





Project Proposal: Hope and Healing Centre in Kitshanga, Democratic Republic of Congo

Executive Summary

This proposal seeks funding and material donations to establish the **Hope and Healing Centre** in Kitshanga, Democratic Republic of Congo. Led by CUPRA - Congolese United for Peace and Reconciliation in Australia, this initiative aims to provide shelter, education, and healthcare to vulnerable children and the local community.

CUPRA - Congolese United for Peace and Reconciliation in Australia - was established in 2016 by a group of Congolese Australians, and became a registered tax deductible charity in 2024. The organisation was founded with the goal of bringing together Congolese refugees and migrants, many of whom had experienced conflict and division in their home country. CUPRA serves as a platform for these individuals to come together in harmony, fostering connections and mutual support in their new home in Australia. Through various community initiatives, CUPRA promotes peace, reconciliation, and unity, helping to build a stronger, more cohesive community both in Australia and back in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

CUPRA is dedicated to fostering peace, unity, and reconciliation within the Congolese Australian community through a series of impactful initiatives. The **Conflict Resolution Workshops** equip participants with strategies to manage disagreements, anxiety, and anger constructively, preventing conflicts from escalating. These workshops are designed to empower individuals with the skills needed to navigate challenging situations effectively.

In addition, **Peacemaking Circles** provide a safe space for open dialogue, allowing Congolese community members to address conflicts or differences in a productive manner. These circles aim to rebuild and strengthen bonds, restoring unity among participants.

CUPRA also organises **Community Social Events** that bring together Congolese and other communities, fostering stronger relationships and promoting harmony through shared experiences. These events are crucial in building a sense of community and mutual understanding.

Lastly, the **Congolese Cultural Education** program connects Congolese Australians with their broader community, offering opportunities to share their rich cultural heritage. This initiative not only preserves Congolese culture but also promotes peace and unity by bridging cultural divides and fostering a sense of belonging.

The dream of CUPRA's President, Leandre Munyarusiro Nkuriza, is to build an orphanage and health centre in his home village of Kitshanga. Deeply committed to the well-being of his community, Leandre envisions this project as a way to share the Australian values of peace, community, and unity that have profoundly influenced his life. Through this initiative, he hopes to lift the people of Kitshanga from the conflict and hardships they continue to endure, offering them a future filled with hope, healing, and the same sense of belonging that CUPRA strives to create in Australia.

Project Background

Kitshanga, a town in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, has been severely impacted by conflict and poverty. Many children have been orphaned, lacking access to basic needs such as shelter, education, and healthcare. The Hope and Healing Centre aims to address these critical issues, providing a safe haven and essential services to the community.

CUPRA have been working with volunteers in Australia and in the Congo to deliver support and services to vulnerable children and families since their inception. Sending containers of second hand clothing, blankets and sporting goods to assist vulnerable people.

The next challenge the committee are eager to undertake is the establishment of the Hope and Healing Centre, which will provide a medical centre and orphanage.



Timeline of Activities

2021: Food Distribution in Goma

- Following the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo, CUPRA facilitated food distributions to refugees at the Acogenoki camp in Goma. This effort provided vital sustenance to displaced families during a time of crisis.



2022: Clothing and Sporting Equipment Distribution

- CUPRA organised the distribution of clothing and blankets to refugees in Kitshanga, generously donated by Australian charity partner Goodna Street Life.
- From the same donation, CUPRA distributed sporting equipment, including soccer boots and jerseys, in Bwito Chefferie. This initiative benefited 17 teams, aiming to unite different groups through sports in the spirit of reconciliation and peaceful competition.
- Additionally, the group facilitated a donation of computers and solar panels to an educational and training centre in Kitshanga. Unfortunately, due to the escalating conflict in the region, this centre is currently closed.





2023: Food Distribution in Goma

- Continuing its support for displaced communities, CUPRA distributed food items, including beans, rice, soy, and maize, at the Acogenoki refugee camp in Goma. This distribution aimed to alleviate food insecurity among the camp residents.



Impact of Activities

CUPRA's initiatives have made a significant impact on the communities they serve by providing essential resources, promoting reconciliation through sports, and supporting educational opportunities. Despite challenges, including the closure of the education centre in Kitshanga, CUPRA remains committed to its mission of supporting vulnerable populations in the region.

CUPRA's efforts are not only making a direct impact in the DRC but also fostering peace and reconciliation among Congolese Australians. Many CUPRA members are from diverse ethnic groups that have historically been in conflict within the Congo. In Australia, they have found a path to peace and unity by working together within CUPRA. This shared commitment to reconciliation is now being extended to their home communities. Through their initiatives, CUPRA encourages volunteers and leaders in the DRC to unite in the spirit of reconciliation, working collaboratively to support victims of conflict and other vulnerable groups. This dual impact strengthens community bonds and builds capacity for peace and cooperation both in Australia and the Congo.

Objectives

1. **Provide Shelter:** Construct an orphanage to house up to 100 children, offering them a safe and nurturing environment.
2. **Ensure Education:** Create a space for educational activities, including classrooms and study areas.
3. **Improve Healthcare:** Build a health centre to provide medical services to the children and the local community.
4. **Facilitate Peace and Reconciliation:** One of CUPRA's core objectives is to foster peace and reconciliation among the various religious, ethnic, and geopolitical groups in the region. Drawing from the experiences of its members in Australia, CUPRA aims to celebrate Australian culture and peace. Through the Hope and Healing Centre, the organization seeks to inspire unity, encourage education, and promote peaceful competition through sports. By bringing together different groups to support orphans of conflict, CUPRA hopes to encourage mutual understanding and cooperation.
5. **Create Sporting Events:** Engage the community in peaceful competition through organised sports, fostering unity and a spirit of camaraderie.



Project Scope

The project will be executed in multiple phases. The first stage focuses on collecting building materials and initiating construction.

Phase 1: Resource Collection and Construction Preparation

- **Resource Collection:** Gather building materials sourced via donation in Australia.
- **Purchased Equipment:** The committee has already purchased a tipper truck to assist with the construction process.
- **Land Donation:** A committee member has generously donated land for the orphanage.
- **Rotary Club Donations:** The Rotary Club has facilitated the donation of essential medical equipment, including:
 - Hospital beds
 - X-ray machine
 - Mattresses and bedding
 - Wheelchairs and crutches & Various medical supplies
 - Solar panels & Building materials



Budget and Resources

For the first stage, the focus is on gathering the following materials and resources:

- Cement
- Bricks
- Steel rods
- Roofing materials
- Tin/Iron sheeting
- Plumbing supplies
- Electrical wiring
- Construction tools and equipment
- Prefabricated buildings

These materials will be crucial in laying the foundation for the Hope and Healing Centre.



Implementation Plan

1. **Site Preparation:** Clear and prepare the donated land for construction.
2. **Resource Mobilization:** Transport collected materials to Kitshanga.
3. **Foundation Laying:** Establish strong and durable foundations for the buildings.
4. **Construction:** Erect the structures using the donated materials.
5. **Inspection and Approval:** Ensure the buildings meet safety and health standards.

Community Impact

The Hope and Healing Centre will:

- Provide a safe home and better future for orphaned children.
- Improve the health and well-being of the local community.
- Create job opportunities during and after construction.
- Foster peace and reconciliation among diverse groups through education and sports.

Call to Action

We invite individuals, organisations, and businesses to support this noble cause. Donations of building materials or financial contributions will make a significant difference in the lives of many.

Contact Information

For donations and further information, please contact:

- Project Coordinator: Leandre Munyarusisiro Nkuriza
- **Email:** munyarusisironkuriza@yahoo.fr
- **Phone:** 0432077452

Thank you for your consideration and support.