



CONGO INITIATIVE

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

TOGETHER WE ARE



MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of Congo Initiative,

Congo Initiative is home to a unique community of Congolese leaders and international partners committed to the holistic transformation of lives and a thriving Democratic Republic of Congo. Our passion and hard work springs from our belief that together and united in action, we can write a new narrative for the Congolese people. A story of a people rising from despair to hope, from suffering to rejoicing, from exploitation to freedom of action and prosperity. By God’s grace and enablement, we have created a unique environment where this new story has already begun—a community of bold and committed people where both faith and intellect matter as we search for real solutions to the challenges of Congo.

The work of Congo Initiative spans a broad range of activities. We educate a new generation of Congolese leaders who have integrity; invest in a sustainable, vibrant society; and develop innovative, grassroots initiatives for peace, hope, and justice. We work in, and with churches, civil society, and businesses; and with professionals, students, and vulnerable people. We have created an atmosphere of *tuko pamoja* (“we are together”) in order to release the potential of each one of us in this journey of hope and Christ-centered transformation.

I am pleased to present you with this report that outlines some of the achievements and progress accomplished in this past year. We would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of our board members, executive leaders, and staff in the USA, UK, Congo and elsewhere, and the students at our main institution, l’Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC). They are the future of Congo!

Our achievements would not be possible without the prayers and support of our partners. To all of you, I say, thank you for your sacrificial and generous commitment to the vision of Congo Initiative. I want to assure you that this report also serves to renew our resolve for a transformed and flourishing Congo. Our challenges are many, but together, united and believing, we can make a difference for people who need it most and now.

Tuko pamoja,

David M. Kasali, PhD
Co-Founder & President
Congo Initiative

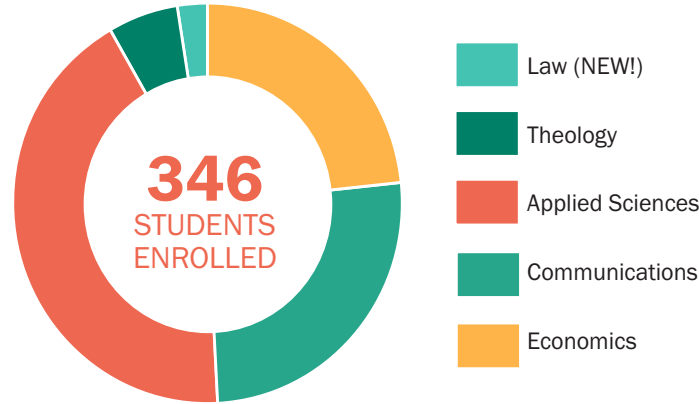


UNIVERSITÉ CHRÉTIENNE BILINGUE DU CONGO

506
TOTAL ALUMNI



UCBC is committed to equal opportunities for men and women. Though almost all Congolese universities are dominated by men (students and professors), UCBC aims to have an enrollment and graduate class that is 50% women. In the past, the ratio has been close to this mark although it dropped this past year to 33%, due in part to the disproportionate effects of regional insecurity on women. UCBC’s *Women’s Voices* student group continues to lead and encourage secondary school female students to pursue higher education and positions of leadership.



79
NEW STUDENTS ENROLLED

73
STUDENTS GRADUATED

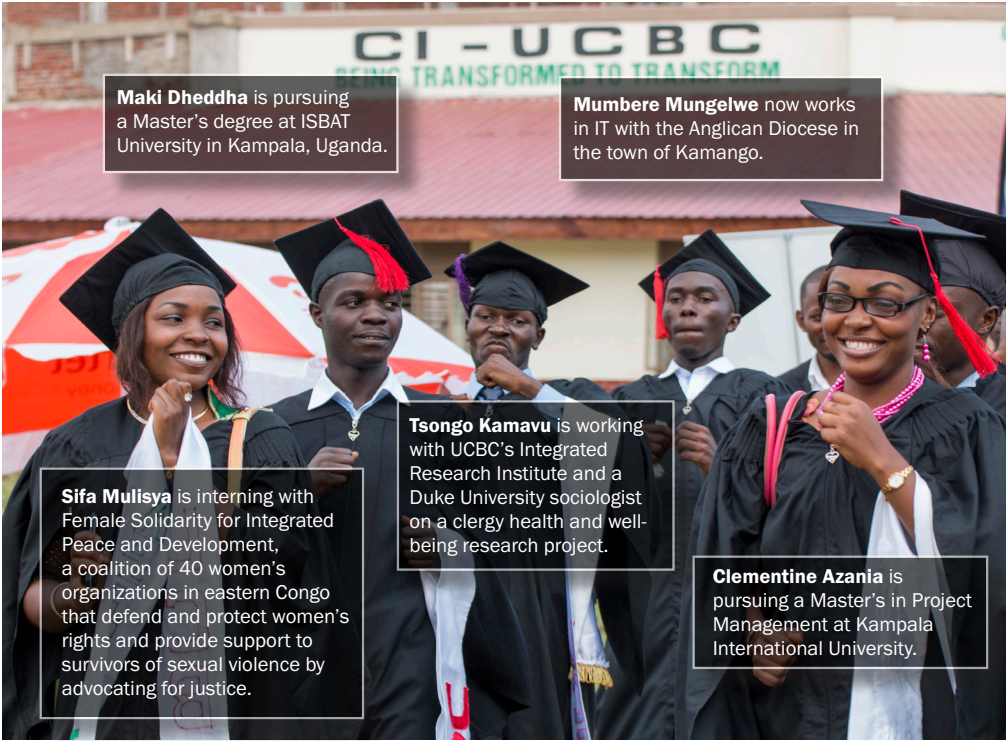


100
staff members.

7
faculty/staff participated in advanced studies in Kenya, Uganda and the U.S..

2
faculty completed their advanced studies and are now back as full-time teachers.





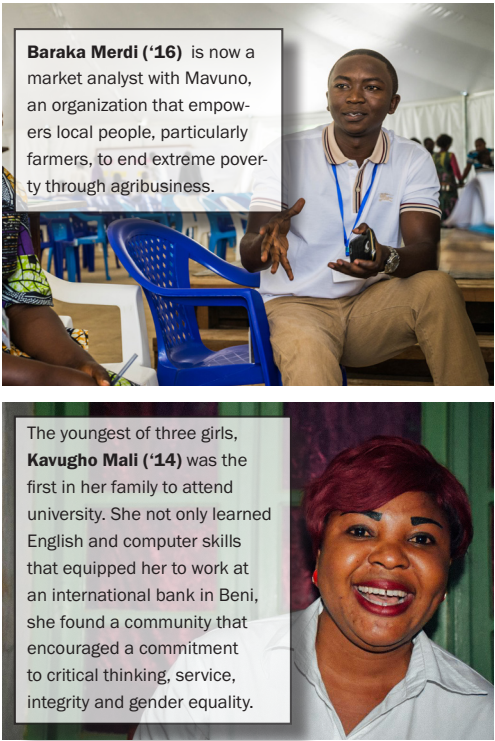
Maki Dheddha is pursuing a Master's degree at ISBAT University in Kampala, Uganda.

Mumbere Mungelwe now works in IT with the Anglican Diocese in the town of Kamango.

Sifa Mulisya is interning with Female Solidarity for Integrated Peace and Development, a coalition of 40 women's organizations in eastern Congo that defend and protect women's rights and provide support to survivors of sexual violence by advocating for justice.

Tsongo Kamavu is working with UCBC's Integrated Research Institute and a Duke University sociologist on a clergy health and well-being research project.

Clementine Azania is pursuing a Master's in Project Management at Kampala International University.

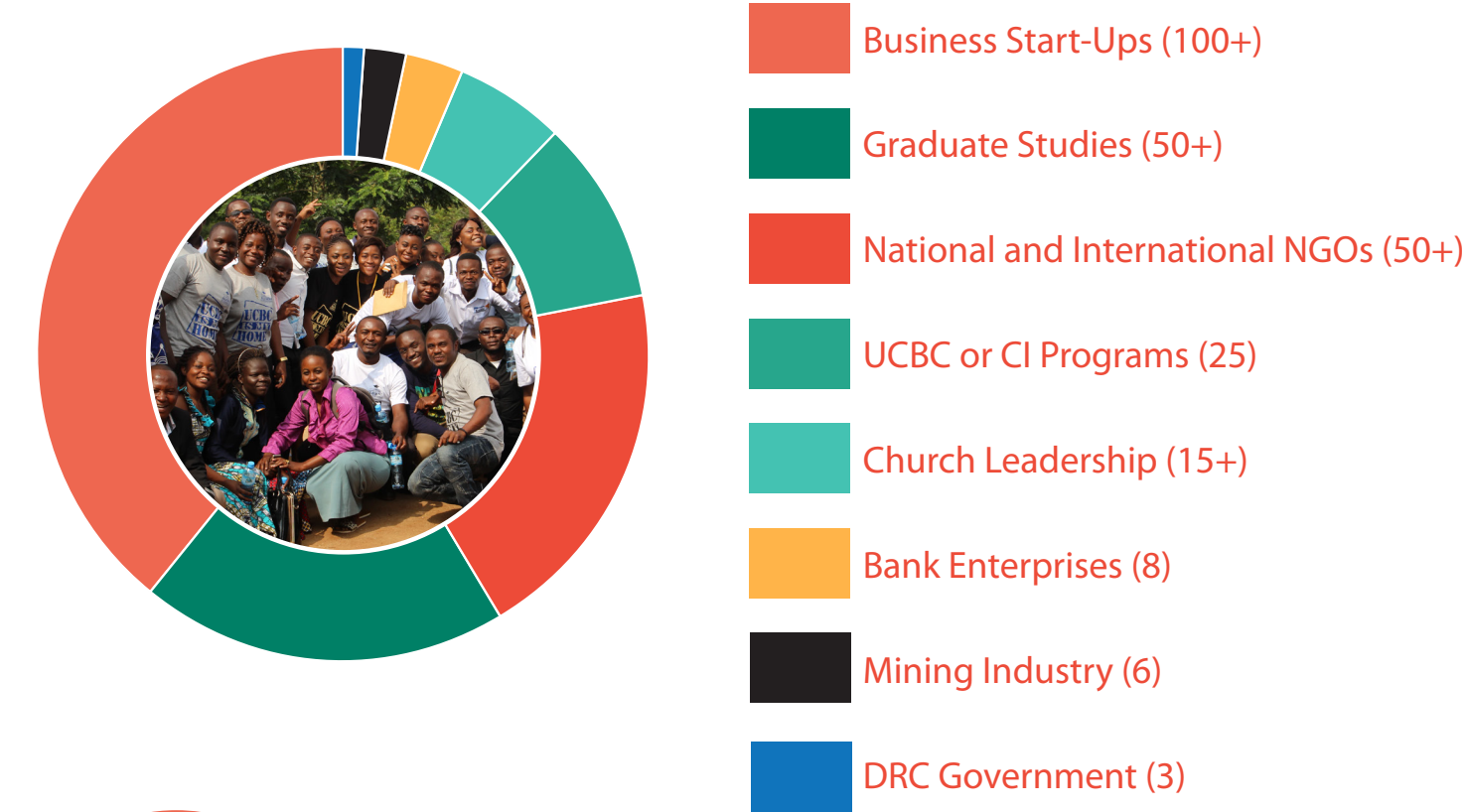


Baraka Merdi ('16) is now a market analyst with Mavuno, an organization that empowers local people, particularly farmers, to end extreme poverty through agribusiness.

The youngest of three girls, **Kavugho Mali ('14)** was the first in her family to attend university. She not only learned English and computer skills that equipped her to work at an international bank in Beni, she found a community that encouraged a commitment to critical thinking, service, integrity and gender equality.

ALUMNI IMPACT

A recent survey conducted by the newly established **UCBC Alumni Association** reveals the variety of ways in which alumni are using their knowledge, skills, and vision to create change and write a new story of hope and transformation in Congo (see below). In addition, the Alumni Association has committed to raising **\$10,000** locally over the next year to contribute to UCBC's first endowment.



SERVING AND ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

UCBC's **Integrated Research Institute (IRI)** conducts and promotes research that is transformative for the communities and people of Congo. Some of the IRI's activities directly benefit UCBC as an institution, while others assist UCBC with accomplishing its goal of engaging social issues through intervention-based research and public policy in Congo.

INNOVATIVE LIBRARIES & INFORMATION LITERACY PROJECT

Throughout 2017, IRI helped enhance the capacity of UCBC's library staff, improved regional library infrastructure, and promoted a culture of research, information, and data literacy. IRI sent library staff to regional conferences on library development and management, and faculty received advanced training in library science.

THE AGRIBUSINESS CENTER

Agribusiness activities are integrated into academics, service learning, and research. While Congo's agricultural wealth is clearly evident, there is a lack of research on how to develop innovative business practices to leverage that wealth, resulting in a significant missed opportunity for integrated economic development. To address this need, IRI's Agribusiness Center is strategically providing educational resources for students and farmers to help Congo's agriculture and farmers flourish.

The Agribusiness Center developed coffee supply chain maps for an **interactive coffee atlas** that is now used widely by coffee farmers and exporters in eastern Congo. The atlas helps promote outside investment and interest in Congo's coffee, helping revitalize the coffee industry and ultimately improve livelihoods.

The Center helped ESCO-KIVU - the largest exporter of cocoa from Congo - by collecting data on **30,000 farmers** and producers to improve the certification process. This enables ESCO to better track the cocoa they buy from the producer, which results in improved production practices, higher quality cocoa, and therefore higher premiums for the producers.

In partnership with Eastern Congo Initiative, the Center created an agribusiness education and research curriculum, funded **10 scholarships for female students** in Agribusiness, and facilitated internship placements for **17 students** with businesses and cooperatives working in Congo's coffee and cocoa sectors.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA

IRI conducted **3 focus groups** in Beni Territory (North Kivu Province) and in Bunia (Ituri Province) and collected data in Goma, Beni, and Butembo on sexual violence and trauma, supporting research for a Master's student at the University of Michigan.



SHARING THE LAND (STL)

STL continues to support land reform and promote land rights for all land owners, tenants, and squatters in Beni's Masiani neighborhood and Goma's Volcan neighborhood. As a result of STL's success and presentations to local and national land affairs administrations, STL is now contributing to the land reform process at the **national level!**

In February 2017, STL launched the **Sharing the Land Resource Center** at UCBC. The purpose of this Center is to provide the university with resources related to land conflict and mediation, land tenure security and rights, urban planning, rural development, and gender issues. The Center hosted two training workshops that equipped and certified **43 people**, including **13 UCBC students**, in the Social Tenure Domain Model, land mediation, and gender evaluation criteria.

SERVICE LEARNING

More than just a program at UCBC; Service Learning is an ethos - a way of learning that is highly practical, where academic knowledge meets real-world problems and opportunities. We take seriously this integration and are thrilled with the **22 projects** completed this past year that served the community. For example, students responded to political and social instability by visiting secondary schools and distributing stickers with a message of nonviolence. In collaboration with *Sharing the Land* (STL), they also sensitized the surrounding neighborhoods about land rights and securing land titles.

CREATION CARE

In addition to our annual Creation Care promotion week in June during which the UCBC community focuses on creation care education and activities, UCBC also organized multiple tree-planting events, including one on **International Forest Day** in March. With the help of a multi-year grant, UCBC continues to pursue a long-term strategy of environmental sustainability for all of CI's programs through advanced training for faculty, staff leadership positions, and designated capital through Wakisha (CI's business accelerator) for environmentally-friendly business start-ups.



CATALYZING RENEWAL IN CONGO

Congo Initiative’s core catalyst of change – a transformational community developing transformed leaders – is at the heart of all we do. Rooted in Christian hope, these transformed leaders respond to challenges through sacrificial service, ethical practice, vocational excellence, and creativity – all for the renewal and flourishing of Congo.



VOCATIONAL TRAINING & COUNSELING

CI serves vulnerable women by providing training opportunities in sewing, baking, and literacy, empowering them to earn a livelihood that will provide a better life for themselves and their families.

In 2017, **2 vocational training programs** were held on sewing skills and embroidery throughout the year.

A one-month counseling workshop also resulted in **23 women** joining our sewing classes.

In addition, we secured initial seed funding to establish a **tailoring business** with the goal of transforming the existing programs into a viable enterprise that creates jobs for the women served by CI and contributes to long-term self-sustainability.



LA CHARITÉ PRIMARY SCHOOL

Due to poverty, unemployment, and other hardships, many families in Beni and the surrounding area are unable to afford school fees. La Charité serves close to 250 children who otherwise may not attend school.

This past year:

- **245** students enrolled (41% girls).
- **176 of 207** (85%) passed their final exams (52% girls).
- **30 of 35** (85%) 6th graders passed their exams and graduated (57% girls)
- Staff increased from **7 to 11**.

For three weeks in July 2017, we offered a Vacation Bible School for **100 children** from five local schools. Weaving, bead-making, shoe repair, and baking were some of the skills the children learned.



ABC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Affiliated with UCBC, ABC seeks to apply its transformational vision of education in the lives of Congo’s youngest learners through character development, community engagement, and critical thinking.

Our growing school community was a source of hope for the future in uncertain times. Despite periods of unrest in the region, our **62 students** were able to successfully complete their coursework and exams.

We employed **15 local teachers and staff** and were able to provide daily meals for each student.

We also received **1000 books** for our library through a partnership with Books for Eastern Congo!



BETHESDA COUNSELING CENTER

We believe that counseling interventions are critical for personal and community transformation. Launched in 2016, Bethesda Counseling Center provides caring, loving, and compassionate Christian counseling, including individual and group counseling; play therapy for children; grief and trauma services; and training for local church leaders. Through our work we seek to bring hope, healing, and restoration for wounded individuals and communities.

- Weekly individual counseling served **70 people**.
- Twice a month counseling served **24 pastors**.
- Weekly widows group served **12 people**.
- Quarterly grief counseling and sharing served **200 people**.
- Weekly play therapy served **60 children and parents**.
- Seminars served **115 people**.
- Trauma debriefing served **30 people**.



THE JUSTICE INITIATIVE

We equip lawyers, judges, and other legal professionals to be transformational leaders within a broken and corrupt legal system.

Our grassroots legal associations in the cities of Beni, Bunia, and Butembo meet together on a regular basis for support, solidarity, and sharing best practices. They offer pro bono services to the poor and actively defend widows whose property rights are unjustly denied. The Bunia group has secured the release of **207** unjustly convicted or imprisoned prisoners and **75** imprisoned children. In Beni, where more than **200** citizens have been killed this past year, the group educated the population about their legal rights as victims of these atrocities.

Every other spring, CI hosts an International Justice Conference at UCBC. Attendance in April 2017 doubled that of the 2015 conference with **150 attendees**, and we anticipate even greater numbers at the 2019 conference. Unique to this year’s conference was the participation of UCBC’s first cohort of law students.



WAKISHA

The business accelerator of CI, Wakisha provides financial and mentoring support to emerging entrepreneurs to scale high impact, innovative startups.

These new businesses will ultimately create jobs and grow the economy, while also providing a steady stream of income back to CI as a means of operational sustainability. Wakisha launched its first competition for start-ups in August 2017. Candidates presented their detailed business ideas, and **10 finalists** were selected and participated in a **two-day training workshop** in business models, market research and marketing, and creating a culture of collaboration in Beni.

Ultimately, three of these finalists will be chosen to receive initial seed funding for their projects along with six months of rent-free co-working space with other Wakisha entrepreneurs and access to mentoring through Congo Initiative’s local and global network of partners.

Although both **Wakisha** and **Neema** are designed to improve economic conditions in the wider community, Wakisha’s focus is on high-impact start-ups and CI’s long-term sustainability, while Neema is focused on smaller ventures to stabilize families and provide for their basic needs.



NEEMA CONGO

Neema is a resource and capacity building program that fosters entrepreneurship activity and engages in robust monitoring and evaluation of small business ventures.

Since 2016, Neema has impacted **153** beneficiaries, including **38** women now trained in basic business skills, and enabled five families to send their children to school through a pig and goat breeding project.

Other Neema Projects include:

- Chicken and egg production project benefiting **46** women and their families.
- Soap manufacturing project employed **18** people.
- Motor taxi service employed **6** people.

Neema invested **348 hours** in business mentoring and coaching, and employed **8 staff members**.



CHURCH RENEWAL & GLOBAL MISSION CRGM facilitates activities on church leadership training, healing, and reconciliation in northeastern Congo and Beni Territory.

18 workshops were held on capacity building in servant-leadership development, marriage enrichment, trauma and healing, and delivering sermons.

6 youth conferences brought together **hundreds of youth** to encourage their role and participation in creating change.

CRGM ministered to **269** children whose parents were killed in Beni territory during the year and distributed food and soap in Oicha (15 miles north of Beni) to **2100 internally displaced households** in December 2016 and January 2017.

In northeastern Congo, CRGM now has **655** organized prayer groups that facilitate reconciliation, prayer and economic development.



A CELEBRATION OF HOPE

At the end of July, UCBC and the wider community celebrated a decade of hope and transformation since UCBC first opened its doors in November 2007. As the 2016-17 academic year came to a close, we not only recognized 73 new graduates, we also celebrated the transformational impact made on and through the lives of over 500 alumni. The community heard powerful stories of hope and change from UCBC students and alumni who are making a difference by investing in their country through business innovation and entrepreneurship, serving in public and private institutions, working in local and international NGOs, and continuing their education.



We also celebrated with local and international partners whose generosity and commitment to the vision of a flourishing and transformed Congo have helped make UCBC a reality. As we celebrate God's faithfulness over the years, we want to especially thank all those who are investing sacrificially in UCBC students and alumni—Congo's future leaders.

CAMPUS & LAND DEVELOPMENT

Blessed with a 95-acre campus, UCBC seeks to use the property to its fullest. In 2017, students raised 12 goats and 8 pigs and planted **1000 cocoa trees** through agribusiness projects that will generate income for the university in the future.

This past year, we completed **2 new seminar classrooms** in UCBC's University Chapel and Community Center and constructed new office space for the CI staff.

With the generous support of several donors, we purchased **5 acres of land** as the future campus of La Charité Primary School and our vocational training and counseling work with women.

WHO WE ARE



Congo Initiative is an envisioned community of Christ-centered Congolese leaders and global partners united for the transformation of lives and a flourishing Democratic Republic of Congo.

Our vision is simple. Live by faith and with confidence. Work hard for the common good. Forgive and be forgiven. Do not dwell in the past or conform to the pattern of the world. Do something new and be transformed by renewing your mind.

Empowered by this vision, Congo Initiative educates ethical leaders who have integrity; invests in a sustainable vibrant Congolese society; and develops grassroots initiatives for peace, hope, and justice.

In this vision, we are together—being transformed to transform.

2017 FINANCIALS CONGO INITIATIVE USA

