are tied with corruption. The American backed President Felix Tshisekedi failed to deliver an end to the violence and exploitations. The article connects armed groups like the M23 for control over the mineral-rich lands that include cobalt, copper and other minerals. It mentions how the groups

and even the government is recruiting children and killing civilians. Over 5.5 million people are internally displaced, and one in three people face severe food insecurity. The author encourages the American government to help Congo's justice system take accountability and end corruption.

**“Children and Slaves Are Mining Our Critical Metals (and Not Just Cobalt) | New Security Beat.”** *New Security Beat*,

<https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2024/12/children-and-slaves-are-mining-our-critical-metals-and-not-just-cobalt/>. Accessed 15 Oct. 2025.

This article argues that child and forced labor in mining isn't just a problem for cobalt in the DRC, it's part of a much broader global system of exploitation tied to tech and clean-energy demands. It cites a U.S. Department of Labor list showing many “critical” minerals (silver in Bolivia, tin in Indonesia, copper and manganese in Zambia) where children work in hazardous conditions like tunnels, handling explosives, and without safety gear. Some families must choose between starvation or sending kids to dangerous mines. The article acknowledges that we must switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy but our push for green energy and tech (EVs, solar panels, phones) has a dark side of forced labor and human rights abuses. And simply cutting off sourcing from places like the DRC doesn't fix the problem but it often just shifts suffering elsewhere. The author pushes for a better solution: strengthen labor and environmental standards where mining happens, and consider more mining for metals in the U.S. with stricter regulations as part of the solution.

**“Cobalt Mining for Green Energy Risks Women's Reproductive Health in DRC.”**

*Mongabay Environmental News*, <https://www.facebook.com/mongabay/>, 18 Nov.

2024,

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/11/cobalt-mining-for-green-energy-risks-womens-reproductive-health-in-drc/>.

This article reveals that mining cobalt and copper near homes in Kolwezi, DRC, is possibly harming women's reproductive health. Locals report more miscarriages, birth defects, infant deaths, and infections, maybe because mines are polluting air, water, and soil with heavy metals or radioactive elements. Women working in artisanal mining, especially those cleaning ore or near dumps, often handle toxic materials with bare hands or breathe in dust. Authorities say they're investigating, and some NGOs are pushing for safety measures like protective gear and stricter regulations.

**“Forced Evictions at Industrial Cobalt and Copper Mines in the DRC.” *Amnesty***

*International*, <https://www.facebook.com/amnesty>, 11 Sept. 2023,

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/09/drc-cobalt-and-copper-mining-for-batteries-leading-to-human-rights-abuses/>.

The article details how expansion of industrial mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo is fueling serious human rights violations. Companies and government forces have forcibly evicted entire communities, often without proper consultation or fair compensation from their homes and farmland to make room for mines. Some evictions were accompanied by violence: houses were burned, crops bulldozed, and in at least one case a pregnant woman was gang-raped during eviction. The affected neighborhoods include long-established residential areas in Kolwezi, where people discovered their homes were slated for demolition only after red X marks appeared on their walls. Many residents say the compensation offered was insufficient to afford

comparable housing. The article also points out that these abuses are linked to global demand for “green” technologies, since cobalt and copper are essential for batteries, and Congo holds vast reserves of both metals.

**“Investigation Uncovers Damages of Cobalt Mining in the DRC Villages.” *Mongabay***

*Environmental News*, <https://www.facebook.com/mongabay/>, 5 Aug. 2024,

<https://news.mongabay.com/short-article/investigation-uncovers-damages-of-cobalt-mining-in-the-drc-villages/>.

In several villages in Lualaba province, Democratic Republic of Congo, a new investigation revealed that cobalt mining is causing serious damage to people’s health, land, and livelihoods. Mines are dumping acidic waste into rivers and soil, which has killed fish and plants and made farmland unusable. In one village, over half the people left—only two stayed behind—because their homes were no longer viable. Some locals reported having skin rashes and sores. There’s also suspicion these toxins contributed to stillbirths and premature births. Chinese-run mining companies dominate many of these operations, often in collaboration with the state mining company Gécamines.

**“Is My Phone Powered by Child Labour? - Amnesty International.” *Amnesty International*,**

<https://www.facebook.com/amnesty>, 10 June 2016,

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2016/06/drc-cobalt-child-labour/>

This Amnesty International article exposes how global demand for smartphones, laptops, and electric cars directly fuels child labor and exploitation in the cobalt mines of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It explains that more than half of the world’s cobalt comes from the DRC, where about 40,000 children work in dangerous conditions for as little as one or two dollars a

day. These children dig and wash ore without protective gear, facing constant risks of lung disease, injury, and even death from mine collapses. The report traces how the cobalt they mine moves through opaque global supply chains, often ending up in batteries used by major tech companies that rarely verify or disclose their sources. Amnesty links this exploitation to broader structures of global inequality and neocolonialism, where wealthy nations profit from cheap labor and weak regulation in poorer regions.

**Jazeera, Al. “Mining of Cobalt, Copper in DRC Leading to Human Rights Abuses: Report | Human Rights News | Al Jazeera.” *Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 12 Sept. 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/9/12/mining-of-cobalt-copper-in-drc-leading-to-human-rights-abuses-report>.**

The article discusses how industrial mining operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly for cobalt and copper, are linked to serious human rights violations. Local communities say they’ve been forcibly removed from land, sometimes without notice or adequate compensation, to make way for mining expansions. There are reports of environmental damage (such as polluted water, degraded land, deforestation) that undermine agriculture and health in surrounding areas. The mining projects are also tied to corporate interests and global demand for batteries and electronics, meaning that abuses in Congo are not just a local issue but part of a larger system of global economic exploitation.

**Pattison, Pete. “‘Like Slave and Master’: DRC Miners Toil for 30p an Hour to Fuel Electric Cars | Africa | The Guardian.” *The Guardian*, The Guardian, 8 Nov. 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/nov/08/cobalt-drc-miners-toil-for-30p-an-hour-to-fuel-electric-cars>.**

This article illuminates how Congolese cobalt miners work in brutal conditions for shockingly low wages, around 30 pence (roughly 40–50 U.S. cents) per hour to supply batteries for electric cars in wealthy countries like the U.S, Germany, France. The miners dig by hand in dangerous, unstable tunnels, with little protective gear, while dealing with dust exposure, risk of caves collapsing, and toxic waste. Many of them are subsistence miners who take on debt to middlemen before they see even a fraction of the final battery profits. The story also connects this labor to the global green energy boom: countries pushing for “clean” tech depend on minerals extracted under exploitative conditions, and yet these workers receive almost none of the benefits.

**Salama, Or. “The Current State of Child Labour in Cobalt Mines in the Democratic**

**Republic of the Congo - Humanium.” *Humanium*, 27 May 2025,**

**<https://www.humanium.org/en/the-current-state-of-child-labour-in-cobalt-mines-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>.**

This article describes efforts to fight this exploitation. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and international organizations have launched initiatives to withdraw children from mining, provide schooling or vocational training, and improve local infrastructure. Meanwhile, the DRC government created an interministerial commission in 2020 to coordinate anti-child labor efforts, aiming to formalize and regulate artisanal mining and protect children. The article calls for stronger enforcement of existing laws, better regulation of supply chains, and international pressure to fund education and alternatives to child labor.