

# Electric vehicle charging democratic republic of the congo

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Through this MOU, the United States will support the commitment between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zambia to develop jointly a supply chain for electric vehicle batteries.

Phone and electric car batteries are made with cobalt mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Cobalt Red author Siddharth Kara describes the conditions for workers as a "horror show."

Yaounde/Kinshasa, 30 June 2021 (ECA) - A senior official of the Subregional Office for Central Africa of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA/SRO-CA) has urged the Government and private stakeholders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to fully appropriate the African Mining Vision of 2009 in order to sustainably ...

The mineral-rich Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is often portrayed as a victim of exploitation by China, the US and Europe in their competition for its minerals, which are critical for the energy transition. But our research has found that the DRC can influence the shape of the cobalt market, in which it is the single largest producer.

The mining of minerals critical to electric vehicle batteries and other green technologies in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has led to human rights abuses, including forced...

Smartphones, computers and electric vehicles may be emblems of the modern world, but, says Siddharth Kara, their rechargeable batteries are frequently powered by cobalt mined by workers laboring in slave-like conditions in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Kara, a fellow at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health and at the Kennedy School, has been researching modern-day slavery, human trafficking and child labor for two decades. He says that although the DRC has more cobalt reserves than the rest of the planet combined, there's no such thing as a "clean" supply chain of cobalt from the country. In his new book, Cobalt Red, Kara writes that much of the DRC's cobalt is being extracted by so-called "artisanal" miners -- freelance workers who do extremely dangerous labor for the equivalent of just a few dollars a day.

"You have to imagine walking around some of these mining areas and dialing back our clock centuries," Kara says. "People are working in subhuman, grinding, degrading conditions. They use pickaxes, shovels, stretches of rebar to hack and scrounge at the earth in trenches and pits and tunnels to gather cobalt and feed it up the formal supply chain."

Kara says the mining industry has ravaged the landscape of the DRC. Millions of trees have been cut down,

the air around mines is hazy with dust and grit, and the water has been contaminated with toxic effluents from the mining processing. What's more, he says, "Cobalt is toxic to touch and breathe -- and there are hundreds of thousands of poor Congolese people touching and breathing it day in and day out. Young mothers with babies strapped to their backs, all breathing in this toxic cobalt dust."

Cobalt is used in the manufacture of almost all lithium ion rechargeable batteries used in the world today. And while those outside of the DRC differentiate between cobalt extracted by the country's high-tech industrial mining companies and that which was dug by artisanal miners, Kara says the two are fundamentally intertwined.

"There's complete cross-contamination between industrial excavator-derived cobalt and cobalt dug by women and children with their bare hands," he says. "Industrial mines, almost all of them, have artisanal miners working, digging in and around them, feeding cobalt into the formal supply chain."

Kara acknowledges the important role cobalt plays in tech devices and in the transition to sustainable energy sources. Rather than renouncing cobalt entirely, he says people should focus on fixing the supply chain.

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