

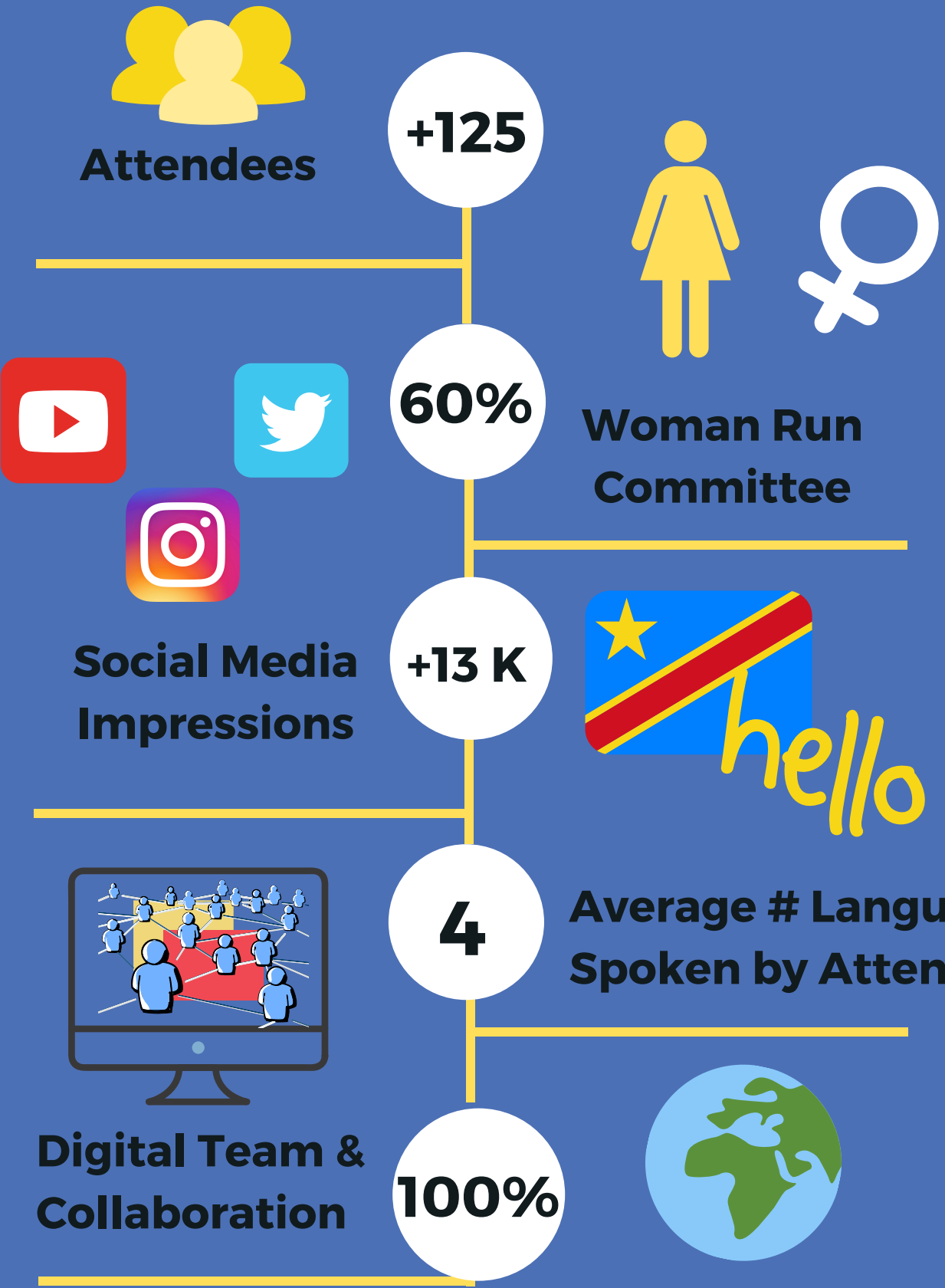


# CONGOLESE DIASPORA IMPACT SUMMIT SUMMARY

**Unleashing The Diaspora's Potential**

**Sep 21 | Civic Hall  
New York, NY**

# CDIS IN A SNAPSHOT



# A NOTE FROM CDIS LEADERSHIP



"CDIS 2019 was a testament of the millennial Congoese community's impact and power. It was refreshing to be a part of an event that represented Congoese from multiple generations and diverse cultural and professional backgrounds. CDIS is changing the narrative within and outside of the Congoese community."

-Lukogho Kasomo, CDIS Co-Founder and Kumi Edu Co-Founder



"It was beautiful, moving and motivating to see so many Congoese from across the DRC, and across the world, network, share ideas, and make practical plans to take ownership and responsibility for the country's present and future."

-Jim Ngokwey, CDIS Co-Founder and Mighty Peace Coffee Partner



"I am so proud of our team and that we organized the first-ever Congoese Diaspora Impact Summit, which created a special space for Congoese-Americans to shape the narrative around the DRC in the United States."

-Laura Kupe, CDIS Founding Member and Diversity in National Security Network Co-Founder

# ABOUT CDIS

The inaugural Congoese Diaspora Impact Summit took place in New York City on Saturday September 21, 2019. The Summit's mission was to identify practical steps the Congoese diaspora can take to maximize its capital, human and financial, and make an influence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). CDIS defines impact as the following:

- Working collaboratively to facilitate brain gain and increased development in the DRC
- Contributing to the improvement in education and healthcare delivery
- Identifying resources to support entrepreneurship and increase diaspora investment in the DRC



Photo: Kwame Andah, Congoese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2019

# SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS

## **Panel 1: Congolese Women and Girls Moving Development Forward**

Noella Coursaris Musunka - Founder & CEO, Malaika |Kaleba Ngoie - Kasongo, Founder and Executive Director, Hear Congo | Lukhogo Kasomo - Co-Founder, CDIS, Founder, Kumi Edu |Moderator: Laura Kupe, CDIS Founding Member

## **Panel 2: Business and Investing in DR Congo**

Yves Mayilamene - Group Exec HR, Ecobank | Serge Nawej - Co-Founder, ProximA Law | Franklin Muanankese - Founder, Tacoma Mountain Group | Lupetu Herve Tshibengabo - Co-Founder, T&T Group | Louis Watum, MD Ivanhoe Copper Mine | Moderator: Tomisi Kikama - Asst. VP of Claims Liberty Mutual Insurance

## **Panel 3: Perspectives on the State of Education and Healthcare**

Ginette Mukoka - Development Officer, BOMOKO United for Congo | Dr Jonathan Mboyo Esole - Einstein Fellow, Northeastern University | Ilunga Kalala - Chairman, Leja Bulela | Amani Tom Matabaro - Founding & Executive Director, Congo Peace School | Moderator: Tshiunza Kalubi - Deputy Executive Director, Leja Bulela

## **Panel 4: Entrepreneurship & Social Impact**

Kahindo Mateene - CEO & Creative Director, KAHINDO | Christian Kakoba - Co-Founder & COO, BitHub | Patrick Gaincko - Founder, Gain Xperience | Josuel Musabamghani - Co-Founder, Kwafrika Travel | Moderator: Jim N. Ngokwey - Co-Founder, CDIS, Partner, Mighty Peace Coffee

## **Closing Remarks**

Amini Kajunju - Executive Director, IUGB Foundation



# SUMMIT SUMMARY

## PANEL 1

### Panel 1: Congolese Women and Girls Moving Development Forward

The DRC has an estimated 85 million people, with women making up slightly more than half of the population. Fifty-seven percent of Congolese women have no formal education, and they are underrepresented in government and other key segments of society including, business. The future advancement of Congo is dependent on the progress of Congolese women.

#### Key Takeaways:

- Organizations like Malaika, HEAR Congo, and CDIS, focused on Congolese women and girls is critical to the advancement of the country, given the integral role Congolese women play in everyday life. The stories about Congolese women need to be shared by Congolese women.
- Congolese women in the diaspora can be excellent conduits in sharing the experiences of women in the Congo. They also can help lead fundraising efforts focused on the importance of empowering Congolese women, as opposed to advertising pain and suffering.
- In the process of launching an organization focused on supporting women in the Congo, transparency with donors and other supporters is essential, in addition to buy-in from the communities served.



Photo: Kwame Andah, Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2019

# SUMMIT SUMMARY

## PANEL 2

### Panel 2: Business and Investing in D.R. Congo

The DRC's commercial business and investment climate has been characterized as challenging due to economic and political volatility. Nonetheless, the DRC's mineral resources, large youthful population, and strategic location in Central Africa make it a potentially rewarding market for investors.

#### Key Takeaways:

- Before investing and doing business in the DRC, it is crucial to spend time in the country and conduct research about the business environment. Low-ranking scores on business indexes do not provide the complete picture on the ground in the DRC. The business climate has been improving consistently in recent years.
- There are opportunities in infrastructure, construction, real estate, agriculture, among other sectors. Congolese and those in the diaspora can help shape the future business environment through initiative, vision, and structures to foster an improved business climate.
- Identifying, developing, and managing local talent is critical to success in business in DRC.



Photo: Kwame Andah, Congoese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2019

# SUMMIT SUMMARY

## PANEL 3

### Panel 3: Perspectives on the State of Education and Healthcare

According to data from the Congolese government's 2016-2025 Strategic Vision for Education Reform (released in 2015), an estimated 3.5 million Congolese children of primary school age were out of school. The healthcare system in the DRC has also suffered for decades from a lack of investment. In a country where the median age is 18.8 years, investments in education and healthcare must be a priority for the DRC and critical donors.

#### Key Takeaways:

- As part of the Congolese government's educational reforms, pedagogy in Congolese schools must ultimately change. Such reformed pedagogy should encourage critical thinking, transformational leadership, entrepreneurship, and essential skills like farming.
- Due to the lack of a robust healthcare system, uncredentialed clinics and health centers have sprung up across the country. The lack of trained physicians and healthcare professionals has also resulted in the unnecessary loss of life. Leja Bulela's work in the Kasai region serves as an example of active diaspora engagement in the healthcare domain. Leja Bulela's Kalala Muzeu Health Center served approximately 300 general patients this year.
- The diaspora can play a critical role in training the next generation of healthcare and education professionals in the DRC through service trips and innovative use of technology.



Photo: Kwame Andah, Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2019



# SUMMIT SUMMARY

## PANEL 4

### Panel 4: Entrepreneurship & Social Impact

Developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the DRC has been more challenging compared to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa—especially when considering the country's economic and human potential. Despite such challenges, diaspora support can help foster entrepreneurship in the country by focusing on the DRC's many young entrepreneurs.

### Key Takeaways:

- Many of the DRC's entrepreneurs are young, creative, and eager. Diaspora entrepreneurs, through the innovative use of technology, can serve as mentors to help foster entrepreneurial acumen in the country.
- Entrepreneurs in the diaspora are eager to develop services and goods that support local economies in the Congo, in addition to improving the lives of everyday people.
- Diaspora businesses can support Congolese entrepreneurs by buying their products and services and by leveraging these entrepreneurs' skills and resources to add value to their enterprises.



Photo: Kwame Andah, Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2019

# CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Kajunju had 10 recommendations for how the Congoese Diaspora can make an impact in the DRC. She had the following recommendations for the audience:

1. Dispel myths and stereotypes to breathe life into a new narrative about the DRC.
2. Help shape U.S. and international policy priorities.
3. Work with partners at home to help bring reforms.
4. Bravely embrace Congoese politics.
5. Mentor our young compatriots.
6. Apply talent, energy and skills to further economic progress in the DRC through employment, entrepreneurship or volunteerism.
7. Remember that you don't have to live in DRC to make an impact in our beloved country.
8. Mobilize following humanitarian disasters.
9. Reconsider dual citizenship.
10. Find inspiration to stay engaged.



Photo: Kwame Andah, Congoese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2019

# SPONSORS & DONORS



Young African MBAs is a non-profit organization that focuses on empowering young Africans in business communities in Africa and in the Diaspora.

[www.youngafricanmbasbsp.com](http://www.youngafricanmbasbsp.com)



T&T Group is a property management company that provides quality short-stay housing with world class amenities in the DRC.

[www.ttgroupdrc.com](http://www.ttgroupdrc.com)

[www.fly243.com](http://www.fly243.com)



The Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security (WCAPS) vision is to advance the leadership and professional development of women of color in the fields of international peace, security, and conflict transformation.

[www.wcaps.org](http://www.wcaps.org)



gener8tor is a turnkey platform for the creative economy that connects startups, entrepreneurs, artists, investors, universities and corporations.

[www.gener8tor.com](http://www.gener8tor.com)



A&O Advisors is a new age boutique investment advisory firm owned by a minority and women team. Their unique holistic wealth management platform is designed for, but not limited to, high net worth individuals and families, exonerates, professional athletes, and women.

[www.aoadvisor.com](http://www.aoadvisor.com)



Mighty Peace Coffee provides coffee lovers and ethical businesses with the highest quality coffee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, while sharing stories of Congolese partners and farmers to inspire and end poverty and conflict through economic transformation and international advocacy.

[www.mightypeacecoffee.com](http://www.mightypeacecoffee.com)



Voss Foundation is dedicated to funding access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene as a means to enable community-driven development in Sub-Saharan Africa and raising awareness of the ongoing need in the region.

[www.vossfoundation.org](http://www.vossfoundation.org)



Mwinda Technologies is a company that aims to use a combination of CleanTech and FinTech products to address the lack of reliable energy and financial inclusion in sub-Saharan Africa, starting with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

[www.mwindatech.com](http://www.mwindatech.com)



Buzuri makeup is a Congolese brand that was launched in 2019 in the DRC.



Zapenda creates clothing that is unique to your body and designed for your lifestyle. Zapenda's clothing is designed in Detroit and made by expert tailors in a production center in the Democratic Republic of Congo

[www.zapendashop.com](http://www.zapendashop.com)



Kobo HubKobo Hub is a Kinshasa-based startup accelerator whose mission is to accelerate the emergence and success of local entrepreneurs.

[www.kobo-hub.com](http://www.kobo-hub.com)

## Donors:

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