



HOPE THROUGH EDUCATION

Transforming Lives and Communities in Kolwezi



SUMMARY

Topics of discussion

1. Who We Are
2. Our Context
3. Achievements
4. Conclusion



1

WHO WE ARE



Who we are

WHERE WE OPERATE



Still I Rise operates in Kolwezi, a mining town in the southern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Our mission is to provide **quality education and life skills to vulnerable children** who have been marginalized due to difficult living conditions, including child labor in the mines.

Who we are

PAMOJA ACADEMY

Still I Rise Academy - Kolwezi (Pamoja) is our emergency and rehabilitation school located in the Mutoshi area, near one of the world's most important mining districts.

Kolwezi, known as the "cobalt capital" and home to "rare earths," is a city in the southern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), from which over half of the global cobalt production originates.

This report celebrates the achievements of Still I Rise in Kolwezi and highlights the **transformative impact of education on children's lives.**



2

OUR CONTEXT



Our Context

KOLWEZI MINES

The mining industry is the primary source of employment in Kolwezi, divided into mining zones managed mainly by foreign multinational companies.

Alongside these large-scale operations, small-scale artisanal miners, known as "**creuseurs**", contribute 20% of the national production.

These artisanal miners work under extremely harsh and dangerous conditions, and regrettably, **many of them are children.**



Our Context

CHILD LABOR IN COBALT MINES

According to UNICEF, approximately **40,000 children work in cobalt mines**, facing perilous conditions and enduring violence, extortion, and intimidation.

These children, aged 8 to 14, engage in hazardous tasks such as digging, transporting, sorting, and washing minerals, often in environments that put their safety and well-being at significant risk.



These activities constitute **severe forms of child labor exploitation**, as defined by ILO Convention 182.

Our Context

MUTOMBO'S STORY

—

Mutombo, living in Kolwezi with his wife and six children, works as a miner in the copper mines of Mutoshi, a job he began after moving from Nkombe in early 2022. His work is dangerous and poorly paid, often leaving him with insufficient income to support his family.

—

Despite the harsh conditions, **Mutombo is determined to provide a better future for his children.**

One of his sons was admitted to Pamoja School, run by Still I Rise, which also supports the family with food kits.

—

While Mutombo dreams of his son completing his education to help the family, economic struggles force another son, Magloire, to continue working in the mines.

For Mutombo, Still I Rise represents hope for a better future.



3

ACHIEVEMENTS



100%

**OF OUR FINALISTS
PASS THE EXAM**



Achievements

100% OF OUR FINALISTS PASS THE EXAM

In June 2024, our first cohort of Level 3 students at Pamoja Academy took the national examination, the final step in the Programme National De Rattrapage Scolaire (PNRS). This accelerated program covers the formal primary school curriculum in three years and prepares students for re-entry into formal schooling and secondary education.

PNRS OBJECTIVES



Provide basic education leading to a recognized primary school completion certificate.



Equip children with skills for future vocational and career development.



Guide children toward further secondary education.



Achievements

EXAMINATION RESULTS

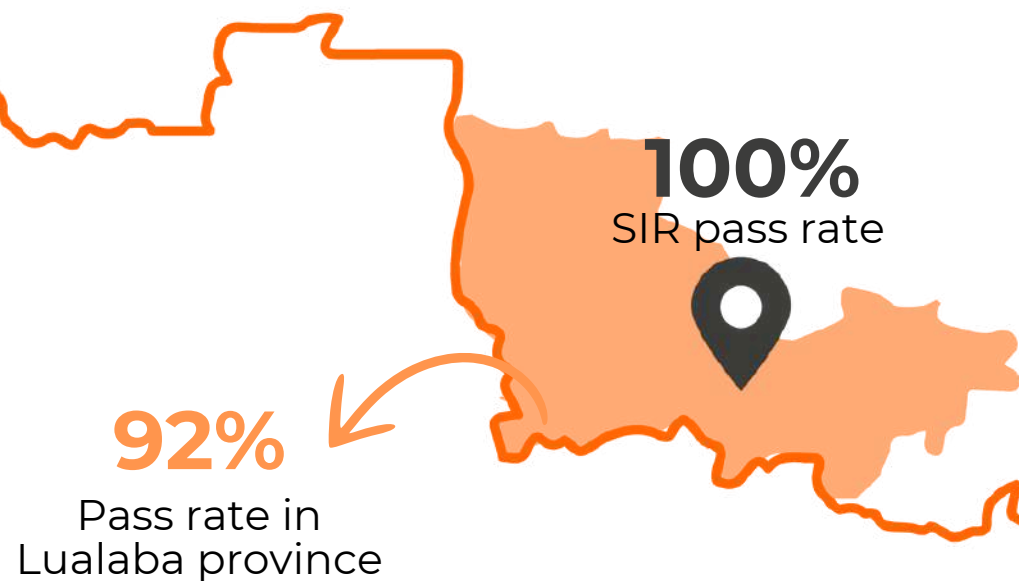
In 2024, 16 out of 18 Level 3 students were admitted to the national examination as finalists. All passed, officially graduating from the program.

This year the two students who did not complete the year were due to reasons of misconduct. In both cases, it was deemed more advantageous for the children to receive alternative forms of education and wellbeing support, and they were facilitated in their transition accordingly.



Achievements

EXAMINATION RESULTS



100%
SIR pass rate

COMPARISON WITH OTHER SCHOOLS:



Ranked 1st in Kolwezi for
training effectiveness*



The students were tested in French, Mathematics, General Culture (History, Geography, Technology, Moral Education).

*Information provided by the regional Ministry of Education inspector

Achievements

DATA ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE



AVERAGE NATIONAL EXAM SCORE:

58.35%

SIR AVERAGE FINALIST SCORE:



64.64%



Achievements

NEXT STEPS

Eleven students are set to transition from Still I Rise to La Grandeur private school with full support for fees, uniforms, and transportation. La Grandeur offers a well-rounded education, modern facilities, and extracurricular activities.

Continued support depends on maintaining good behavior, 90% attendance, and academic progress toward secondary certification, with support capped at two years. This will be checked every term from the SIR team.

Additionally, four students will enter the International Student Scholarship Program, preparing for Still I Rise's International School in Nairobi.



Achievements

STATEMENT FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL IN KOLWEZI

"I am honored to share this remarkable milestone in our journey. For the first time, we are celebrating our inaugural graduating class with a 100% success rate. This is a testament to our collective efforts and dedication.

**THESE CHILDREN, WHO ONCE WORKED IN THE MINES
AND COULDN'T READ OR WRITE, HAVE ACHIEVED
IN THREE YEARS WHAT TYPICALLY TAKES SIX YEARS."**

- VITAL KAMUNGU



Achievements

FROM MINES TO LEARNING: A JOURNEY OF HOPE



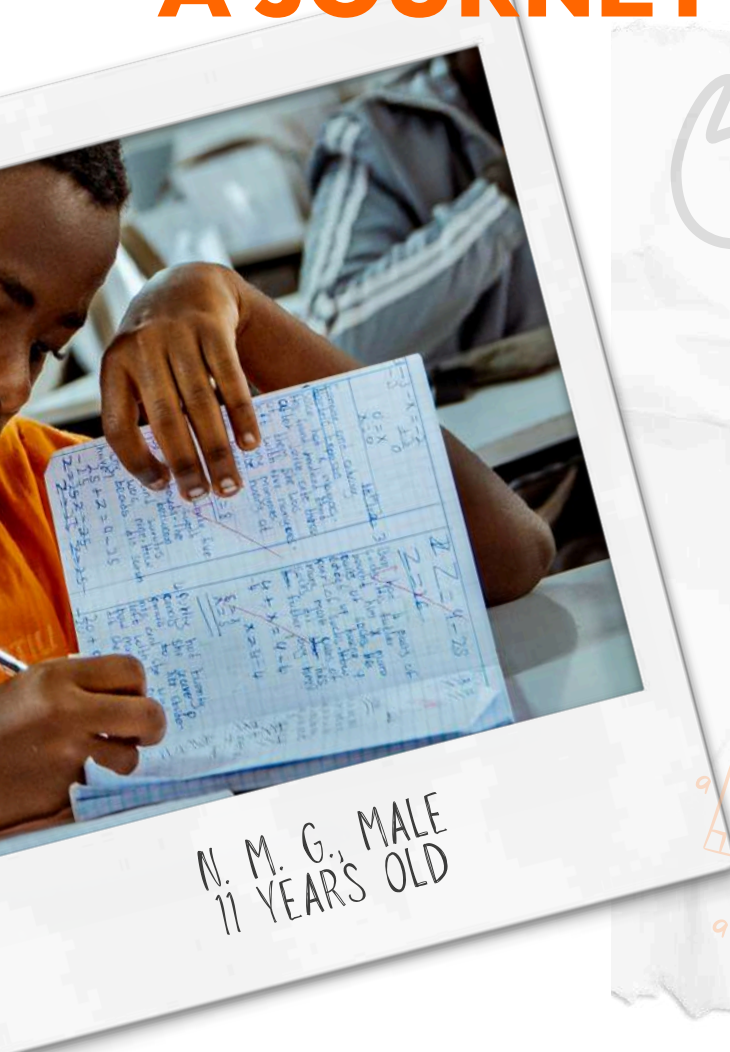
I WORKED IN THE MINES
FOR TWO YEARS,
COLLECTING MINERALS
AND DIGGING THROUGH
THE SAND IN THE
QUARRY.



When I started school, I was happy to have the chance to study instead of going to the mine. At home, I felt like I wasn't learning anything, and even in my community, I was considered the least intelligent.

Achievements

FROM MINES TO LEARNING: A JOURNEY OF HOPE



BUT NOW, I'M SMART! I CAN EXPRESS MYSELF IN FRENCH, I'M LEARNING TO USE THE COMPUTER, I PLAY, EAT, STUDY — IN SHORT, I'M LIVING WELL. 😊

Math is my favorite subject. In the morning, when I wake up to go to school, I think about my studies and how I must give my heart and soul to becoming a responsible adult. When I grow up, I will become President of the Republic because I want to help people.

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

$$y = mx + b$$

4 CONCLUSIONS



Conclusions

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH EDUCATION

The achievements of Pamoja Academy in Kolwezi demonstrate **the transformative power of education for vulnerable children.**

By providing access to learning and life skills, Still I Rise has successfully reintegrated children who were once trapped in child labor into formal education. The 100% pass rate of the first cohort is **a remarkable testament to the resilience of these students and the effectiveness of our accelerated education model.**

Beyond academic success, this initiative **represents hope and opportunity**, not only for the students but for their families and the entire community.



LOOKING FORWARD

Building on the success of our first cohort and with **100 students already enrolled this year**, we look forward to further expanding our impact in Kolwezi.

The 2024/2025 academic year will see additions of brand new game-changing off-curricular classes, as well as a big boost to our English program. Keep your eyes peeled for news on that!

Meanwhile our focus will remain on **providing life-changing educational opportunities**, with the long-term goal of inspiring systemic change and driving improvements in education across the DRC, ensuring a brighter future for the children of Kolwezi.





CHANGING THE WORLD TOGETHER, ONE CHILD AT A TIME.

For more information, contact us at schools@stillirisengo.org

Follow us



or scan the qr code
to discover how
you can support us



**STILL
I RISE**