



**THE
CONGO
TREE**



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

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Contents

Message from the Chair of the Board.....	1
Message from the Assistant Director and the DRC Team	1
Staff and Board of Trustees.....	2
WYLD Programme.....	3
Tree of Life.....	6
Mentoring.....	7
Mentoring Stories	8
Facilitators.....	9
School project - <i>Projet Ecole</i>	10
Alumni Stories	11
Social Action and Enterprise.....	12
Volcanic Eruption.....	13
Mwanzo Enterprise.....	15
Mwanzo Artistique.....	16
Peace for a Future.....	17
Youth for Inclusion.....	18
Partnerships.....	19
Finance Report.....	20
BeWYLD.....	21
Thanks.....	22



STEVE BAVINGTON

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

This year has been another groundbreaking year for Congo Tree as our young people continue to show us why we need to keep doing what we are doing, and more. Each story and message paints a picture of dynamism, strength, courage and creativity despite all the challenges young people face in eastern DRC. Our exceptional team is motivated and has given their all this year despite political uncertainty and economic pressures.

The fact that Congo Tree continues to gain momentum and grow, impacting thousands of lives for good across North Kivu is due to the intelligence of the team and the openness of our young leaders and mentor leaders. The positive difference the team, facilitators and young people are making in families and communities will go down in history as individuals and whole communities discover the power of teamwork, trust and solidarity. We are very grateful to every supporter and partner who has contributed to this work. Your donations have changed not only the lives of the people mentioned here, but also the lives of all the young people we have helped - we can't do this without you. On behalf of the Board, I thank each and every one of you for being part of this story.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

We have once again experienced and celebrated the different skills of young people in their own ways in our communities. A special year with specific circumstances for the Congo.

The DR Congo continues to go through moments of serious instability in its eastern part. North Kivu, the region where we run our activities, is not spared. The region of Beni continues to count hundreds of people massacred every day, but also the territory of Rutshuru and Masisi still has armed groups that greatly destabilise the peace of the population. Young people are both victims and perpetrators in these wars, which also limits their ability to think beyond and have big visions. In addition, the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano has devastated the northern part of the city of Goma.

Thanks to The Congo Tree, young people have demonstrated that they are drivers of change. We have inspired and equipped our youth, and from their sides they have been solutions for the community. We have celebrated the success and achievement of our Young Leaders. Today we are a benchmark organisation for youth because our way of doing, acting and inspiring is creative and participatory. Our team in the DRC has become even more motivated and passionate about this work which is of great importance to the youth. We will never stop saying thank you to all the supporters who keep on accompanying us and being part of the history of many. We are very proud of you.



MEDI MUYISA
Assistant Directeur

THE STAFF AND BOARD OF THE CONGO TREE

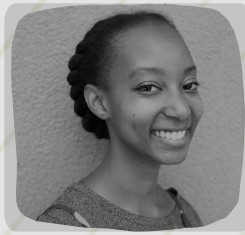
DRC TEAM



Medi Muyisa
Assistant
Director



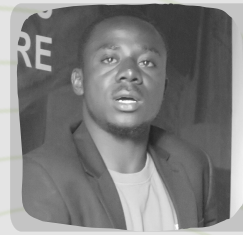
Sage Dunia
Programme
Coordinator



Philippa Zawe
Communication
Lead



Kaley Grace
Communication
Officer



Merveil Bahati
Engagement
Officer



Alice Mitulo
Organisation
Officer

OUR TEAM IN MASISI AND RUTSHURU



UK TEAM



Chloe Russell



Anna Galloway



Harmony Ngwamah

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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Muhindo Malunga



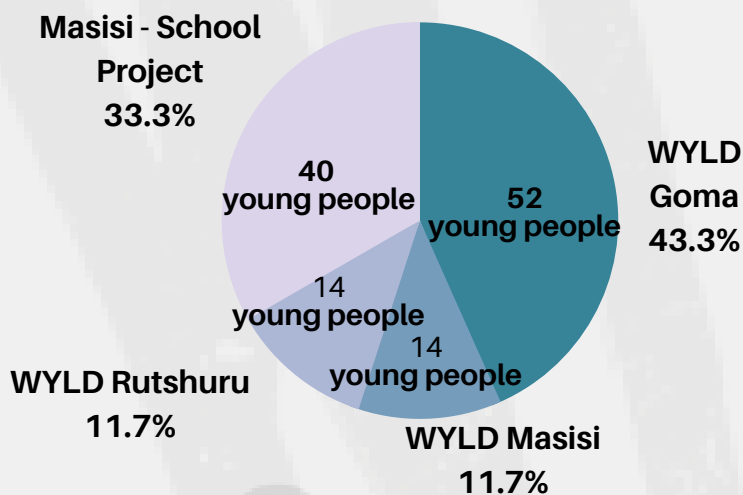
THE WYLD PROGRAMME



The WYLD programme is the central pillar of The Congo Tree's work. WYLD enables us to deliver on our vision of inspiring, equipping and supporting young people through personal development, teamwork, challenges and discussion groups that promote peer learning, as well as helping young people to understand their role in solving problems in the community and thus being a major agent of change.

There are many challenges facing communities in the DRC and the hope for change lies with the youth, who make up more than 70% of the active population. The very context of the country means that young people find themselves neglected and unsupported. Youth are today both the victims and the perpetrators of various atrocities within the community. Through our vision and mission, we give young people a chance to be the authors of change and develop different skills that are useful to many. The WYLD Programme is a direct response to the various challenges facing the youth of this country.

This year we have directly reached 120 young people through our programmes, and indirectly we have reached over 1500 young people in the community through our actions.



120 young people
in our
programmes



**INSPIRE
SUPPORT
EQUIP** | **THE YOUNG
PEOPLE**

THE WYLD PROGRAMME

Despite a more difficult context in our areas of activity, notably increased insecurity in Rutshuru and Masisi, and also the volcanic eruption near Goma city. During this year, our team in DRC was even more determined to achieve a great impact in the lives of young people and also at the community level.

Leadership capacity

96 %

Say that the amount of knowledge learned in leadership is very developed



Pleasure in the programme

95 %

Of our young people enjoy being part of the WYLD programme.

Content of the programme

98 %

Say that the content of the programme is very important and interesting for our young people in relation to their situation or need

The WYLD programme helps young people to develop at least five transferable life and leadership skills: communication, creativity, problem solving, entrepreneurship and leadership with integrity. Each year we ask our young people to assess their progress in the above skills and we register the results.

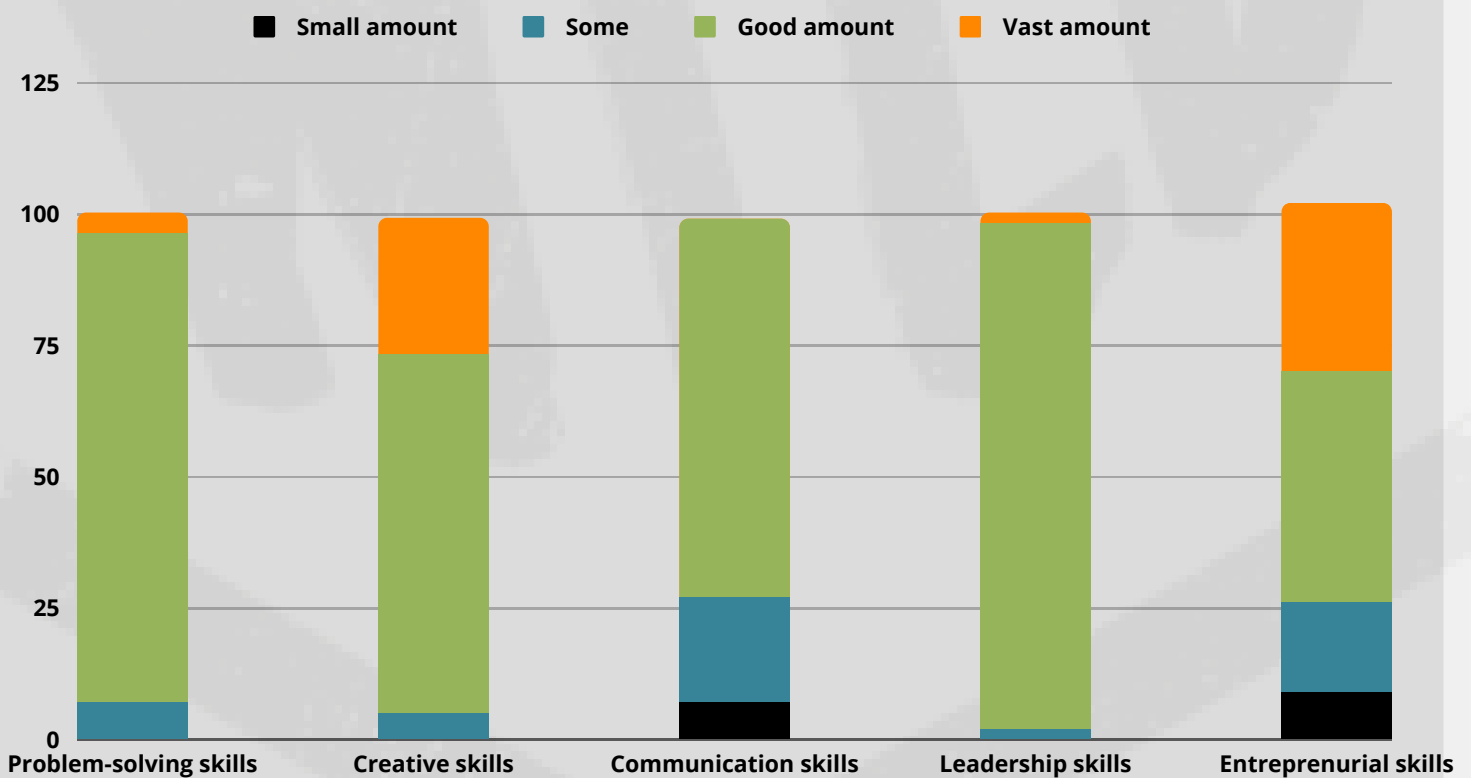
THE WYLD PROGRAMME



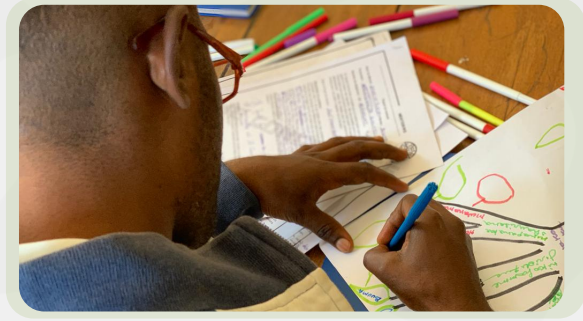
Goma / Training of the WYLD programme with Young Leaders and Leader Mentors



Rutshuru / Training of the WYLD programme with Young Leaders and Leader Mentors



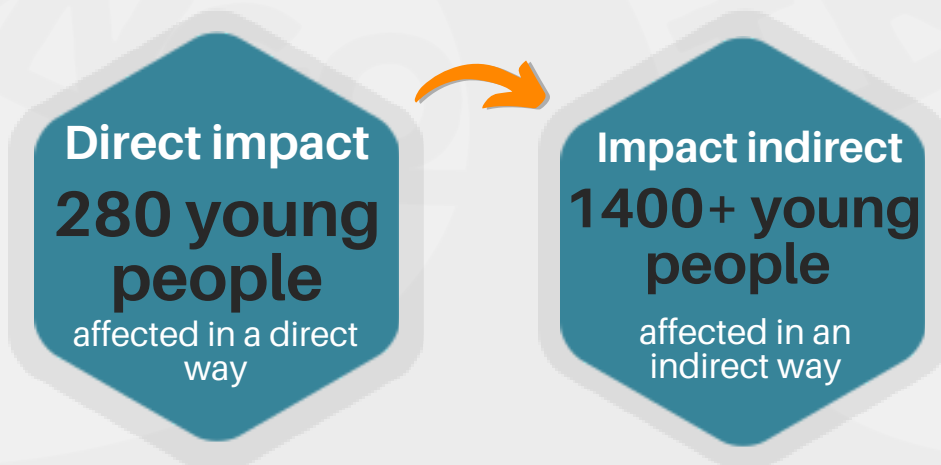
TREE OF LIFE



Identity is the basis for the development of one's circle of influence and personal development. Tree of Life is a psychotherapeutic tool, additional to the WYLD programme run by The Congo Tree.

Tree of Life is a direct support to our mentoring scheme, as it helps the young people in the programme to better understand each other and to overcome the traumas of conflicts experienced in the community. This is based on :

- Mutual knowledge of each other's background and identity
- Understanding of each other's other unknown skills and having a clear vision
- Being part of each other's history and making solutions in the community
- Insight into problems and prevention of solutions



MENTORING

Each participant in our WYLD programme is placed in a mentoring pair, either as a mentor or mentee depending on their age, experience and abilities.

They are required to meet for at least one mentoring hour per month. At the end of the year, we found that the majority of our young people were meeting much more than that.

Goma

52 young people or 26 mentoring pairs

Masisi

14 young people, 7 mentoring pairs

Masisi-Projet Ecole

40 young people or 20 mentoring pairs

Rutshuru

14 young people, 7 mentoring pairs

During the year 2021-2022, the mentoring scheme has been very successful. From the beginning to the end of the mentoring relationships, the young people have challenged each other and experienced positive change. Beyond having the time to meet at the beginning of each month for the monthly meeting, the young people made solid and encouraging relationships.

In Goma, Masisi and Rutshuru, the Leaders Mentors and Young Leaders have had a considerable positive impact. Despite the worrying situations of the war in Rutshuru and Masisi, and also despite disruption caused by lava flow from the volcanic eruption, the mentoring groups continued their monthly discussion activities at times through messages and phone calls. No mentoring sessions were missed - 100% of the mentoring pairs met regularly in some capacity during each month. The total number of young people involved in the mentoring programme is 120, making 60 mentoring peers involved during the year 2021-2022.



MENTORING STORIES



Aristoste and Rodrigue

Aristoste and Rodrigue

Goma

The mentoring programme is essential for me. By meeting my mentor, my learning level in school improves. His technical language makes me understand more about the subject I am learning. I am doing the technical section in electrical studies. In our schools in Goma, the teachers give a lot of theory and little practice. Before, every time I needed to put what I learned into practice, I lacked someone who could help me to apply myself better, someone to guide me

and refer to, to do better. Rodrigue is an important connection for me to reconcile my theories with my practice. In our mentoring goals for the year, my main target is that I become a good technician. I hope to end my time in the mentoring program with an excellent level of electrical experience. Since the beginning of the mentoring, I have already installed in more than 6 houses here in the city of Goma.

Binite and Salama

Masisi

" I went through a very difficult phase financially in my family. I am 14 years old, and I realised that I should continue to study so that my future would not be ruined. Due to the financial challenges, I was at the point of giving up school - while we pay \$15 per term, I didn't know if it would be possible for me to complete the school year. None of my relatives were able to help and support me.

When I met with my mentor, Salama, in February 2021, she gave me some guidance that was beneficial to me, which I will share with you: to take someone else's money on credit and start a micro-business, part of the interest from which I would use to pay back the lender and part to pay my expenses. I borrowed some money and start selling vegetables every afternoon after school. At the beginning of my vegetable business it was a bit difficult to combine studies and business, but now it's going well. I have achieved a real stability in my studies, in my emotional life, and also I don't have as many financial worries! "

95 %

of our young people said they were satisfied with their mentoring experience

FACILITATORS



89%

of young people
appreciate the way our
facilitators work

25

Facilitators

for Goma, Masisi and
Rutshuru
(volunteers).

Our team of volunteer facilitators is getting stronger and even more committed to young people. Facilitating sessions with The Congo Tree is about transferring skills to young people whilst also continuing to learn and improve oneself - these are the first objectives we set for all our facilitators. This year, **we graduated 15 facilitators** - who have started the programme since 2018 and have given lots of their time for the development of the youth. **15 Ambassadors in the community** to help The Congo Tree to have even more impact. Together we celebrated the success and impact that these young leaders have had on the work of The Congo Tree. Today, we have **25 facilitators for Goma, Masisi and Rutshuru**. Our facilitators are the first references for our youth in their leadership in the community.

"Thanks to my experience in facilitating sessions, today I am able to speak confidently in public and also develop my self-esteem. I know that the knowledge I have passed on to the young people will help them to become solution-makers in the community."

Baby Kitambala / Facilitator

SCHOOL PROJECT - PROJET ECOLE



Our WYLD school project is a great success in Masisi Territory. **40 children have been directly reached by Projet Ecole** with over 1100 children indirectly reached and influenced positively by children on the project at school level.



" Having my students in this programme has made me think twice about the way we teach in our schools. Getting children to understand who they are by discovering their strengths and weaknesses will make them people with better self-esteem. Today I see these young people taking the lead in solving problems in school. We believe in them and know that they are catalysts for development in our communities. "

Patrick Muhindo / Teacher

Change

92 %

of students in the project are now authors of positive change in their schools

Peaceful cohabitation

96 %

of students are now advocating peaceful cohabitation between different tribes at the community level

Continuity of the programme

100 %

of students want to continue with the programme to learn more about personal development

Impact

40 children directly reached

+ 1100 children reached indirectly through the positive influence of project children at school

"Discovering who I am and my role in changing the situation in my community, starting with my school, is the most important thing I have learned with The Congo Tree. I am taking the lead and will influence my colleagues towards positive change.

Tuliza / Student from Masisi

ALUMNI



Andy Best Kanku

I went through the WYLD programme at The Congo Tree and it was like a catalyst for me because, through the different training sessions, I discovered the two great values embedded in me - inspiration and creativity.

Before I went through The Congo Tree programme, I had so many unstructured ideas in my head that I found it difficult to put things into practice but now, with what I have learned and especially from working as a team, I have become involved with others and we have now initiated two community projects together, one of which is agricultural field to help solve the problem of famine. Malnourishment is a serious problem for my community, so I decided to grow beans. By increasing the production of beans in my country, it will lower the price, which is currently very high, and I will be able to save thousands of children in the community. Today, I am proud to be part of the solution.

Archange Lwanzo

We were all inspired and encouraged by this young leader. Archangel is a young person in the ongoing programme at The Congo Tree, since September 2021. For much of this time, she has also been working in Kigali, Rwanda, as a school teacher. Kigali is 300 kilometres from the city of Goma.



From the very beginning, she was greatly inspired by the training that she received. Knowing who she really was - her strengths and her weaknesses - she set a vision with small, short-term goals. Determination and self-confidence made it possible for her to keep moving forward in her life. Through what she had learned in The Congo Tree's programmes, she was able to impress her new employer and succeeded in being offered a teaching role at the school. Most importantly, and what inspires us all, is that she travels 300 kilometres every month to attend our monthly meetings.

We asked her why she travels so far, from one country to another, here is her answer:

"My participation in each monthly meeting is very important not only for me but also for my teammates. I learn a lot from the training sessions which develops my professional skills but also improves how I live with others. Developing my character will allow me to be an outstanding person in the community, capable of helping others. I am not only learning for myself but also learning for others. The experiences of others will allow me to challenge myself and overcome my difficulties."

SOCIAL ACTION AND ENTERPRISE

Each year, we give young people the opportunity to solve problems in the community through social action. The objective is not only to solve the problem but also to develop teamwork; for young people to practically experience the strengths and the overcoming of challenges by working together. During this year, 6 social actions have been implemented in communities in Goma, Rutshuru and Masisi.

◦ Rutshuru

70 households supported in agriculture in Kisisile

The village of Kisisile is located around 10 kilometres from Rutshuru Centre. It is a small village with a little more than 2000 inhabitants and whose main livelihoods are agriculture. After a time of serious conflict and displacement of the population from the village they call home, our young leaders in Rutshuru decided to use their social action challenge to help. Working with the chief of the village, they coordinated support for 70 households who had just returned to their village without any seed for their fields. The distribution of seeds for beans was to meet the need for food but also for community reintegration after moments of war. More than 500 people were impacted by this social action project, which continues to this day in the village of Kisisile to support families in difficulty.



We believe that what our young people are doing in Kisisile will not only solve problems in the village and wider community of Rutshuru but will also inspire many others of their age to do the same and take responsibility for the community. We are proud of this new generation who are able to work within their community and do great things to help others.

○ **Masisi**

10 young people are supported in their income generating activities.

The youth in Masisi have decided to continue with micro-credit projects for other young people. With young people susceptible to making poor choices when facing the challenges of poverty, supporting youth entrepreneurship is the only way to help them become autonomous and give them better options for the future. Through their social action challenge, our young people have decided to directly support 10 young people in their entrepreneurship, indirectly impacting more than 80 people connected to their households.

The aim was to influence other young people to do the same, to work together to solve the problems in their community.

Thanks to The Congo Tree, I have become an entrepreneur. I sell phone credit and this makes me financially independent. Today, I am an inspiration to many young people in my community. I can no longer be manipulated and end up in armed groups because I have a job that gives me money.

Young entrepreneur / Masisi



"The funds received from The Congo Tree have enabled me to fulfil my dream of being a young entrepreneur in my village. I have become a positive example and role model for many in my community. I am also solving problems in my community because my pharmacy and the sale of medicine helps many sick people."

Joseph , young entrepreneur / Masisi

○ **Goma**

35 children reintegrated into their families

Children separated from their families - because of displacement, poverty or other reasons - is a big problem in the city of Goma. There are many children living on the streets, alone or in groups, who are fending for themselves - this is dangerous for them and also problematic for the community. One team of young people decided to try to reunite some of these children with their families. Talking and understanding the problems of street children was an important objective of this project.

Thanks to this team of young people, 35 children were reunited with their families. Some of these children are going to continue with studies and others have been supported to start work. All of the children have been referred to the organisation *Un Jour Nouveau* for continuous psychological follow-up.

VOLCANIC ERUPTION

In May 2022, the city of Goma came under fire from the Nyiragongo volcano, located just 10 kilometres from the city centre. More than 5,000 households were left homeless and 14 people died when this uncontrollable disaster plunged the city of Goma into crisis. As always, the lava found a new path, and this time it was the northern part of the city that was affected, close to the airport.



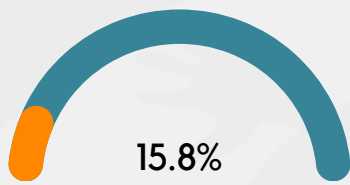
With problem-solving being one of the most important lessons in our WYLD programme, young people mobilised to put into practice what they had learned. Over 60 young people, current and alumni together, volunteered to bring food and water to displaced families. This is what we got involved with:

- Worked with our partner Uhuru Center, in Sake town to give food and water to more than 1000 people during their evacuation from Goma
- Supported with community health education in area where displaced people had found refuge
- Distributed sanitary products and gave information on menstrual hygiene issues to women and girls who were displaced - reaching more than 1000 young women
- Identified 20 families of the youth of The Congo Tree who had lost their homes and all their belongings in the eruption and were in real difficulty. We gave each family \$75 so that they could meet their urgent needs to enable them to start again
- Worked with Michelle Smith to run Tree of Life trauma therapy and WYLD problem-solving sessions with 120 young people in schools that had been destroyed or impacted by the lava flow. With this programme, we also reached at least 600 people in the community indirectly.

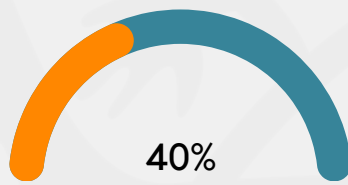


MWANZO ENTERPRISE

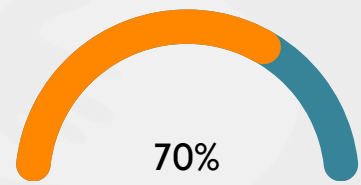
In the DRC, unemployment is a serious problem in urban area, affecting mainly young people aged 15 to 24.



youth unemployment
rate in the DRC



of the population live in
urban areas



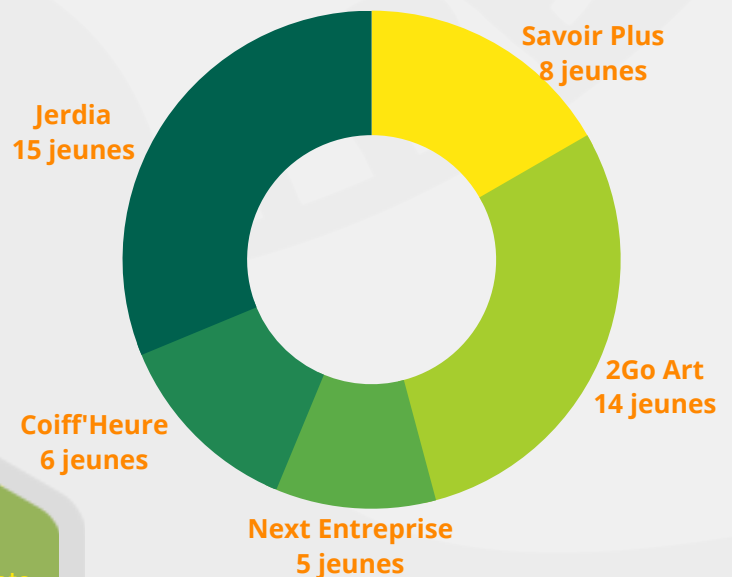
of the population live in extreme
poverty, on less than \$2 USD per day

Since January, we have welcomed 5 companies to use a co-working space in our Treehouse: Savoir Plus Corporation, Next Entreprises, 2GO Art, Coiff'Heure and Jerdia have been actively demonstrating the importance of the Mwanzo Entreprise programme, which has supported them with training and mentoring, a physical address, and a good working environment, allowing their credibility and reputation to increase.



Youth Employability

This programme is designed to help young entrepreneurs. We want to help lower the unemployment rate among young people in the community. This table shows the extent to which this problem is being solved step by step with these 5 enterprises:



**Impact of the
Programme**
72%

The programme helps companies so far to improve their organisational capacity and vision and especially the capitalisation of working time

**Corporate
customers**

Savoir Plus : 42 clients
2Go art : 45 clients
Next Entreprise : 30 clients
Coiff'Heure : 47 clients
Jerdia : 200 clients

The programme offers monthly entrepreneurship training sessions to provide each business with the tools they need to develop and grow.

MWANZO ARTISTIC

Mwanzo Artistic is a professional and personal development programme designed to support of young artists in the province of North Kivu. The programme is aims to engage and mentor artists in their creative practice, to encourage them to use their art to lead themselves and others towards problem resolution, peaceful cohabitation and mentoring. We also connect young artists with artists from their local community and international artists, to increase their global awareness and thinking together about community engagement.



◦ Musika na Kipaji

We accompanied the *Musika na Kipaji* festival, a series of artistic activities focused on presenting female artists and with the aim of equipping young women to explore and utilise their potential. Some of our young people and team performed in this festival, including: Esther Abumba, Philippa Walusimbi, Aminah Murhebwa.



◦ Festival Amani

The Amani Festival takes place every year, bringing music, dancers, comedians and other talented artists to Goma for 3 days each February. The name of the festival comes from the Swahili word for "peace" and promoting peace is one of the festival's main aims. Every year, many of our young people volunteer to help run the festival.



Impact Mwanzo Artistic

70+ young people

regularly participated in our performances at Tree House

8 Young Artists

have been supported in their creativity

Diversification of different cultures

in the community through art

with one message:

"love"

PEACE FOR A FUTURE

Peace For a Future is a programme that aims to put young people at the centre of finding solutions to problems related to peace, justice and inclusion in the community.

The DRC, especially the eastern part, has experienced several wars and tribal conflicts. Young people remain the victims and perpetrators in these wars. We want to break the cycle of the violence that they experience, and see young people at the forefront of peace-building in the DRC.

100+
national and
foreign armed
groups in
Eastern DRC

+ 600 million
young people living
in fragile and
conflict-affected
environments
worldwide

60%
of the population
in DRC estimated
to be under 18
years old

○ Conference on the International Day of Peace



To celebrate this day we organised with the African Union, UK in DRC, Cordaid, EDA and the presidency of the DRC a day of reflection with more than 200 young leaders from different civil society structures in Goma city.

○ International Youth Day



International Youth Day is an international day celebrated around the world on 12 August.

We got together and discussed two themes: **"Youth involvement in the development of North Kivu"** and **"Responsible understanding of the Vaccine19"**.

ENGAGEMENT

300+ young people

commit themselves to becoming peacemakers in the community

ADVOCACY

Many pleas to authorities for the involvement of young people in discussions and actions for peace



YOUTH FOR INCLUSION

Youth for Inclusion is a programme aiming to break down the various prejudices that are prevalent in the community which prevent people from achieving their potential, such as women and people living with disabilities.

◦ International Girls' Day / Breast Cancer Awareness



The International Day of the Girl has been celebrated every year on 11 October since 2012. Around the world, girls and young women face challenges specific to and because of their gender. This day celebrates girls and raises awareness of some of the challenges they face.

◦ International Women's Day



International Women's Day, also called International Women's Rights Day in some countries or regions such as France or Quebec, is celebrated on 8 March every year. Celebrated with the aim of empowering women, we dedicate the month of March for the promotion of women's rights and the value that they bring to every organisation and community.

150+ young girls
become aware of their
important role in
solving problems in
the community

**Inclusion of 16+
young people with
disabilities
in our programmes**

**Fight against
prejudice**
against girls and
women in the
community (culture,
church etc.)



PARTNERSHIPS



We were received by the administrator of Masisi Territory. Here is what he said to us: "The hope of Masisi at the moment lies in this youth who are the new generation that your organisation is training for the change of character. With a new way of seeing the world, of changing things and approaching different situations, Masisi will be able to produce useful young people in North Kivu, and in DRC in general."

Military Administrator of Masisi



Our partner, the ULPGI University, through its Young Leaders Incubator programme, has enabled us to reach many young people at university level. Several activities of scientific exchange and debate between young people were organised to give a free space of expression to the young people.

We have to say here that 3 of the young people who lead this programme within the University are Alumni of the WYLD Programme. Inspiring many other young people is our priority.

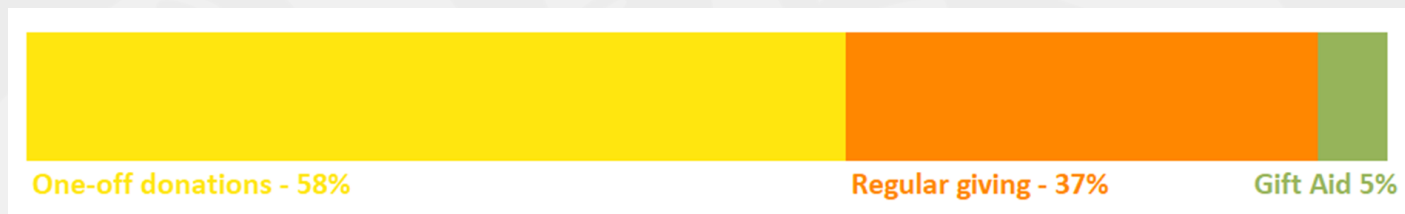


Uhuru Centre, our base partner in Sake, is a leading youth organisation in the area. During this year, we have organized some exchanges with the youth in Sake to understand what their vision and hope is for their community. In the future, we hope to start a WYLD programme with the young people of Sake (28 kilometres from Goma) in partnership with Uhuru Centre.

FINANCE REPORT

INCOME

Total income: **£43,059**

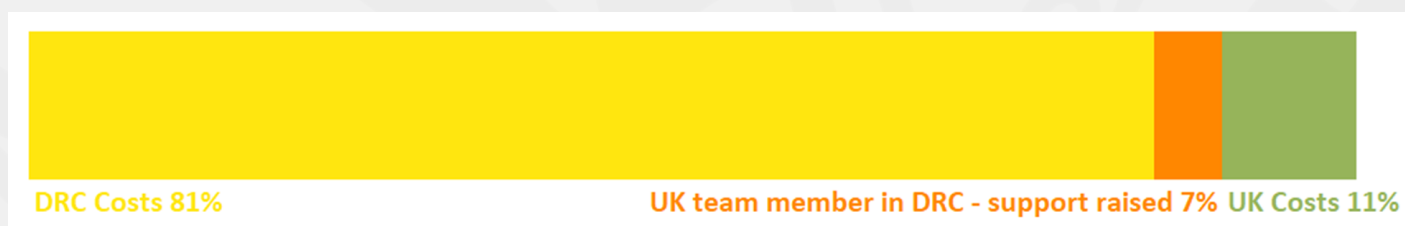


Volcano Emergency Appeal: £3760

**Not including accrued Gift Aid*

EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure: **£38,226**



DRC Costs Include:

- Programmes
- DRC Team salaries and stipends
- Monitoring and evaluation visits (including UK Director visit)
- The Treehouse – rent and maintenance
- Volcano response
- DRC bank fees

UK Costs Include:

- Accountancy
- Insurance
- UK bank fees
- Visibility / events / fundraising
- UK Team Leader salary
- Assistant Director mentoring support

Carried into 2022-23: **£9,030**

BEWYLD

#bepartofthestory

We couldn't do any of what reported on without the amazing financial support of generous people - thank you to everyone who has given to us in 2021-2022!

If you are thinking about giving to The Congo Tree, we would like to invite you to come and be WYLD with us, by supporting a place on a WYLD programme for only £120 / \$150 or £10 / \$12,5 per month!

Each cohort in Goma, Masisi and Rutshuru comprises 12 young leaders. We need supporters like you to give the leaders of tomorrow a life-changing experience. Alternatively, you could support an Intern for £30 / \$40 per month. Find out more at:

www.thecongotree.org.uk/donate

And there are loads of other ways that you can get involved!

- Volunteer with the UK Team
- Get sponsored for us
- Host us or run a fundraiser for us
- Support a young entrepreneur or team with a specific social action / creative enterprise project
- Gifts in kind
- Invite us into your school

If you're interested in finding out more, please contact us at: hello@thecongotree.org.uk



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARTNERS:

