



# WOULD YOU LIKE A PHONE MADE OF GOLD?

Of course you would! Who wouldn't? But did you know that your mobile phone wouldn't work if it didn't contain gold? **MOBILE PHONES ACTUALLY NEED UP TO 30 METALS** just so they can function.

And did you know that the **GLOBAL ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY CONSUMES A GROWING PROPORTION OF THE WORLD'S PRECIOUS AND RARE METALS** to make our mobile phones, laptops and MP3 players? Many of these metals are mined in developing countries where workers often face appalling conditions.

The environment is also paying the price as our appetite for all the latest electronic gadgets continues unabated. In Norilsk in Russia, where nickel, cobalt, platinum and palladium are being mined for electronic components, **AIR POLLUTION IS SO BAD THAT MANY CHILDREN SUFFER FROM CRIPPLING LUNG DISEASES.**

**FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP AT  
WWW.MAKEITFAIR.ORG**

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, **50,000 CHILDREN, SOME AS YOUNG AS SEVEN, WORK IN COPPER AND COBALT MINES** for many hours without protective clothing. Many of the 2 million small-scale miners in the Congo earn less than 2 Euros a day. In other regions, whole villages are being removed to make space for mining. And while some miners hardly earn enough money to buy food and medicine for their families, mining companies and traders are lining their pockets with gold as the demand for minerals increases.

The makeITfair campaign is calling on big brand electronics companies to **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPROVING THE APPALLING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS** in the mineral mines around the world.

# WHAT IS IT MADE OF?

**TANTALUM**  
Tantalum is needed for important electronic components called capacitors in mobile phones, digital cameras and laptop computers. Mining for coltan, known as tantalum ore, has helped to fuel a bitter civil war in the **DR Congo**.

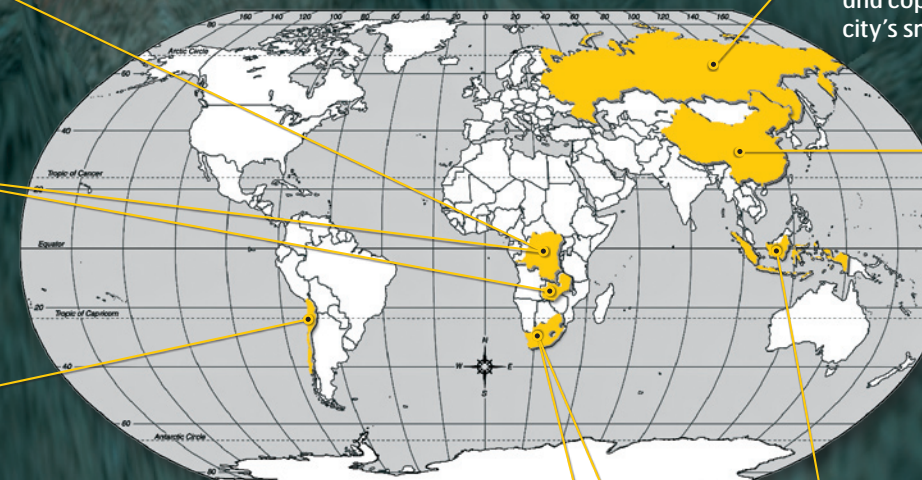
**COBALT**  
Cobalt is an important ingredient in rechargeable batteries needed for laptops, mobile phones and digital cameras. **Zambia** and the **Democratic Republic of Congo** provide half the world's cobalt, but mine and factory workers in both countries face severe health and safety problems. In Zambia, 80 people died in the mines in 2005.

**COPPER**  
**Chile** is the world's biggest producer of copper, which is used for many electronic components. Farmers in Chile are facing huge problems because copper mining uses so much water. In the dry regions of northern Chile, mining companies use precious ground water limiting the supply of drinking water.

**GOLD**  
**South Africa** is the world's largest producer of gold. Gold is the material of choice in contacts and connectors on the circuit board in many electronic gadgets. Gold is often extracted by surface mining, using harmful substances like cyanide that may leak into the soil and the ground water. At least 100 kg of mine waste is generated to produce the 0.034g of gold used in a mobile phone's circuit board.

## INTERESTING nuggets

- At least 20 million people are directly involved in mining for minerals and an estimated 100 million people depend on mining for their livelihood.
- 13 million people are directly engaged in small-scale mining, which is often an extremely hazardous activity.
- Between 1 million and 1.5 million children are estimated to work with mining.
- About 15,000 people were forced to leave their homes to make way for the largest gold mine in the world – the Freeport Mine in Indonesia.



**NICKEL**  
Nickel is used to make the batteries in many electronic gadgets. In Norilsk in **Russia**, emissions from nickel and copper sulphide are so extensive they make the city's snow turn yellow.

**RARE EARTH METALS**  
Rare earth metals are a group of 17 elements, which can be used to produce fluorescent substances for computer screens. Rare earth metals are mined in Inner Mongolia in **China**, where the mining industry is damaging the environment for generations to come. Emissions from smelters are polluting the air, in some places to such an extent that the inhabitants rarely see the sun.

**TIN**  
Tin is used in printed circuit boards. In **Indonesia** – the world's second largest producer of tin – uncontrolled mining has been wreaking environmental havoc. Huge holes with standing water are a common sight in some villages, as well as mounds of soil resembling barren hills.

**PLATINUM**  
Platinum is used in computer hard drives and in liquid crystal displays used in laptops and some flat screen TVs. In **South Africa**, local communities have been forced to leave their farmland without proper compensation to make way for the growing number of platinum mines supplying the computer industry. To make matters worse, 40 per cent of the miners in South Africa's platinum mines are contracted labourers who have few rights and earn even less than other workers. They often have to do the most dangerous work and get very little safety training.

## Mining misery

With his thin frame, 13-year-old Jean looks **TOO WEAK TO LIFT THE HEAVY BAGS OF ROCKS** that will be turned into cobalt for the electronics industry. Yet he carries those bags up to eleven hours a day, six days a week. He earns two to four Euros a day for his pains.



Jean has asked us not to use his real name or photo in order to protect his identity.

**"Foreign mining companies are plundering our country."**

JEAN, 13, WORKING IN THE MINES OF KATANGA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Yet Jean is **NOT THE ONLY CHILD WHO RISKS HIS LIFE** in the quarries and mineshafts every day without any form of protection. More than a third of all the miners in the mining province of Katanga are estimated to be children.

"I am very annoyed with the destiny reserved to my village by these foreign mining companies that are plundering our country," says Jean. **"MY VILLAGE IS LACKING SO MUCH.** We do not have an ambulance, no electricity, no drinking water. The health centre is poorly equipped. The mining and trading **COMPANIES ARE ENRICHING THEMSELVES IN FRONT OF OUR EYES.** Those people are neither generous, nor compassionate."

**Turn over to find out what you can do to help to make IT fair for children like Jean...**

## mining – makeITfair

Metal prices are booming, but workers in the mines of the developing world have not reaped many of the benefits. They struggle to survive on poor wages, while mining metals so that we can chat to our friends on the latest mobile phones or listen to the hippest hits on our MP3 players.

In our part of the world, governments are making new laws to promote recycling so that the environment is protected. Yet mining communities in poor countries are often surrounded by polluted land and waters. They breathe in air polluted by the emissions from metal smelters, often with severe long-term impacts on their health.

Companies like Philips, Lenovo and Packard Bell argue that these issues are none of their business. Often, they don't even bother to find out where their metals have come from – or whether the metals in their products have been mined by children like Jean. And they don't know whether the mining activities behind their products have damaged the environment for generations to come or not.

makeITfair thinks these companies should make it their business to find out what is happening further down their supply chain – and they should start working for change. As such a big consumer of the world's metals, they could really make a huge difference – making life better for miners and helping to protect our planet from further damage!

## This is how you can help!

Log onto [www.makeITfair.org](http://www.makeITfair.org) to **SEND AN E-MAIL TO THE BIGGEST ELECTRONICS COMPANIES.** Ask them to improve conditions for miners and workers at the bottom of their supply chain and to clean up their act when it comes to environmental pollution!

If you've bought a new mobile phone or MP3 player, leave your old one in the shop or **TAKE IT TO A RECYCLING POINT!** Remember to do the same for old batteries!

Look out for more makeITfair leaflets on different aspects of the electronics industry – and join the makeITfair campaign at

[www.makeitfair.org](http://www.makeitfair.org)



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