

Child Labor and Technology

by Pat Glinka, SSND

I love my smartphone –courtesy of an upgrade in a family plan. The smartphone holds my contacts and identifies the caller so that I need not answer scam calls. It gives me great directions to unknown destinations. It holds my calendar and sets an alarm to remind me of meetings and appointments. It even holds my special photos. I love my smartphone, but I also hold in mind and heart what Pope Francis said in *Laudato Si'*:

“We should be particularly indignant at the enormous inequalities in our midst, whereby we continue to tolerate some considering themselves more worthy than others. We fail to see that some are mired in desperate and degrading poverty, with no way out, while others have not the faintest idea of what to do with their possessions, vainly showing off their supposed superiority and leaving behind them so much waste which, if it were the case everywhere, it would destroy the planet. In practice, we continue to tolerate that some consider themselves more human than others, as if they had been born with greater rights” (91).

Please click on the link to read the very important story below:

[Meet Dorsen, 8, who mines cobalt to make your smartphone work](#)

<https://news.sky.com/.../meet-dorsen-8-who-mines-cobalt-to-make-your-smartphone-...>

Eight pence a day for backbreaking work. At one *cobalt mine*, children toiled in the drenching rain carrying huge sacks of the mineral. Dorsen, eight, had no ...

So what can be done and what is being done about the child labor? An updated (November 15, 2017) report from Amnesty International explains its efforts and the efforts of various technology companies.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/11/industry-giants-fail-to-tackle-child-labour-allegations-in-cobalt-battery-supply-chains/>



- *Survey of electronics and car companies shows major blind spots in supply chains*
- *Apple is the industry leader for responsible cobalt sourcing – but the bar is low*
- *Microsoft, Lenovo and Renault have made least progress*

My conclusion/action is to follow up on Amnesty International and its efforts to investigate and publicize the progress of technology companies to seek responsible cobalt sourcing. What is your conclusion/action?