



Fair Cobalt Alliance  
L'Alliance du Cobalt Equitable

# 2024 Impact & Financial Report





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# ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Advisory Board
AFA	Alternatives for Action
ASM	Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining
CARF	Centre Arrupe pour la Recherche et la Formation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLR	Child Labour Remediation
CMDS	Coopérative Minière pour le Développement Social
CTCPM	Cellule Technique de Coordination et de Planification Minière
CPF	Centre Promotion Familiale
CPVS	Conseil Présidentiel de Veille Stratégique
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EPRM	European Partnership for Responsible Minerals
EGC	Entreprise Générale du Cobalt
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
FAC	Fund Allocation Committee
FCA	Fair Cobalt Alliance
KCC	Kamoto Copper Company
LME	London Metal Exchange
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHS	Operational Health and Safety
PPA	Public-Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals Trade
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
CAHRA	Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas
CTCPM	Cellule Technique de Coordination et de Planification Minière
RMC	Responsible Mineral Credits
RMI	Responsible Minerals Initiative
SAEMAPE	Service d'Assistance et d'Encadrement de l'Exploitation Minière Artisanale et à Petite Échelle
SC	Steering Committee
TIF	The Impact Facility
TMB	Trust Merchant Bank
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VSLAs	Voluntary Savings and Loans Associations

# FOREWORD

In a year characterised by progress, learnings, and adaptation for the Fair Cobalt Alliance (FCA), we are reminded of the paramount need for collaborative action to support the nearly 150,000 – 200,000 people directly reliant on artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) in the DRC. The sustained softening of the global cobalt market continues to influence the dynamics of ASM and the overall profitability of the trade. Despite these market pressures, cobalt remains a critical mineral for the energy transition. Demand—particularly for electric vehicle (EV) production—is projected to more than triple between 2020 and 2050, reaching 250 kilotonnes by 2050 (BloombergNEF, 2024). With the right support and investment, the artisanal cobalt sector has the potential to supply this growing demand and position the DRC as a key player in Africa’s emerging battery manufacturing landscape.

We are encouraged by the appointment of H.E. Mr. Kizito Pakomba Kapinga as Minister of Mines. His leadership brings renewed momentum for the reforms and investment needed for responsible ASM practices.

**A collaborative approach to transforming the artisanal cobalt sector**

With the support of our members, implementing partners, and donors, we have seen a reduction in fatal and serious incidents at the mine site through improved occupational health and safety practices. We also celebrated the children who completed the Child Labour Remediation (CLR) programme and observed growing economic resilience in the mining communities — particularly among women — through the

continued development of micro-enterprises supported by the savings and loan groups.

In 2024, we secured a €320K grant from the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals (EPRM) to scale and digitise the cobalt credit mechanism. This innovative financing tool enables downstream companies to invest in ASM site improvements, even where direct offtake or physical integration is not yet feasible.

We believe that building a responsible ASM sector that supports resilient communities is only possible through collective and targeted interventions. We were therefore delighted to welcome new members to our alliance —Northvolt, the Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM), and Telf AG— who share this vision.

**Looking ahead: scaling impact and strengthening market linkages**

As we move into 2025, the macro-political and security landscape will continue to present challenges. The deepening security and humanitarian crisis in Eastern DRC continues to be of great concern. The Increased instability has endangered countless lives and threatens the livelihoods of many mining communities. We stand in solidarity with the people of the DRC and call for an immediate end to the conflict. Despite challenging macro factors, FCA continues to prioritise scaling its interventions and strengthening market linkages for responsibly produced ASM materials. Our ongoing partnership with Entreprise Générale du Cobalt (EGC) — a subsidiary of the state mining company Gécamines—to develop a responsible and scalable model for the formalisation and professionalisation of ASM



Creusers constructing a tarpaulin rain cover to secure tunnel entries from flooding. Between 150,000 and 250,000 people work in the DRC’s artisanal cobalt sector, contributing 5–6% of the country’s cobalt output. This is significant, as the DRC accounted for 73.9% of global cobalt production in 2024 (USGS).

mining reflects our commitment to systemic change.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all stakeholders who remain committed to the mission

**Ines Kaempfer**  
CEO of The Centre for Child Rights and Business  
and Chair of the FCA Steering Committee

of the FCA. With so much work still ahead, your support will be vital in addressing the numerous challenges we face in supporting the individuals, families, and communities that depend on artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) in the DRC.

**Agathe Bukasa**  
Exécutive Director , FCA



2024 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



23  
CHILDREN

onboarded into the Child Labour Remediation System, bringing the total number of children having received support so far to **43**.



34  
CHILDREN

attend primary and secondary school, and **4 are** enrolled in vocational training.

**4 CHILDREN** successfully completing remediation.



12  
CASE  
MANAGERS

from local organisations trained on the ASM-centric Child Labour Remediation System, bringing the total number to **39**.



6 OHS  
COMMITTEE  
MEETINGS

held to review, evaluate and develop management plans for mine operational safety.



27  
SAVING  
GROUPS

comprised of



604  
MEMBERS

saved a total of



USD  
110,500

bringing the historic savings under the mechanism to **USD 209,415**.

This enabled the provision of peer-to-peer loans enabling the creation of **203 new micro-enterprises**,

bringing the total number of new businesses created to **323**.



ROOFING of  
131  
UNDERGROUND  
TUNNELS

to stabilise the mine entry points, bringing the total pits roofed to **136**.



8  
UNDERGROUND  
VENTILATORS

installed, financed by the sale of **COBALT CREDITS** to **Fairphone**, providing underground ventilation to **129 pits**, benefitting **5,220 underground workers**.



2 HEALTH &  
SAFETY  
BILLBOARDS

erected, bringing the total number of safety billboards on site to **12**



22  
TOOLBOX  
TRAINING  
SESSIONS

conducted by



100  
SAFETY  
CAPTAINS

trained in 2021 and 2022, reaching a total of



4040  
MINERS IN  
2024

Publication of the



1ST FCA  
ANNUAL  
SURVEY  
REPORT

informed by 2 surveys conducted on



500+  
PARTICIPANTS

from the mining community. This was accompanied by the publication of the **FCA RESULTS MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK**.



USD spent in 2024  
1,003,565



+3  
new members joined the alliance





# Enabling safe & dignified working conditions

Tshivet – one of the 100 safety captains trained by the FCA in 2021 and 2022 – during the weekly toolbox training done to socialise operational health and safety at the mine site.

## Embedding a safety culture through training

Over the past two years, we have made significant strides in promoting safer working conditions at the Kamilombe mine site through the training of 100 safety captains and the ongoing health and safety awareness-raising efforts. Throughout 2024, these safety captains led the organisation of weekly toolbox training sessions aimed at reinforcing health and safety knowledge and risk management approaches among miners. A total of 22 toolbox sessions were held on-site, covering topics such as cholera prevention, Mpox awareness, rainwater management, site sanitation, risks of working under heavy rainfall, and shaft protection measures. These sessions reached approximately 4,000 miners, including diggers, transporters, saliseurs (*Sailleurs are the group of workers that lift the ore from the tunnel to the surface*), depot workers, site cleaners, and washerwomen.

Our annual survey report<sup>1</sup> indicated a growing

perception of safety among underground workers, with 72% of respondents in 2024 feeling safe compared to 70% in 2023. However, the risk of accidents, including shaft collapses and flooding, underscores the continued importance of these awareness and training efforts. While these training sessions represent a positive step forward, survey data reveals that while overall awareness is relatively high, the application of key health and safety measures remains low at 26% across the site. The overall gaps in applying consistent safety practices underscore the continued need for regular training and reinforcement of safety protocols to drive sustained behavioural change and build a lasting safety culture on-site.

## PPE provision

Prior to FCA’s intervention, miners at Kamilombe largely worked without personal protective equipment (PPE). In response, FCA expanded its PPE provision efforts in 2024 to better safeguard miners from occupational hazards. PPE was distributed to various miner groups as follows:

**46 SHIRTS**  
for safety captains

**16 SHIRTS**  
for data collectors

**20 SHIRTS**  
for sensitisers involved in the RMI Normative Framework

**17 GUMBOOTS**  
34 gloves, 34 goggles, and 34 outfits for site cleaners

**200 GLOVES & GOGGLES**  
for miners

**235 HELMET & LAMPS**  
for underground miners

<sup>1</sup> The Fair Cobalt Alliance’s annual survey is a recurring assessment that gathers data on key social, economic, and environmental indicators at Kamilombe. Two surveys has been administered so far (2023 and 2024) with 500+ participants, aiming to track progress, identify challenges, and inform evidence-based decision-making to enhance responsible mining practices and community development efforts.





The FCA team donating uniforms to the safety captains for easier identification at the artisanal cobalt mine site.

The increased PPE distribution aligns with positive trends from the perception survey, which noted an increase in PPE usage from 38.3% in 2023 to 58.6% in 2024. Despite this progress, gaps remain, particularly regarding helmet and boot usage, which remain comparatively low at 16% in both cases.

### Mitigating hazards and safety risks collectively – pit roofing

Historically, pit shafts at Kamilombe were inadequately protected against rainwater and harsh weather conditions – as tarpaulins, typically made of plastic, are the most common material used to cover the pits – exposing miners to the constant risk of shaft collapses. A total of 40% of miners at Kamilombe experience flooding frequently, 76% of whom attribute the problem to uncovered shafts or poorly covered shafts. To address this hazard, FCA provided metal sheets to cover 131 pits, directly benefiting 5,240 miners, responding to 87% of the miners who have called for pit coverage. This intervention signif-

icantly improved safety by reducing water infiltration and mitigating structural weaknesses during rainy periods. With a lifespan of 10 to 15 years, the iron sheets not only last significantly longer than the tarpaulins—which previously had to be replaced at least three times a year at an average cost of USD 600 each time—but have also contributed to improved safety outcomes. Over the past eight months, the covered pits have reported no slipping and falling accidents, as the iron sheets prevent water infiltration.

The impact of this intervention was reflected in miners' testimonials:

*Mr. Moke Katulushi noted, “The pits were covered with tarpaulins; the risk was permanent. But covering the shafts with metal sheets has improved our safety.”*

*Similarly, Mr. Paul Bambi stated, “The use of tarpaulins was costly because of*



A pit recently covered with iron sheets – a durable alternative to the tarpaulins commonly used – to prevent accidents such as falling rocks and other hazards, such as flooding when it rains.

*their very limited lifespan. Covering the pits with metal sheets is effective, and safety is now ensured for the miners.”*

While significant progress has been made, our survey data revealed that shaft collapses and ground subsidence remain the most frequently identified risks and causes of accidents. This highlights that while roofing efforts have been impactful in reducing the risks, they alone are insufficient mitigation measures. Miners have emphasised the need for additional structural reinforcements, such as timbering and routine maintenance, as critical next steps. Building on the success achieved, we remain committed to working with CMDS to ensure lasting improvements.

### OHS signage and awareness-raising campaigns

FCA continued efforts to raise awareness about occupational health and safety through visual messaging and participatory methods. Four

theatre performances were held on-site, reaching approximately 9,420 miners with messages about key safety practices such as PPE usage, pit roofing, cholera prevention, dust hazards, rainwater management and site cleanliness.

Additionally, FCA installed two new OHS billboards and repaired six existing billboards, bringing the total number of active billboards on-site to 22. These billboards served as constant visual reminders of proper health and safety protocols, enforcing a safety culture on site. Our survey data highlighted the need for continuous reinforcement through both visual and interactive approaches to embed behavioural change among miners at Kamilombe, and this will continue to be our focus in 2025. A local theatre group with skits on various operational health and safety topics, with messages about key safety practices such as PPE usage, pit roofing, cholera prevention, dust hazards, rainwater management and site cleanliness.

One of the Swahili safety signages at the ar-





A local theatre group with skits on various operational health and safety topics, with messages about key safety practices such as PPE usage, pit roofing, cholera prevention, dust hazards, rainwater management and site cleanliness.

tisanal mine site reads, “Think! Security is for everyone. Please consider your safety and that of others. We only have one life.”

### Mine safety governance and monitoring

The OHS Committee, established in 2021 as a multi-stakeholder committee comprising a Chair from the Kamoto Copper Company (Chair), a Co-Chair from Service d’Assistance et d’Encadrement de l’Exploitation Minière Artisanale et à Petite Échelle (SAEMAPE), CMDs, and FCA (Secretariat), continued to serve as a platform that provides oversight, reviews opportunities and addresses OHS concerns at the mine site. The committee convened six times over the year to discuss critical safety issues, including waste management, sanitation improvements, the pro-

vision of neck braces and stretchers, PPE distribution, and pit covering efforts.

### Improving access to digital financial products

The JET Minerals project is part of USAID’s Countering Transnational Corruption (CTC) Grand Challenge initiative, designed to address the structural financial and market challenges artisanal cobalt miners face. The project builds on learnings from FCA’s mine-wide perception surveys, which highlighted low levels of financial literacy, poor access to formal financial services, and widespread concerns about corruption in the cobalt marketing process. The informality of the cash-based marketplace further entrenches corruption, as 98% of miners reported



Members of the project consortium – Trust Merchant Bank, Coopérative Minière pour le Développement Social (CMDs), Alternatives for Action (AFA) and the FCA, during a stakeholder analysis workshop at the start of the project.

not having a bank account, and 95% relied on informal sources for loans. In response, the pilot project—implemented in partnership with Trust Merchant Bank (TMB), Coopérative Minière pour le Développement Social (CMDs) and local civil society organisation Alternatives for Action (AFA)—aims to improve access to digital banking services to enhance financial transparency in mineral trading through the introduction of a mobile banking and payment solution called The Pepele Mobile platform.

Key activities implemented in 2024 included:

- **Baseline assessment, connectivity study, and stakeholder analysis.**
- **Training and sensitisation sessions for miners, traders, and VSLA members on the use of the Pepele Mobile platform. A total of 2,363 people were sensitised,**

**comprising 1,979 men and 384 women, including 2,084 miners and traders and 279 VSLA members.**

- **Procurement process was initiated for solar-powered kiosks to address connectivity and charging needs at the mining site.**

While progress has been made, survey findings underscore the scale of financial exclusion, with formal banking and credit access virtually non-existent among miners. Transitioning to digital payments is a critical step, but sustained engagement, infrastructure improvements, and capacity-building will be required to ensure the uptake of mobile banking solutions and lasting market transparency.





## Child labour prevention & remediation

The Hub's Director, Chadrack Kanyingu and Odette Kanimu – a case manager under The Hub – visit a family under the child labour remediation programme. Case managers are a key part of The Hub's programme – they monitor and support the children and their families until the end of the programme. Case managers regularly visit and speak to the families and provide support as needed.

Photo: © Cristina Karrer, 2024

### About The Hub for Child Labour Prevention and Remediation

Launched in 2022 by The Centre for Child Rights and Business (The Centre) with the financial support of Save the Children Germany and the FCA, The Hub for Child Labour Prevention and Remediation (The Hub) is a long-term, sustainable initiative that supports children and youth in ASM communities, keeping them out of child labour and connecting them to education and skills-building opportunities. The Hub is established as a not-for-profit association by six local civil society organisations (CSOs) and The Centre for Child Rights and Business ('The Centre'), who currently manage the day-to-day operations of The Hub. The Hub has a growing network of over 20 case managers working alongside other child rights practitioners to identify synergies and scale impact.

The Hub has also continued the exchange and alignment with government policies and structures. During 2024, nearly all of the new cases that have been introduced to our child labour remediation programmes were referred to us via the government-run system – Le Système de Suivi et de Remédiation du Travail des Enfants (SSRTE) – for identification and follow-up of children found in child labour in mining. Furthermore, government representatives responsible for child protection and social affairs were invited to the 3-day-long training programme for case managers to further strengthen collaboration and build capacity in local structures.

### Breaking the Cycle: The Hub's 2024 Impact in Child Labour Remediation

The Hub marked its second year as an independent local association, breaking the cycle of child labour through a holistic, child-centred remediation programme that considers both family needs and local realities.

### Child Labour Remediation by the numbers

The FCA's 2024 financial contribution enabled the continuation of remediation support for 20 out of the 43 children, 14 of whom are still in the programme. 13 of the remaining children are in primary and secondary school, and 1 is enrolled in a vocational school. A total of 204 months of child labour remediation were provided in 2024 to the children receiving FCA's financial support, bringing the historical total to 304 months.

**38 CHILDREN**

currently under the remediation programme

**20 OF THE CHILDREN**

financially supported by the FCA

**34 CHILDREN**

currently enrolled in primary & secondary school

**4 CHILDREN**

enrolled in vocational school

**383 MONTHS**

of child labour remediation provided in 2024

**25 JUNIOR**

case managers approved

**4 CHILDREN**

completed the programme

**1 CHILD**

dropped out of the programme



## Case Study Resilience and Rediscovery

In 2024, The Hub had 39 approved case managers; among them, 14 active ones and 25 approved junior case managers who will continue to receive training. The Hub team regularly conduct case manager training sessions, as pictured here in July 2024.

Photo: © The Centre for Child Rights and Business, 2024

Meet Dolie\* (not her real name), who dropped out of school at 13 to work in her aunt's restaurant within a mining concession. Like many children in ASM communities, she came from an impoverished family with no safety net. When her father—the main breadwinner and caregiver—unexpectedly passed away, her aunt took her in, but in exchange, Dolie worked six days a week for free. The restaurant's location within the mining ecosystem exposed her to dust, harsh weather, and dangerous roads.

Her fate changed when The Hub team met her at 12 years old and assessed her situation. She received a health check and was enrolled in the remediation programme when she was 13 years old, where she was assigned a dedicated case manager—one of 25 following rigorous training by The Centre. To ease her family's financial burden, she was provided with a monthly living stipend through her aunt and enrolled in a fully funded sewing course. Despite having only completed Grade 6, Dolie excelled, becoming one of the top students in her

class. With financial support from The Hub, she no longer needs to work, and her foster family's situation has improved. She will continue receiving a stipend and vocational training sponsorship until September 2025, when she turns 16 – the legal working age in the DRC. *"I'm glad I'm doing this cutting and sewing course; it will help me become a seamstress. The Hub's remediation programme is a great opportunity for me to have a normal childhood again,"* Dolie said.

Long-term support like Dolie's is made possible by continued financial support from the FCA, which has supported the initiative since its establishment. A growing number of companies connected to the cobalt supply chain also play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability and expansion of The Hub's programmes. In 2024, three global companies and one government initiative provided financial support to The Hub, which will allow The Hub to integrate more children into the remediation programme and launch a decent-work-for-youth initiative in 2025.



Group photo during the case manager training at Kolwezi in Lualaba province.

*"2024 marked a key year for The Hub as we saw a significant rise in private sector investment, underscoring these companies' acknowledgment of their responsibility towards ASM communities, despite the often complex and indirect nature of these companies' connections to cobalt. It was fulfilling to see our case manager network grow and to see a genuine passion and commitment amongst them to provide chil-*

*dren and their families with opportunities for a brighter future,"* said Chadrack Kanyingu, Director of The Hub.

At the FCA, we continue to support The Hub's work with fundraising efforts, offering children working in mining communities a path away from mining and an opportunity to not only chase their dreams but also to have a normal childhood.



## LME School Infrastructure Project

A recently renovated block of the Centre Promotion Familiale (CPF), a vocational training centre in the Kapata mining community that surrounds the Kamilombe mining community, an opportunity for the learners to study in a much more dignified setting.

In partnership with the London Metal Exchange (LME), FCA continued work in 2024 on improving school infrastructure and sanitation measures in three Kapata schools as part of the Child Labour Remediation Programme. These efforts aim to improve the study and learning environment to encourage children to return to school rather than engage in mining activities. The first construction phase included building 1.2 km of brick fencing walls at three schools—Centre Promotion Familiale (CPF), Dima, and Kabulungu—to address vandalism and enhance security. The second phase, launched in late 2024 and scheduled for completion in early 2025, involves rehabilitating school buildings and sanitary blocks at each school. Additional improvements include providing CPF with technical education equipment and drilling a well at Dima to ensure access to clean drinking water.

Monitoring and evaluation has clarified the project's impact and ongoing challenges. For example, at Kabulungu, new fencing reduced un-

authorised access and vandalism, improving the safety of the school environment. However, issues persist, with some individuals still managing to trespass.

Sanitation remains a critical issue across the schools. Kabulungu and Dima continue to struggle with inadequate toilet facilities, while CPF's improvements primarily benefited staff, leaving students with limited access. Access to clean water is also particularly challenging at Dima, where students are required to bring their own water. The FCA is working towards remedying both of these challenges at the schools involved.

These findings highlight the need for continued investment in infrastructure, particularly sanitation and water supply, alongside measures to address gender disparities in enrollment and dropout rates. FCA will continue to work closely with school management to monitor progress and ensure the sustained improvement of educational conditions in these schools.



## Economic Resilience

Members of one of the 27 saving groups during one of the regular group meetings to keep track of the money saved. The members pool their savings and pay according to their means.

Since 2022, FCA has supported the establishment of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) as part of its broader strategy to strengthen the economic resilience of mining households in the Kapata community, together with our implementation partner, Alternatives for Action (AFA). By 2024, 30 VSLAs had been created across three cycles, with 27 remaining active, involving 604 members. Participants have been trained in financial literacy, savings culture, and entrepreneurship, equipping them to better manage their incomes and launch small businesses.

Survey data highlighted persistent financial insecurity among miners and community members,

with just 10% of community members reporting saving or investing part of their income, reflecting the fragile financial landscape. The creation of 203 income-generating activities (IGAs) by VSLA participants, with members drawing on savings and loan funds to start small businesses such as food trading and tailoring, is demonstrative of the resilience being forged.

The impact of the savings groups extends beyond income generation. Case studies illustrate how participants have been able to stabilise their household incomes, finance their children's education, and improve their living conditions.



Key 2024 figures

Amount Saved (USD)	USD 110,500
Solidarity Funds	USD 2,557
# people with access to loans	345 (123 men, 222 women)
Loans	USD 58,200
Fund Repaid	USD 33,792
# of VSLAs (Groups)	27
# of Active Members	604
IGA Created	203
Amount allocated to IGAs	USD 44,692
Members were trained in VSLA methodology, group dynamics and leadership	148 (56 men, 92 women)
Members trained in entrepreneurship	100
Amount allocated to children's education (USD)	6,477
Amount used for healthcare (USD)	1,765
Amount invested in agriculture (USD)	3,676

Case Study 1

“My name is Moise Isema, member of the Agapao saving group, father of 5, living in Kapata, married. Since I was very young, I have had a passion for business, but I always had difficulty mobilising the turnover to get started. My wife and I had undertaken small activities to raise financial capital without success, as a result, not all of my children were studying, and my household was experiencing enormous difficulties in survival. Having considered this vulnerability, I decided, during the third phase of FCA’s savings project, via AFA, to join the Agapao group. From then on, we have known a new way of living because things have started to change thanks to the ease of access to credit. To date, thanks to the credit of 2,000,000 FC, or about USD 700 contracted through the VSLA, we have a luxury clothing store, two little houses, and our 4 children are all in school. Life in our home has really taken a new turn thanks to savings.”

Case Study 2

“I am Mrs. Angèle Nongo, member of the Jerusalem savings group, mother of 10 children, residing in Kapata, wife and housewife. I joined the FCA’s savings project in the first phase of the project. Before I joined, my husband and I had experienced enormous difficulties in ensuring our children’s schooling. Some of them could not study and those who were studying were always expelled due to the non-payment of school fees because of the economic vulnerability of our household. Since joining this savings program, I have had the ease of accessing credit to send my children to school, allowing me to put all my children back in school. I received a loan of 550,000 Fc, or USD 195, in order to re-enrol my 5 children. To date, I have 1 licentiate, 3 state graduates in my house, 1 of whom is currently at university. This feat is made possible thanks to the savings project.”



Saving group session during one of their regular meetings. Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are designed to support communities, mine workers and disadvantaged people to save more efficiently and to help build solidarity among members while providing a safety net against predatory lending in the community



### RMI ASM Cobalt Normative Framework

CMDS commenced the implementation of the RMI ASM Cobalt Normative Framework to enhance environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance at the Kamilombe mine

site. An initial training on the seven principles of the framework was delivered to 20 participants, including 17 CMDS members and 3 state representatives with a corrective action plan developed. Following this, CMDS conducted awareness sessions on-site, reaching a total of 4,516 individuals – 3,359 men and 1,157 women.



### Driving impact through the Responsible Mineral Credits mechanism

In August 2023, the FCA teamed up with Dutch electronics brand Fairphone – a co-founding member of the FCA – to launch an innovative solution: the Responsible Mineral Credits (RMC) mechanism. The idea was simple but powerful—to make it easier for companies to directly participate in creating responsible mineral supply chains, starting with the artisanal cobalt and copper mining sectors.

#### How do credits work?

Companies pay USD 5,000 per tonne of cobalt produced at the artisanal mine site—equivalent to 10% of the commodity’s average price over the past three years— to purchase credits. Each credit verifies that a corresponding tonne of cobalt was produced and sold with defined environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards.

### What do buyers get in return?

Credible assurance that their purchase supports continuous mine improvements that will, over time, enable safer, more responsible mining, backed by well-defined ESG standards. This offers a practical way to support the professionalisation of the sector, even if direct physical offtake and physical integration of ASM material into global supply chains remains challenging. The funds raised are managed by The Impact Facility, FCA’s secretariat, with transparent and inclusive governance. A Fund Allocation Committee (FAC)—comprising FCA, CMDS, and representatives of mine workers, including women washers, diggers, transporters, and sailiseurs—collectively decides how funds are used. Together, they focus on four key areas:

- good governance,
- safe and dignified working conditions,
- environmental protection, and
- inclusive economic development.



Process flow of the Responsible Mineral Credits mechanism.



## From idea to proof of concept: improvement of mine site ventilation conditions

Fairphone led by example, purchasing USD 12,000 worth of cobalt credits – equivalent to 2.5 tonnes of cobalt – equivalent to its full 2023 consumption – coinciding with the launch of the Fairphone 5. This investment directly funded improvements at the Kamilombe artisanal mine

At Kamilombe mine, miners faced a serious risk—poor air circulation underground that left them struggling for oxygen. To ventilate their tunnels, they relied on blowers powered by dynamos rented from private shaft owners. But these rentals came with high fees, plus extra fuel and

maintenance costs, putting an unfair financial strain on the miners. Using proceeds from the sale of cobalt credits under the RMC mechanism, the Fund Allocation Committee approved a proposal from underground diggers to purchase 8 dynamos and 8 engines for USD 8,000 to improve air circulation underground. These dynamos are ventilating 129 pits, improving safety for over 5,000 miners, reducing the risk of suffocation and gas poisoning. As a result, the number of diggers per shaft has increased from 40 to 70, with more workers confident in the improved underground conditions. The improved safety conditions are coupled with reduced operational costs for pit owners. Ventilation costs are now shared among 15 pit owners, cutting weekly expenses to USD 32 per shaft—USD 16 for fuel



Two dynamos ready for delivery at the Kamilombe mine site.

and USD 16 for maintenance—saving miners over USD 110 per week.

Reflecting on the benefits of the dynamos installed, Katulushi Moke, one of the beneficiaries of the project, said,

*“Many things have improved with the acquisition of dynamos financed through the RMC project. With the old practice of renting private dynamos, the expenses were enormous. Per day, we used 15 litres of petrol; 1 litre costs 4000 Fc, equivalent to USD 1.41, which means we spent USD 21.15 per day. This means that for every six-day week, we would spend USD 126.9. Maintenance costs are \$16 per week, so the overall cost is USD 142.9 per week. With the implementation of this project, the result is very satisfactory. For example, the dynamo installed at Paul Bambi’s shaft supports 15 shafts. With this system, the cost is shared between the 15 shaft owners.”*



Katulushi Moke, one of the underground diggers benefitting from the provision of dynamos for underground ventilation.

## A safe space for women washers at the Kamilombe artisanal mine site

At the mine site, washer women spend their days washing ore, yet they lack a private space to change into or out of their heavy wader boots. Forced to manage in public, they endure daily discomfort. Seeking a solution, the women proposed a dedicated changing room. For USD 12,307, a supplier has been selected to bring their vision to life. Once built, this space will offer privacy, comfort, and a renewed sense of dignity for the women who play a vital role in the mining process.

## Scaling the Responsible Mineral Credits mechanism

Although the USD 12,000 from Fairphone has been instrumental in establishing a pilot for the mechanism, only through significant investment can the RMC mechanism be scaled to make a more significant impact in the sector. This is why we are excited to have received funding from the EPRM to scale and digitise the mechanism. Together with our partners under the EPRM project – Fairphone, the Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM), and Datastake – this funding allows the consortium to raise the mechanism’s visibility across the cobalt and copper supply chain.

*“I’m happy to see the better and safer working conditions resulting from our first cobalt credits purchase at the Kamilombe copper-cobalt mine in DRC! Just imagine how much more can be achieved if more companies start accounting for their cobalt consumption with cobalt credits. Welcome to join this change.”*

Lisa Minere,  
Project Manager Fair Mining,  
Fairphone



Scaling our impact in partnership with EGC

Throughout the year, we continued our partnership with Entreprise Générale du Cobalt (EGC) together with its consortium partners to establish the first legal and responsible artisanal mining site operations in the DRC. The goal is to develop a replicable and scalable model that achieves economic viability in the medium term.

If successful, this pilot will provide a viable pathway for international midstream and downstream companies to responsibly source ASM material. It also aims to align with the DRC Government and the DRC Battery Council’s efforts to enhance local value addition in the strategic minerals sector—supporting the development of clean and sustainable battery production in the

DRC, in line with the MoU signed between the U.S., DRC, and Zambia.

Key project objectives:

- **Improve working conditions for artisanal miners and protect vulnerable populations;**
- **Minimise environmental harm and support the social development of ASM-affected communities;**
- **Increase incomes from artisanal mining;**
- **Ensure full traceability to an RMAP-conformant crude refiner; and**
- **Strengthen the DRC’s reputation and investment climate to attract responsible investment.**



Artisanal miners descending into one of the pits at the Kamilombe artisanal cobalt-copper mine site. Photo: © Olivier Delafoy

2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

Contributions to the FCA are received and managed by The Impact Facility, which functions as the permanent FCA Secretariat. As a UK charity, The Impact Facility’s financial accounts undergo independent financial audits every year, which are filed with the Charity Commission of England and Wales in line with UK charitable regulations. Our annual budget and workplan are subject to approval by the FCA’s Steering Committee, who also monitor and review quarterly reporting on expenditures and workplan progress.

The FCA’s programme implementation is financed through annual membership contributions, grants from (institutional) donors and public subsidies towards specific projects. All membership contributions are pooled to finance the implementation of the Steering Committee-approved workplan; as such, individual member contributions are not attributed to specific activities.

Incoming funds for 2024

Based on projected membership contributions and potential donor funding, the Steering Committee initially approved a 2024 budget of USD 1,444,844. However, as the year began, it became clear that confirmed funding would fall short of this target. To reflect this, the budget was revised down by USD 80,000, resulting in a final approved budget of USD 1.36 million.

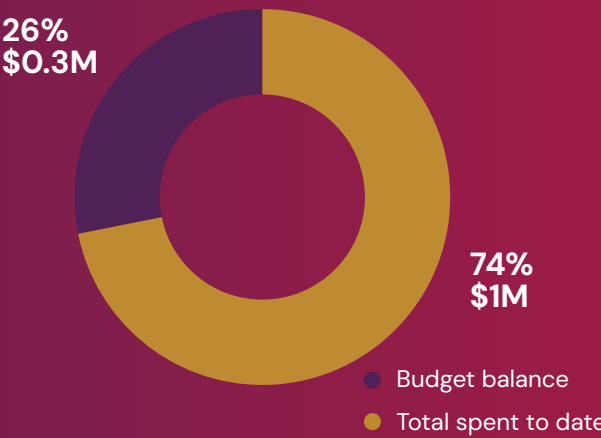
By the end of 2024, the actual income received by FCA totalled USD 940,000, representing approximately 69% of the revised budget. This gap underscores the importance of securing more

predictable and diversified funding to ensure continued impact and programme delivery.

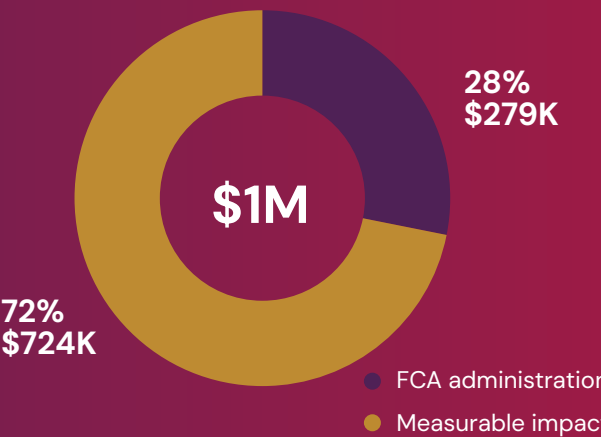
Budget status overview

The USD 1,364,844 million budget was spread across administrative costs and the four work-streams.

BUDGET VS EXPENDITURE 2024



TOTAL SPENT PER ACTIVITY



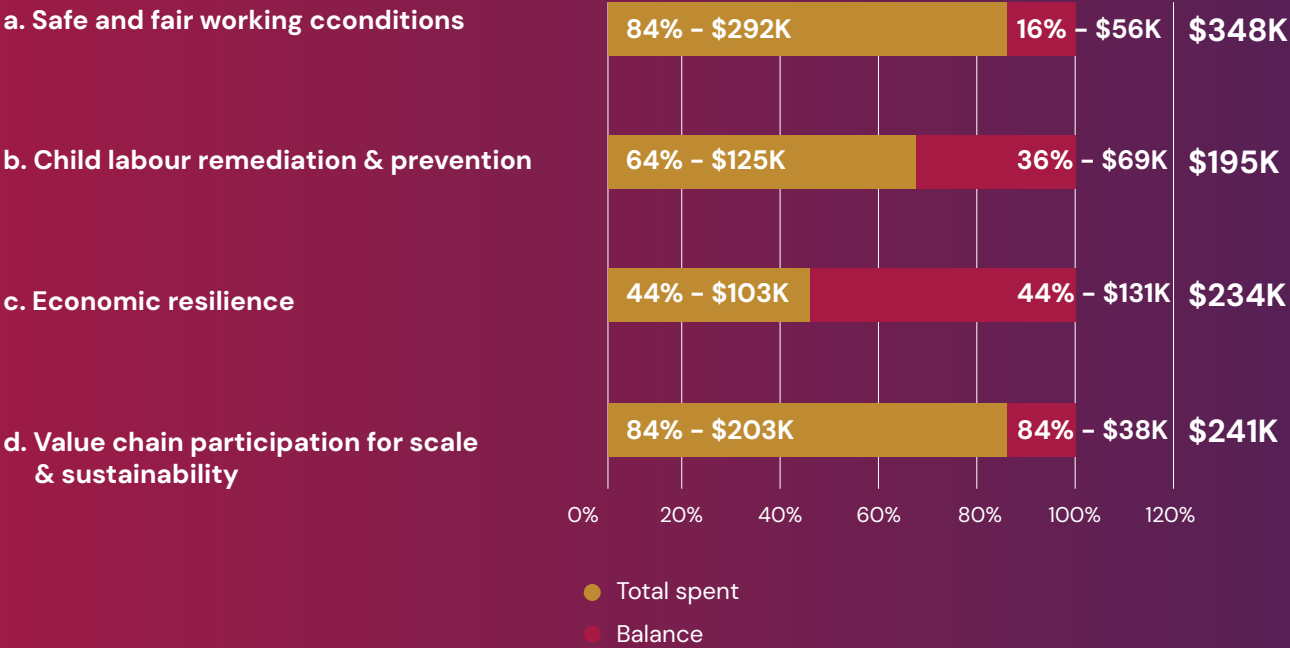


Measurable impact workstream

The budget and expenditures were allocated as outlined below:

- Safe and fair working conditions:** USD 292,373 – 84% of the allocated budget of USD 348,456 – has been spent on our interventions to improve safety measures like personal protective equipment, roofing pits and worker training at Kamilombe.
- Child labour prevention and remediation:** USD 125,573 – 64% of the budget of USD 195,429 – was spent on the ongoing support for the child remediation programme through The Hub.
- Economic resilience:** USD 103,295 – 44% of the USD 224,939 budget – was spent on expanding the savings groups and increasing financial access through the digitised payments programme done by the JET Minerals Project.
- Value chain participation for scale and sustainability:** The work focused on scaling and digitising the cobalt credit mechanism with our partners under the EPRM-funded project, while enhancing international outreach for market acceptance of responsibly sourced ASM materials – utilising USD 202,944 (84% of the allocated USD 241,254).
- FCA administration:** USD 279,379 (28%) was spent on office, administration and overhead costs. This includes administrative costs such as office rent, audits, legal fees, electronic devices for staff, insurance and relevant software needs of the team. In addition, a 15% overhead contribution derived from total costs to The Impact Facility, as permanent secretariat of the FCA, is included as part of the administration costs.

MEASURABLE IMPACT  
BUDGET VS ACTUAL SPENT

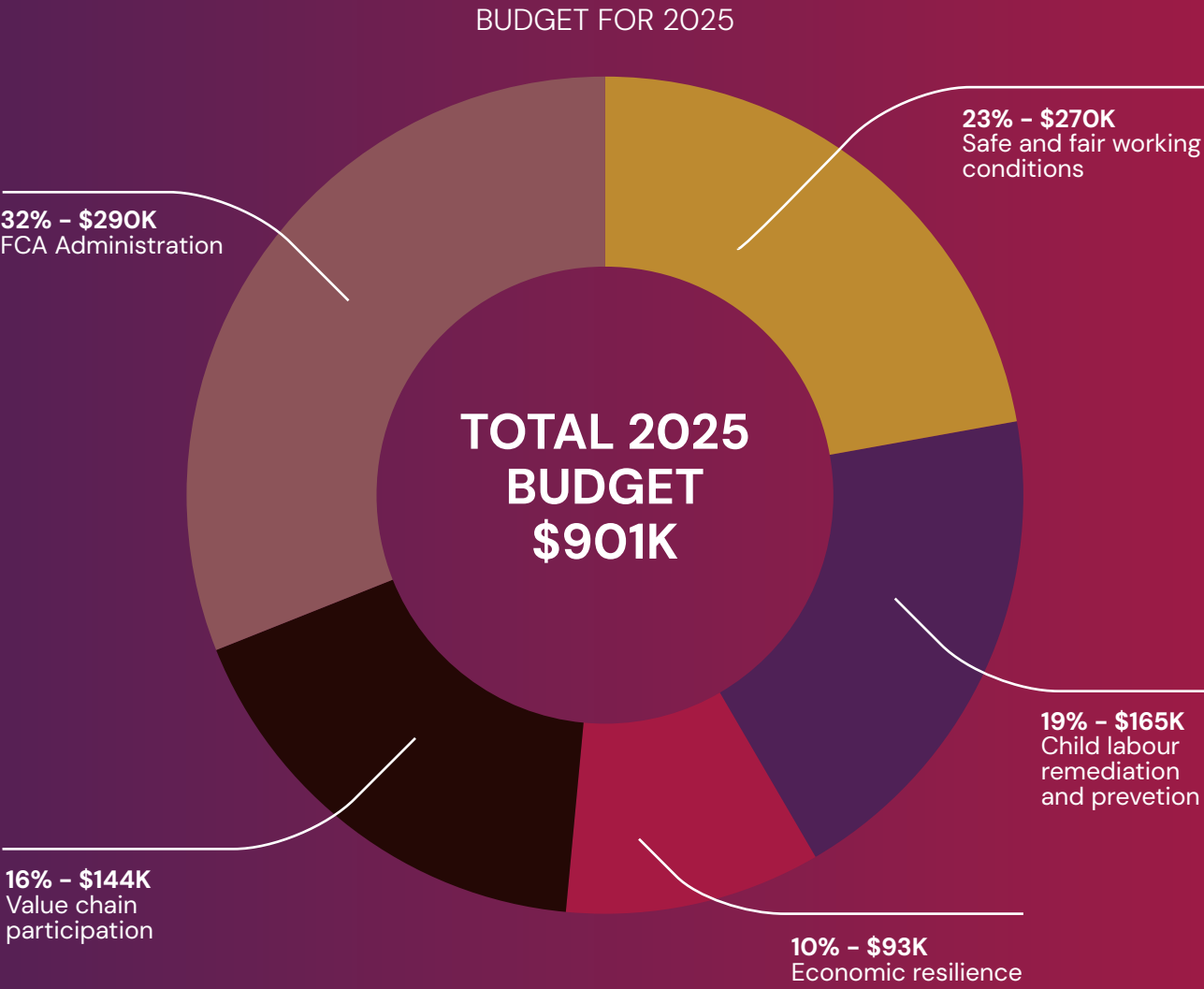


The above expenditures resulted in restricted funds being carried over into the 2025 financial year, amounting to USD 221,285. There were savings of 26% in staffing costs realised due to the delayed start dates of the JET Minerals Project Manager (*April 22, 2024*) and the FCA Executive Director (*July 23, 2024*). The remaining amount of the restricted budget carried over into 2025 is largely to support:

- The completion of the LME School improvement project in Q1 of 2025
- Jet Mineral Challenge Project continuation
- FCA’s three-month organisational reserves

Budget forecast for 2025

Looking ahead, the 2025 budget is currently set at USD 901,289, excluding two projects awaiting confirmation. If the pending projects are approved and payments received, the total budget would increase to USD 3,030,320, which would include USD 1,990,000 from a USAID grant and USD 139,030 for a dewatering management and safety training programme at Kamilombe in partnership with Kamoto Copper Company (KCC).





# CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT: GOVERNANCE

## Our members

Since the launch of the FCA in August 2020, our membership has grown significantly to now tally 21 members, and it is with the support and

commitment of our diversified membership that we are able to report on the impact of our work showcased in the pages above.



“Joining the Fair Cobalt Alliance as a member has given us deeper insight into the unique challenges and opportunities of the ASM cobalt sector in the DRC. The high visibility of issues surrounding ASM cobalt raises the stakes significantly, demonstrating that ASM communities can benefit from mineral demand driven by the energy transition. The work of the FCA could serve as a blueprint for collective action worldwide, unlocking the social and economic potential of well-managed ASM. Systemic change takes time, but the FCA enables companies to take action now through innovative solutions, such as the successfully piloted “cobalt credits” with Fairphone. We encourage more supply chain actors to get involved—this is a valuable opportunity to transform a supply chain risk into meaningful social and economic benefits.”

**Marcin Piersiak, Executive Director Europe, Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM)**

## Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC), composed of elected representatives, provides strategic oversight of

the FCA strategy and programmatic direction to ensure objectives are met and funds mobilised.

## Meet our Steering Committee members

Ines Kaempher (Chair)	The Centre for Child Rights and Business
Angela Jorns	Fairphone
Anne-Marie Fleury	Glencore
Ferdinand Maubry	Tesla
Jihye Choi	LG Energy Solution
Julien Kagere	Centre Arrupe pour la Recherche et la Formation (CARF)
Jon Bauer	Google
Marcin Piersiak	Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM)

## Advisory Board

The FCA Advisory Board comprises 10 members, including subject matter experts, practitioners and civil society members willing to help shape the further development of the FCA approach and evolution of our programme by providing non-binding advice to the FCA Secretariat and SC. Our dedicated advisory board members serve within their individual capacities and share our commitment to multi-stakeholder action to create better developmental outcomes for ASM mining communities. In 2024, we welcomed Holger Grundel (Managing Director, Levin Sources) as the new chairperson of the Advisory Board and look forward to the continued impact under his leadership. More details on the Advisory Board and meeting summaries are available [here](#).

We continue to work with Congolese and strategic partners to transform the artisanal copper-cobalt sector, ensuring alignment with na-

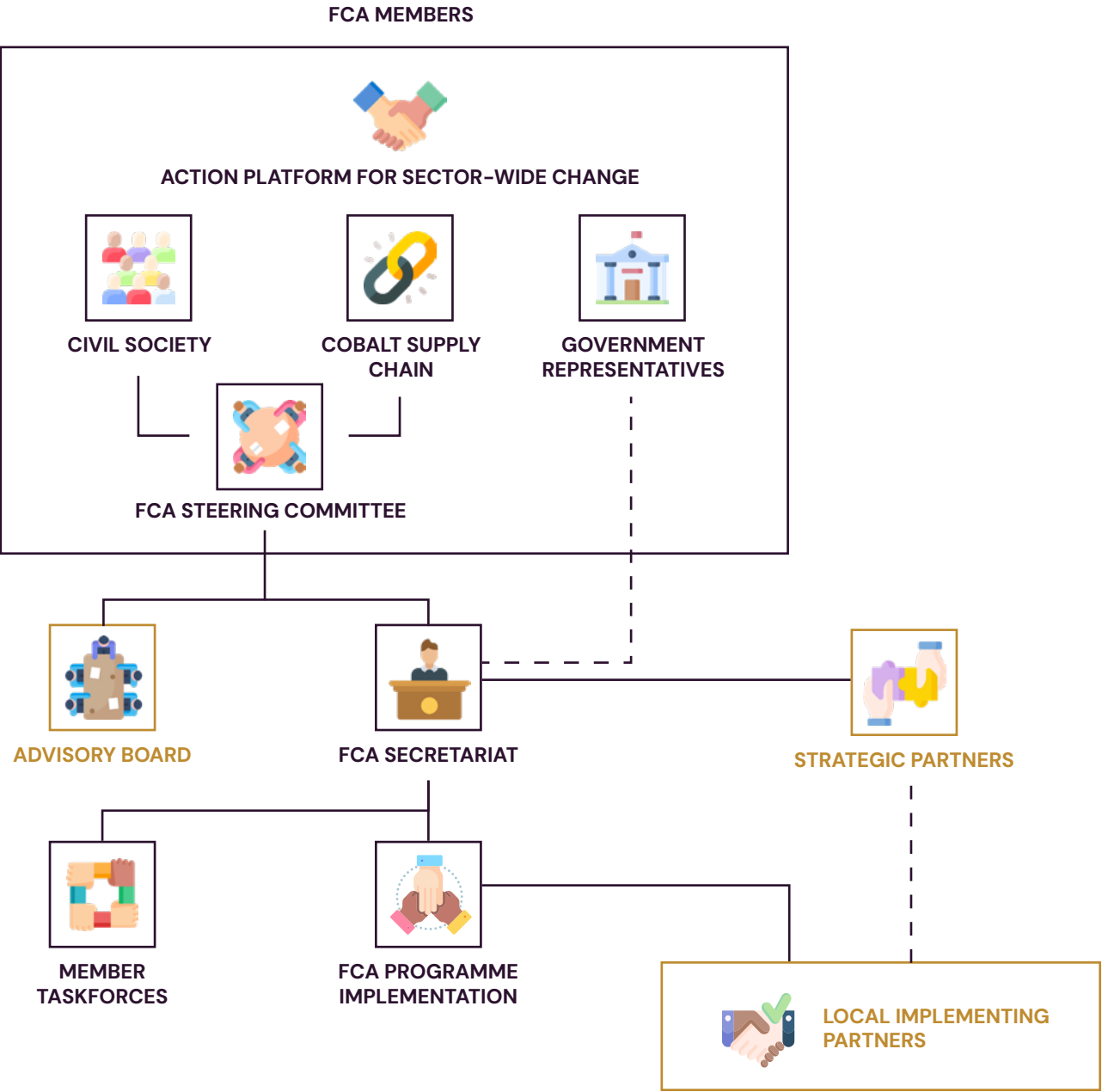
tional policies and leveraging a broad range of expertise across our network to achieve FCA’s objectives. FCA is actively engaging with key Congolese institutions, including the Cellule Technique de Coordination et de Planification Minière (CTCPM) that serves as an advisory, research, and coordination body for the mining sector in the DRC; Service d’Assistance et d’Encadrement des Mines Artisanales et de Petite Échelle (SAEMAPE), a government agency that works to facilitate the organisation of artisanal miners into cooperatives and ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks for artisanal mining supervision, and Entreprise Générale du Cobalt (EGC), a government agency that holds an exclusive mandate to purchase and market artisanally mined critical minerals requiring processing before export.

Our commitment to global co-operation in responsible mining: Internationally, the FCA continued its engagement as a member of the Resolve’s Public-Private Alliance for Responsible



Minerals Trade (PPA) and European Partnership for Responsible Minerals (EPRM), both of which are multi-stakeholder initiatives that have a mandate to support responsible mineral pro-

duction and sourcing at artisanal mining communities. These partnerships enhance stakeholder coordination, promote transparency, and support long-term improvements in the sector.



Learn more about the FCA on our website:  
[www.faircobaltalliance.org](http://www.faircobaltalliance.org)

Follow us on social media:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/fair-cobalt-alliance>

Contact us at:  
[secretariat@faircobaltalliance.org](mailto:secretariat@faircobaltalliance.org)

The Fair Cobalt Alliance is an initiative managed by The Impact Facility, a UK-registered charity and founding member of FCA that serves as its permanent Secretariat.

The Impact Facility, UK Charity Registration Number: 1181077, Registered office: Avening Park, West End, Tetbury, GL8 8NE. Learn more about The Impact Facility at: [www.theimpactfacility.com](http://www.theimpactfacility.com)

