



How-To Guide for Making a Difference

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Congo's problems will ultimately be solved through solutions created and implemented by the Congolese people, but international advocates can play an important role in assisting those initiatives through a variety of actions. This section details some of those options, but as with any form of activism, the opportunities are constantly shifting, and we hope you will seek out new ways to get involved for years to come.

Pass a conflict-free minerals resolution at your school or in your city or state

Enough's Conflict-Free Campus Initiative (CFCI) brings together students and other activists who are looking for a concrete way to leverage their consumer power to support conflict-free minerals sourcing from Congo. By encouraging school administrators, procurement officers, and technology departments—all of whom have influence over large purchases of electronics and can be powerful spokespersons—to commit to measures that pressure electronics companies to invest responsibly in Congo's minerals sector, students are voicing the demand for conflict-free products from Congo.

The main component of the program focuses on students passing campus-level procurement resolutions. Passing a CFCI resolution means that when a school considers contracting with companies that use conflict minerals in their products, the school will give preference to companies that have strong conflict-free minerals supply chain policies and practices in place, as compared to companies with weak or nonexistent policies. While the program focuses on school resolutions, activists have also extended the procurement policy principle to pass city- and state-level legislation that similarly requires the respective institutions to take companies' conflict mineral sourcing policies into account when deciding whether or not to procure from them. As of November 2018, twenty-six schools, seven cities, and two states had passed conflict-free resolutions.

CFCI has been at the forefront of the consumer activism movement, with students and activists interacting directly with companies on various levels, including leading letter-writing, social-media, and letter-to-the-editor campaigns. Students have also met with company executives, including Intel CEO Brian Krzanich, who was an early champion of the transition to conflict-free electronics products. In addition to working on resolutions, CFCI students and activists undertake a wide range of activities to support an end to violence and corruption in Congo. In



the past, CFCI has been involved in the push to appoint a US special envoy to the Great Lakes region of Africa, which encompasses Congo and the surrounding region, with some students even having the opportunity to meet with successive US special envoys Russ Feingold and Tom Perriello after they were appointed.

Lobby for policies that support responsible minerals sourcing

As of 2018, the only US federal law related to conflict minerals is Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the corresponding Securities and Exchange Commission conflict minerals rule. Consumers, investors, and activists should hold companies accountable to this law by examining their annual conflict minerals reports and pushing companies that aren't required to report to voluntarily disclose similar information. Annual reporting is a core component of due diligence, and concerned consumers should therefore pressure companies to release this information, and encourage policymakers to prioritize enforcement of the reporting and implementation of additional, complementary legislation that will further benefit Congolese mining communities. To quickly contact twenty of the largest consumer electronics and jewelry retail companies and ask them about their conflict minerals policies, please visit www.enoughproject.org/demandthesupply.

In addition to the US conflict minerals rule, there is also a European Union (EU) regulation, but it applies to a much smaller group of companies—those that directly import minerals or refine minerals in the EU. In 2023 the EU will conduct a review of the regulation and will have the opportunity to add end-user companies to the list of those required to report on their conflict minerals sourcing practices. Europeans should encourage this expansion of the legislation by requesting that end-user companies begin voluntarily complying with the EU regulations. Activists in Europe can use the company contact tool at www.enoughproject.org/demandthesupply and personalize their messages to ask specifically about whether the company plans to comply voluntarily with the EU regulations.

By consistently raising conflict minerals as an important issue both with companies and lawmakers, consumers can demonstrate the demand for enhanced compliance and enforcement.

Focus especially on the main mineral still funding conflict—gold

Gold and the jewelers that sell it are a particularly important focus for consumer activism. It is critical to increase the demand for conflict-free gold from Congo, since gold has become the chief funder of armed groups. The small conflict-free gold supply chain from Congo needs much more support and demand. The first-ever verified conflict-free artisanal gold from Congo was sold to North American jewelers in 2017, when Toronto-based Fair Trade Jewellery Co. sold mine-to-market gold jewelry from the Just Gold project run by Canadian NGO IMPACT.¹ Then in October 2018, the first-ever shipment of conflict-free artisanal gold from Congo to a U.S. jeweler made its way to US markets through a project that Enough, USAID, Richline, Asahi Refinery,

¹ “Jeweller Completes First Export of Responsible & Conflict-Free Artisanal Gold from Eastern Congo to Canada,” available at <https://impacttransform.org/en/jeweller-completes-first-export-of-responsible-conflict-free-artisanal-gold-from-eastern-congo-to-canada/>.



and others were a part of produce, transport, and ultimately sell the gold to US jeweler Signet – owner of Kay, Jared, and Zales. If this progress is built on to demonstrate that there is enough demand and money to be made from conflict-free gold, and if other key gold reforms are forthcoming, it could change the market for conflict gold in eastern Congo away from armed groups. Those include consequences for conflict gold smugglers, tax reforms to incentivize a legal trade and not smuggling, and more legal titling to Congolese gold mining cooperatives.

Activists interested in supporting this campaign should leverage their consumer power by inquiring with jewelry companies about the source of their gold. This can mean simply walking into a store and asking the salesperson for information about the company’s minerals sourcing policies and whether they know if any of their gold is sourced responsibly from Congo. This may catch the employee off guard, but that’s good! If they don’t have an answer, consumers can request that the question be brought to the appropriate person in the company and ask for an answer to be provided in follow-up before deciding whether to purchase from that company or not. When retailers get questions about these issues, they inform management, so the higher-ups in the company become aware of what questions people are asking. This demonstrates to companies that consumers actually take this information into account when making purchasing decisions. That is consumer power.

These same types of questions can be asked via Twitter or other social media or sent through a company’s email inquiry system. If a company has little or no information about the source of their gold, consumers can suggest that they reach out to the Enough Project to learn more about conflict-free Congo gold sourcing opportunities.

Visit www.enoughproject.org/demandthesupply to send the top jewelry retailers a message about why sourcing conflict-free gold from Congo matters to you when you make purchasing decisions.

Call for electric vehicles and other renewable energy technologies that don’t fund corruption in Congo

The demand for electric vehicles and more efficient technologies is skyrocketing, which in many ways is positive for the future prospects of our planet. All of these innovations require cobalt to power them, and Congo is the world’s geological epicenter for the production of cobalt. With Congo producing approximately 60 percent of the world’s cobalt, a global scramble to secure a piece of the country’s mineral wealth is underway. However, the cobalt trade in Congo contributes to significant corruption in the country, particularly at high levels and involving certain international commercial partners, and is linked to a range of human rights abuses, including child labor and.

Similar to how advancements have been made so far on conflict minerals, automotive and consumer electronics companies can take steps to address issues with suppliers and other actors in their cobalt supply chains and therefore play a significant role in helping ensure that this mineral does not fund corruption in Congo. End-user companies should require that all the companies they contract with, including the mining and state-owned companies in Congo that are deeper in their supply chains, are much more transparent about their business dealings, including publishing mining contracts, the owners of subcontracting firms, and pushing for reform within the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The recent movements



within EITI, including steps to make companies' ownership and contracts more transparent, are helpful concepts that should be applied to address corruption in the cobalt sector in Congo. And consumers and activists should be vocal about their demand for products that are both good for the environment and for human rights and transparency in Congo. To learn more and discover ways to contact companies about this issue, visit www.enoughproject.org/cobalt

Hold your companies to a higher standard

Consumers and activists should consistently be demanding that the companies they purchase from—particularly tech, jewelry, and auto companies that rely heavily on brand maintenance—have a responsible, transparent supply chain that contains minerals responsibly sourced from Congo. In other words, conflict-free should not mean Congo-free, and concerns about corruption should not discourage companies from sourcing their cobalt from Congo.

Consumers can use Enough's company rankings, cobalt report, and other available resources—such as the reports companies are required to file under the SEC's conflict minerals rule and conflict minerals information publicly available on company websites—to make informed decisions when purchasing new electronics, jewelry, cars, or any other product that might contain minerals from Congo.

If you decide to buy from a company that is working hard to ensure its minerals are sourced responsibly from Congo, make sure you contact that company afterward (via email or forms that can be found on company websites) and let them know that their work on this issue contributed to your decision to buy from them. Companies need to be reminded that this work is important and that consumers care. On the flip side, if you decide not to buy from a company because you are concerned that they are not doing enough on this issue, make sure you let them know that this is why they lost out on your business. You can personalize your messages using the company contact tool at www.enoughproject.org/demandthesupply to let high-ranking companies know you appreciate their efforts, and let low-ranking companies know their lack of attention to this issue impacts your decision on whether or not to purchase from them.

Meet with your members of Congress to talk about why Congo is important to you

The following is adapted from Enough's "How to Meet with your Member of Congress" guide.

While it may seem daunting, setting up an in-district meeting with your senator or representative or their staff is easier than you might think, and can have a huge influence over whether they decide to speak out on behalf of legislation that impacts Congo. To find out who your members of Congress are, visit <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members> and type in your zip code. Once you have their names, call their offices in your home state and let them know you're a constituent interested in meeting to talk about the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and what the representative or senator can do to help.

When you are meeting with a member of Congress or one of their staffers, there are three goals:

1. Immediate: Educate the official on the issue



2. Short-Term: Get the Member to take action on the ask(s) you present
3. Long-term: Develop a relationship with the elected official's staff

Developing a relationship with your representative or senator's office staff will help you have lasting influence and build toward the elected official serving as a leader on the issues you care about. Here are some tips to make your meeting the best it can be:

- **Prepare**

You should come to the meeting knowing essentially what the goals and objectives of the meeting are, having assigned any necessary speaking roles for those in the meeting if you're with a group, and bringing along any printed materials you can leave behind. Keep leave-behind materials as short and relevant as possible.

- **Be punctual, polite, and professionally dressed**

You can be passionate, bold, and respectful all at the same time. Use the "soft sell"!

- **Know to whom you are talking**

Research the member of Congress ahead of time. What is the reason this particular member might and should care about Congo? Understand that staff members get meeting requests and meet with constituents all the time—it's their job. So there's no need to be intimidated. This isn't new for them.

- **Identify yourself and your influence**

Identify yourself as a constituent and what groups you represent (your faith-based community, schools, etc.). The more influential you demonstrate yourself to be, the more likely the office will be to take action based on your recommendation. Tell them *your* story—why you and your community care about the issues.

- **Ask Questions**

Studies show that people tend to walk away from a conversation thinking it went well if they did most of the talking, so—even though you're trying to get across a lot of information—the staff will likely feel positive about your meeting if they are engaged in the conversation.

- **Ask for a firm commitment and plan for follow-up**

Ask if the office plans to take the suggested action. If yes, thank them. If no, or they're not sure (the most likely response), ask if additional information is needed to help make a decision. Ask *when* you can follow up by email. This should be no more than one or two weeks following the in-person meeting. Be sure to collect business cards for staff members you meet.

- **Keep it short and to the point**

Congressional staffers are very busy and may unexpectedly only have fifteen minutes for a meeting.

- **Be prepared to say "I don't know, but I can find out"**—it's a perfect response if there is a question to which you don't know the answer, and an excuse to follow up. You aren't expected to be an expert.



Write an op-ed or letter to the editor in your local or school newspaper

The following is adapted from Enough's "How to Write an Op-Ed or Letter to the Editor" guide.

The power of local press is often overlooked, especially when it comes to influencing your members of Congress. Bringing issues like conflict minerals back to the local level helps educate others in your community about what they can do both personally and collectively to contribute to solutions. Members of Congress are also tuned in to what their constituents are saying in local outlets—sometimes even more so than in big national platforms like the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.

Op-eds are usually about 750 words. They lay out a problem and offer a solution. Letters to the editor are much shorter, with 250 words being typically the longest length for local newspapers, with many larger newspapers limited to just 150, and some magazines limit letters to less than 100 words. You should first review the specific media outlet's submission guidelines, which are usually available online.

It is very helpful to read a number of op-eds from the publication you plan to target. Take note of the structure, the opener and closer, the imagery, the sentence length, the rhythm, the tone, and how many facts or stats they tend to include. See what seems to work for their editors and readers, and reflect those elements in your own piece.

Op-eds don't have to be balanced. By their nature, they have a specific opinion and point of view, but they also should educate. At some point in the piece, if only briefly, address the strongest counterargument to your position. In fact, an effective op-ed—and one more likely to be published—should be limited in scope. Try to take on a very specific problem or focus on a narrow piece of a wider issue, one in which you have specific experience or expertise—for example, how conflict minerals have fueled Congo's broader crisis.

Use clear, simple, descriptive language where you can, and try to have a timely news hook such as an upcoming election or a vote on whether your school is going to pass a conflict-free procurement resolution. Powerful imagery, without getting overly flowery, especially in the opening, will help make your op-ed stand out to editors.

Use social media to widen your influence

Social media has gone from the trendy to the default, and it's now an ecosystem that penetrates every part of modern life, including in countries like Congo. When used strategically, it can increase the effectiveness of any of the actions discussed so far in this chapter.

Storytelling is a key component in building an influential social media presence. Everything we do on social media is story—we're building characters and crafting narratives. Build a persona for yourself and your organization or group—don't just use Facebook or Twitter as an announcement board or a soapbox. Think about what pictures tell the story of what you're trying to achieve. If you're tweeting at a company, think about what it will take to really motivate them to take action; most companies probably won't care about your opinions on conflict minerals unless they see that you have the power to change not just your own purchasing decisions but also the decisions of the people around you. If you pass a campus procurement resolution, make sure you tweet a link to all the companies your school does business with, so they know that this issue could have an impact on their contracts. There are lots of creative ways to



demonstrate your power—from hosting a film screening and taking a photo of everyone who shows up, to asking all of your friends to message companies to ask them about conflict minerals sourcing using the same hashtag, so the companies will see this is something many people are talking about.

Keep in mind the reason behind why you are telling stories: to get others to gather around and share that story later. You're telling stories to create communities that produce impact.

Social media is a fantastic tool to connect with members of Congress, company representatives, and other decision-makers in order to rally collective support for an issue. Here are some tools to help increase your reach:

- Use Thunderclap (<https://www.thunderclap.it/>) to amplify your message on a particular day (great for campaigns).
- Hold Facebook “sit-ins,” and have participants post on targets’ Facebook walls at the same time or all on the same day, so the target (policymaker, school administrator, company, etc.) gets flooded with notifications and is more compelled to take notice.
- Send thank-you notes or requests via Twitter, especially for members of Congress or companies, and retweet or repost positive things they are doing and saying; remember, it’s important to thank people for doing the right thing.

