



# Eradicating Child Labour, Building a Better Future

**Facilitating conversations and advocating for global cooperation: The church in dialogue**

*Sala Etchegaray*, Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (DPIHD). Vatican. 19/11/2021

**Presented by Catherine Mutindi, RGS**

# Our Identity

The Congregation of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd is an international women Congregation working globally with partners; with vulnerable children, girls and women (and their communities) to **affirm dignity, reduce poverty, violence and discrimination** in all forms; safeguard and enhance ecology.

<https://rgs.gssweb.org>

**Bon Pasteur Kolwezi, (with GSIF)** that is now a global partnership addressing **poverty and slavery**, was established in 2013 at the invitation of the Local Bishop.

<https://congo.gsif.it/>



## VALUES



**Person-centred approach to development**



**Inclusion**



**Trust and respect**



**Partnership and collaboration**



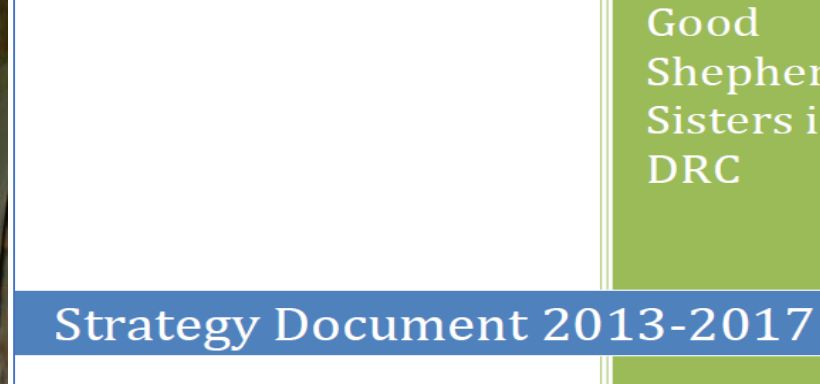
**Transparency and accountability**



# A Global Partnership to Tackle Poverty and Slavery



## Embarking on a 10 months' Needs Assessment Process



GSS Research – Violence and abuse against women, girls and children in artisanal mining communities of the DRC

### Participatory Planning process



## Violations of children's rights

- **70% of children engaged in labour** - causing trauma and long-term health hazards
- **90%+ illiteracy**
- **50% unattended orphans;**

## Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

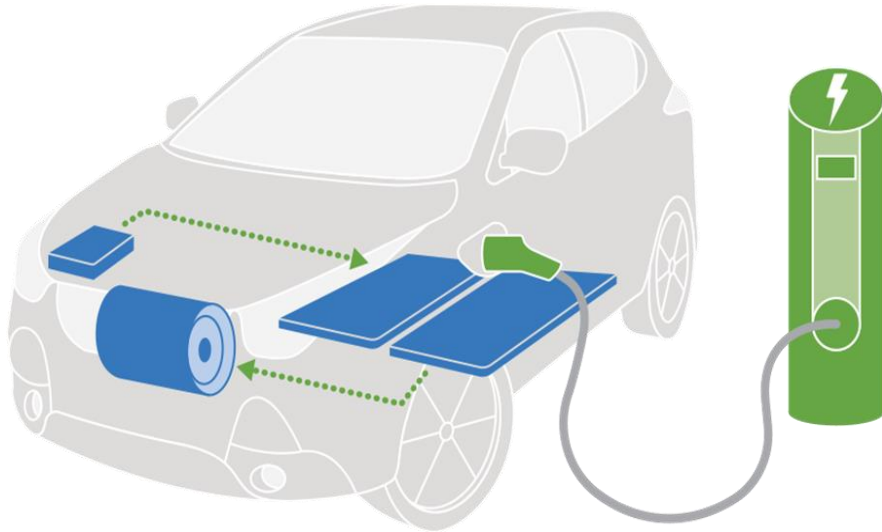
- **75% women abused** (50% sexual abuse);
- **70% of women –and 50% of girls are illiterate/semi-literate**
- High birth-mortality rate

## Poverty and hunger

- **90% of the population lives on less than 1\$ per day.**
- Only 53% of population have access to clean drinking water.
- 100% of children could not recall when they had their last meal
- Unpredictable and intermittent household income from mining



# Context



## Cobalt and Battery Supply Chain

# Battery economy and supply chain

- Cobalt global demand tripled between 2010 – 2016.
- The demand for rechargeable batteries keeps this raising, projected to double between 2017 and 2025.



- A remote estimate of **70%** of the global cobalt deposits are in Lualaba Province in DRC, qualifying Kolwezi (the capital of Lualaba) as the global cobalt capital.
- An estimated **20%** of this cobalt is sourced manually, through ASM (Artisanal Small-scale Mining).





# Impact on Human Rights (Lives and Livelihoods) and the Environment

**Kolwezi is poster child of the resource curse.**

## **Reality:**

- Corruption: Mining companies and government on one side; the population on their own.
- Unregulated industrial practices generating negative impact on the environment, social and economic conditions of communities and violations of human rights.



# Root causes of Child Labour

1. Poverty and lack of economic alternatives to mining.
2. Lack of social protection structures – includes limited number of schools – to match the population.
3. Poor governance - lack of political will to reinforce effective application of (2009) Child Protection Law and Mining Code (2018)





# Some risks of Artisanal Mining (ASM)

## In relation to Children

A major risk, injustice and evil of Artisanal (Cobalt) Mining is that it has turned children into digital slaves. They sacrifice dreams, future, life...feeding an e-mobility (called sustainable, green energy revolution) that they do not relate with. For many Cobalt means food; food for the day. It has left many sick, wounded or orphaned. (an estimated **2/3 children not in school**).

*How can a Sustainable Future be built through sacrificing children's wellbeing, through depriving children the right to be?*







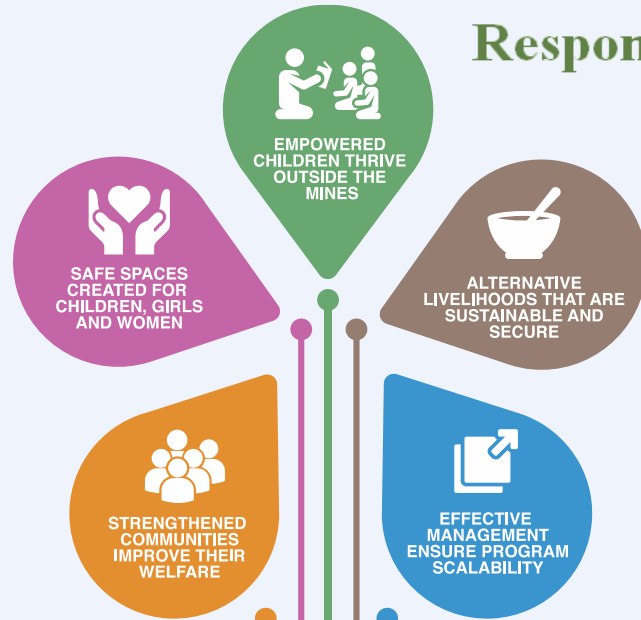
# What is our response?





## A Multi-dimensional Approach

– Taking into account the **Rings of Responsibility and Circles of Care**



### Root Causes

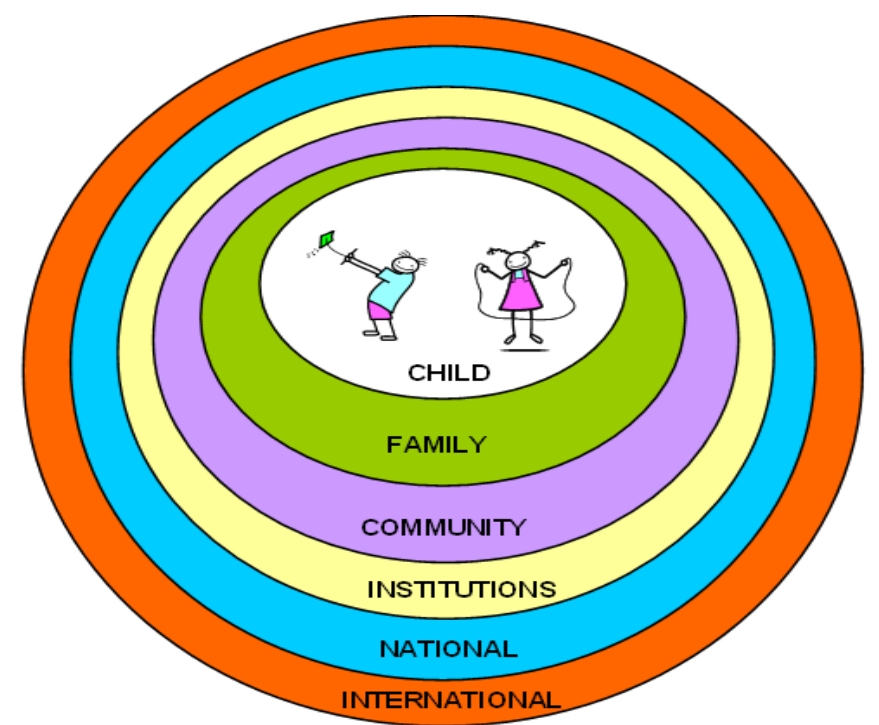
Gender based violence and discrimination of women and girls

Extreme poverty and food insecurity

Systemic violations of children's right and prevalence of WFCL in the ASM

Poor local capacity and weak governance

Social fragmentation, lack of infrastructures and services for the mining communities



We have learned that a Multiple Root Causes of **Child Labour** (and Human Rights violations) require a multi-dimensional: **community-based, integrated, transformational, person-centred, human-rights based, sustainable... model of intervention**; as in Kolwezi.

# The Multi-dimensional Approach



... to Prevent, Protect, Remediate the Worst Forms of **Child Labour** (and other human rights violations) through:

- \* **STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COHESION;**
- **CREATING SAFE SPACES;**
- **CREATING SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS;**
- **EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS** – to increase impact on the ground; for advocacy towards systemic change.





# Principaux résultats 2017 - 2019

**1228**

Women trained and involved  
in substantial alternatives

**3140**

Community Members  
educated on citizenry  
rights and responsibilities  
in relation to the mining  
code, and the role in  
Government in public  
service

**450**  
**151**

Girls and  
Women

Acquired Vocational and  
Entrepreneurship skills to  
access employment

**+/-5000**

Children  
quit WFCL in the mines.  
are empowered,  
educated and safeguarded

520 enfants  
intégrés dans le  
système scolaire  
formel (a.y. 2018-  
2020)

485 nouveaux enfants  
inscrits dans le projet  
précédemment engagé  
dans WFCL dans le  
secteur minier

**77%**

Of the Targeted Children  
**Quit Mining  
Work**

90% en Dec 2018  
66% en Juin 2019

\* Through the support of multiple donors, globally

# What Didn't Work Well – Some Challenges

- **Children dropping out of schools:** going back to the mines as **mines bust** in residential quarters, or due to their family substantial needs.
- **High demand to enroll children** in to the schools - with limited intake capacity, some classes host up to 120 children.
- **Continuing Secondary education:** (High School) Education is highly unfordable for the majority – many return to the mines, etc.
- **Teen pregnancies.**
- **Limited/constrained resources to scale up services.**





# What we have learnt



# Success Factors

Evaluation by Prof. Mark Canavera  
Columbia University/CPC Network



- **Radical inclusivity**  
Poorest First
- **Integrating human rights AND development**  
Education, civic strengthening and sustainable alternative livelihoods
- **Taking the time to build human relationships**  
A persons-centered approach, uplifting human dignity in a materialistic environment
- **Focusing on both process AND outcomes**  
Pay as much attention to “how we do” things, as to “what we do”, in a **slow-gradual process**
- **Adopting a strategic approach to engaging the most powerful**  
As insiders/outsideers, best positioned to refuse corruption and slowly gain credibility, ***moving from the periphery to the center.***





# Corporate responsibility

According to the UN Guiding Principles and OECD Guidelines:

– Corporations are to be considered responsible if they cooperate with all stakeholders, including NGOs, to:

## **PREVENT, PROTECT AND REMEDIATE**

all forms of human rights violations within their supply chains.



**NOT just based on 'do-no-harm' (PR) statements.  
These do not solve issues on the ground and could  
actually do more harm.**

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## Moving Forward:

**The Child Labour concern is a survival question for us all. Unless we join efforts to address Child Labour, to hold all stakeholders accountable for an e-mobility rooted in sustainable human and community development, that protects all, including our 'Common Home' we are bound to perish.**

# Thank You

# Asante



# Grazie

# Merci