

Save the Children Joins the Fair Cobalt Alliance to Strengthen Child Rights in the Cobalt Sector in the DRC

Berlin, 3rd of December 2021 – Save the Children in collaboration with The Centre for Child Rights and Business (The Centre) have become members of the Fair Cobalt Alliance (FCA) to help establish child labour prevention and remediation systems in artisanal mining (ASM) communities.

The FCA is an action platform that brings together actors from across the cobalt mineral supply chain. It aims to strengthen and professionalise the DRC's artisanal cobalt mining sector and promote economic development in local communities. This is achieved by enabling responsible mining practices at artisanal mine sites, creating acceptance of and demand for fair ASM cobalt, identifying and remediating child labour at partner mine sites, and extending opportunities for entrepreneurship and livelihood diversification in and around the mines.

Both Save the Children and The Centre are committed to improving the lives of children and are excited to bring their expertise in child rights and business, and in particular child labour issues, to the alliance. Both organisations are deeply engaged in understanding and implementing practical on-the-ground solutions to child rights issues in complex supply chain settings while working with a diverse range of actors. In 2021 both organisations jointly conducted an in-depth study on ASM in the DRC that reiterates the need for supply-chain-wide collaboration to protect and support the many children and working families reliant on ASM. The study, which will be launched on December 8, 2021, points out opportunities for various actors, including downstream companies, to take action and improve the situation on the ground.

By joining the FCA, Save the Children and The Centre will bring in a combination of technical expertise in relation to implementing child labour prevention and remediation systems as well as play an advisory role that draws on both organisations' expertise in working with business actors on child labour issues and in setting up holistic child protection systems.

“Membership of the FCA comes at a crucial point in time for Save the Children. The detrimental impact of ASM cobalt mining on many children and their families, the consequences of the pandemic and the increased demand for cobalt as the world shifts towards green energy means joint action is urgently needed to ensure that children in ASM communities have access to their rights, are safe from child labour and grow up in families, that make a living from decent jobs,” said Florian Westphal, CEO of Save the Children Germany.

“No one actor can solve child labour issues in ASM singlehandedly. With collaboration being at the heart of the FCA, we are looking forward to working with all FCA members and other stakeholders in implementing strong child labour prevention and remediation systems. We believe that the industry actors, from producers to buyers, all have both the responsibility and the opportunity to significantly improve the situation for children in ASM communities within the next few years, and we are looking forward to supporting this process with a strong child rights perspective,” said Ines Kaempfer, CEO of The Centre for Child Rights and Business.

“We urgently need to find solutions through cross-sectoral action to improve the protection situation of children in the environment of mining communities. In this regard, the sustainable implementation of strategies that focus on the best interests of the children and provide children with consistent access to those rights that they have been denied because of child labour (e.g. protection, education, adequate work, etc.) are elementary,” said Amavi Akpamagbo, Country Director of Save the Children in the DRC.

“Save the Children and The Centre for Child Rights and Business joining the FCA marks an important milestone for us. An action platform dedicated to promoting and enabling collaboration across the supply chain and between the private sector and NGOs, the FCA will benefit greatly from Save the Children’s and The Centre’s expertise and experience protecting children’s rights and addressing child labour holistically across geographies and commodities. Our organisations share a common vision and approach, centred around local ownership and participation, and we are excited to have Save the Children and The Centre on board, not only as members, but also as the latest addition to our Steering Committee,” said Dr. Assheton Carter, Executive Director of the Fair Cobalt Alliance.

About Save the Children:

Save the Children is the world’s leading independent children’s organisation. For over 100 years, Save the Children has been fighting for the rights of children worldwide. Save the Children is recognised for its commitment to accountability, innovation and collaboration. As quickly and as effectively as Save the Children responds to tsunamis and civil conflict, it works to resolve the ongoing struggles children face every day — poverty, hunger, illiteracy, child labour and disease — and replaces them with hope for the future. For more information, please visit

www.savethechildren.de.

About The Centre for Child Rights and Business:

The Centre works with companies to promote and respect children’s rights in all their operations, with a particular focus on supply chains. The Centre helps businesses understand how and where they impact children and delivers practical solutions and services for mitigating risks and creating positive change.

These services include child labour prevention and remediation, child rights risk assessments, packages to support women, migrant parent workers, young workers and other vulnerable groups, and a comprehensive set of services to create family-friendly workplaces in supply chains. The Centre supports businesses across multiple industry sectors in close to a dozen Asian countries, with staff and projects also located in Africa, Australia, Europe and The Americas. Please visit www.childrights-business.org for more info.

About the Fair Cobalt Alliance:

The Fair Cobalt Alliance (FCA) is a multi-stakeholder action platform launched in August 2020 that brings together actors from across the entire cobalt mineral supply chain to provide an answer to increasing scrutiny on the cobalt artisanal mining (ASM) industry and the DRC mining sector. Our purpose is to assist in the building of a DRC cobalt mining sector that is known to be a responsible partner in providing the minerals needed for a new green economy. This includes mobilising the resources of the whole supply chain to deliver technical assistance and investment to realise the vision of a formal, fair and safe ASM cobalt sector. To find out more, visit: www.faircobaltalliance.org.

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