



CONGO: POWERING THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

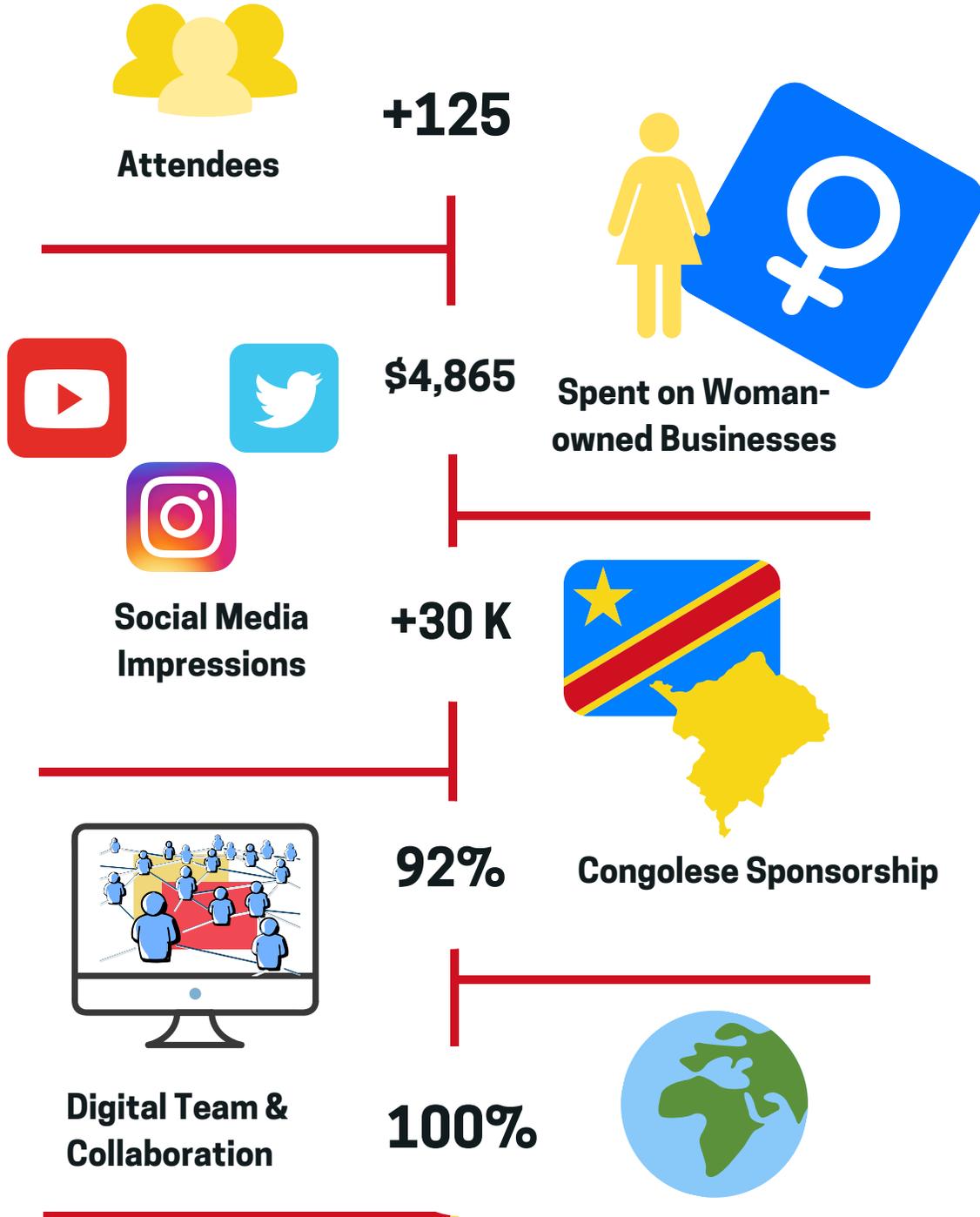
2023

RETURN TO NYC

BACK TO WHERE WE STARTED



CDIS 2023 IN A SNAPSHOT



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CDIS CO-FOUNDERS

Lukogho worked for several years as a Legislative Staffer and Press Assistant for former U.S. Representative José E. Serrano of New York; a member of the Appropriations Committee. After her Hill tenure, she worked in business development and on grants and policy for firms in Nairobi and Accra before joining Raytheon Technologies in 2019. She is a Co-founder of CDIS and currently works as a Business Development Manager for a Fortune 500 financial technology corporation.

Jim N. Ngokwey is a Co-founder of CDIS and the Managing Partner for a social impact startup, Mighty Peace Coffee. Mighty Peace Coffee exports the DRC's best coffees and invests in development projects in the country's coffee-growing regions. He is passionate about business and development and is committed to using his expertise and resources to empower Congolese entrepreneurs and create jobs and wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Laura Kupe is a former Obama presidential appointee and multilingual attorney with domestic and foreign policy expertise in think tanks and the Federal Government, including the U.S. House of Representatives, the Department of Homeland Security, and the White House. She is a Co-founder of CDIS and currently serving in the Biden Administration.

Visit www.cdis-congo.org for more information.



Lukogho Kasomo



Jim N. Ngokwey



Laura Kupe

ABOUT CDIS

The Congoese Diaspora Impact Summit's mission is to identify practical steps the Congoese diaspora can take to maximize its capital, human and financial, and make an impact in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The Summit brings together Congoese professionals, and individuals interested in the DRC, to network and learn from leaders who are making an impact in the country.

Defining Impact

- Amplify the voices of experts of Congoese descent
- Increase the social, economic, and political capital of Congoese-Americans
- Increase access to business & investment opportunities in the DRC and in America

Outcomes

- Facilitating extensive networking among the Congoese diaspora and individuals interested in the DRC
- Identifying opportunities for conference attendees and members of the CDIS network to collaborate with Congoese entrepreneurs, change-makers, educators, and professionals on the ground to create social impact in the DRC



Photo credit: Samson Lusamba; Congoese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2023

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SPEAKERS & PANELISTS

2023 CONFERENCE

September 22-23, 2023

Friday Fireside Chat - A Conversation with James Mwangi, CEO of Equity Group

- Dr. James Mwangi, CEO of Equity Group
- Lukogho Kasomo, CDIS Co-founder (moderator)

Saturday Fireside Chat - A Conversation with Reshma Shah, Equity Group Sustainability Group Leader

- Reshma Shah, Equity Group Sustainability Group Leader
- Marielle Thete, U.S.-Africa Policy Strategist (moderator)

Saturday Main Panel - Congo: Powering the Global Supply Chain

- Jonathan Katende, CEO of Lipaworld
- Stella Safari, CEO of Zapenda
- Dr. Yvan Yenda Ilunga, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Salve Regina University
- Marielle Thete, U.S.-Africa Policy Strategist (moderator)



Photo credit: Samson Lusamba; Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2023

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FIRESIDE CHAT REMARKS

DR. JAMES MWANGI, CEO OF EQUITY GROUP AND LUKOGHO KASOMO, CDIS CO-FOUNDER

The summit's first fireside chat was with Dr. James Mwangi, CEO of Equity Group. Equity Group is a Kenyan-based financial services conglomerate with a significant presence in Africa, including the DRC, through its subsidiary, Equity BCDC. Equity BCDC is the second-largest bank in the DRC. During the fireside chat with CDIS co-founder Lukogho Kasomo, Dr. Mwangi highlighted the DRC's great potential as one of Equity's growing markets.

Key Takeaways:

- Dr. Mwangi highlighted that the DRC's admission into the East African Community (EAC) in 2022 would greatly benefit the DRC—especially because the DRC would have access to the EAC's legal and trade infrastructure to operate in a larger economic market.
- Equity Bank has worked hard to best position its customers in DRC with economic opportunities in the EAC by digitizing services between DRC and the Port of Mombasa, one of East Africa's major trade hubs.
- Dr. Mwangi stressed the significant potential economic opportunities in the DRC for clean and renewable energy. He also identified hydroelectric power, in addition to wind, geothermal, and solar energy, as areas where the Congolese government and the Diaspora should invest.
- Finally, he encouraged the Congolese Diaspora to return to the DRC and become the "brain gain" that the country needs to reach its true socioeconomic potential.



Photo credit: Kwame Andah, Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2023

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FIRESIDE CHAT REMARKS

RESHMA SHAH, SUSTAINABILITY GROUP DIRECTOR, EQUITY GROUP AND MARIELLE THETE, U.S.-AFRICA POLICY STRATEGIST

The summit's second fireside chat, a conversation between U.S.-Africa Policy Strategist Marielle Thete and Equity's Sustainability Group Director Reshma Shah, focused on Equity Bank's sustainability projects across Africa, including the DRC.

Key Takeaways:

- Ms. Shah raised how Equity Bank supports projects focused on solar energy, ranging from the household level to small and medium-sized enterprises, as examples of their sustainability initiatives.
- Furthermore, Ms. Shah highlighted agriculture as another sector that the diaspora could invest in, mainly because the diaspora knows local farming practices that could contribute to actual sustainability—it is not solely the West that possesses knowledge on such matters.
- The fireside chat ended with a discussion about the Congolese mining sector. Ms. Shah mentioned that the many opportunities for investment in the mining ecosystem require investments, including support services like technology, logistics, hospitality, and energy. These are all areas Diaspora investors should consider exploring.



Photo credit: Kwame Andah, Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2023

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MAIN PANEL SUMMARY

CONGO: POWERING THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

The Summit's main panel focused on how the DRC, with all of its natural resources, is an invaluable part of the global supply chain. This session, also moderated by Marielle Thete, included Jonathan Katende, CEO of Lipaworld, Stella Safari, CEO of Zapenda, and Dr. Yvan Yenda Ilunga, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Salve Regina University.

Key Takeaways:

- Dr. Ilunga provided an overview of the geopolitical dynamics shaping how the U.S., China, and Europe engage the DRC and its abundant cobalt and copper supplies.
- Mr. Katende highlighted the work of his Pan-African fintech startup that has innovated the remittance space by offering digital vouchers as a form of cross-border payment. He also shared how the Diaspora can leverage this platform for their financial transactions in the Congo.
- Labor is a critical part of supply chains, not just raw materials. Ms. Safari's African-inspired fashion brand with roots in Congo illustrated this in her commentary, highlighting that she employs Congolese tailors in Bukavu as part of her supply chain.
- Ms. Safari and Mr. Katende also discussed the business climate in DRC—while noting the many opportunities—there is still a need for well-defined laws to regulate business activities in the country.
- The group concluded the session by discussing the strategic importance of the Congolese people, most notably the youth, as a critical part of the global supply chain and that the Diaspora's investment in education and training can help harness that potential.



Photo credit: Kwame Andah and Samson Lusamba, Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit, September 2023

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THE MODERATORS



LUKOGHO KASOMO

Lukogho Kasomo is a Business Development Manager for a top Fortune 500 financial services company and is a co-founder of the Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit. Her career in financial services started as a former Legislative and Press Assistant for retired U.S. Representative José E. Serrano of New York; a member of the Appropriations and Financial Services Committees. After graduate school, she worked on grants and policy for a manufacturing company in Nairobi and served as a Africa Business Fellow for a Ghanaian-American conglomerate in Accra before joining Raytheon Technologies as a Business Development Manager in 2019 and the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition as a Senior Government Relations Manager in 2020. Lukogho holds a BA in Political Science from San Jose State University and a MBA with a certificate in International Business from Howard University School of Business.



MARIELLE THETE

Marielle Thete is a U.S.-Africa policy strategist, who most recently served as as Director, U.S. Government Relations, North America Advocacy, at the ONE Campaign. She leveraged her bipartisan, bicameral, and broad U.S. government relationships and ties to the continent to influence US-Africa policy. Prior to joining ONE, Marielle was a Program Manager for CARE's Learning Tours, a program that hosts high-level delegations in countries where CARE works in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia. Additionally, Marielle was U.S. Senator Angus King's (I-ME) Senator's State Scheduler and served as the scheduler for his 2018 re-election campaign. Marielle holds a BA in International Relations and Political Science from Wheaton College (MA). She is fluent in French and Lingala. Born in the DRC, Marielle grew up in Portland, ME. She lives in Washington, D.C.

FRIDAY FIRESIDE CHAT: A CONVERSATION WITH DR. JAMES MWANGI, CEO OF EQUITY GROUP



DR. JAMES MWANGI

Dr. James Mwangi is the Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Office of Equity Group—a banking conglomerate with one of the largest customer bases on the African continent. He has led Equity to become a publicly listed financial services group that is rapidly expanding in Africa with a current client base of 14 million clients in 7 countries, including the DRC. Equity’s subsidiary in the DRC is Equity BCDC. It is the second-largest bank with a balance sheet of \$2.5 billion and a nationwide footprint of 74 branches, 214 ATMs, 13 local dedicated desks, 3055 agents, and a customer of nearly one million.

On the global front, Dr. Mwangi. has won several awards, including the G8 Global Vision Award, 2007. He was named among the Top 50 Emerging Market Business Leaders and the 20 most influential people in Africa in 2011; the World Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst & Young in 2012; the Forbes Africa Person of the Year in 2012 and was recently named in the Bloomberg 50 list of people who defined 2019 globally. He is an honoree of the 2020 Oslo Business for Peace Award, also described as the “Nobel Prize for Business.”

SATURDAY FIRESIDE CHAT: A CONVERSATION WITH RESHMA SHAH, SUSTAINABILITY GROUP DIRECTOR, EQUITY GROUP



RESHMA SHAH

Ms. Shah is the Group Director for Sustainability for Equity Group Holdings Plc and a non-executive board member of the Kenya Shipyards Ltd. She has over twenty years' experience on a broad and rare combination of expertise spanning business strategy and performance, risk management, finance, and tax. In the last fifteen years, her work has focused on the extractives and infrastructure sector, primarily in Africa and the Middle East.

Her work to date has been at both corporate and operational levels with experience ranging from Board and Senior Leadership to working with communities on the frontline. Some of the corporates she has worked with include KPMG UK, Shell, BP, Tullow Oil Plc as well as some small to mid-cap organizations.

Ms. Shah holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Manchester in the UK and an Executive MBA from École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées (ENPC) in Paris. She is also a UK qualified Chartered Accountant and a Chartered Tax Advisor. Reshma is also certified in Sustainable Finance from the University of Cambridge and in Green, Social and Sustainability (GSS) Bonds from the IFC and the International Capital Market Association (ICMA).

MAIN PANEL: CONGO POWERING THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

A discussion on strategic minerals and resources in the face of changing global demands and consumer trends, an upcoming presidential election, and a growing youth population.



STELLA SAFARI

Stella Safari is the Founder and CEO of Zapenda, an African-inspired fashion brand with roots in Congo. After earning her degree from Dartmouth College, she moved to Detroit where she began her career in venture capital and startup operations. Before starting Zapenda, Ms. Safari ran an early stage accelerator where she helped high growth companies scale and raise over \$20M in venture capital. She created Zapenda with a mission to create employment opportunities for talented tailors while sharing the beauty of Congolese fashion with the world. Zapenda recently opened a showroom in Detroit and a production atelier in Bukavu. Ms. Safari was featured in Crain's Detroit 20 in their Twenties list and is a recipient of the Joy Ivy Foundation Woman of Impact Award.



JONATHAN KATENDE

Mr Jonathan Katende is the Co-founder and CEO of Lipaworld an NYC headquartered fintech platform that helps the African diaspora to remit back to the continent using digital vouchers. Jonathan holds a master's degree in business management from the University of Johannesburg and Executive Education program certification from the Wharton Business School. Furthermore, Jonathan is a mentor at the African Diaspora Network, which helps underrepresented founders launch their startups. Lastly, Jonathan was recently selected in the Money2020 USA Amplify cohort and the Mcdermott Rise program for 2023.

MAIN PANEL: CONGO POWERING THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

A discussion on strategic minerals and resources in the face of changing global demands and consumer trends, an upcoming presidential election, and a growing youth population.



DR. YVAN ILUNGA

Dr. Yvan Yenda Ilunga is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island (USA), where he teaches courses in international relations and African Politics. He also serves as Deputy Director of the Joint Civil-Military Interaction (JCMI) Research and Education Network. Dr. Ilunga is the author of the book *Humanitarianism and Security: Trouble and Hope at the Heart of Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). He is working on two book projects, *The Dynamics of Religion in Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping Operations* and *Designing and Teaching Peace (Under Contract)*. His most recent book chapter, "Peace Leadership, Security and the Role of the Military in Ethnopolitical Conflict," was published in the *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding and Ethnic Conflict*. (Routledge Publishing 2022). Dr. Ilunga holds a Ph.D. in Global Affairs from Rutgers University.

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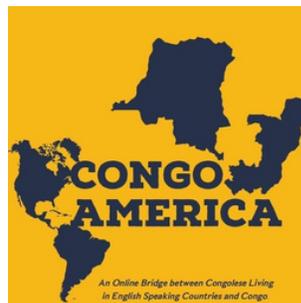
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www.equitygroupholdings.com



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5 YEARS OF CDIS

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY AND GROWTH



INGLEWOOD
Bantu Boyz Podcast - Episode 5. "Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit Debrief with Lukogho Kasomo"



ongolese and Congolese-Americans living in America want to change the narrative around the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They've launched the inaugural Congolese Diaspora Impact Summit (CDIS), which will take place in New York City on September 21st, in the midst of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Democratic Republic of Congo is a country of significant strategic importance to Africa, America and the world at large, due to its size, its resources and its potential. CDIS will be one the first Congo-focused conference of its kind in the U.S.A.

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