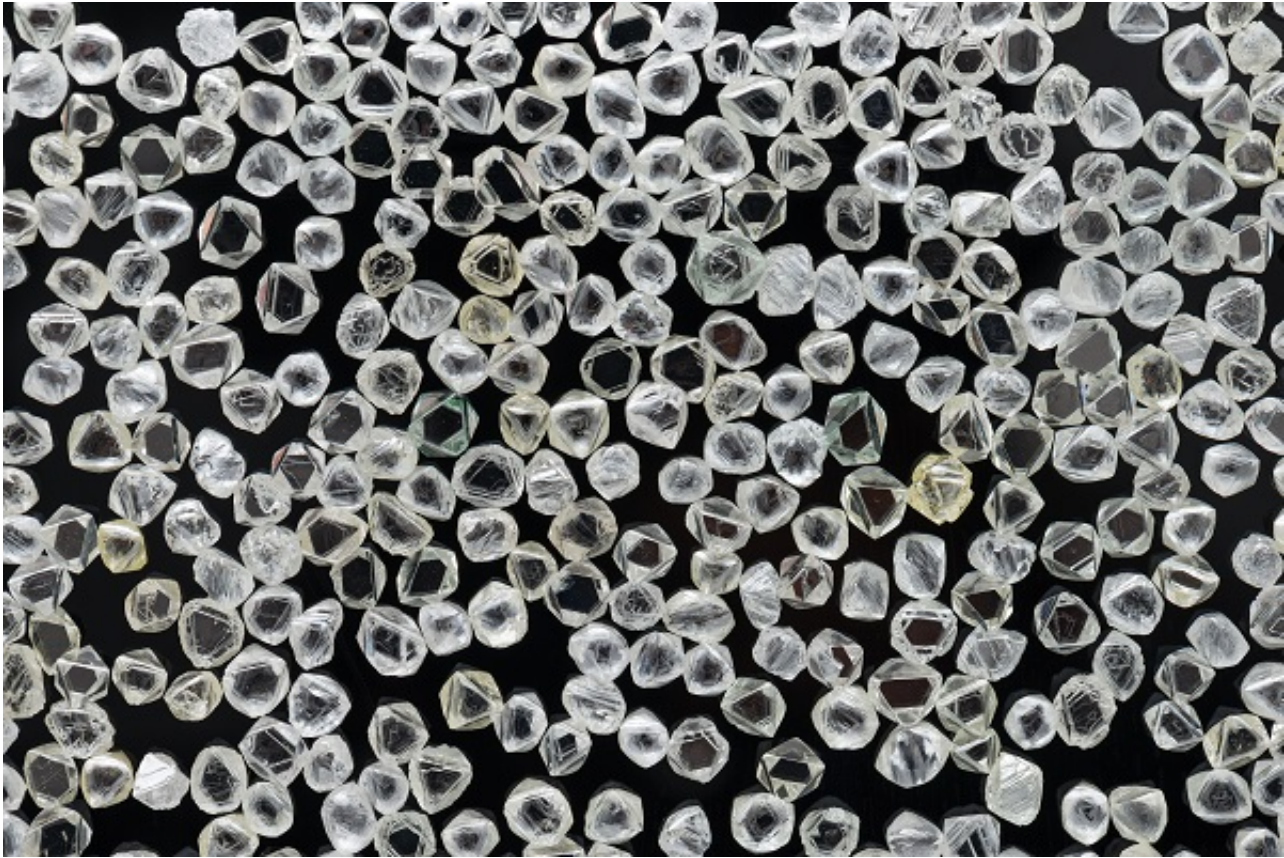


Provenance Program for Artisanal Miners Launches



RAPAPORT... Organizations around the world have launched a pilot traceability project for artisanal diamond mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

OrigemA will work toward setting up a transparent mine-to-market program for small-scale mining cooperatives in the central African country, the founders said this week.

The institutions behind the initiative are the Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC), the DRC's Ministry of Mining, nongovernmental organization DDI@RESOLVE, and technology company Everledger. The overseer of the project on the ground will be DDI@RESOLVE, which was formed two years ago when Resolve absorbed the Diamond Development Initiative (DDI).

"The purpose of the OrigemA pilot is to develop a blueprint that focuses on transparency, sustainability and fair trade, which over time can be scaled up, within the DRC but also in other countries," the organizations said.

The DRC accounts for nearly 70% of global production of artisanal mining diamonds, according to the groups. The informal nature of the sector means it is especially vulnerable to human-rights violations, corruption and opaque or illicit trade, they added.

The launch follows the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the

AWDC and the DRC government last November. That agreement outlined the fundamentals of a mine-to-market program for the country, calling for the development of such a facility over the coming years.

Image: Rough diamonds. (Shutterstock)