



15 years of building responsible supply chains

ITSCI Annual Report 2025
and OECD Step 5 Due Diligence Report

First minerals tagged by state agents under the ITSCI Programme, Nyabibwe, South Kivu Province, DRC, June 2010.



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Glossary

AA	Alignment Assessment
ASM	Artisanal and small scale mining
CAHRA	Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas
CLS	Comité local de suivi
CPP	Comité provincial de suivi
Divimines	Mine division (DRC)
DMTF	District Mining Task Force
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
FARDC	Congolese army
KYS	Know your supplier
OBM	Burundian Office of Mines
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHS	Occupational health and safety
PMH	Mine police (DRC)
RMB	Rwanda Mines, Petroleum & Gas Board
SAEMAPE	Service for Assistance and Supervision of Artisanal and Small Scale Mining organisation (DRC)
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
3T	Tin, tantalum, and tungsten

Foreword

Fifteen years mark a significant milestone for the ITSCI Programme. Over this period, ITSCI has supported the practical implementation of traceability and due diligence practices in Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas (CAHRA), working alongside governments, companies, and civil society across the Great Lakes Region. This anniversary is not only a moment to reflect on impact, but also a moment of progress, as ITSCI transitioned to an independent organisation.

Throughout these fifteen years, ITSCI has operated in complex and evolving environments. A volatile security context and logistical constraints have underscored the importance of sustained field presence, credible first-hand information, and continuous engagement with local stakeholders. These realities have shaped ITSCI's approach: one grounded in risk-based due diligence, local expertise, continuous monitoring, and multi-stakeholder dialogue, to identify, communicate, and mitigate risks in order to implement sustainable actions relevant to the local context.

Over time, this approach has begun to generate evidence of longer-term change. In 2025, preliminary findings from a Monitoring and Evaluation study conducted by an independent researcher from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) were presented at the OECD Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains. Covering a ten-year period (2012-2022), the study found that levels of violence reduced by 60% in ITSCI-monitored areas in the DRC. These findings suggest that consistent, multi-stakeholder efforts can meaningfully improve stability and peace at and around mine sites. Importantly, they provide evidence that the ITSCI Programme can deliver tangible impact on the ground and that the OECD Guidance can be effectively implemented in practice. The full study is expected to be published in 2026, and we look forward to sharing its comprehensive results.

Beyond field implementation, ITSCI has continued to contribute actively to policy dialogue at national, regional, and international levels. In 2025, included participation in the United Nations Security Council Arria Formula Meeting on critical minerals and insecurity; ongoing engagement with

national authorities, and a high-level roundtable held with the Geneva Platform for Resilient Value Chains, bringing together the Prime Minister and the Minister of Mines of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These discussions focused on traceability, due diligence, and the role of good governance in supporting responsible mineral supply chains.

At the community level, ITSCI's work has sought to support practical improvements that matter to those directly affected by artisanal mining. Sustained engagement continues to deliver reduced interference at mine sites, stronger local consultation mechanisms, improved transparency, and increased awareness of rights and responsibilities. Many images come to mind, reminding me of why we do this work. I think of the group of women in Maniema who sang a song explaining how artisanal mining was vital to their livelihoods and how ITSCI tags prevented soldiers or police officers from interfering. The experiences and voices of artisanal miners and local stakeholders continue to shape programme priorities and reinforce the importance of inclusive approaches to due diligence.

Looking to the future, ITSCI enters its next chapter under The ITSCI Organisation, building on over a decade and a half of experience. The transition towards ITSCI as a standalone, independent not-for-profit organisation marks an important step in strengthening governance, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

We are sincerely grateful to ITSCI participating companies, government partners, civil society organisations, and all ITSCI field implementation teams for their continued commitment and cooperation. The Programme's progress to date is the result of shared responsibility and sustained collaboration.

As the famous African proverb reminds us:

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, let us go together."

Mickaël Daudin
CEO & Executive Director, The ITSCI Organisation

2025 in numbers

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689,903 tags used
22,433 export tonnage, in tonnes

9,848,671 since 2010
 298,396 tonnes since 2010

1,706 incidents recorded
135 incidents recorded via whistleblowing

By the end of 2025:

990 incidents were resolved
714 incidents were still open for mitigation

251 multi-stakeholder committees meetings (CLS, CPP) in the DRC

21 District Mining Task Forces (DMTF) site visits in Rwanda

3,064 monitored mine sites

1,693 in the DRC

1,068 in Rwanda

303 in Burundi

114 mines added to the Programme in 2025

88,367 artisanal and small-scale miners supported

788 joint monitoring visits

1,022 training sessions
22,902 beneficiaries



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Artisanal miners washing minerals at Maibaridi mine site, Kalieme territory, Tanganyika Province, DRC, June 2011

About us

Vision Responsible sourcing of minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas supports improved governance, creates economic and social opportunities, improves livelihoods of local artisanal and small-scale miners and their communities, and contributes to peace and stability through inclusive supply chains.

Mission To promote due diligence best practices in mineral supply chains through an industry-wide initiative that reduces risks of serious abuses, supports formalisation of the mining sector, and creates opportunities for economic and social development in CAHRA.

Values *Collaboration:* We work with companies, governments, civil society, and artisanal miners to strengthen governance, address and mitigate risks, and improve mining practices.

Transparency: We foster clear, accountable processes that build trust across the supply chain.

Sustainability: We strive for ongoing improvements that sustainably improve livelihoods, governance, and peace.



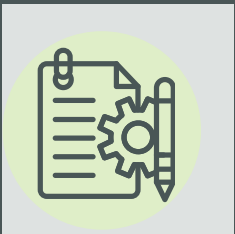
Traceability

The ITSCI Programme supports field-based traceability currently for tin, tantalum, and tungsten (3T) minerals across the African Great Lakes region. With monitoring at roughly 3,000 mine sites in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda, ITSCI connects the entire upstream supply chain, from mine to smelter, linking responsible sourcing efforts of companies across more than 45 countries.



Community & Risk Mitigation

Our commitment to responsible sourcing begins at the grassroots level. Local teams continuously collect, verify, and report first-hand information on risks, including mining activities, community developments, and political and security dynamics. One of our core activities is to deliver training and tools to multiple stakeholders at all levels of the supply chain, and one of our key strengths lies in acting as a convening force and instrument of mediation to support risk mitigation and resolution.



Due Diligence

Fully aligned with the OECD Guidance, ITSCI supports companies in meeting their due diligence responsibilities. By making available unique and credible first-hand information, we support businesses to make informed decisions to fulfil their due diligence, and support government authorities and civil society towards progressive improvement and good governance in mining.



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Fifteen years of ITSCI: Perspective from the field

Perhaps the best way to grasp what fifteen years of ITSCI truly means is to hear from someone who has implemented the Programme across various provinces and worked directly with mining communities. Désiré Bisimwa, from South Kivu Province, has been working in the mining sector since 1995, including with ITSCI since the Programme started in 2010, and reflects not only on how the Programme evolved, but also on the gradual shift in perception, ownership, and formalisation of the 3T artisanal sector.



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Désiré in Luntukulu, Walungu Territory, South Kivu Province, DRC, February 2015

When ITSCI started its first pilot in Nyabibwe, South Kivu Province, the artisanal mining sector in eastern DRC was fragmented, according to Désiré: **“The mining sites were practically empty and there was no real hope that people could live on the activities taking place there. Gold and 3T mining were sort of a jungle, which was benefiting neither the government nor artisanal miners.”**

Confusion over mining perimeters, limited presence of state services, and regular fraud meant that few actors believed external efforts to formalise practices could succeed. **“Honestly, I wasn’t sure the Programme would be accepted, especially given the complexities of the artisanal sector and the habits that had taken hold over the years,”** he recalls, citing both the sector’s complexity and mistrust among operators. This uncertainty shaped ITSCI’s earliest actions, undertaken in an environment where few believed long-term improvements were achievable.

In 2010, as ITSCI rolled out its first pilot, even the simplest procedures were unfamiliar. Authorities were supportive, but implementing partners were still learning. Désiré recalls: **“At the beginning, there was a lot of hesitation. Even the state agents responsible for tagging were unsure of themselves. No one imagined that the Programme would reach all the remote corners it eventually did.”**

Despite these challenges, the pilot gradually demonstrated that consistent tagging, data collection, and on-site monitoring were possible. Over time, these practical steps helped build the credibility the Programme needed to expand.

Désiré’s early field missions also highlighted how differently 3T mining was viewed across provinces. He remembers travelling to former Katanga Province, where local actors were sceptical of outside staff: **“When I first arrived in Katanga, people looked at me with suspicion because I had come from Bukavu. The locals were focused on copper and cobalt, and many considered 3T minerals unimportant.”**

Many negotiants believed ITSCI’s arrival threatened their business model. Some even confronted him directly: **“A number of negotiants approached me convinced that ITSCI was going to complicate their activities.” Years later, these same individuals had completely changed their opinion: “Today, when we meet in Bukavu, they thank the Programme for having helped formalise the sector.”**

This shift demonstrates both the cultural and geographic scope of the Programme and how its consistent implementation helped align practices across provinces and, eventually, across borders.



Launch of ITSCI with Désiré (green hat) in former Katanga Province, DRC



Launch of tagging in Kisise, Punia territory, Maniema Province, DRC, February 2014

Implementing the programme: strengthening systems and improving coordination.

As the programme expanded, government services, cooperatives, negociants and communities began to see its advantages. Désiré notes the significant improvements in coordination: **“There has been huge progress in how the programme is understood. Stakeholders now take responsibility for protecting the system, and collaboration between political, administrative, and mining actors is far stronger than in the past.”**

One of the most important breakthroughs, he explains, was the harmonisation of production statistics: **“For the first time, all government services were using the same figures. This was a major advance and contributed directly to increased revenues from artisanal mining.”**

Tools that were initially unfamiliar, such as incident reporting forms, tagging procedures, or the joint management of tags, became routine. Cooperatives strengthened their role, particularly in site organisation and security.

The role of communities: ownership and local development

Perhaps the most visible change on the ground is the shift in community engagement. Local multi-stakeholder committees (Comité Local de Suivi, CLS), community leaders, and cooperatives now play an active role in incident mitigation and the dissemination of ITSCI tagging processes and international requirements.

According to Désiré: **“Everywhere, communities have realised that they must take ownership of the Programme.”**

For him, this sense of ownership also translated into tangible benefits for the community. The Basket Fund in South Kivu, a voluntary contribution system linked to mineral exports that ITSCI helped establish, supported the construction of schools, health centres, and road improvements. He explains:

“The Basket Fund was an unprecedented experience. The communities saw real results, and the transparency of the traceability system helped ensure that the money was managed responsibly.”

A regional approach

ITSCI’s large-scale roll-out in Rwanda in 2011 and its expansion into Burundi in 2014 took place alongside the Programme’s early implementation in the DRC. Over time, as experience accumulated, mining actors were able to observe the effects across borders.

Désiré was responsible for carrying out the baseline assessments of Rwandan mine sites, evaluations that determine plausible production levels and identify possible risks at and around mine sites, a role that reflects how the ITSCI Programme supports regional collaboration and builds trust between communities.

Today, the same procedures, reporting tools, and expectations apply across all three countries, supporting a coherent approach across all ITSCI implemented areas.

Looking forward

Asked what has changed most over fifteen years, Désiré points to the clear decline in mineral fraud, stronger collaboration with state services, and more professional practices among operators. **“All actors now make a genuine effort to respect the norms,”** he explains, noting that incidents linked to non-compliance have decreased significantly. He also highlights wider social impacts, such as the decline in child labour in mining areas, growing acceptance of women’s participation in mining where it was once forbidden: **“In some areas, it was once considered taboo for women to be present around mine sites. That has changed.”**

Désiré also highlights both the progress achieved and the scrutiny that comes with transparency: **“ITSCI has endured moments of pressure, navigated criticism, and helped formalise a sector that thousands of families rely on. It hasn’t always been easy, but I can only thank the ITSCI Programme for holding firm despite many challenges and above all for its support to mining communities.”**

Looking ahead, he emphasises what still matters most for mining communities:

“We hope that digitalisation will reach every country and location where the Programme operates, so that everyone can benefit from the new technology. And we hope the programme’s work on gender, OHS, support for vulnerable or marginalised groups, and environmental issues can be extended, for the benefit of all the communities living in and around artisanal mining areas.”



Désiré (front right) with a group of artisanal miners in Luntukulu, Walungu Territory, South Kivu Province, 2015.



Désiré (checked shirt) with a group of artisanal miners at Kakule mine site, Mwenga Territory, South Kivu Province, 2015.

A word from the DRC government



For more than fifteen years, without interruption, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, through the technical departments of the Ministry of Mines, including SAEMAPE, has been resolutely implementing traceability and due diligence mechanisms in the cassiterite, tantalite and wolframite sectors, in close partnership with the ITSCI Programme, a recognised initiative of the 3T industry.

This exemplary collaboration has made it possible to sustainably strengthen the state's authority in overseeing its strategic mineral resources, to identify and monitor all actors in the supply chain, from the mine to export, whilst contributing significantly to the reduction of armed conflict and the fight against human rights violations in the artisanal mining sector.

The impacts are now visible: improved mining governance, greater transparency in production and marketing flows, maximisation of state revenue, and a safer and more responsible environment for mining communities. This experience demonstrates that structured partnerships between the Congolese state and international industry can produce concrete, sustainable results that serve peace, development and national sovereignty.

After fifteen years of ITSCI implementation, the Congolese government's vision is of an artisanal mining sector that is more transparent, better governed and fully integrated into the formal economy. ITSCI has contributed to strengthening the state's authority over its mineral resources, the gradual formalisation of cooperatives and the accountability of supply chain actors. This framework has also fostered community development around mining sites, whilst supporting peace and respect for human rights. The ITSCI experience demonstrates that credible traceability is an essential lever for governance, development and national sovereignty.

His Excellency Louis Watum Kabamba,
Minister of Mines of the DRC.



2010-2025: 15 years of progress and impact

From a pilot site in South Kivu Province, DRC, in 2010, ITSCI has expanded into an international Programme supporting responsible mineral supply chains, community livelihoods, improved governance, and due diligence practices. Fifteen years on, ITSCI's development highlights the value of collaboration, transparency, ongoing improvement, and shared responsibility. The Programme remains a unifying force that enhances governance, promotes peace, and supports responsible sourcing from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas (CAHRA).

From pilot to scale: expanding across the Great Lakes Region

When attention towards 'conflict minerals' increased during the mid-2000s, industry actors started to consider measures to reduce the risk that minerals sourced from central Africa would contribute to armed conflict. These efforts laid important groundwork for later due diligence frameworks.

In 2008, the International Tin Association (ITA), then the International Tin Research Institute (ITRI), established an industry working group, and the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.) also joined the management of the Programme. In 2010, due diligence and mineral traceability were anchored in the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from CAHRA and the US Dodd-Frank (Section 1502), which required US companies to disclose whether any of those minerals originated in the DRC or an adjoining country.

The ITSCI Programme was piloted in South Kivu in 2010, introduced in Katanga Province and Rwanda in 2011, and gradually extended to other provinces of the DRC and other countries (Burundi in 2014, and Uganda in 2015) as funding became available either from participating company investments or donor funders, specifically the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) in the Programme's early stage and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (MFA) in 2015-2017. Today, ITSCI supports the responsible sourcing of over 25,000 tonnes of 3T minerals annually, with ongoing on-the-ground monitoring and risk management systems that can operate at any scale (in industrial, semi-industrial and remote small-scale

and artisanal mine sites), promoting an inclusive approach.

Strengthening governance in CAHRA

Operating in Conflict-Affected and High-risk Areas has required ongoing engagement with local authorities, artisanal miners, community leaders, and security forces. Over the years, this work has helped reduce interference by state and non-state armed groups and contributed to improved accountability and safer working environments. ITSCI continues to foster a collaborative approach and emphasises that it remains the most effective way to manage risks and promote responsible mining practices that support local communities.

A key factor in ITSCI's progress has been its long-standing collaboration with the governments of Burundi, the DRC, and Rwanda and their respective mining services, which formalise collaboration with state mining authorities and promote national ownership of the mining sector. By supporting the establishment of traceability and providing training to state services in charge of tagging, ITSCI has supported the governments in-country to record detailed data, helping government agencies to record data generated in the field, which improves sector oversight, strengthens the government's tax formalisation, and supports risk mitigation.



2008
ITA
working
group

2010
ITSCI pilot site
in Nyabibwe,
South Kivu

2011
ITSCI launch in
Katanga, DRC

2013
ITSCI launch in
Maniema, DRC



2011
ITSCI launch
in Rwanda

2014
World Bank
funds project
'Promines'

2014
ITSCI launch
in North Kivu,
DRC

2014
ITSCI launch
in Burundi

2017
ITRI wins Edie
Sustainable Supply
Chains Leader for the
ITSCI Programme

2015
ITSCI launches
whistleblowing
programme

2015-2017
DMFA funds
project "Scaling
up Mineral Trade"

2018
Alignment Assessment
ITSCI is Fully Aligned
with the OECD Guidance

2018
Launch of electronic
data collection in
Burundi

2023
Localisation
process, ITSCI
partners with local
NGO Kumbuka
Afrika

2026
ITSCI registers as
an independent
organisation

2022
Alignment Assessment
ITSCI is Fully Aligned
with the OECD Guidance

2023
ITSCI
implementation
in Tshopo, DRC



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Partnerships as a foundation for success

The Programme's growth has been enabled by long-standing partnerships. ITSCI is carried out in close cooperation with state services, civil society organisations, and mining cooperatives and companies. After 10 years of implementation with former field operator Pact, ITSCI was proud to support a successful localisation process, working with Kumbuka Afrika, a regional NGO founded by people from Burundi, the DRC, and Rwanda, serving as a model of regional integration and cooperation.

Today, our established local presence and trusted relationships foster international partnerships that not only address all OECD Guidance risks but also go beyond its scope, and enhance training, governance, and capacity. For example, ITSCI downstream Associate Participant TPV Technology has supported expanded work on legal awareness, occupational health and safety training, gender inclusion, and support for vulnerable groups across ITSCI-monitored areas in South Kivu and Maniema Province, DRC.



Click [here](#) to find out more about the ITSCI-TPV project
Ushimbaji kwa Kanuni, heshima na Haki
Supporting Responsible and Inclusive Mining Governance

EXTERNAL FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY-CENTRED INITIATIVES

In addition to industry participating contributions, ITSCI has benefited, over the years, from targeted external funding to deepen its impact. Support from donors and private-sector partners has amplified ITSCI's work on women's empowerment in mining, safer working practices, improved legal compliance, and enhanced governance.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), through the South African Department for Trade and Industry, provided very welcome assistance to ITSCI during times of rapid set-up and growth in 2011-2013. This was focused on activities in the former Katanga Province, DRC, in Rwanda and in Burundi.

Solutions for Hope

Following the successful pilot in 2010, the Solutions for Hope project, which brought together electronics and materials companies, including Motorola Solutions, AVX Corporation, and Global Advanced Metals, supported the roll-out of the Programme in former Katanga Province, DRC. By implementing ITSCI traceability systems, the companies could demonstrate that responsible mineral sourcing could support due diligence requirements while maintaining trade flows that benefit artisanal miners and local communities.



Placing a mine tag in Kalimbi site by the Provincial Minister during the large scale implementation of the Programme in South Kivu Province, DRC, October 2012

Conflict-Free Tin Initiative (CFTI)

Initiated in 2012, the CFTI was a public-private partnership led by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs with industry participants including Royal Philips Electronics, Tata Steel, Motorola Solutions, Research in Motion, Alpha, AIM Metals & Alloys, Malaysia Smelting Corporation (MSC) and Traxys. The project established a responsible supply chain for tin from the Kalimbi mine in South Kivu Province, using ITSCI traceability, independent audits, and multi-stakeholder oversight involving government, industry, and civil society. The selected mine was notably the site of the very first pilot trials of the ITSCI programme in 2010, and following a two-year embargo, largely driven by the unintended consequences of the 2010 U.S. Dodd-Frank Act, the related smelter audit requirements and subsequent withdrawal of buyers unable to meet those requirements, the initiative marked a critical step in re-establishing responsible mineral trade and supporting mining communities.

GE Foundation - Breaking the Chain

The Breaking the Chain project, funded by the GE Foundation in 2013, was a research initiative designed to strengthen responsible mineral supply chains by generating robust evidence of child labour in 3T sites in former Katanga Province, DRC. The research was delivered by ITSCI former implementation partner Pact, working in close coordination with ITSCI field teams. By leveraging ITSCI-monitored areas, the project demonstrated how our on-the-ground presence can be effectively used for risk analysis and the design of targeted, corrective actions against child labour.

World Bank - Promines

Difficulties facing the production of 3T minerals in the DRC include limited infrastructure, especially in more remote mining areas. These significant challenges are also faced by ITSCI field teams when providing traceability material and in risk monitoring. In 2014, the Promines project funded by the World Bank provided transport equipment, communications equipment, and other essential field equipment to the ITSCI Programme in Maniema and the former Katanga Province.

Boeing and Microsoft

In 2015-2016, the Watoto Inje ya Mungoti (WIM), Children Out of Mining project, was funded by ITSCI Associate Participants at the time, Boeing and Microsoft, and implemented by former field implementation partner Pact. The project was located in and around Manono Territory, Tanganyika Province, DRC, and addressed child labour in 3T artisanal mining. Building on ITSCI traceability and risk-monitoring systems, the project focused on community awareness, caregiver training, and local enforcement mechanisms to reduce children's participation in mining. In only one year, WIM reached over 4,100 beneficiaries, including 1,881 children, resulting in child labour bans at 23 mine sites and contributing to the reduction in the number of children working in the mining areas by 89%.

World Bank - EITI

The World Bank-commissioned Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) study "Transparency of Revenues from Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining of Tin, Tantalum, Tungsten and Gold in Burundi" in 2015 examined how revenue transparency can be strengthened in artisanal and small-scale mining by aligning EITI reporting with the ITSCI Programme. Focused on 3Ts, the study used ITSCI data to analyse government revenues, taxation gaps and formalisation challenges, demonstrating how traceability can serve as a practical foundation for EITI implementation in ASM. Implemented by former implementation partner Pact, in partnership with the Government of Burundi and ITA (then ITRI), the project highlighted a concrete example of ITSCI systems supporting transparency, due diligence and evidence-based policy reform.

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Artisanal miners washing minerals at Nyakabingo site, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda February 2016.

©ITSCI Programme



Women transporting ITSCI tagged minerals, Lemera, Uvira territory, South Kivu Province, DRC, July 2014

U.K. Department for International Development

In 2016, the DFID-funded East Africa Research Fund (EARF) study “Understanding the Economic Contribution of Small-scale Mining in East Africa” assessed how ASM contributes to livelihoods and national economies, with a strong focus on formalisation and responsible supply chains. In Rwanda, the research examined the 3T sector monitored by ITSCI to demonstrate how traceability supports legal exports, risk management, government revenues and local economic benefits. Implemented by former implementation partner Pact, the project highlighted the successful use of ITSCI as a platform for credible research, policy evidence and responsible ASM outcomes.

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DMFA)

In 2015-2017, the DMFA provided funding for the ITSCI Programme through its three-year “Scaling Up Mineral Trade” project, which supported ITSCI in increasing the inclusion of 3Ts mines and expanding the number of trained government representatives. The project also led to improved ITSCI data collection and strengthened local stakeholders' capacity through multiple trainings of multistakeholder committees, including on the Voluntary Principles for Security and Human Rights. Importantly, the project also benefited local communities through training in literacy, savings, and business management with a curriculum specifically designed for artisanal miners, supporting women's representation, raising awareness of safety issues, and reducing the number of accidents reported at the mines.

Operating without external funding since 2017, ITSCI offers opportunities to contribute either to the Programme’s continued impact in advancing responsible sourcing in the Great Lakes Region and beyond, or to specific project-based interventions.



A woman artisanal miner at Rugese mine, former Kirundo Province, Burundi, February 2016.



Women miners sorting minerals prior to washing at Lula mine, Mitwaba territory, former Katanga Province, DRC, May 2015

A model of continuous improvement

In 2018, an Alignment Assessment (AA) by the OECD, based on the AA methodology developed by the OECD, concluded that the standards of the ITSCI Programme were 100% aligned with the 5 Step due diligence framework of the OECD Guidance.

Building on these positive results, ITSCI continued to make important improvements to the programme's activities and implementation. These efforts were reflected in the strong results of ITSCI's second AA in 2023, with ITSCI becoming the first joint industry initiative to complete a second successful AA. The assessment concluded that ITSCI is Fully Aligned with the OECD Guidance, and ITSCI was also the first to publish the full AA report along with the completed assessment tool.

Both the 2018 and 2023 Alignment Assessments of ITSCI have recommended the development of a formal organisational structure adapted to the Programme's scale, including, for instance, by transitioning to a stand-alone organisation. The AA further recommended ITSCI to strengthen the Programme's governance and improve formal oversight through a supervisory board structure.

Today, we are proud to announce the official registration of The ITSCI Organisation as an independent UK not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), which benefits from an improved governance structure, with an appointed Board of Directors who bring diverse experience from industry, the private sector, NGOs, and international organisations, and whose collective expertise will guide the strategic direction and development of the ITSCI Programme. Considering the successful development of the ITSCI Programme over the years and its current scale, establishing a formal organisational structure and strengthening the governance and oversight of the ITSCI Programme is a natural progression, and recommended in previous Alignment Assessments. The ITSCI Organisation administers the ITSCI Programme as the ITSCI Secretariat since 1st May 2026.



© ITSCI Programme

*Washing points at Nyange pit, Luwowo sub-sector, Masisi territory,
North Kivu Province, DRC April 2018*



Training on ITSCI traceability and tag and logbook management, Nyabibwe, South Kivu Province, 2010



Artisanal miners washing minerals at the Kalimbi mine site, South Kivu, DRC, June 2013



Burundi: Community development through responsible sourcing

In June 2024, ITSCI marked its 10-year anniversary in Burundi, with the first ITSCI tagging taking place in Kayanza province on 12 May 2014. The 3T mineral sector in Burundi has encountered many challenges, but the government and mining companies have collaborated to establish a responsible supply of 3T minerals. The Burundian government is the only government in the region to have provided financial support for the Programme's launch.

By establishing traceability and due diligence procedures, ITSCI supported responsible sourcing practices and the formalisation of mining cooperatives. Among the many cooperatives working with ITSCI, the Niyogushimwa Cooperative demonstrates how structured support, responsible sourcing, and community-focused projects can enhance local development.

The Niyogushimwa Cooperative was created in 2017. At the time of its creation, the mining sector was characterised by limited organisation as Burundian minerals had previously faced embargoes due to concerns over 'conflict minerals'. In 2015, a political crisis also led to companies suspending operations in Burundi, and over 30% of mines became inactive.

Support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DMFA) meant activities were able to continue. During that year, ITSCI made significant efforts to maintain the Programme and continued to train state agents, organised about 100 visits to mine sites and exporters to closely check the security situation and to monitor risks, discussed the situation with government entities and continued to manage traceability and collect data, in cooperation with state services.

The Niyogushimwa Cooperative started to participate in the ITSCI Programme in 2015, initially under the umbrella of another cooperative, evolving into its present form. According to the cooperative President, Kanani Amulani:

"Before ITSCI, we had no structured system for documentation or traceability. Joining the Programme helped us to improve our systems, mining practices, and to comply with international standards."

ITSCI provided training and administrative guidance, helping Niyogushimwa shift from artisanal methods to semi-mechanised production. The cooperative is now establishing 'Société Niyogushimwa', with the aim of progressing toward industrial-scale mining, a notable development in under ten years.

This reflects broader progress across Burundi's artisanal mining sector, where cooperatives have formalised and improved governance. President Amulani summarises the impact simply:

"ITSCI gave us the tools to manage risks and implement traceability. The transparency we have today did not exist before."



Top: Cooperative President Kanani Amulani with two cooperative members.

Bottom: Winkona artisanal miners



Driving community development beyond the mine

One of the strongest indicators of responsible sourcing and ongoing improvements is how mining cooperatives' revenues are reinvested into local communities. Niyogushimwa has become a key actor for development across Butihinda, Giteranyi, Muyinga, and surrounding areas.

Rehabilitating Local Schools

In August 2025, the cooperative supported the rehabilitation of École Fondamentale de Tura ahead of the new school year. This effort improved learning conditions for local children and strengthened ties with the wider community.

Supporting the Giteranyi Hospital

In May 2025, the cooperative contributed to the rehabilitation of Giteranyi Hospital. Previously, in 2024, Niyogushimwa also helped channel water from a source located 20 km away, improving the hospital's access to clean water. A doctor at the hospital expressed deep appreciation for these sustained efforts:

"The cooperative has been essential in improving our working environment. Their participation in our activities shows real commitment to the community."

Infrastructure and environment

Additional initiatives include maintaining rural roads and rehabilitating the Stade Umuco in Muyinga by 2025. Efforts also involve planting trees along the Muyinga-Kobero road in 2023 to combat erosion. Furthermore, the cooperative is supporting vulnerable families through the annual distribution of health insurance cards in collaboration with local community leaders, which has fostered trust with communities and enhanced the livelihoods of local families.

Safety, compliance, and improved working conditions

With ITSCI's continued support, the cooperative has implemented strong safety measures, trained artisanal miners on risk prevention, supplied protective equipment, and reinforced underground galleries to prevent collapses. Artisanal miners affirm the difference these changes have made:

"We now understand the risks better, and accidents have reduced. Working conditions are not the same as before."

Through capacity-building sessions, ITSCI engages with state services, mining cooperatives, and communities. This is carried out regularly by ITSCI field teams, during which they explain the different steps of the OECD Guidance, highlight the role of mining stakeholders in risk assessment and management by providing additional guidance and detailed recommendations to reinforce understanding of effective due diligence practices and responsible sourcing.



École Fondamentale de Tura



Giteranyi hospital



The doctor at the water source near Giteranyi hospital



Top and bottom: Umuco stadium



A model of collaboration

The cooperative's achievements are the result of effective partnerships between ITSCI, local authorities and state services, communities, and artisanal miners. This collaboration has strengthened local practices, improved mining activities, and contributed to a safer, more transparent 3T supply chain in Burundi. President Amulani also added how the localisation process with local NGO Kumbuka Afrika represented an important step towards national ownership of the Programme and the strengthening of local capacity.

"The evolution we see today, from better governance to community projects, is proof that responsible sourcing works. ITSCI has helped us grow, not only as a cooperative, but as a community."

President Amulani

The story of the Niyogushimwa Cooperative demonstrates how the ITSCI Programme fosters development beyond traceability and how responsible mining practices can uplift entire communities.

From supporting around 2,400 artisanal miners working in 43 mine sites in 2014 to nearly 4,000 working in over 200 monitored mines today, we are proud of the positive developments of the Programme in Burundi. We remain committed to supporting the government, companies, and miners in promoting responsible sourcing and will continue to foster engagement and collaboration while supporting stakeholders with risk mitigation.

Read about the Programme 10 years in Burundi here:

[A Decade of Progress: The 10-year Anniversary of the ITSCI Programme in Burundi, May 2024](#)



© ITSCI Programme

A word from the government of Burundi



The Government of Burundi regards the implementation of the ITSCI Programme as a key driver for strengthening governance in the mining sector. This Programme has contributed to strengthening mining governance, improving the traceability of minerals and formalising artisanal mining activities, thereby increasing transparency throughout the supply chain.

In recent years, there has also been better organisation of mining cooperatives, more active involvement by the administration in site monitoring, an increase in production, and greater awareness among operators of compliance requirements and due diligence obligations.

Furthermore, the ITSCI supports community development around mining sites by promoting responsible practices that generate sustainable socio-economic benefits for local populations. In this way, Burundi reaffirms its commitment to making the mining sector a driver of inclusive growth and sustainable development.

2026, Quesney de Jésus AKABAHINGA, General Director of the Burundian Office of Mines and Quarries (OBM)



© ITSCI Programme

The first ITSCI tag applied in Burundi by the Minister of Energy and Mines, May 2014.

Strengthening local companies through ITSCI: formalisation, compliance and community benefits in Rwanda

Over the past fifteen years, the ITSCI Programme has contributed to strengthening responsible mining in Rwanda by supporting risk management and compliance across the 3T supply chain. New Bugarama Mining (NBM), operating in Burera district, provides a clear example of how responsible sourcing frameworks directly support company development while providing tangible benefits for surrounding communities.

NBM was formally established in 2009, transforming a long-standing artisanal mining area into a structured operation with improved governance and semi-mechanised production. At the time, artisanal practices, informal mining and limited safety standards posed operational and security challenges. The company joined the ITSCI Programme in 2011, introducing traceability and supporting compliance with international due diligence requirements.



“Mining activities here were fully artisanal. There were many informal miners, accidents were frequent, and operations were not organised. One of our main motivations was to ensure that our minerals could be properly traced. ITSCI helped us comply with standards and strengthened confidence in the supply chain.”

The adoption of ITSCI systems and practical tools helped the company to improve documentation, implement systematic due diligence procedures with additional training on responsible sourcing, governance and safety, which helped NBM arrange its mining activities more effectively, employ qualified engineers and establish stronger management processes.

Enhancing safety and working conditions

Through collaboration with ITSCI teams, NBM strengthened its safety practices and introduced structured risk-management procedures. The company shifted from unsafe artisanal tunnels to engineered underground structures. Safety engineers were hired to supervise work, and artisanal miners now work with personal protective equipment and gas detection tools to verify oxygen levels before entering tunnels.

Regular training sessions and joint site visits have also contributed to fewer accidents and a clearer understanding of risk. Artisanal miners have acknowledged improvements in safety, organisation and communication: ***“We understand the risks better now. The equipment and safety measures have reduced accidents.”***



Community development through responsible sourcing

Responsible sourcing has supported NBM to invest in community development projects using revenue generated through mining.

NBM has supported housing improvements for vulnerable households, including renovating homes for five families. Food assistance was provided to 18 vulnerable families in 2025, and agricultural support was offered through the distribution of 2,000 avocados and 1,500 guava seedlings to help address child malnutrition and improve livelihoods.

The company also supports local education by rewarding high-performing pupils in nearby primary schools with school materials and first-term school fees. In addition, NBM assists communities living in areas where volcanic rock complicates construction by making suitable clay available from within its concession, enabling residents to produce bricks for household use or income-generation.

NBM has also invested in social services for workers, notably through establishing an Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre near their mine site. This facility supports women to continue working while their children receive care, meals and early-learning support. The centre employs trained caregivers and currently supports around twenty children, offering practical assistance that strengthens both family welfare and reduces the risk of child labour or the presence of children at mine sites.

Collaboration and compliance

Collaboration between NBM, ITSCI teams, state services, local authorities and communities has reinforced security and compliance at mine-site level. Joint inspections and awareness-raising activities have helped reduce informal mining, strengthen communication and build trust between stakeholders. The company has also developed internal regulations, human-rights policies and committees for workers to raise concerns transparently. Health screenings carried out with national authorities further contribute to a more responsible and compliant workforce environment.

“The collaboration remains strong after over a decade. The local ITSCI teams continue to provide guidance when needed.”

NBM’s experience demonstrates how responsible sourcing frameworks through initiatives like ITSCI support company development through improved governance and strengthened safety. In turn, the company has been able to reinvest in community projects that improve local living conditions, education and family wellbeing. The progress observed reflects the wider impact of ITSCI in Rwanda, where structured due diligence and multi-stakeholder collaboration continue to strengthen the transparency and sustainability of the 3T sector.



©ITSCI Programme



Food supplied to 18 vulnerable families



©ITSCI Programme



Distribution of 2,000 avocado and 1,500 guava seedling

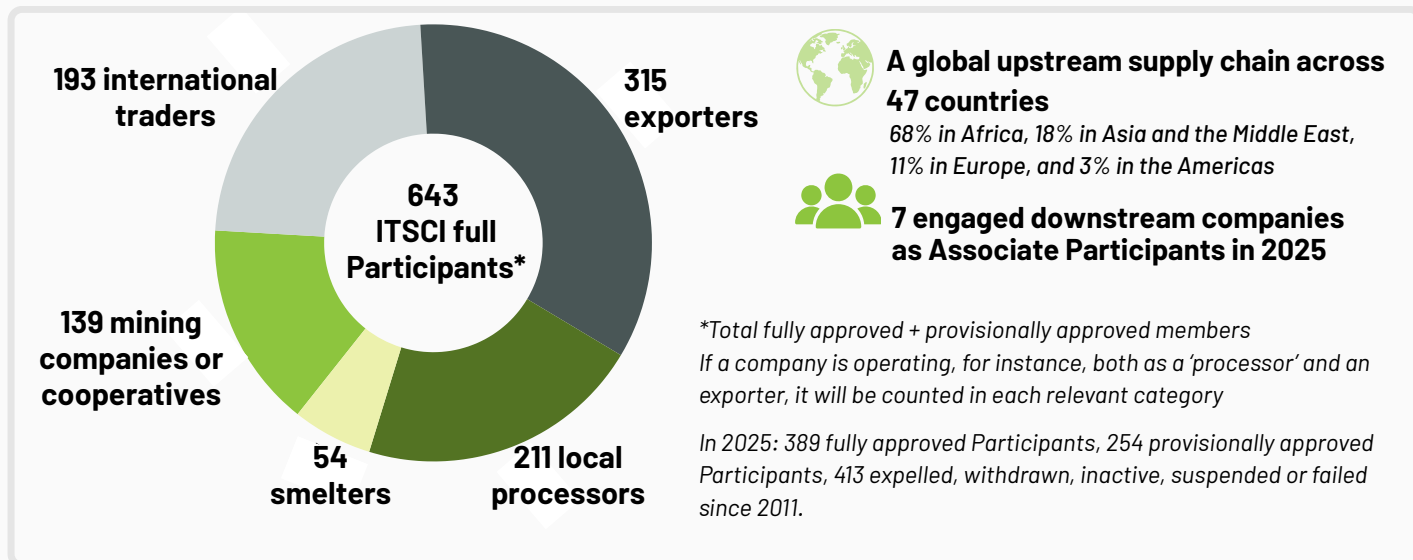


RW Early Childhood Development (ECD) center

2025 Report on the implementation of the OECD due diligence guidance on responsible mineral supply chain

STEP 1: STRONG COMPANY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

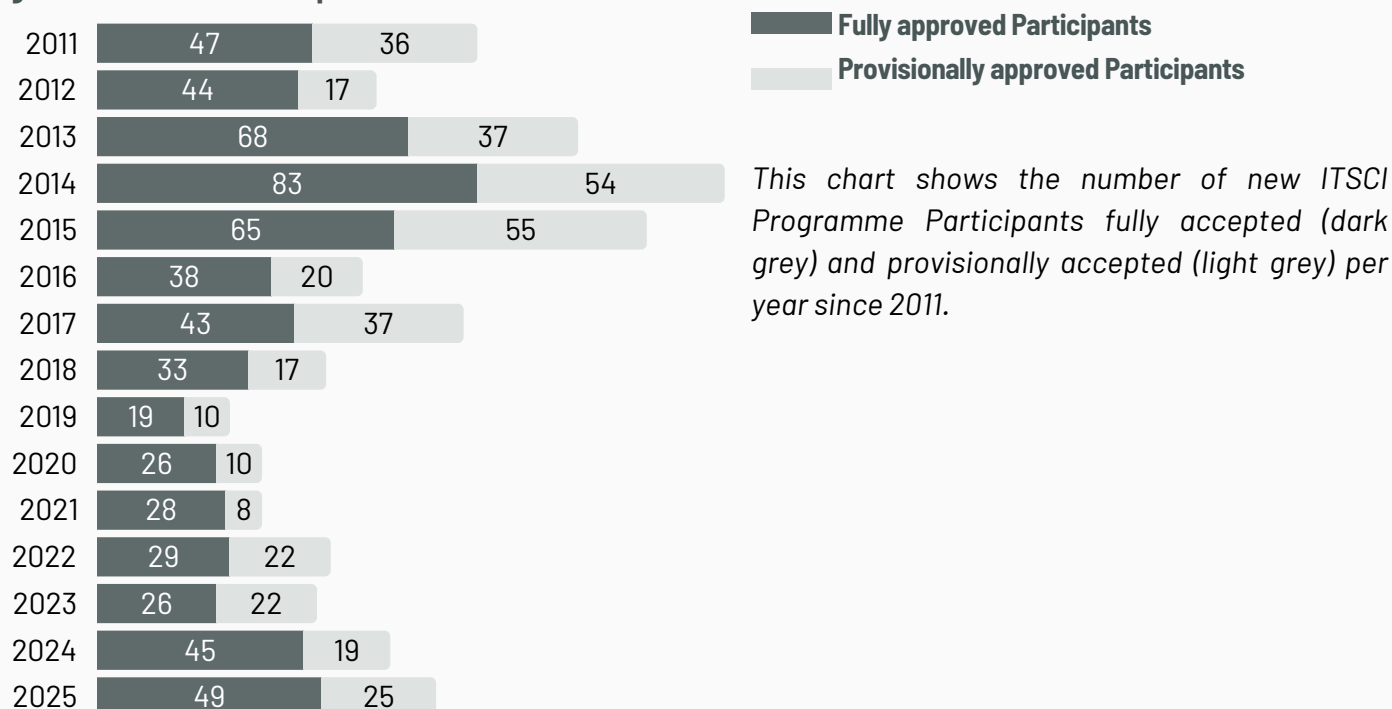
Figure 1: ITSCI Programme Participants overview



ITSCI Participant companies demonstrate their commitment to the progressive improvement of, and due diligence in, the mineral sector as laid out in the OECD Guidance. Participants agree to recognise all aspects of the OECD Guidelines, as well as to provide information on their operations for risk assessment and audit.

A prospective Participant becomes provisionally approved once they sign the ITSCI Programme Agreement. Once provisionally accepted, companies undergo a preliminary audit, which makes a recommendation to accept or not the application. If fully approved following the preliminary audit findings, the ITSCI Secretariat publishes a company summary and recommended actions for the company to strengthen its due diligence practices.

Figure 2: New ITSCI Participants since 2011



Shipment reports

Shipment reports present the result of the traceability analysis provided by the ITSCI data team on all the shipments purchased by ITSCI Smelter Participants from ITSCI implemented areas. These reports are used by smelters for their company due diligence, including for step-4 audits.

In 2025, the ITSCI Secretariat provided **60** shipment reports covering 660 shipments, submitted to **12** ITSCI smelters.

ITSCI shipment reports include:

- Reference number(s) of the associated shipments
- List of all associated mines of origin
- Mine baseline reports (including type of minerals, method of extraction, and estimated production quantity of minerals for each mine)
- List of associated tags
- Weights and types of minerals
- In-country locations where minerals are consolidated and exported
- Transport routes and methods, including names of transporters

For completing shipment reports, ITSCI traced:

519,994 tags
recorded on

56,563 logbooks
which equates to

16,093 tonnes of
3T minerals

sourced from Burundi,
the DRC, and Rwanda

In the past 15 years, ITSCI has supported the responsible sourcing of over 12,900 shipments from the Great Lakes Region.



© ITSCI Programme

STEP2: IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF RISKS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

ITSCI records, summarises, verifies and reports on the progress of risks through our incident mechanism system. Incidents are evaluated as relevant to one or more key issues under the ITSCI categories of:

- Due diligence,
- Chain of Custody (CoC),
- Corruption,
- Armed groups and security forces
- Human rights and other concerns

Other concerns recorded by ITSCI go beyond the OECD Annex II risks, for instance, occupational health and safety. However, the primary focus remains on human rights abuses and conflict financing.

Following receipt of additional information and clarification over a period of time, the ITSCI reporting team summarises events according to all available information. Incidents are allocated one of three levels of seriousness, where 3 is ranked the lowest, and 1 is the highest level. Priority issues requiring immediate and high-level attention and possible disengagement in the supply chain, according to OECD Annex II are classified as Level 1. Low-level incidents relating to mistakes or lack of capacity or training are considered Level 3, with intermediate or repeated issues as a mid-category of Level 2.

Figure 3: 2025 incidents overview



In 2025, a new Great Lakes Region incident table was designed to support more effective risk identification and provide ITSCI Participants with insights into companies' compliance across key operational areas, including levy payments, timely and accurate declarations, and completion of Know Your Supplier (KYS) and other requirements.

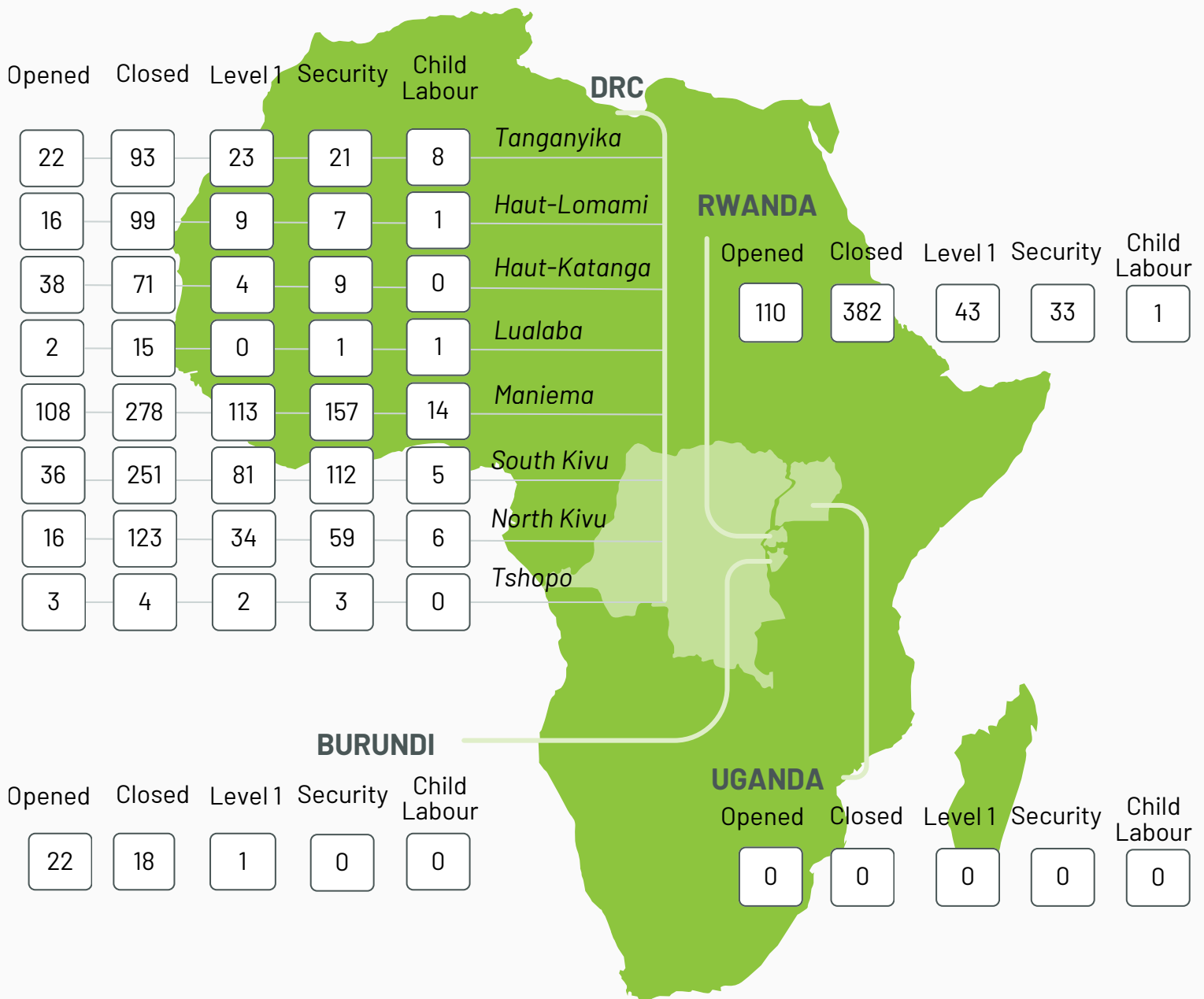
Incidents may remain open for up to six months while the ITSCI team and/or involved stakeholders are verifying information, monitoring the situation and/or implementing mitigation actions. Incidents may be closed in three ways:

Resolved –The ITSCI team and/or involved stakeholders have agreed and implemented actions which have resulted in satisfactory mitigation.

Unresolved –The involved stakeholders may not have agreed or commonly have not effectively implemented all recommended mitigation actions. Overall, an unresolved incident does not necessarily mean that no effective and successful mitigation measures were carried out. Each incident typically involves several mitigation actions implemented by different stakeholders. In many cases, some of the recommended actions are completed and lead to positive outcomes. However, when not all recommendations are implemented, the incident may still be considered unresolved.

Inconclusive – The ITSCI team do not find sufficient evidence to support an allegation or need for mitigation.

Figure 4: 2025 Incident monitoring



788 joint visits in 2025

Field visits help identify potential issues such as with security, corruption or lack of attention to traceability procedures, and then report them through the Programme structure to all supply chain participants to ensure they are fully informed of risks and have the opportunity to engage in follow-up and resolution as necessary. Similar joint visits also take place to implement risk mitigation measures or follow-up and such measures (step 3).

Joint site visit at Ngobo sub-sector, Tanganyika Province, DRC, December 2025



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The ITSCI Whistleblowing programme

The ITSCI whistleblowing programme, an essential element of our incident mechanism, provides an accessible platform for anonymous reporting of risks in the DRC via a toll-free hotline and continues to help record incidents that may never have been reported or mitigated. Our whistleblowing programme is also commonly used by ITSCI Participants, and they are encouraged to promote it within their organisations.

Through partnerships with local community radio stations, radio campaigns broadcast in both French and Swahili raise awareness about responsible mining and potential risks through two radio spots broadcast on 16 local community radios across the DRC. In 2025, the broadcasts took place around 530 times per quarter. With a total of 135 calls received and 134 incidents opened and/or updated in 2025, the whistleblowing programme has a tangible impact in raising awareness and empowering communities to assert their role in the mining sector.

Figure 5: Overview of incidents opened following whistleblowing tips

	South Kivu	North Kivu	Maniema	Tanganyika	Haut Lomami	Lualaba	Haut Katanga	Tshopo	Total
2025	25	19	82	7	1	0	0	0	134
Since 2019	63	57	153	55	12	4	5	0	349

TESTIMONIES FROM LISTENERS



© ITSCI Programme

Radio Umoja, Lubutu territory, Maniema Province, December 2025

The ITSCI Programme has self-funded the whistleblowing programme since 2024, and we are now seeking support to help ensure its long-term sustainability and to enable us to expand its reach to more areas.

“The president of an artisanal mining cooperative commended ITSCI and its partner, Kumbuka Afrika, for making reporting channels available to stakeholders to address abuses throughout the supply chain.”

Radio Sauti ya Punia/Maniema Province, May 2025

‘This is excellent awareness-raising that helps us uncover the abuses taking place at mining sites’

South Kivu Province, July 2025

‘One listener congratulated the broadcasters but also encouraged for the dissemination of the messages in other local languages for wider reach.’

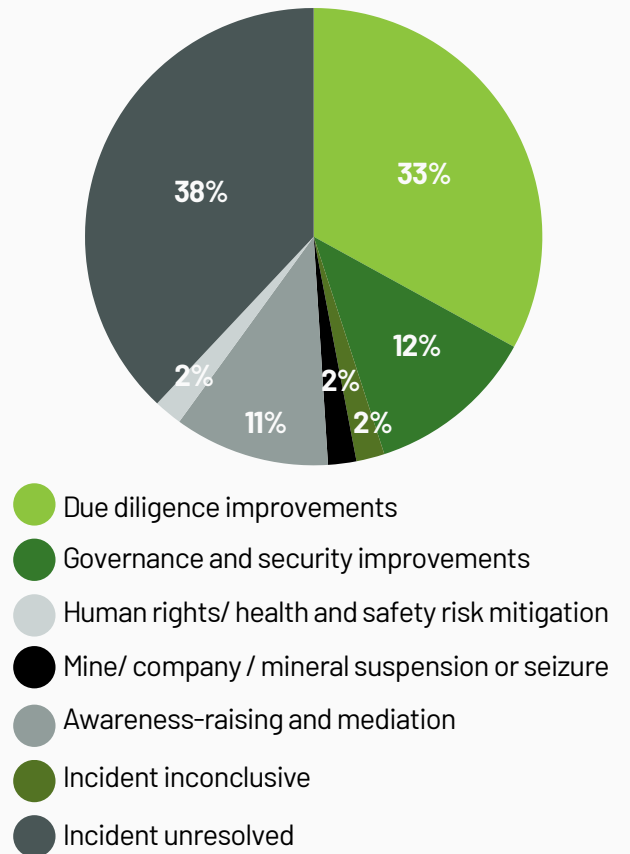
Radio Malemba Nkulu, Tanganyika province, September 2025

STEP 3: RISK MITIGATION

One of the key strengths of the ITSCI Programme lies in acting as a convening force and instrument of mediation to support risk mitigation and resolution. As well as communicating incidents along the supply chain, we recommend mitigation actions which are discussed and agreed with local stakeholders and follow up to report on whether those actions have been successfully completed. Companies, which are ultimately responsible for their own due diligence, can consider actions recommended by ITSCI for risk mitigation. Summaries of incidents, ongoing developments, actions or challenges are provided every month to ITSCI Participants prior to wider publication.

The ITSCI Programme has extensive experience supporting companies, governments and civil society in the identification and mitigation of risks associated with 3T minerals supply chains. Our ITSCI reporting team gather reports from ITSCI field staff, or from other sources, evaluates their level of seriousness, and verifies the information before recording it for further action. ITSCI has 7 categories as indicators of outcomes from incident management (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Types of incident outcomes



In 2025, ITSCI field teams made an average of 541 monthly visits to mine sites, companies, processors, and exporters to follow up on activities, collect information on potential risks, share credible risk information with local stakeholders and follow up on mitigation actions, as well as provide guidance and build the capacities of supply chain companies, cooperatives, miners and other stakeholders.





Multistakeholder committee meetings

One core aspect of ITSCI has been to support the establishment of local and provincial multi-stakeholder committee meetings, known in the DRC as Comité Local de Suivi (CLS) or Comité Provincial de Suivi (CPS or CPP), and to provide capacity-building training for local committee members. This work is an essential part of the ITSCI Programme to facilitate improvements on the ground. These committees, chaired by provincial and local authorities with participation from state services, security forces, mining companies and civil society, not only strengthen their sense of ownership but also serve as a safe space where mining activities are discussed, risk information is shared, and mitigation actions are agreed upon and followed up. Civil society organisations play a key role in providing ITSCI with independent information to assess possible risks, as well as following up on the mitigation actions.

In Rwanda, ITSCI continued to promote the establishment of District Mining Task Forces (DMTF), supporting training for their members while participating in DMTF meetings or joint visits. DMTFs are multistakeholder bodies composed of state services, companies, and civil society organisations. Their main objective is to conduct joint visits to various sites on the ground to implement measures aimed at mitigating risks. By the end of 2025, 16 DMTFs had been established across the country.

The establishment of multistakeholder meetings

The first Comité Local de Suivi (CLS) was created by ITSCI in Nyabibwe, South Kivu, as a response to emerging challenges observed during the Programme implementation.

A recurrent risk observed, for instance, was the involvement of state actors and reports of illegal taxation of mining revenues, which highlighted the need for greater transparency, community oversight, and accountability.

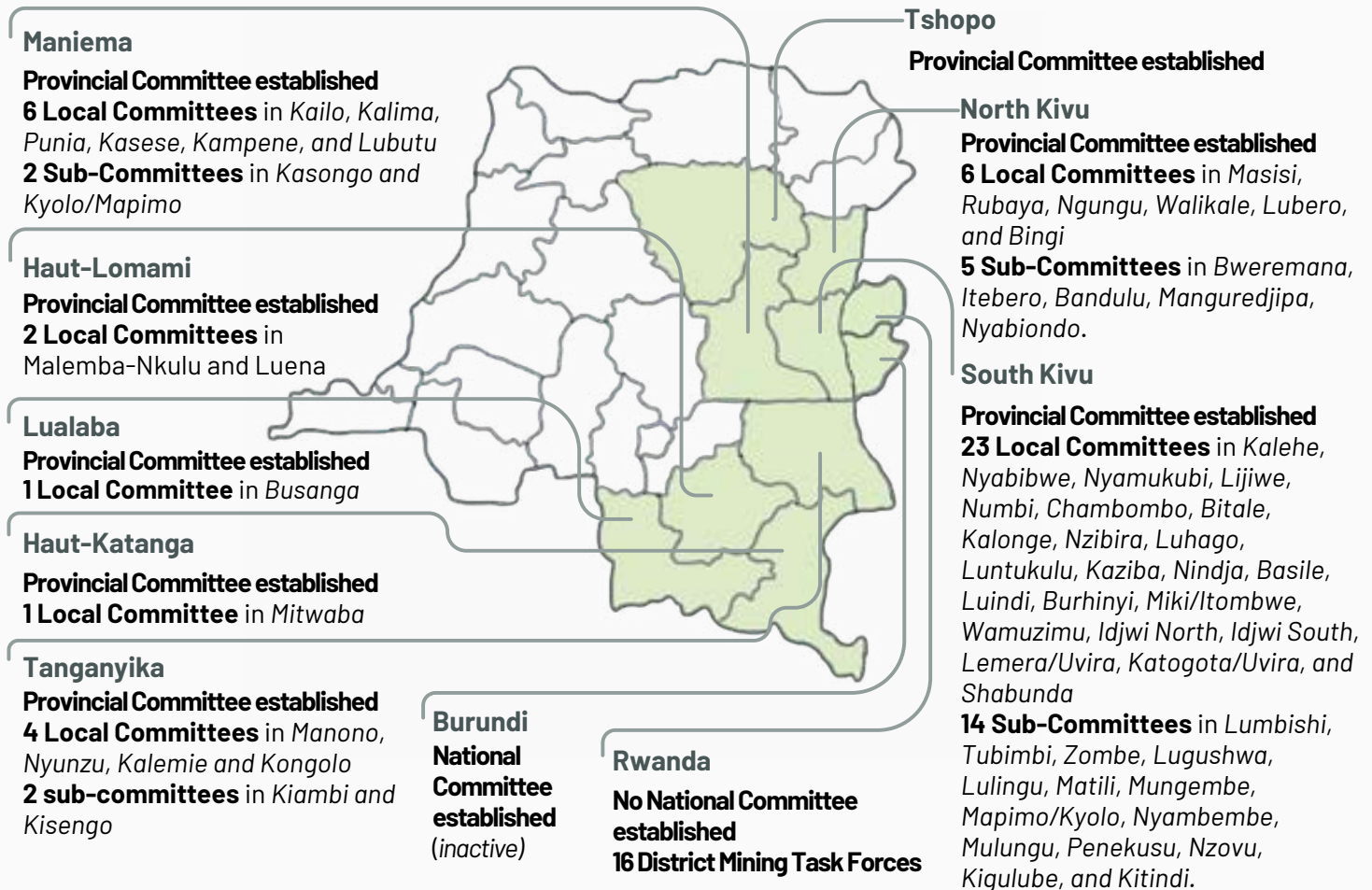
Designed as inclusive forums, the CLS brought together civil society organisations, local communities, customary leaders, public authorities, and mining stakeholders. Their purpose was not only to monitor mining practices and risks but also to empower communities through dialogue, information sharing and joint problem solving.

Over the past 15 years, the CLS have evolved from a pilot initiative into a national mechanism for community-based oversight. More than 90 CLS are now facilitated by ITSCI in the DRC, demonstrating the relevance and sustainability of this approach. The continued expansion and strengthening of the CLS reflect the Programme's long-term commitment to participatory governance, transparency and local ownership.





Figure 7: Local Consultation and Mitigation and DMTF facilitated by ITSCI



Ongoing situation in Eastern DRC and impact on our activities

In 2025, the security situation across North and South Kivu in the DRC remained concerning, marked by the presence of multiple non-state armed groups, including M23 and various Wazalendo factions, alongside ongoing clashes and illegal taxation along mineral transport routes. These conditions disrupted local mining activities and led to the suspension of ITSCI activities in several territories, such as Masisi and Lubero (North Kivu) and Kalehe, Idjwi, Uvira, Kabare, Mwenga, and Walungu (South Kivu). Despite these challenges, ITSCI maintained a presence in state-controlled areas, with daily communication with field teams, facilitated local multi-stakeholder committees, continued accurate incident reporting, and pursued additional risk-mitigation efforts to uphold OECD-aligned due diligence practices. ITSCI also supported the establishment of an interprovincial transport agreement, with minerals tagged in North or South Kivu Province transported to Maniema Province for onward export, through procedures in place between all three provinces.

The prolonged suspension of ITSCI monitoring and tagging by state services in territories of North and South Kivu due to the presence of non-state armed groups has also had wider implications, including increased risks in safety hazards, illegal taxation, and mineral fraud. In this context, ITSCI has previously published a statement on tantalum mineral flows from the Great Lakes Region, including data relating to material traded outside the ITSCI Programme, to help stakeholders understand how insecurity and the suspension of traceability, due diligence and state oversight can lead to heightened risks and discrepancies between production, export, and international trade figures.

This statement supports responsible sourcing and companies' due diligence by highlighting the limitations of data in CAHRA settings, the heightened risks when traceability, due diligence and monitoring mechanisms cannot operate, as well as actions undertaken by ITSCI to address those risks.

The security situation in North and South Kivu is not uniform across either province, nor is it representative of the situation in other provinces across the DRC where ITSCI is working. Understanding this variation is crucial for anyone assessing risks from the region, as it highlights the need for a nuanced approach aiming to avoid general de-risking from sourcing minerals in the Great Lakes Region. Despite the complex and uneven security landscape, mining activities and tagging by state services continue in several parts of the DRC, including some territories of North and South Kivu, and in the provinces of Haut-Katanga, Haut-Lomami, Lualaba, Maniema, Tanganyika, and Tshopo, as well as in neighbouring Burundi and Rwanda.

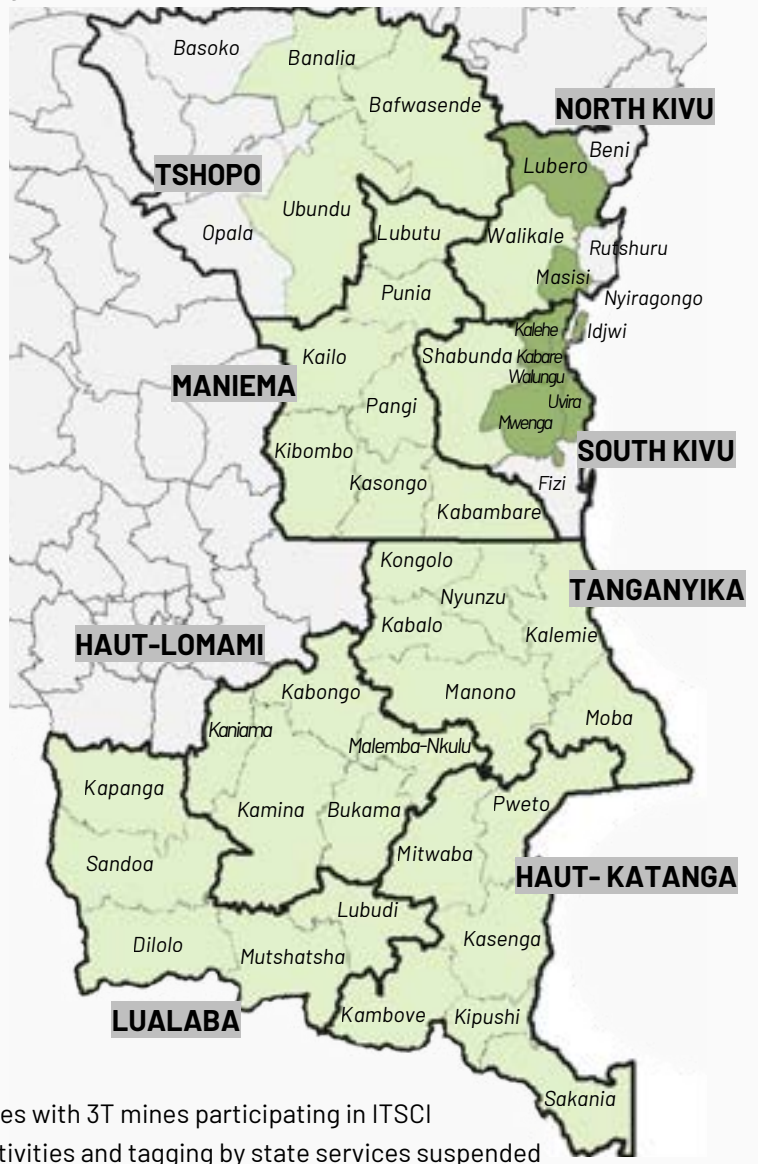


Figure 7: Map of ITSCI implemented area in the DRC

Publications on this topic:

- [UPDATED ITSCI statement: Shifts in tantalum mineral flows from the Great Lakes Region](#) (February 2026)
- [ITSCI statement: Shifts in tantalum mineral flows from the Great Lakes Region](#) (November 2025)
- [Ongoing situation in North and South Kivu Province, DRC](#) (September 2025)
- [ITSCI welcomes the peace agreement between the DRC and Rwanda](#) (July 2025)
- [Recent Developments in North and South Kivu, DRC](#) (April 2025)
- [ITSCI statement on the recent European Council sanctions](#) (March 2025)
- [Update on the situation in North and South Kivu, DRC](#) (February 2025)
- [ITSCI reports that M23 have taken possession of an ITSCI office and other equipment and condemns all illegal actions by the non-state armed group](#) (February 2025)
- [ITSCI clarifies the role of its 3T traceability and due diligence Programme](#) (February 2025)
- [Escalating security situation in North and South Kivu](#) (January 2025)
- [ITSCI update on the security situation in North Kivu Province](#) (January 2025)

Risk Mitigation Amidst Conflict

Suspension of ITSCI activities is not a process specific to North Kivu or the current situation. As a facilitation initiative, we have for the past 15 years worked on the implementation of the OECD Guidance in Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas, achieved through cooperative engagement with local, national and international stakeholders, and follow clear guidelines on the risks of armed group interference. Suspending mineral tagging and sourcing may be necessary when risks cannot be mitigated, and disengagement is the only appropriate action, in alignment with the recommendations of the OECD Guidance. Such process is coordinated with local governments responsible for implementing traceability.

We continue to engage with local stakeholders, including mining operators and state services in North Kivu, to closely monitor the situation and to seek measures and solutions for mining activities within state-controlled areas in order to avoid blanket disengagement from the area, which is detrimental to local communities.

In 2025, ITSCI maintained risk-mitigation measures in state-controlled areas of North and South Kivu. For instance, ITSCI field teams verified reports of illegal taxation by multiple stakeholders and documented incidents where illegal barriers erected by non-state armed groups prevented state services from carrying out ITSCI tagging. Engagement with local authorities remained continuous, supported by CLS meetings to coordinate risk responses across state services, mining cooperatives and mining stakeholders. Joint follow-up delegations were deployed to incident sites, supporting direct dialogue, data verification and monitoring.

At the sub-CLS level, discussions and awareness-raising sessions helped reinforce community-based structures, for local leaders to understand how to report incidents and manage risks. Targeted capacity-building workshops for state agents, cooperatives and supply-chain actors strengthened their ability to apply due diligence procedures and respond effectively to risks and incidents. These coordinated actions led to the dismantlement of illegal barriers, bringing an end to illegal taxation. With safe access restored, ITSCI tagging could resume promptly, accompanied by continued monitoring by ITSCI field teams.

Together, these measures illustrate how ITSCI's interventions lead to concrete improvements on the ground, supporting concrete mitigation actions and reducing conflict-related abuses, while reinforcing due diligence, transparency and community support where possible.

STEP 4: INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY AUDIT

ITSCI provides key support to smelters as they undergo OECD Step-4 audits, assisting them with the necessary tools and information. Through regular updates and the provision of key documents, we help ITSCI smelters effectively use ITSCI data to meet audit requirements. These include:

- ITSCI shipment reports
- ITSCI baseline studies
- ITSCI incident summary tables
- ITSCI audit reports
- ITSCI Programme Participants list
- ITSCI incident alerts
- ITSCI Due diligence list

In 2025, a mapping document was developed by ITSCI with input on the Tin Code Standard 7.3 and associated Criteria 7.3 provided by ITA. It includes reference to each of the steps of the OECD and provides a comprehensive guide for smelters undergoing a step-4 audit. The mapping indicates in which situations and how smelters can use ITSCI information to demonstrate fulfilment of each relevant Criteria requirement. It provides: (i) a breakdown of which ITSCI documents against each item of Criteria 7.3, (ii) guidance on how to use ITSCI data in audits and reporting.

STEP 5: REPORT ANNUALLY ON SUPPLY CHAIN DUE DILIGENCE

As part of the OECD Guidance's Step 5, companies are recommended to publish an annual report on their management systems for due diligence. To support this, ITSCI Participants are required to produce and share an annual due diligence report.

In 2025, 91 ITSCI Participants shared their 2024 annual due diligence reports. Participants should submit their annual report in the next calendar year. These reports are publicly available [on our website](#) and include information regarding companies' management systems, the results of their risk assessment activities, and the steps taken to address identified risks.

To support the continuous improvement of our participating companies, we follow up on the submissions of the reports. In 2025, we opened 52 incidents as a result of non-submission, of which 16 incidents were resolved, and 36 incidents were unresolved.

With this reporting structure of Step-5, we aim to not only align with OECD recommendations but also reinforce transparency, accountability, and the collective responsibility of our Participating Companies in fostering responsible mineral sourcing practices.

Observations from Participants due diligence reports

ITSCI provides Participants with the opportunity to publish their annual due diligence reports on the ITSCI website. Up to 2025, 823 ITSCI Participants' annual due diligence reports have been published.

Based on a review of these reports, several **positive developments have been observed in how Participants describe their due diligence activities and supply chain management**. In particular, Participants increasingly report on:

- The way their company policies are defined, how due diligence is organised and implemented internally, and how responsibilities are structured within management.
- How suppliers' due diligence practices are assessed, including systems used to support traceability risk information.
- The methodology used to obtain up-to-date and reliable information about on-the-ground activities in their respective sourcing areas.
- How risks are identified and managed, including examples of how plausibility concerns and incidents related to suppliers are analysed, monitored, and followed up, for example, through supplier visits.
- How ITSCI-related incidents affecting the company are recorded and reviewed, including information on follow-up actions taken and how issues were addressed or resolved.



Improvements on ITSCI's implementation of aligned standards to the OECD 5-step framework

Highlights of achievements in 2025 based on Improvements action plan.

I. Improvements on ITSCI's implementation of aligned standards to the OECD 5-step framework

1. Improving and accelerating ITSCI Participants processes

- A revised participation application form and preliminary audit report template have been developed, with explicit references to the OECD 5-Step Framework to enhance clarity and consistency. These revised documents will be finalised and rolled out in 2026.
- Research has been conducted to identify a suitable digital CRM solution to streamline participation application and ongoing ITSCI Programme Participants management. Subject to final selection, implementation is planned for 2026.
- ITSCI Field teams are being increasingly incorporated into the application processes of local GLR Participants to improve timely communication and information review.

2. Facilitating improved company management systems

- Work has continued to strengthen support for participating companies' management systems, including targeted guidance and training linked to due diligence expectations. Further enhancements will be rolled out progressively in line with the updated Participants onboarding process.

3. Building capacities of ITSCI Participants and stakeholders

- A detailed mapping of ITSCI information against the Tin Code Standard Requirements 7.3 has been developed, shared with ITSCI Participants and made publicly available. This supports smelters' understanding of how ITSCI information can be used by smelters to meet relevant audit criteria.
- This work builds on a mapping published by ITSCI in 2024 against RMAP criteria. A comparable mapping against the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals & Chemicals Importers & Exporters (CCCMC) guidelines has been drafted and is being finalised.
- ITSCI has also developed a document for Participants on the ITSCI mine baseline assessment implementation process. This aims to improve smelters' understanding of ITSCI process and methodology and to strengthen the effective use of ITSCI information and tools in company due diligence.

4. Rolling out improved digitised traceability tools

- ITSCI has completed all preparatory steps for the roll-out of electronic data collection in Rwanda at mine, processor and exporter levels. Implementation is being scheduled with the Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMB).
- Significant progress has been made in developing automated shipment traceability reports for ITSCI smelter Participants, enabling more timely information and due diligence on their shipments, including mine of origin. Initially planned for roll-out in 2025, technical challenges required additional development. Initial pilot testing was conducted with a smelter, providing valuable feedback, which has been incorporated. Full roll-out is planned for 2026.
- ITSCI has initiated improvements to internal data evaluation systems, including the automation of certain checks, increasing operational efficiency.

5. Accelerating information exchange by clarifying ITSCI Participants reporting requirements

- ITSCI has updated internal procedures to clarify shipment trading and declaration requirements for exporters, international traders and smelters. These procedures include explicit timelines for shipment delivery reporting and levy payments, aimed at reducing information gaps for smelters' due diligence.
- Targeted training sessions have been delivered to all ITSCI Participants, tailored to their respective position within the upstream supply chain.

6. *Improving on-the-ground monitoring and reporting processes*

- Drawing on lessons learnt over time, ITSCI initiated a thorough restructuring of its ITSCI field teams across all implementation countries, in cooperation with implementation partner Kumbuka Afrika. This includes updating field staff's roles and responsibilities, strengthening reporting requirements, and enhancing internal management processes, while better reflecting local operating environments.
- The roll-out of the improved field team structure, including training for all ITSCI field teams, is planned for 2026.

7. *Improved support to company risk identification and mitigation*

- ITSCI has implemented a new tool to support improved Know-Your-Supplier (KYS) information collection from ITSCI Participants, providing a standardised template and facilitating information sharing with smelters, including for step-4 audits.
- As part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening risk management and transparency, we introduced a new Great Lakes Region incident summary table. The incident table helps ITSCI Participants to view compliance across companies, including adherence procedures and declarations.
- An updated summary of the ITSCI Incident Matrix has been finalised and published as part of the ITSCI annual incident review. This summary will also be integrated into incident alerts and monthly reports shared with ITSCI Participants.

II. Improvement on the governance of the ITSCI Programme

1. *Establishing ITSCI as a stand-alone, not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee*

In 2025, ITSCI continued implementing a transition plan outlining the legal, financial and operational steps required to transition the ITSCI Programme and Secretariat to an independent, stand-alone UK not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee, The ITSCI Organisation. This work has included:

- Identifying and engaging potential future directors of the Board.
- Drafting the Articles of Association, including terms of reference for the future Board.
- Ongoing engagement with external legal counsel to support and review the transition process.
- Contracting external expert advisers, including in the area of human resources.

We are pleased to announce that, effective 1st May 2026, and following the official transfer from the International Tin Association (ITA), the ITSCI Programme is now administered by The ITSCI Organisation, acting as the Programme's Secretariat. Find out more here: <https://www.itsci.org/2026/05/04/a-new-chapter-for-the-itsci-programme/>

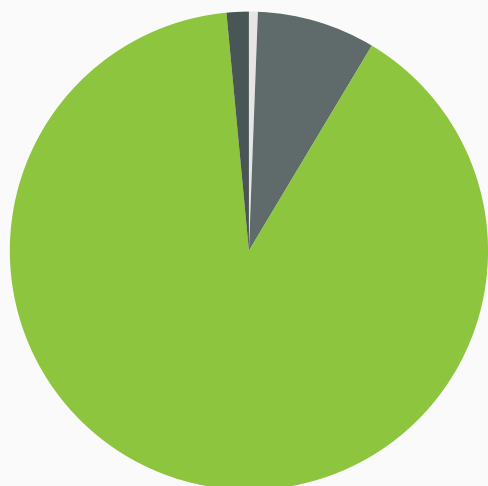
2. *Improving ITSCI communications*

- ITSCI has continued quarterly engagement with its Stakeholder Group, comprising representatives from NGOs, international organisations, governments, and academia, to share updates on the ITSCI Programme's activities, promote constructive dialogue and exchange of ideas or suggestions on improving responsible supply chains of minerals.
- Engagement with downstream Associate Participants has continued through dedicated webinars and exchanges, both quarterly group meetings and individually
- ITSCI has published regular updates on key topics, including developments in the security situation in Eastern DRC and related supply chain risks, analysis of mineral trade flows, and actions taken by ITSCI to address these risks.
- Reconfirmed to all stakeholders and the public that ITSCI is not a certification system but a facilitation initiative.

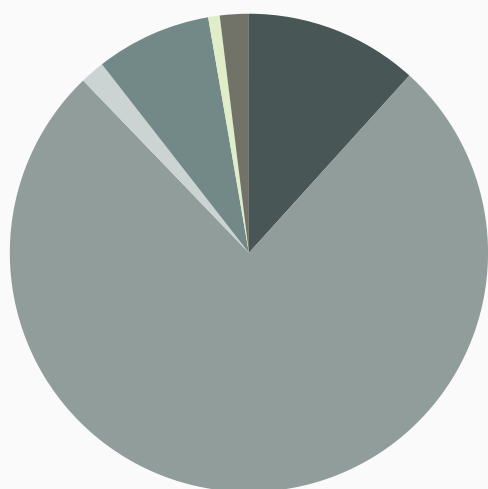
3. *Raising funding to underpin existing and improved ITSCI activities*

- ITSCI secured a renewed three-year funding commitment from an ITSCI Associate Participant to continue and expand a project aimed at scaling up ITSCI on-the-ground activities and providing additional support to affected communities. The project focuses on thematic areas including Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), Gender and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), women's participation in the mining sector, and training of local stakeholders on mining rights, applicable laws, due diligence standards, and risk mitigation.

Our finances



FUNDING	US\$	%
Downstream participants fees	42,249	0.6
Upstream participants fees	700,739	8.3
Upstream mineral levy	7,537,438	89.7
Upstream direct payments	0	0
Donation/other	120,744	1.4
Donor, field implementation	0	0
TOTAL	9,990,633	100



EXPENSES	US\$	%
Traceability and data	988,150	11.6
Field implementation	6,631,262	77.7
Field implementation, donor	0	0
Independent evaluation	104,350	1.2
Secretariat	629,159	7.4
Governance Committee	62,748	0.7
W/blowing & Ombudsman	117,402	1.4
TOTAL	8,533,072	100
3-month field implementation reserve fund	2,133,268	
2025 bad debts written off	84,571	
Ongoing Programme balance	233,646	

Notes:

Upstream funding from levies and fees represented 98.6% of total funding. Since 2016 and 2019 respectively, the levy rate for each wolframite and tantalite has been harmonised across the region.

'Donation/other' includes a contribution from two downstream companies to incident and whistleblowing activities, as well as a project on Occupational Health and Safety, mining rights, and gender.

US\$84k has been written off. Bad debts relate to unpaid membership fees or levies from expelled or withdrawn members who did not settle their invoices. The Programme currently has a reserve equivalent to 3 months field implementation reserve funds for emergency needs or in case of Programme close-out plans.

Funding:

ITSCI has operated at large scale with no donor funds since January 2017. The Programme is operated at cost by not-for-profit associations and all revenues are held in trust for sole use for ITSCI activities. Since our establishment in 2010, we have improved due diligence, and supported companies, government and civil society to understand and mitigate risks in Full Alignment with the OECD Due Diligence Guidance. We continue to engage downstream companies and encourage their financial support to the Programme.

Annual statement

AF1183/1734384/KC

23 April 2026



WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

ITSCI PROGRAMME ACCOUNTING – INTERNATIONAL TIN ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Rayner Essex LLP are the statutory auditors of International Tin Association Limited, the company which is the Secretariat of the ITSCI Programme. We confirm that income, expenditure and the reserve fund related to the ITSCI Programme is recorded separately within the International Tin Association Limited accounting systems and included within our audit of the financial statements of International Tin Association Limited for the year to 31 December 2025. We also confirm that separate bank accounts are held exclusively for the ITSCI Programme and in September 2016 a formal declaration of trust was established over the funds to confirm use only for purposes stated in the ITSCI Membership Agreement. Our audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

In accordance with our invariable practice this information is given strictly without responsibility on the part of the writer or the firm and we cannot be held responsible for any financial liability under any circumstances.

Yours faithfully

RAYNER ESSEX LLP



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Rayner Essex is a business name of Rayner Essex LLP, which is a limited liability partnership in England under number OC338376. Its registered office is at Tavistock House South, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9LG. Rayner Essex Chartered Accountants are registered to carry on audit work in the UK by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.



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The ITSCI Organisation

Registered in England and Wales | Company number 17032057

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