Responsible Minerals Initiative
Cobalt Due Diligence

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the world’s largest producer of cobalt and holds more than 50 percent of the global cobalt reserves. Cobalt is used in lithium-ion batteries that form an integral part of electric automobiles, mobile phones and laptop computers. Demand for cobalt is expected to rise significantly over the coming years. Cobalt is extracted in mechanized and artisanal mining operations. Multiple reports have highlighted concerns over social and environmental impacts of cobalt extraction, including child labor and unsafe working conditions in artisanal cobalt mining.

What We Do

The RMI works to create the enabling conditions for companies to exercise due diligence over cobalt supply chains in accordance with the OECD Due Diligence Guidance. We provide:

- Tools and resources for companies to conduct due diligence on cobalt supply chains in accordance with internationally recognized frameworks.
- Independent third-party assessments for crude and fine cobalt refiners that are OECD-aligned using our Responsible Minerals Assurance Process (RMAP).
- Regular engagement with stakeholders along the cobalt and battery value chains to ensure the complementarity of programs and their alignment with market expectations.
- Direct support to projects in the DRC to monitor artisanal mine sites in an effort to link on-the-ground efforts to independent third-party assessments of crude and fine refiners, as well as identifying opportunities to scale the projects.

Tools and Resources

The RMI provides the following programs, tools and resources to support companies’ due diligence on cobalt supply chains:

- The Cobalt Reporting Template to map supply chains.
- The RMI’s list of active cobalt refiners and conformant cobalt refiners participating in the RMAP program.
- The Risk Readiness Assessment provides access to self-assessments of cobalt refiners and producers on key social, environmental and governance issue areas.
- A globally applicable Cobalt Refiner Supply Chain Due Diligence Standard to define responsible sourcing expectations for cobalt refiners, mechanized and artisanal mines in cobalt supply chains.

Visit the RMI’s e-learning Academy and publicly available training sessions for modules specific to due diligence in cobalt supply chains for suppliers, refiners and RMI member companies.

How to Get Involved

As an RMI member, join our Cobalt Workgroup to shape the tools and resources developed for due diligence on cobalt supply chains as well as to access the reports from our on-the-ground projects.