

[Form 6]

Code: 14-A-052

THE NIWANO PEACE FOUNDATION
THE FINAL REPORT OF ACTIVITY GRANTS
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

Title of the project:

The North Kivu Leadership Institute

Organization/official title:

Congo Leadership Initiative

Name:

Nathaniel Houghton, President

Abby Gaylord, Grantwriting Assistant

Address:

24 Briar Hill Rd.

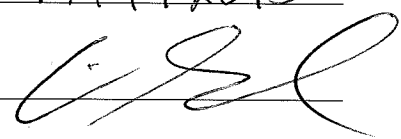
Orchard Park, NY 14127 USA

Telephone: 001-716-445-2251

Fax: n/a

E-mail: nathaniel.houghton@congoleaders.org

Date: 9/14/2015

Signature: 

1. Purpose of the Activity

Congo is a country rich in natural resources, diverse species of flora and fauna, and resilient people. However, throughout history and to this day Congo has been plagued by war, disease, and political instability. The BBC has referred to the country as the center of "Africa's World War."

DR Congo earned independence from Belgium in 1960. Despite the newfound freedom, the country very quickly fell into conflict and violence when the province of Katanga attempted to secede. During this time, the new Congolese government faced mutiny by the army. Soon after, the Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, was killed troops representing Joseph Mobutu. Mobutu seized power in 1965, renamed the country Zaire, and renamed himself Mobutu Sese Seko. During his reign, Zaire was backed by the United States and became a battleground for the Cold War. In 1997, Rwanda invaded Zaire in search of extremist Hutu militias. This gave anti-Mobutu rebels the opportunity to take Kinshasa and replace Mobutu with Laurent Kabila as president, and the country was renamed DR Congo.

At this time, Kabila plunged the country into a long-lasting, terrible conflict. Government forces were supported by Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, while rebel forces were backed by Uganda and Rwanda. The Congolese Civil Wars cost the lives of six million people. Some died as a direct result of warfare and violence, while others perished under the weight of the conditions of war, such as disease and malnutrition. A peace deal was signed in 2003, and a transitional government was formed in Congo to subdue fighting in the country. However, the Congolese Civil Wars left the country in a pattern of corruption and its people in the shadow of fear, which has barred Congo from reaching its full potential for development.

These conditions are especially harmful to the 22 million Congolese youth living there, ages 13-30. By age 14, only 56% of Congolese youth are still living with both of their parents. After age 14, school enrollment for all youth drops dramatically. For girls, the drop out rate is extremely high and, by the age of 18, 39% of girls are married. Sexual and domestic violence has been reported as commonplace throughout the country, and women's rights are not held to a standard deemed acceptable by the United Nations. In addition, instances of child labor and forced labor have been reported by the U.S. Department of Labor. Congo is a nation that is often last on the UN's Human Development Index out of 187 countries. GDP per capita has been estimated as lower than \$250 annually.

It is clear that Congo cannot rise up from the violence and mistreatment solely through the help of other nations. Other nations have stepped in already, and seem to have muddled the situation even more for the Congolese. Not only that, but change created within the country has a better chance of surviving, as it is more respected by the people of that country. Other countries are not necessarily aware of the true needs of Congo, but the Congolese are. Therefore, change must arise from the Congolese themselves, and who better to create a change than the creative, bright minds of the country's youth. This belief is outlined in CLI's Theory of Change:

"CLI will achieve its vision by training talented young leaders and providing them with opportunities to develop their communities."

The purpose of the North Kivu Peace Institute was to train local youth in the Congo's violent North Kivu province to lead peace building in communities affected by war and to provide them with the resources to launch their own peace-building projects. The North Kivu Peace Institute

was motivated by the recognition that harmony between people in the Congo of different religious and ethnic groups cannot be enforced by outsiders, but must come about as a natural result of the beliefs and actions of those in the community. Because youth have energy and willingness to create change, and because the population of the Congo is so young (more than 60% of Congolese people are under the age of 25), CLI chose to target young leaders as the drivers of change. CLI hopes that through peaceful actions, such as leadership training, the Congolese people can begin to feel empowered in their own abilities to sustain important and influential projects throughout the country.

2. Content and method of the Activity

The North Kivu Peace Institute was carried out in three parts as first described in CLI's original grant application to the Niwano Foundation. CLI used the following three core strengths to create a successful and meaningful experience for the youth involved:

1. An adaptable model
2. A strong brand in the Congo
3. A leadership curriculum with depth and rigor

Due to these key components of CLI's plan, the outcome of the program was extremely positive.

Firstly, CLI believes that well-trained teachers are crucial to the strength of the program. CLI began by choosing trainers that were believed to uphold the principles valued by CLI. In order to properly train Congolese youth, the students would need trainers who were passionate, creative, and who exemplified the leadership program's beliefs in everyday life. The CLI staff then spent two days training the chosen teachers on the leadership curriculum as well as proper teaching methods. Once the teachers had been trained, CLI students consisting of high-school aged students and out of school youth had an opening Peace Institute meeting, followed by 4-hour blocks of training on alternating Saturdays. These training days were dedicated to the core curriculum, a leadership-building program created by CLI to meet the specific needs and interests of Congolese youth. The core curriculum provides the main building block for students to base their projects on.

Upon completion of the core curriculum, students presented their project ideas to CLI and graduated as members of CLI. Students continued training for a total of 20 more hours after graduating. This training provided more specialized focus for the students to start their projects. At the final closing meeting, successful students were awarded micro grants of \$40 to begin their projects.

The content of the program began with the core curriculum, which focuses on developing leadership through cooperation and selflessness. This core curriculum, which was developed by CLI, creates a foundation on which students can practice and grow their leadership and entrepreneurial skills with the good of the community at the forefront of their endeavors. Lessons in the core curriculum stated clear objectives that would build upon one another to increase each trainee's leadership and entrepreneurial knowledge in the context of their communities. For example, a lesson titled My Community stated the following objectives:

- Create awareness of your local resources
- Recognize and value the gifts within your community
- Understand the importance of working with what you have

- Avoid paralysis, reliance on exterior groups and take action into your own hands

The activities that follow consist of creating both a personal asset map and then a community asset map. In the personal asset map, students are asked to brainstorm what they can bring forward and use to make a change in the community, such as individual strengths and specific knowledge. The community asset map allows students to think critically about their environment and ideate how local resources can be used to support change.

After completion of the core curriculum, CLI students train for another twenty hours at their sites. This training goes beyond the core curriculum to provide specialized information and tools to CLI students. The content of this training focuses on preparing the students to begin their own project or endeavor with the provided \$40 micro grant.

CLI's overall methodology and project theory is demonstrated in the following blog post written by Iongwa Mashangao, CLI Partnership Manager:

"The world over, entrepreneurs are looked as the answers to the abject poverty and unemployment challenges, creating wealth for investors, increasing tax receipts for countries, and bringing solutions to critical pressing challenges for the world."

"Entrepreneurs are interested in building successful business models that not only provide innovative solutions to global ills but also generate sustainable returns on investment. CLI puts in place a Better model for Training young Congolese socially responsible entrepreneurial leaders. This training model undergoes improvement regularly to respond to the needs of youth."

"CLI mentors and trainers are capable of discussing with the youth existing challenges, how to transform these into opportunities and the language of investors for funding these types of enterprises. This is the strategic way to address extreme poverty and unemployment challenges via entrepreneurship in the DRC."

3. Course of actual events

We received our initial wire transfer of \$5,820.16 (after the exchange rate) from Niwano Foundation and had already gathered the additional funding necessary to being the program. The North Kivu Peace Institute was carried out in Beni in partnership with Oneness Development Institute, a grass roots NGO that has been a partner for more than two years. CLI values the knowledge and input that local partner organizations, such as the Oneness Development Institute, bring to the training. CLI firmly believes that working with these partners not only creates a program that is outstanding, but also one that is well suited to Congolese youth.

The events of the North Kivu Peace Institute occurred as originally planned. CLI's professional staff chose and trained incoming trainers. After completion of teacher training, the Peace Institute held an opening meeting for trainers and students at which the goals and expectations of the program were discussed. The chosen Congolese youth then began training twice per month (on alternating Saturdays) for 4 hours at a time. Upon successful completion of the core curriculum, students moved on to an additional twenty hours of more specialized training. Upon completion of all training requirements, \$40 micro-grants were awarded to each student to launch a project in their community. Some students worked independently, but many chose

to work in groups on a shared project.

Since trainees of the program become members of CLI upon completion of the core curriculum, CLI can easily follow their progress post-training. Feedback from trained youth indicates the CLI leadership-training program was pivotal to their growth as a leader in the community. Members were also expected to continue their journey towards becoming an even more influential catalyst for change. This assumption has been supported by the continuous work of CLI members in the community and their thirst for more opportunities to serve and develop their communities. It is the hope that this momentum of change remains continuous, and that the cycle of grassroots peace creation throughout Congo.

4. Achievements of the Activity

Ultimately, we consider the total number of youth trained and projects launched to be a success. The goals for the program were adjusted from our initial expectations for several reasons. Firstly, continued violence in the region affected young leaders' ability to attend and participate. CLI did not wish to put any youth in harm's way during a time of dangerous instability. Secondly, smaller class sizes allowed CLI to better appreciate the quality of programs created due in part to more individualized attention from trainers, rather than simply the quantity of youth trained. 139 youth launched 22 projects in their local communities. One of our areas of learning was that youth – especially in Beni – preferred to work in larger groups than initially anticipated. In a country where stability is so rare, projects that are rich in quality and stronger in manpower are more likely to succeed and become sustainable. In addition, CLI found these teams to be especially beneficial in reflecting the values of cooperation and unity among leaders. Working as a team also upholds the values of oneness throughout the community and trust among students and the general population.

The following are projects created by CLI students that highlight the program's success:

- A goat-breeding business bringing together families in the community and providing funds for school fees
- A short film publicly denouncing gender-based violence screened for 100 schoolchildren
- A socially responsible business providing technology and school supplies to young people
- A social organization that trains young girls to be artists in order to experience joy and earn a living

Programs such as these differ in their areas of focus, but they share a common goal of uniting the Congolese people to become self-sufficient, self-sustaining, and strong against opposing powers of violence and hatred. These programs cross the many cultural and ethnic boundaries found in Congolese communities, bringing everyone together in a peaceful and constructive manner. Although these projects may seem small right now, it is these types of changes that will truly make a difference in Congo. Lasting change does not manifest itself in one large blow, but rather grows from the seeds planted by those who have the willingness and capacity to make a difference for themselves and for their communities.

5. Future areas to be pursued

The results of this initial project are promising and CLI intends to continue increasing the scale of the program in the coming years, both at established sites and new sites in the Congo. CLI

hopes to reach those youth that were prevented from participating in the training program over the past year due to violence in the region. Although these ambitions are highly dependent on the state of the site areas and levels of violence, CLI will do everything in its power to deliver leadership training safely to these youth.

CLI hopes to grow to reach even more Congolese youth while keeping in mind the value of quality throughout the process. Although this will require more resources and funding, CLI believes that power of value and substance in future training cannot be forgone as expansion continues. CLI will continue to seek funding as a non-profit organization from sources willing to support economic and social growth in Congo. As more funding becomes available, CLI will launch programming with interested youth at new sites. In the past year, over 20 organizations have expressed interest in using the Leadership Institute with their own youth groups, opening up the doors for more collaboration and a greater number of students trained throughout Congo.

In an effort to make CLI's program more self-sufficient in terms of funding, the CLI headquarters office in Kinshasa has purchased a generator, which can provide energy to the office computers during the frequent energy blackouts that occur there. The office will charge Congolese citizens for use of the computers, following the model of an Internet café. It is anticipated that the purchase of a generator will increase CLI's income and allow the organization to reach its goals of expansion throughout the country while maintaining a quality education program to students. In less than one month of operation, the Kinshasa office has earned nearly \$200 in profit from this platform.

In addition to continuing leadership education in Congo, CLI would like to recruit a greater number of female students and trainers. CLI recognizes the need for more women's rights throughout the country and believes that women who are educated and able to earn their own income are less likely to experience sexual and domestic violence. Financially successful women also have the power to fight for women's rights in their country, as they have more power legally. CLI believes that, by helping women to become financially independent, women can rise above the violence and oppression they have so long endured to become equal members of society.