



Lumumba

French and English Academy



Executive Summary

In the last decade, the most violent human conflict since the Second World War has swept through Central Africa's largest country, the Democratic Republic of Congo, leaving 5.4 million dead in its wake, alongside crippling infrastructure, rampant outbreaks of mass rape and sectarian violence, and a crisis economy. The 'Congo War' that has engulfed the entire Eastern portion of the massive Central African nation has raged without sign of cessation since 1994, beginning as a region-wide refugee crisis (spawned by the Rwandan genocide) and evolving into a complex mineral war with more than 40 militias competing for valuable mining territories. The engine for this conflict in its present state is a metal called Columbo-Tantalite (commonly 'Coltan'), found almost exclusively in the East Congo (more than 80% of the world's deposits are in the East DRC, and most other deposits are inaccessible or too scarce for sustained mining operations). Columbo-Tantalite is an essential component in the development of electronic appliances (all consumer smartphones, laptops, etc, use tantalum capacitors from smelted coltan), fueling a voracious demand for mass quantities of the metal. Militia groups have manufactured an intricate and widespread slave operation in the East Congo, underwritten by a lack of economic opportunity, to facilitate the extraction of Coltan and meet this demand (alongside a number of other minerals such as Cobalt, used in Lithium-Ion batteries). Militias raid villages and large towns, utilizing rape as a weapon of coercion (since the outbreak more than 1 million women have reported violent rape, indicating actual numbers are significantly higher than that) and meeting resistance with summary executions (more than 90% of the 5.4 million killed have been non-combatant civilian targets). Civilians often have no choice but to acquiesce to the whims of militiamen when confronted and coerced into labor. They live in cities without stable governance or reliable civil services, separated by vast militia-controlled pockets of jungle. Those who attempt to migrate from their cities have often been captured by militias or died in the dense Congolese jungle, and those who remain in the East's semi-permanent tent cities (housing millions) suffer from widespread disease and lack of access to economic or educational opportunities. This dilemma fuels the militias' recruitment efforts, often targeting children (aged 5 to 14) without alternate prospects and without education. This lack of education is so widespread and devastating, in fact, that more than 60% of the East Congo's militia combatants are minors, the majority of which voluntarily joined the conflict for lack of feasible means of living. Failing public education infrastructure means that among those male children

*“The commander gave us an order...
He told us to stand around him so he
wouldn't get shot.
Then he started raping her”*

-Congolese Army Soldier, South Kivu Province



who don't join militias (because of moral objections, or failure to meet recruitment standards) 40% become laborers in mining operations, and among the female children 60% participate in the Congo's sex industry (some coercively, without pay, and some voluntarily to earn money for their families). Among children in the East Congo who are not involved mining operations, brothels, or militia movements, some participate in family-run subsistence farming, and some irregularly attend public school. Operating on a gutted budget, these East Congolese public schools produce less than 50% literacy rates among graduates, and fail to provide any significant alternatives to the cycle of violence and desperation that pervades the region.

In a region of the Congo where militiamen and kleptocrats leverage lack of opportunity to coerce civilian population into slave labor, the first step in breaking the cycle of destitution and desperation is the provision of opportunity. The Lumumba International French and English will be founded as a first class primary and secondary educational institution to provide opportunity to desperate community actors, educate East Congolese about the institutional problems that afflict their communities, and promote multi-faceted, deep-seated change in the region. This will be accomplished by, at the same time, providing an alternative to the slave mining operations of militiamen, and preparing young Congolese men and women as bold and impassioned community leaders who will foster broad, institutional change in the country.

The project will be underwritten by the resources and connections of the Central African Relief Effort, a US-Based NGO founded in December of 2016, of which Robert Flummerfelt and Sekou Foley act as board members. In its first 6 months operation, the Central African Relief Effort built from scratch a strong domestic donor network and coordinated its first ground mission in Mombasa, Kenya in July of 2017, gaining regional insights and invaluable connections that can and will be leveraged in the development of its next endeavor, the Lumumba International School. The school will *not* be located in the East Congo, for lack of reliable civil services, infrastructure, and security forces in the region. Rather, Lumumba International will be located in the southern border city of Lubumbashi. Admissions will be open to an applicant pool of 50% fee-paying Lubumbashi (target market I) and 50% tuition-free East Congolese children (target market II). This model will allow the school to achieve financial self-sufficiency (once the initial development is complete). The city of Lubumbashi features a variety of French and English speaking schools that charge admissions fees to students, demonstrating the fact that *Market I* exists and is capable of paying school fees (on average upwards of \$1500 per student per term). As for *Market II*, an anticipated surfeit of interested East Congolese candidates will allow for a selective admissions process that will bolster the school's academic standings and reinforce its prospect of qualifying for a rigid accreditation institution's approval (such as the IB, opening the door for graduating Lumumba students to apply to global universities with their academic transcripts issued by the school). East Congolese school children, if selected, will have transportation to Lubumbashi arranged and be boarded.



Lumumba International School

The Lumumba International School will provide invaluable world-class education to Congolese students, backed by rigid international accreditation. This will allow Lumumba to send its students to universities around the world (the Central African Relief Effort will develop a donor fund toward the provision of travel and logistical expenses for those learners who are accepted to global universities but cannot afford to attend out-of-pocket).

Key, highly precise metrics can be attached to students' academic performance, literacy rates (in Swahili, English, French), and matriculation to institutions of higher education both in the region and elsewhere in the world. These metrics will allow the venture to produce quantifiable evidence of a tangible impact for accepted students.

This venture benefits from the existing fundraising infrastructure, expertise, and ground connections (transportation contractors, school administrators) of the Central African Relief Effort, whose relatively short history has already, despite numerous obstacles, demonstrated a track record of highly effective ground relief in the region on a shoestring budget. An existing property will be purchased in Lubumbashi and renovated to accommodate the needs of the institution. This initial development necessitates start-up capital in the form of grant funding, but once the venture is operational the fee-payment system from the Lubumbashi population (50% of the school) will allow it to achieve financial solvency, sustainability, and, via a simple model of leveraging learners' tuition fees and donated funds from the C.A.R.E. to provide for a development budget, the capacity for growth.

These advantages, in symphony, make the Central African Relief Effort incredibly well-positioned to facilitate the construction of Lumumba International and oversee its continued prosperity and growth, both in terms of literal construction and development and, more significantly, in terms of its ability to effectuate meaningful, systemic change in a region currently engulfed in warfare and destitution.

"We have no security. At any moment you can lose your life here. And with the police, we are scared, with the military, we are scared"

-Resident of Goma, eastern Congo

"I was on my way to fetch water when two M23 soldiers kidnapped me. They took me to Rugombo, where I was trained to use a firearm"

-Former Child Soldier, South Kivu

Daima Mbele

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