

# THE ROAD TO RUIN?

## Electric vehicles and workers' rights abuses at DR Congo's industrial cobalt mines

### ANNEX 1: LIVING WAGE CALCULATION FOR KOLWEZI – 2024 UPDATE\*

**NOTE:** This calculation is based on the Minimum Expenditure basket (MEB) methodology and uses as a reference the UNICEF MEB conducted for Congo in 2016. It has been adapted for the Kolwezi context in consultation with Lualaba based organizations and in-person assessments of prices in the local markets in Kolwezi. It assumes an average household of 6 people (2 adults and 4 children). In October 2021, RAID and CAJJ calculated the living wage to be \$402.65 and updated this amount to \$480.37 in 2023. The table below provides a new calculation based on prices in Kolwezi markets in May 2024.

RAID and CAJJ adjusted the MEB as follows:

- (1) We modified the “education” criteria to cater for the fact that Congo made access to primary school education free in 2019, although the practice remains that parents provide some subsidy. We calculated an average subsidy based on fees for state schools and budget-friendly paying schools.
- (2) We adapted the “food” category to portray more accurately eating habits in Kolwezi.
- (3) We added a “transportation” category which was calculated considering public transport between Kolwezi and the Lulu neighbourhood where most mine workers live.
- (4) We added a small amount for “leisure activities” because the MEB applies only to the very minimum needs in situations of humanitarian emergencies. This was also an item added by other civil society groups when determining the living wage of artisanal miners in Congo's Kivu provinces.

\*Exchange rate (on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024): \$1 = 2,786 FC

Item	Average cost per item	Cost per month per household (Fc) <sup>1</sup>	Cost per month per household (\$)	Assumption
<b>FOOD</b>				
<i>Manioc</i>	<i>2,500 Fc or \$0.90 per kg</i>	<i>180,000</i>	<i>64.60</i>	<i>12 kg per person per month</i>
<i>Maize</i>	<i>3,500 Fc or \$1.26 per kg</i>	<i>252,000</i>	<i>90.45</i>	<i>12 kg per person per month</i>
<b>Staple crops (average of manioc and maize)<sup>2</sup></b>		432,000	155.05	12 kg per person per month
<b>Vegetables (not tomatoes or onions)</b>	2,000 Fc or \$0.72 per kg	43,200	15.51	3.6 kg per person per month
<b>Tomatoes</b>	6,000 Fc or \$2.15 per container (approx. 3 kg)	36,000	12.92	1 container per person per month
<b>Onions</b>	45,000 Fc or \$16.15 per container	45,000	16.15	1 container per month
<b>Chicken legs</b>	8,000 Fc or \$2.87 per kg	76,800	27.57	1.6 kg per person per month
<b>Fresh fish (Thomson)</b>	5,500 Fc or \$1.97 per kg	52,800	18.95	1.6 kg per person per month
<b>Small fish (fretin)</b>	8,000 Fc or \$2.87 per small container	32,000	11.49	4 small containers per month
<b>Cooking oil</b>	8,000 Fc or \$2.87 per l	43,200	15.50	0.9 litres per person per month

<sup>1</sup> Congolese Francs.

<sup>2</sup> This is the amount considered in the total calculation; the standalone “Manioc” and “Maize” items are only indicative.

<b>Salt</b>	2,000 Fc or \$0.72 per kg	1,800	0.65	0.15 kg per person per month
<b>Sugar</b>	27,500 Fc or \$9.87 per bag (approx. 5.5 kg)	4,500	1.62	Approx. 0.15 kg per person per month
<b>Tea</b>	4,000 Fc or \$1.44 per small container	4,000	1.44	1 small container per month
<b>HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS</b>				
<b>Rent/living quarters</b>	150,000 Fc or \$53.84	150,000	53.84	Once a month
<b>5-litre pan</b>	27,000 Fc or \$9.69	2,250	0.81	Replacing it once a year
<b>Kitchen knife</b>	3,500 Fc or \$1.26	583.33	0.21	Replacing it twice a year
<b>Bar of soap</b>	2,500 Fc or \$0.90	15,000	5.38	1 bar per person per month
<b>Mattress</b>	250,000 Fc or \$89.73	20,833.33	7.48	Median costs, 1 mattress per 2 persons, replacing it every 3 years
<b>Blanket</b>	35,000 Fc or \$12.56	8,750	3.14	1 per person, replacing it every 2 years
<b>Pagne/cloth</b>	16,000 Fc or \$5.74	4,000	1.44	1 per 2 persons, replacing it once a year
<b>Jerry can</b>	3,500 Fc or \$1.26	583.33	0.21	2 per household, replacing them once a year
<b>Washing basin</b>	42,000 Fc or \$15.08	3,500	1.26	1 per household, replacing it once a year
<b>Bag of charcoal (60/80 kg)</b>	35,000 Fc or \$12.56	35,000	12.56	1 per month per household
<b>7-litre pan</b>	43,000 Fc or \$15.43	3,583.33	1.29	1 per household, replacing it once a year
<b>Mug</b>	3,500 Fc or \$1.26	1,750	0.63	1 per person, replacing them once a year

<b>Small spoon</b>	1,500 Fc or \$0.54	1,500	0.54	1 per person, replacing them twice a year
<b>Large spoon</b>	3,500 Fc or \$1.26	583.33	0.21	1 per household, replacing it twice a year
<b>Small bowl</b>	3,500 Fc or \$1.26	875	0.31	3 per household, replacing them once a year
<b>Big bowl</b>	37,900 Fc or \$13.6	3,158.33	1.13	1 per household, replacing it once a year
<b>Large bag</b>	2,800 Fc or \$1	467.67	0.17	2 per household, replacing them once a year
<b>Tarp</b>	34,500 Fc \$12.38	2,875	1.03	1 per household, replacing it once a year
<b>Clothing items</b>	12,700 Fc or \$4.56	12,700	4.56	2 pieces per person, replacing them once a year
<b>SANITATION AND HYGIENE</b>				
<b>Latrine maintenance</b>	8,400 Fc or \$3.02	700	0.25	Once a year
<b>Hygiene kit (toothbrush, soap, etc.)</b>	35,000 Fc or \$12.56	17,500	6.28	1 per household, replacing it every 2 months
<b>Water treatment tablets</b>	2,000 Fc or \$0.72	2,000	0.72	Once a month
<b>Fees for potable drinking water (town supply or public taps)</b>	70,000 Fc or \$25.13	70,000	25.13	Once a month
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
<b>School fees</b>	37,500 Fc or \$13.46 per month	112,500	40.38	Once a month per child (4) for 9-month academic year

<b>Uniform</b>	25,000 Fc or \$8.97	8,333.33	2.99	Once a year per child (4)
<b>School materials</b>	35,000 Fc or \$12.56	11,666.67	4.19	Once a month per child (4)
<b>HEALTH</b>				
<b>Health expenses at dispensaries/hospitals</b>	85,000 Fc or \$30.51	21,250	7.63	Cost of an admission for a serious disease, 3 times per year for 1 household
<b>Painkillers and other medicines</b>	2,000 Fc or \$0.72	24,000	8.61	12 packages per month
<b>Mosquito net</b>	5,500 Fc or \$1.97	458.33	0.16	1 for 2 persons, replacing it every 3 years
<b>Anti-malaria tablets</b>	7,000 Fc or \$2.51	1,166.67	0.42	1 package every 6 months
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
<b>Public transport</b>	6,000 Fc or \$2.15 per return trip	60,000	21.54	5 times a month for two persons travelling
<b>OTHER</b>				
<b>Cheapest mobile phone in the market</b>	35,000 Fc or \$12.56	1,944.44	0.70	2 per household, replacing them every 3 years
<b>Average phone credit</b>	3,500 Fc or \$1.26	14,000	5	Credit for 2 phones per household, recharged twice a week
<b>Leisure (meal out, cinema, public holiday or other)</b>	70,000 Fc or \$25.13	11,666.67	4.19	Average for two outings a year for the household

TOTAL	1,396,478.76	501.25	45
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