

MASTER'S DEGREE FINAL PROJECT

Neoliberal Globalization & Africa's Conflict Minerals

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Acknowledgments

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Abstract

The focus of this research is about the post-colonial exploitation of natural resources in Africa in the context of neoliberal globalization. First, I outline the theoretical framework drawing from studies on neoliberal globalization and development. This is followed by a discussion on some of the negative effects of neoliberal regulations, particularly on how neoliberalism fosters growing inequality where a few are massively enriching their lives at the expense of others. This economic world order has a deep impact on humans as well as on nature and is not sustainable. I will conclude the theoretical discussion with a look at the rise of many alter neoliberal movements.

The second part of this thesis is a practical teaching and resource guide focusing on the link between neoliberalism and local conflicts in Africa which as I shall contend is based and fueled by international corporations. It provides an overview of the topic of conflict minerals, with Democratic Republic of Congo as a case study.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, neoliberal globalization, natural resource exploitation, post-colonialism, conflict minerals, Democratic Republic of Congo

Acronyms & Terms

3T's	Tin, Tungsten and Tantalum
3 TG's	Tin, Tungsten, Tantalum and Gold
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
G8	Group of Eight
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MNC	Multination Corporation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
TNC	Transnational Corporation
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nation
WSF	World Social Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization

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I. Introduction

I have a heart for the poor, for the marginalized, for the ones whose fate did not always seem to be on their side. It is obvious why I became a social worker in Germany. It also made me move to East Africa. Being there made me fall deep in love with the amazing people, their beautiful countries and cultures. But, besides all the beauty, I also got to know extreme poverty and suffering, which went beyond my experiences in Germany. For my Bachelor thesis I conducted an ethnographic field research in Northern Uganda in a rehabilitation center for war-affected people. This was in post-conflict era when the troops of Joseph Kony, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), had just moved on to neighboring countries and with them the international humanitarian organizations. Yet, the consternation and helplessness stayed deeply. People suddenly should live freely who spend partly all their life in internally-displaced persons (IDP) camps or former rebels were expected to be "normal" citizen after spending years inside the LRA. The rehabilitation was just one drop in an ocean. Many clients were former rebels of the LRA under Kony's command. But what are rebels? Pretty soon I figured out there is no good or evil. There was no clear division in this conflict. Victims were systemically turned into perpetrators, which turned into an endless cycle of violence. You "rehabilitate" them and make them move back. Those from Northern Uganda might be lucky of actually having escaped falling back into the drama. But we also had clients from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a country which is congested with violence. You send them back home - but what's next? The same circle might start over again. It made me furious reading later a book called *Another Man's War* (Childers, 2012). The author was an American who claims to free child soldiers from the LRA rebels. Who is he separating from whom? Who are the child soldiers and who are the LRA rebels? Are they not one and the same? When are you still the victim and when is this point that you are the perpetrator? These child soldiers were those LRA rebels. There was no line to separate the two, it was a transition. For me, however, these "rebels" suddenly had a face, a name, a personal story. They were not rebels anymore, they were friends, they were victims - victims of a violent system. These personal events made me dig deep into the history and events of the African Great Lakes Region. I wanted to know what really the problem is, what went so wrong that it turned out so badly in this beautiful and prosperous region. And above all what needs to happen that my new found friends will not end up in the circle of violence again. Digging deep, made me study *Peace, Conflict and Development*, and find out about more profound

reasons: The overall post-colonial world order, structural violence within it and a system of rulers and oppressed alive. Have I actually been on the right place to fight against injustice?

In regards of the above mentioned statements, I am going to elaborate on two profound questions in this thesis: First, I will argue that the colonial system of rulers/ ruled and the exploitation of natural resources is on-going, probably more alive than ever. Second, I am going to show the tie between my comfortable German lifestyle, the current colonizers and my friends back in the African Great Lakes Region.

The first section is a critical theoretical framework. This includes a first statement about the current world order regarding the question of hierarchal constructed power by political and economic institutions. I will undertake a discourse analysis on the post-colonial era in times of African sovereign governments, but tied to economic dependencies through globalization and the rise of neoliberalism. I point out the ongoing colonial system of chronic oppression of countries and natural resource exploitation to enhance rich international elites which retain and broaden inequalities worldwide. This thesis is focusing on an overall global trend being seen in the past few decades of billions being stuck in poverty, while very few reach an unbelievable luxury standard supported through societies who dream to enrich their lives via consumption. Therefore, I will show some of the costs people are facing nowadays in Africa, with a focus on the Democratic Republic of Congo, due to the fact that this country is used in the second part as case study, but also in Europe. Furthermore, I illustrate the impact on the environment. I will conclude the theoretical section with a chapter about the alter movements rising all over the world which are calling out for change.

The second part is a practical elaborated example. This section mirrors the mentioned ties between personal daily consumption, people suffering in regards to it and an elite who reap the benefit. The example I chose is the case of conflict minerals of Africa with the focus on the DRC, due to the fact that the term conflict minerals is not very known in Germany. This material can be used for secondary schools but also for any other occasion to bring forth awareness or even for one's own interest. Afterwards, readers will know about the term and conditions of these minerals. Furthermore, you get to know the DRC, its past and present with the issues this country was and is still struggling with. In addition, I will give each a short and easy introduction to understand the current world order in terms of hierarchies and structures, an introduction to the major problem of our recent global economy and finally to neoliberalism and the system behind it. Like in the theoretical section I will

conclude this one with alternative approaches, strategies and solutions done by various stakeholders.

My research is mainly based on a secondary sources analysis. For the first section I primarily used peace studies literature, but also some from the field of economy or activists networks. For the content of the teaching material, I used largely reports from activist organizations, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but also from research centers and projects working in that field or international institutions like the UN. While carrying out my research, I have realized that in the past few years much has happened in regard to conflict minerals. For this reason, I utilize publications which are as recent as possible. While I endeavored to obtain the information as updated as possible it is important to keep in mind that it is a complex issue with a lot of involved participants constantly working on it.

II. Neoliberal Globalization: A Critical Reflection

The German population seems to be well recovered from the economic crisis some years ago and its demand for new products has expanded. Many industry branches boom and brand-new products are brought daily on the market. Germans are facing a positive time; thanks to globalization we can have fancy products from all over the world. Many people in Germany, however, have seldom questioned what it actually takes to produce all that and where it will go after usage. People watch news but hardly ever connect the international issues with our perfect little world. It seems we are living in a luxury-bubble which is taken for granted. Yet, we are very wrong! There is a limit on our lifestyle and a high cost, but we were not the ones so far paying for it. After living in Africa for about two years, I started questioning the prevailing systems and began to wonder about world orders, the influence of certain states or civilizations. I started questioning my well-intended help in a local NGO in Northern Uganda working for the poor and against injustice. I increasingly realized that much of the invisible core was essentially caused by “my people”, the capitalist world – societies which always longs for more no matter the cost. A group of alienated cultures whose identity is dominated by “the very essence of being is having; that if one *has* nothing, one *is* nothing.” (Fromm, 2008: 13) These societies built up throughout history a linear system with a hierarchal structure (race, sex, and class/ status in particular in terms of economic and academic). The highly acclaimed age of Enlightenment, the industrialization, and the entry into modernity brought forth a breeding of uprooted human beings, which claim to explain and solve everything by

science. Are science and the belief in technology not an ideology in itself, the new religion of the West, which have been on a global mission to convert to development and modernization? Being white in Northern Uganda was like a magnet to the people, it seemed they finally found someone to take responsibility. One cannot even blame them because it was the “global” players of humanitarian intervention who built up IDP-camps and took care for so many years – years of full dependency. Did the people from the global north ever leave this southern continent or did they just physically leave but are still ruling and controlling from a distance? The colonial era has brought a lot of misery, oppression and exploitation in many parts of this globe. Apparently, the end of it has been desired by the victims for so many years to finally live in independence and therefore freedom. Looking up the definition of being an independent country it says: “Free from outside control; not subject to another’s authority” (Oxford Online Dictionary, 2015). A synonym therefore would be that a country is self-governing. In the colonial era the colonized countries fought for years to finally be independent. However, in the moment they entered their independence and they officially had their own governments, they had to realize that the autonomy is just an illusion. The new African states had indeed won national sovereignty, however, did not have the economic basis for a self-determined development (Schicho, 2010: 124). When the occupying powers left their colonies, corporate elites did not; instead the resource industry retained their interest and increased their sphere (Burgis, 2015). This phenomenon was yet less visible to the newly formed governments and of course not obvious at all to most of the population, who actually thought they are free and independent of white supremacy. According to Walter D. Mignolo (2011) colonialism never ended. Mignolo introduced the concept of *coloniality*, which he calls the darker side of Western modernity. Modernity, in his view is a complex narrative which originated in Europe and “that builds Western civilization by celebrating its achievements while hiding at the same time its darker side, 'coloniality'” (Mignolo, 2011: 3). Consequently coloniality is the response to the prevailing neoliberal globalization and its linear thinking. It is a theory which identifies social, racial and political hierarchical orders imposed by European colonialism which implemented values and degradation to societies and cultures. Although officially colonization ended, the west benefits from the inequalities and tries to perpetuate it through first globalization and second neoliberalism (Mignolo, 2011). This colonial system of power keeps discrimination, inequalities and the concept of leading and oppressed cultures alive.

1 Neoliberalism on the Rise

During the period of decolonization the capitalist economy had turned into an era of globalization. Globalization was the process in which the world became extremely interconnected and intertwined through the trade of resources and goods, but also services, ideas, knowledge, cultural goods and even humans (Kreff, 2011: 126). Globalization thus means the global convergence of nations. The creation of communication technologies and transportation systems made this global net of exchange possible and ever since it is extremely increasing. The term globalization is heard all over, sometimes as opportunity, but occasionally to be warned off. On the one hand due to globalization many people gained much benefit. The opening of international trade improved quickly the living conditions and standards of people worldwide in various countries (Stiglitz, 2002). Furthermore, people all over the world are able to gain endless knowledge and inspirations for innovations like never before. Foreign aid, which is another aspect of the global world, brought vital resources to those suffering from extreme poverty (Stiglitz, 2002). On the other hand, the global exchange and trade in a capitalist linear economy is happening at the expense of people and the environment. Economic, ecological, social and political issues are no longer solely part of individual countries. It goes beyond the border thinking. Considering this fact, reasonable policies can be only made in a broader scope, for example, in alliances of states like the EU or in economic zones such as the OECD. Globalization is complex, a broad term which is transferable to all areas of life. The impact of globalization reaches into the spheres of economics, politics, environment, culture and identity.

The implementation of someone's own culture into another one is nothing new and can be seen all over world history. This influence came along when tribes, kingdoms, monarchies, dynasties or empires spread their power. Particularly "successful" have been, however, the European during the colonial era, which reached an expansion of control like no one before. Even though the European colonizers have since left, their cultures stayed deeply implemented in many ways. This era already set the stage for further so-called Westernization, recently more known under the term Americanization (although it only refers to the USA) through the shift of the United States as unipolar world power. New technologies in media to be accessible for the majority of people like television, music, and news made it possible to spread information, opinions as well as culture (like languages) to the remotest corners of the world. Americanization has therefore become accepted widely and destroys

cultural diversity. Walking in a city center of megapolis you can nearly forget where exactly you are in the world cause the image of streets is covered with almost the same labels and brands in same design. The song “Amerika” by the popular German band Rammstein says that “we’re all living in America”. The lyrics refer sarcastically to the cultural imperialism of the USA, if cultures want it or not:

If there’s dancing, I want to lead, although you dance on your own. Let yourselves be controlled a little, I show you how it's done right. [...] We're lining up nicely. Freedom plays on all violins. Music comes from the White House. [...] I know very useful steps and will protect you from mishap. And who doesn't want to dance at the end, doesn't know yet that he must dance. We're lining up nicely; I will show you the direction.
(Translated from the original lyrics by Verena Bloch)

In the meantime Rammstein is singing that this is not a love song, because they are not singing in their mother tongue. When already Germans, whose culture is comparably similar to the ones of the United States and internationally stereotyped as one “the West”, feel overwhelmed by the influence and the loss of our own culture how much more must it be for populations from very differ cultures. Briefly, globalization nowadays is a system “associated with the accepting triumphant capitalism, American style” (Stiglitz, 2002: 5). The USA had high interest in ending the colonial empires of the Europeans to gain their own access to markets and start their new anti-colonial imperialism in the name of development (Rist, 2008). President Truman called out in 1949 the “era of development” by using for the very first time the word “underdeveloped” and changed consequently the meaning of development “used ever since to allude either discreetly or inadvertently to the era of American hegemony” (Esteva, 2010: 2). In that moment he had created new identities of one’s own and the other: 2 billion people became underdeveloped and their identities were defined as being placed at the end of the queue mirrored of other’s reality (Esteva, 2010). This definition justified any interventions for people who are in need and cannot be watched passively. Development got a transitive meaning linked to a principle of social organization, instead of being underdeveloped as a natural, causeless state (Rist, 2008). The creation of the term underdevelopment unleashed not only “the idea of change in the direction of a final state, above all, the possibility of bringing about such change” (Rist, 2008: 73). The economic principle of competition and ranking with the aim of development got an internal and self-generated phenomenon with its own governmental dynamics, only backed from the outside (Rist, 2008). Yet “their right to self-determination had been acquired in exchange for a right to self-definition” (Rist, 2008: 79). The term development gave a global hegemony, the new

colonial names became “underdeveloped” and “developing”, but also “Third World”, while the expression developed purely referred to the Western history with its roots lying deep in processes of modernity and capitalism (Escobar, 2007; Esteva, 2010).

Truman simply had substituted a new word for what had already been there: backwardness or poverty. According to them, the ‘backward’ or ‘poor’ countries were in that condition due to past lootings in the process of colonization and the continued raping by capitalist exploitation at the national and the international level: underdevelopment was the creation of development. (Esteva, 2010: 7)

In a capitalist society development had become reduced to economic growth, which in turn became installed at the center of politics and ethics. “As a conceptual construction, economics strives to subordinate to its rule and to subsume under its logic every form of social interaction in every society it invades” (Esteva, 2010: 14).

The global capitalist era of interconnectedness with all its benefits took countries into new dependencies and conditions. The development discourse made it possible to build up an immense institutional apparatus that actually deployed this discourse to become a real and effective force transforming the economy, politics and cultural and social realities (Escobar, 2007). In contrast to earlier ages, this time the new imperialism is neither kings and rulers, nor governments. The USA is playing, through announcing themselves as in charge for the world’s wellbeing, a key role together with some other leading governments, and its role is more obvious and visible than the ones of others. However, international financial institutions (IFIs), those who represent the interests of transnational/ multinational corporations (TNCs/ MNCs)¹, are acting out of the background and pull the strings more secretly (Chomsky, 2014). The fact which did not transform from century to century is that the ruling powers are the ones with money. Architecture often reflects prevailing systems. For many years in Germany the highest buildings had been churches. Church towers could be seen from far away as a symbol of majesty. Also, the homes of leaders reflected their authority: castles, palaces and later governmental buildings carried outstanding magnitude. Nowadays, the tallest buildings are banks which stick out in size and glamour to which church towers mirror a decaying age. This phenomenon is seen very well in Frankfurt, Germany, which was being rebuilt after its destruction in WWII. The new look of Frankfurt are fancy skyscrapers, which mostly host banks and financial institutions. Frankfurt is a major international financial cen-

¹ The term multinational corporation refers to national companies with foreign subsidiaries while a transnational corporation is identified as without a national home. (Drucker, 1997) For simplifying I will not keep on differentiating the term and only use the term TNC.

ter. Globalization developed further into a neoliberal one. Neoliberalism is an approach in which the control of economic factors is shifted from the public and governmental sector to the private one of corporations to make trade easier. This is underlined by the economic thoughts of constant profit maximization, growth, and efficiency. Neoliberalism implies a new system of principles which at the same time is based on classical liberal ideas (Chomsky, 2014). The term *Liberal* in economic terms is different than in politics or religion. Liberalism in economics refers to the ideas of Adam Smith, a Scottish economist of the eighteenth-century. In his book *The Wealth of Nations*, he advocated that government remove all barriers and restrictions to trade in order to develop a so-called free trade with no control which would foster countries economic development (Martinez and Garcia, n.d.). Years later a new economic branch that challenged liberalism arose by the economist John Maynard Keynes. His argument was that full employment is a necessity for the growth of capitalism. This can only be achieved through the intervention of governments and central banks. The idea that governments should intervene for common good spread affirming and caused for many years improvement in people's lives. However, in times of economic up and downs and the quick rising of the global capitalist economy, corporate elites rekindle on the economic liberalism which turned now into global neoliberalism (Martinez and Garcia, n.d.). Neoliberalism nowadays is also known with its name Washington Consensus (which already mirrors the global order behind it) and refers to a number of market principles made by the US government and its dominant financial institutions. The main points of the Consensus are the liberalization of trade and finances, price regulation by the market, ending inflation and privatization (Chomsky, 2014). The idea is that economic growth is best achieved via an unregulated free market, followed that everyone would benefit out of this growth. In that sense governments and population should clear the way for the interests of TNCs, banks and investment institutions. Governments are no longer independent agents, due to "those who impose the consensus naturally" and therefore "have a major impact on global order" (Chomsky, 2014: 20). This phenomenon was already pointed out by Adam Smith himself, who said:

'Principal architects' of policy in England were 'merchants and manufacturers,' who used state power to serve their own interests, however 'grievous' the effect on others, including the people of England. Smith's concern was 'the wealth of nations,' but he understood that the 'national interest' is largely a delusion: within the 'nation' there are sharply conflicting interests, and to understand policy and its effects we have to ask where power lies and how it is exercised (Chomsky, 2014: 20).

TNCs have advocacies in the media and within governments. A majority of economic-political discussion in Europe are done in Brussels, where about 20,000 lobbyists are represented. Approximately to a study of the EU parliament about 700 finance lobbies try to directly influence the making of European policies/ law with a budget of about 350 million Euro annually (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). However, the strategies of lobby are manipulation, destabilization and disinformation.

Whereas the colonized world was primarily a political space to cover continually bigger empires, the time of development was the era of internationally occupying economic space, with the crucial focus on a raising GDP. In becoming political independent, they gave up their identity and their economic autonomy, and “were now forced to travel the ‘development path’ mapped out for them by others” (Rist, 2008: 79). Africa became the continent with the most massive interventions by industrialized countries. “Far from being the idyllic evolution pictured by the founding fathers of economics, the emergence of economic society is a story of violence and destruction, often adopting a genocidal character” (Esteva, 2010: 14).

2 The Architects of our Time

Where does power lie nowadays? Who are the architects of our time? The players of the neoliberal Washington Consensus are the agents of the private economy. All over the world, neoliberalism has been imposed by powerful corporations and IFIs that control much of the global economy and furthermore “have the means to dominate policy formation as well as the structuring of thought and opinion” (Chomsky, 2014: 20). To meet their aims, corporations have powerful allies: the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). All of them perform the neoliberal globalization very actively.

The World Bank, based in Washington D.C., was established in 1944 to finance the redevelopment of Europe. Up to now it is said that they fight poverty all over the world. The sphere of influence is dependent on the amount of shares which makes the richest countries like USA, France, Great Britain, Germany and Japan overly dominant. The World Bank is the biggest financial backer of the so-called “underdeveloped countries”. With loans many large-scale projects are financed on which TNCs instead of the local population earns much money. In addition the World Banks development projects have caused suffering like forceful

resettlements for dams and pipelines. The creation of democratic principles has been most of the time of little importance, instead since the eighties the loans for governments of poor countries are connected to economic conditions. Through the so-called structural adjustment programs, national infrastructures are to be adjusted to requirements for a free market economy, the Washington Consensus principles. Regardless of local conditions, a universal plan was implemented globally. An outcome is that governments have no money for public facilities and are forced to privatize in favor of the TNCs who do it all for profit. (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014; Schicho, 2010)

The International Monetary Fund founded in 1946 is based in Washington D.C. It is closely connected to the World Bank and has similar structures in regards to the fact that the main representatives are solely from rich countries. It was designed to balance instable exchange rates between the different currencies to regulate the flow of international transactions and to foster global economic growth. Furthermore, the IMF takes care that indebted countries are able to pay the money back. These countries are already the poor ones, although the population never lived over their standards. For example the citizens of the Democratic Republic of Congo are still paying back the debts which were first caused by their Belgian colonizers and later by the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. There are still billions of Euros of Mobutu in Swiss bank accounts, while people are starving in the DRC. To pay back debts the IMF loans money to these countries which is again coupled on the World Bank conditions to reduce services and social benefits to give space for privatization of TNCs. (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014; Woods, 2006)

The World Trade Organization was founded in 1995, and it is now based in Geneva. The WTO is the one which supports the most the interests of TNCs. Therefore, the WTO even neglects human rights and environmental policies if they are in the way of making profit (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). Like the other two organizations the WTO has its own structures to exclude an active participation of poorer countries. In addition to the anyway various dependencies of economically fragile countries, there is barely a possibility to counter act. These dependencies make them weak for being blackmailed, for example, through reduction of development aid or through withdrawal of debt cancellations. The WTO aims through international contracts to support the interests of TNCs and actors in the global trade. They have the power to set trade sanctions worldwide. If a country does not follow, it will be forced to change their law or must pay high sanctions which get them into debts.

However, the WTO has widely been rejected by citizen in the global south as well as in the north and face a lot of resistance, which is their only limitation to carry out their plans. There are different attempts to regulate and control all services under the neoliberal free market economy. An example is the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) which introduced intellectual property law to protect global technical know-how. These patents are highly expensive to buy. Patents on medicine for example make those unreachable for many who would need it. Patents on seeds and plants destroy local farmers as they cannot deal freely with their own products and seeds. Monsanto and Bayer for instance own many patents on plants which are used since centuries from indigenous societies, who of course never got a patent on their knowledge or natural resources. Through the so-called biopiracy citizens are suddenly supposed to pay for natural goods which they used from generation to generation as their daily food, medicine but also for cosmetics. (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014; Woods, 2006)

Those three main global players are supported by other “international” financial and development institutions like the OECD, but also the UN system plays a major role in terms of global governance. Since the last two decades in the twentieth-century we are basically facing colonialism of direct interventions in politics and economy which is closely linked to development assistance and globalization (Schicho, 2010).

3 Global Structural Violence

There are many theories which state various reasons why nations end up in extreme poverty or even fail. A major underlying problem of economically poor countries, argued by Gary Haugen, is the lack of law enforcement and justice systems (Haugen, 2014). One profound root of poverty is chronic vulnerability to violence. This factor was not even mentioned by the UN Millennium Development Goals, the eight economic goals to address global poverty. When people think about global poverty, they think about people who are hungry and thirsty, homeless and have no education, and so they try to meet those needs. However, “the world overwhelmingly does not know that endemic to being poor is a vulnerability to violence, or the way violence is, right now, catastrophically crushing the global poor” (Haugen, 2014: xi). Gary Haugen is thereby talking on a micro level within nations, but I think you can expand it on a global macro level. The countries that were poor because of their colonial past have been too vulnerable to get a fair chance in the global development. Sys-

temic violence of being enslaved to work, under horrible conditions with little income or robbed of your belongings (like land grabbing or the exploitation of natural resources) is a daily threat among the world's poorest billions. Johan Galtung (1975) named it structural violence; the slow destruction of the poor, who are victims of a higher socioeconomic global system (Galtung, 1975). The East African famine in 2011 which caused nearly 12 million refugees was not alone caused by a long drought how the mass media was spreading it. It was closely connected to the economic crisis in 2008 and food speculations on the exchange market, which lead to a massive increase in food prices (Ziegler, 2011). Rising food prices in turn go ahead to violence in countries where almost all the monthly income ends up anyway in food. Strategies such as rural development is a systemic mechanism for silent transformation in linking scientific expert knowledge of food or agriculture with particular intervention, like extension, credit or infrastructure, to let it seem naturally but truly resulted in a profound conversion of "underdeveloped" regions and societies along the line of modern capitalist conceptions of land, agriculture, and farming (Escobar, 2007). One of the key components of structural violence is the complexity of the global system which makes actors non-identifiable, this, in turn makes it very hard to extrapolate the structural violence against the poor, who are made dependent on these structures (Gebrewold, 2009: 87).

3.1 Shifts in World Inequality

The structural violence of neoliberalism gave birth to a new dimension of inequality. In the eighteenth century for instance the differences between the global south and north was not at all as distinct as it is now (Chomsky, 2014). In 2014 a study of Oxfam said that the richest one per cent of the world citizens own half of the global estate (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). The promised goals of growth and development are seen in some economies, particularly in Asia. Nonetheless, restructuring the economy gave birth to deep divisions between social classes and ethnic groups (Chossudovsky, 2003). You cannot separate economic issues from social, political, or ecological ones. The neoliberal globalization was designed by corporations and governments for the interests of few. Almost all brand-name products which we daily use are marketed by TNCs. These products might be made by local suppliers; however, they depend on the TNCs in terms of price, quality standards, and purchase quantity. It seems there is a huge variety on brands, however in reality it comes back to negligible amount of TNCs who have the rights on others and navigate from above. The global corpo-

rate consolidation and cross-holding are getting more and more intertwined and complex, therefore it is hard to overlook. The following graphic shows some major TNCs and their amount of subsidiaries.



Fig. 1: Example of Some TNCs and Their Network of Subsidiaries, Source: Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014.

A study by the *Technische Hochschule Zürich* (EEAG, 2011) showed that a network of only 147 corporations is having a 40% control over 43,000 international companies. Due to these networks only 1.7% of the TNCs are controlling 80% of the sales worldwide. According to the Global Investment Report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development the worldwide trade of goods and services is controlled by 80% of the TNCs (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). If you take TNCs into economic rankings measured only in profit maximization in GDP, they surpass even those of developed countries. For instance, from rank 25 to 35, six TNCs are found (Royal Dutch Shell, Wal-Mart, Exxon Mobil, Sinopec Group, China National Petroleum and BP) before many other economically rich countries (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). This kind of economic power gives them automatically a very influential political power. The necessary policies are written by themselves, because they are barely subjected by any government control. Countries, its citizens and resources are seen as medium to gain the overall goal of profit (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). For profit TNCs and their allies are systemically oppressing people, exploiting others resources, destroy the environment, and bring democracy in danger.

3.2 Human Exploitation

TNSs spend great sums in order to improve their image and the marketing of their brands. There is no financial limitation for TNCs to brainwash the generations for consumption and brand mania to create an ideology of greed, grievance, competitiveness, profit and performance orientation instead of solidarity, respect and empathy. In the world of TNCs, there are no such values and standards, on the contrary, money is saved in the conditions of production and resource depletion, and for that reason TNCs have been condemned for structural violence. Structural violence on the national or global level has been considerably contributing to modern-day slavery and trafficking, labor under threat or cruel working conditions, destruction of economic infrastructure, hunger and famine, but also environmental degradation, the destroying of biodiversity and the support of violent conflicts (Gebrewold, 2009). In violent conflicts, human beings are dehumanized through sexual violence, torture and killing, or are displaced. Natural resources and profit gain more value than people (Gebrewold, 2009). Basic human needs become a commodity. The social and environmental engagement done by so many companies is simply for advertising their prestige and as a necessary respond to the rising amount of human rights and environmental activists, who have been steadily increasing since the seventies (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). Instead of changing the human exploitation in their supply chain and rethinking their own system of production, they donate and establish separate aid programs. These initiatives make for good marketing investment and the fulfillment of social trends. Companies spend million to keep up their good reputation. If Deichmann, a major German company for cheap shoes known for a much activism in social projects all around the world, changed their own production conditions in the supply chain locations in Asia, it would be more worth than all their well-intended help. The trend of “corporate social responsibility” is often simply the rational adaption of market demands, which at this time is the increased awareness of global interrelations. Child Labor in the supply chain for instance is tried hard to avoid recently because the consumers see that as very awful and damages the image of a company badly (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). Due to consumers demand TNCs have introduced controls and policies on their suppliers. Yet this is often done at the expense of the small suppliers, because the TNCs do not pay more money to assure that the profit remains the same. Out of that reason local production centers need to find their own solutions to make all the demands possible and yet deliver to the TNCs cheap. In many cases controls and policies only shift

human exploitation. Companies simply move to other countries with less controls and policies. For the same reason of moving their investment TNCs have enough power to pressure governments. Governments are afraid of that and therefore they decrease and lower social and environmental standards, which people were fighting for so hard some decade before. The ones who profit out of that system are the ones who are rich and big enough to have that freedom. A local farmer is forced to keep up the prices which will guarantee the livelihood of him and his family according to the price level of the country he is living in. The power of corporations to influence politics is also mirrored by the case of Sudan and Coca-Cola. The USA government refused to impose a trade embargo in times of conflict to pressure the Sudanese government because the resource gum arabic, which is needed to make the color of Coca-Cola, is mainly found in Sudan (Guillaume, 2011). In many countries, schools, universities, hospitals, public transportation systems, post and litter services used to be tasks of governments. Many of these services were moved into the private sphere. They were bought by major corporations who offer these services now for profit while safety standards and quality lowers. In some parts of the world this had deep impacts, like the privatization of drinking water. Small price increases exclude many people from their human right to access to water. A drop in quality standards, like the example of water quality, causes diseases in countries which do not have a health system. Nonetheless, the neoliberal deregulation of the world economy, the privatization of common goods and services, as well as the establishment of free-trade zones without democratic control still keeps on growing (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014).

The distinct gap is not alone seen between the global south and global north. The impoverishment is also seen within the industrialized countries. Liberating and privatizing the market from governmental policies gave birth to a lot of damage regarding social and labor rights therefore ghettos and suburbs are increasing in the United States and Europe. By the deeply implemented norm of profit maximization, it is easy to cut salaries without outside control. It was a long process for the German government to introduce the minimum wage of 8,50€ in January 2015, yet you can already hear debates all over how big companies are able to avoid it in a legal grey area, while small businesses suffer to comply with the law. Germany is a democratic and social welfare state, which is included in the German legislation. Public infrastructure, education facilities, and a health system create an overall social welfare system. Due to that, Germany has been able to kind of balance out poverty within

the country for many years. But these common achievements are steadily pushed aside from neoliberal politicians. If it comes to save national money, it was mainly in the sectors of education, health, social or culture, but not in subsidies or the money to help banks. Taxes for TNCs got lowered so much that particularly the rich are barely contributing to the social welfare system (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). The GDP of European countries was steadily increasing almost all throughout the economic crisis and is now bigger than ever before. It is important to add that the GDP of the TNCs grew, not necessarily the one of the citizens.

3.3 Resource Exploitation

The resource of human labor is not the only exploitation in these circumstances; corporate elites also exploit natural resources, the original impetus for colonial occupation of foreign lands. The systemic looting never stopped, it simply became modernized (Burgis, 2015). The increasing global demand for modern technology has become a leading factor of global structural violence. Most of the sub-Saharan countries are massively rich in natural resources and many of the on-going conflicts there are based on this wealth. Natural resources in the DRC for instance, are on the one hand, the national economic means, and on the other hand, it is financing warring groups who bring destruction. The causes of the conflicts in Africa are systemic and complex and facilitated from asymmetrical opportunities and economic inequalities rather than ethnic diversity (Gebrewold, 2008). "In 2010 fuel and mineral exports from Africa were worth \$333billion, more than seven times the value of aid that went in the opposite direction (and that is even before you factor in the vast sums spirited out of the continent through corruption and tax fiddles)" (Burgis, 2015: 6). As actual owners of these resources Africa would be the richest continent and yet it is stuck at the bottom. Most economically poor countries lack the technology and marketing of their resources; therefore, they get international "help". Under the pressure of the global players the highly indebted countries are only allowed to take a tiny amount of taxes on those resources in comparison to the massively high export gains (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). The TNCs take high benefits of unstable and conflicting situations within and among nations. Opponents compete for international investments to empower themselves with an outcome that only corrupt elites of poor countries get profit out of the resources. Due to a lack of transparency, money often more gets lost in corruption than the country gets out of official taxes (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2014). Resource-rich states tend for *kleptocracy* or an economy

ruled by “big man” politics (Burgis, 2015). “The world’s four longest serving rulers – Teodoro Obiang Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, José Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Paul Biya of Cameroon – each preside over an African state rich in oil or minerals” (Burgis, 2015: 5). To get the necessary resources, TNCs also do not hold back in getting into business with rebels, warlords and military regimes. Resources are traded in conflict and war zones to arm those fighting parties with no regard of their political intentions. This is very well seen in the oil, gas, diamond and mineral industry. It is notable that 69% of the people living in extreme poverty reside in nations which have national incomes far below the global average; these poorer nations contain a corollary amount of the oil, gas, and minerals needed by richer countries (Burgis, 2015). This systemic plundering is a phenomenon which economists call the resource curse. Counterintuitively, the curse occurs because more likely than not some negative things happen to these economies with dominate extractive industries. The resource curse is not alone seen in Africa, but there it is most obvious due to the fact that it is the world’s poorest and thus far its richest in resources (Burgis, 2015). Yet, it is not a universal explanation for conflict, war, and extreme poverty. Frankly, the global interest and the level of intervention are very much dependent on the resource commodity. The gap of inequality between the living standards of the areas where resources are found to the ones where they are consumed makes it obvious where the benefits grow.

The average Finn or South Korean can expect to live to eighty, nurtured by economies among whose most valuable companies are, respectively, Nokia and Samsung, the world’s top two mobile phone manufacturers. By contrast, if you happen to be born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, home to some of the planet’s richest deposits of the minerals that are crucial to the manufacture of mobile phone batteries, you’ll be lucky to make it past fifty (Burgis, 2015: 6).

The prices for Africa’s resources are set in the London, Hong Kong, and New York Stock Exchange, which calls itself “the financial crossroads of the world”. Any reduction in Africa’s resource export is immediately seen at the international market and prices go rapidly up throughout the world. “The basic commodities that lie in abundance in Africa remain the primary ingredients of the world economy” (Burgis, 2015: 7). Africa is disproportional dependent on its resources; however, according to Jeffrey Sachs and Joseph Stiglitz are “despite the prospects of wealth and opportunity that accompany the discovery and extraction of oil and other natural resources, such endowments all too often impede rather than further balanced and sustainable development” (Burgis, 2015: 4). The exploiters of TNCs are not physically in the countries anymore which they prey but they govern from a distance.

This makes it easier and perceived as less brutal because they do not have to face the consequences.

3.4 Environmental Degradation

In addition to all the social damages in our global society, there are great environmental costs. How is it possible that in a time where everything got so intertwined and branched together humans, above all the so-called developed Westerners, lost their connection to the environment? Among the prevailing systems, there is barely a responsibility towards nature. Through Adam Smith labor became the supplier for all the necessities and conveniences in life instead of nature as source of wealth and sustenance, like it is seen among tribal societies. The processing productive power of labor and economic development as widespread mindset summon the devaluation and de-recognition of productivity of nature's work and "led to the ecological crises [...] that has created the various forms of ethnic and cultural crisis that plague our world today" (Shiva, 1988: 42). The new German fashion of "sustainability" which is heard in every sector and industry is one strategy used to soothe our guilty consciousness, and overall it is again for marketing reasons. In reality, the movement can do nothing against the invisible, essential ecological processes and over centuries effectively running life cycles. The riches created by nature were in balance and in harmony with local ecosystems and needs, in contrary "the commodity and cash economy destroys natural cycles and reduces nature to raw materials and commodities" (Shiva, 1988: 43). Again, companies try to use the movement for marketing reasons. Last year I saw an advertisement of C&A with a t-shirt called "sustainability" for only 4Euro. All over their webpage is this one word "sustainability", with slogans like "sustainable products everyday", "sustainable supply everywhere" and "sustainable life for everyone" (C&A, 2014). For "everyone" in a capitalist society, left out cultures and societies who love living close to and by nature, and even more left out the earth. In 2014 the global ecological footprint was on August 19th (Global Footprint Network). Means that the annual budget of earth resources in 2014 was already depleted and from that day on world society lived by inventories of the next year and thus at the expense of our future generations. This overshoot day is coming a few days earlier every year. The German society lives way over the earth's capacity, which is only possible due to the compensation of so many countries which live sustainable in real (Global Footprint Net-

work).² If we take nature into the hierarchy level it would be found on the very bottom. Humans spread a net over the earth with no connection to the earth. This net is a pure pressure for the globe which will, if we tie the web even closer together without change, suffocate the earth therein. “By separating nature from economics, we have walked blindly into tragedy” (Sachs, 2015). The fact that only few countries fully live in a highly developed society which already caused this huge environmental mess shows the reality to global development, with its current definition of capitalism and modernization, being universal and made for all would not work out. Besides the fact that out of various reasons I personally do not like the thought of modern development to be the ultimate model for all nations, it is to further to question if systems (governments, alliances, economies, etc.) really want to bring the promised improvements of development to all countries? They must have realized as well that it will not work out with our planetary boundaries. How much do ruling powers actually want change and improvement in other countries? Alone for the consumption of food, Germany needs more land area than it actually has. The demand for cultivable land increases greatly since agricultural products are not only eaten but also used for biofuel. The industrial countries, but also emerging economies like China and India, do not have enough land anymore to be cultivated, thus agriculture became a global market. The so-called “land-grabbing” by big corporations, which seek to establish long-term plantations on a large scale, is often contracted by the exclusion of the public and is by now a widespread issue which cannot even be measured at the moment (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen, 2015). What about an enough in cultures that permanently grow on demand upon the world's depleting resources, due to the fact that everybody simply strives hard to have more (Schumacher, 2013).

4 Alter-Globalization

Neoliberal Globalization cannot be seen as either good or evil by itself. It depends on what people do with the new possibilities. Considering the controversial current world order it is not a surprise that there is a rise of counter-movements and summits of the IMF, the World Bank or the WTO are connected with scene of protests and uproar (Stiglitz, 2002). This was seen just recently in Frankfurt when opponents drained their frustrations in riots all over the city which covered the opening of the new European Central Bank building. However, most

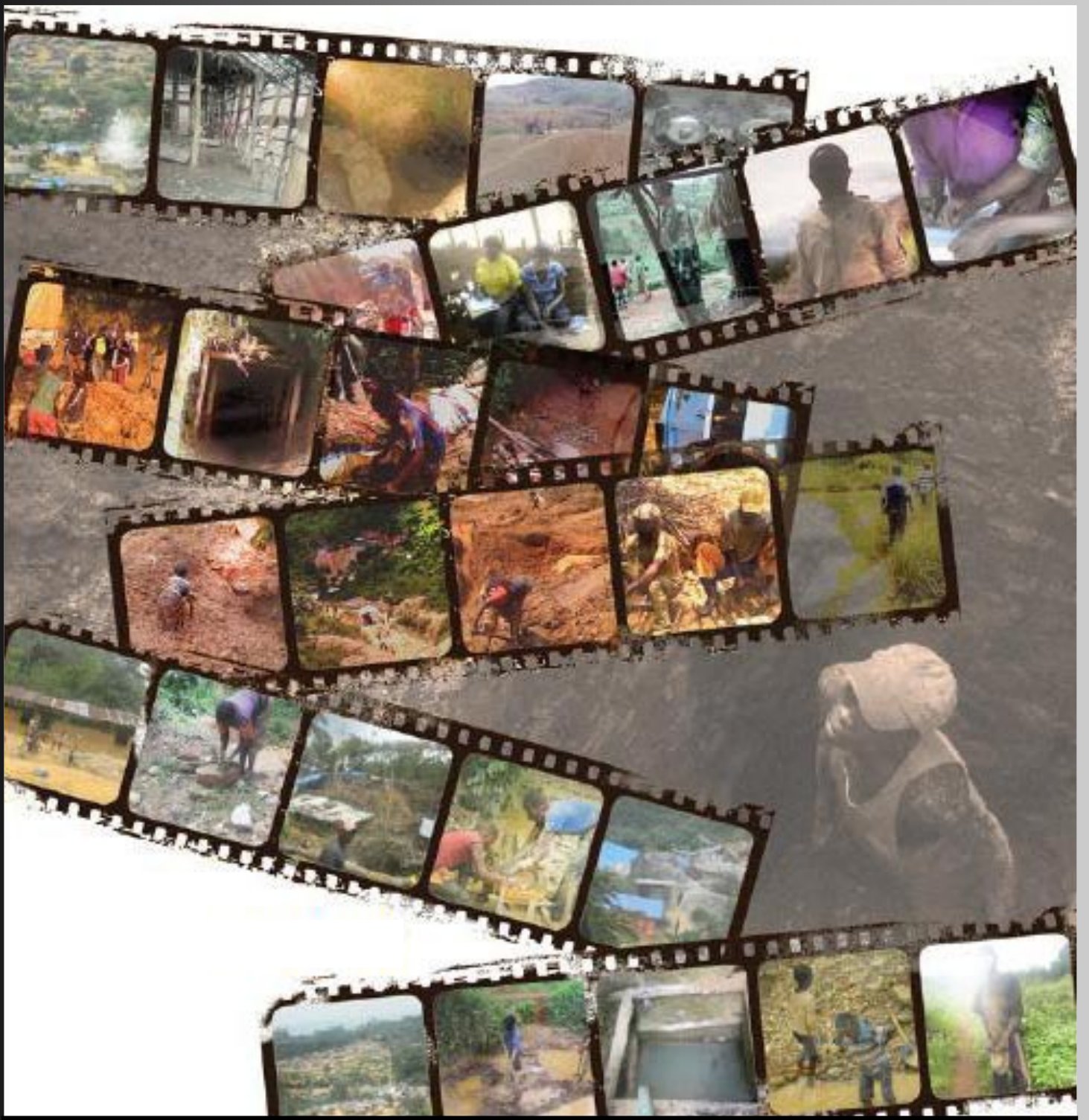
² See Appendix 1 for a graphical representation

movements run luckily non-violently. Alter-Globalization refers to social movements which are not necessarily against globalization, but want an alternative to neoliberal globalization (Kreft, 2011: 21). They question the capitalist economy and criticize modernity, without rejecting it but to show the negative tie between modernity and colonialism and to call decisions makers to rethink the *corporatocracy* with its non-transparent and undemocratic mechanisms. The movement is especially critical of policies of economic neoliberalism and the promoting of international institutions, such as the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, but also the OECD and the Group of Eight (G8) (Engler, 2011). First protests against the neoliberal globalization occurred in 1999 against the WTO in Seattle. “Many participants and theorist instead trace the lineage of the movement through a 500-year history of resistance against European colonialism and U.S. Imperialism” (Engler, 2011: 151). The biggest annual meeting of the alter-globalization movement is the World Social Forum (WSF), which was held first in 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brasil. The WSF sees itself as counter-event to the yearly World Economic Forum of the international economic elites (Kreft, 2011: 21). The WSF gives place to exchange backgrounds and issues of local and national movements. This regular event is about networking and collecting ideas for future actions; it seeks to “assert an identity as a unified international movement” (Engler, 2007: 153). This movement exists out of a network of autonomous organizations united in their critical perspective on capitalism, imperialism and culture domination. There are many terms and names which refer to it: The *Anti-Globalization Movement* (more imposed by movement critiques), *Global Justice Movement*, *Global Justice and Solidarity Movement*, *Movement of Movements* or simply *The Movement* (Engler, 2011: 151). It is discussed if this movement is a single social movement or a collection of movements. The second would justify the many different opinions on whether and tactics of how to interact, there is no single model for social change, nor leading persons.

Movement constituents include trade unionists, environmentalists, anarchists, land rights and indigenous rights activists, organizations promoting human rights and sustainable development, opponents of privatization, and anti-sweatshop campaigners. These groups charge that the policies of corporate globalization have exacerbated global poverty and increased inequality (Engler, 2007: 150).

Alter-globalization characterizes the globalization from below or grassroots globalization. The anthropologist Arturo Escobar for instance sees new social movements’ contrary to the dominating capitalism in particular to neoliberal globalization as “meshworks”, which do not rely on hierarchy, decentralized decision-making, self-organization, heterogeneity, and di-

iversity (Kreff, 2011: 22). The grassroots globalization exists besides the NGOs out of a rising number of new social unions, networks and organizations. Representatives of the globalization act from below act on local issues, interests and advocate for justice, equality and free access to resources or their redistribution (Kreff, 2011: 22). The Nobel Prize carrying welfare economist Amartya Sen claims an extension of the term wealth and riches with factors like social security, individual freedom and the right of education and health care. These aims are nothing other than the elementary human rights made to be the aim of economic activity (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2011). In his perspective, human freedom is the primary means of development, in which the people are actively involved in shaping their own destiny instead of being the passive receivers of turned-over development programs. The state should have a supporting and safeguarding role for human capabilities (Sen, 1999). The organizations and movements hope to establish new global and non-capitalist ideas. However, the TNCs are not sleeping; they are very clever in their marketing strategies, which swallow counter movements and simply make them fashionable to the demand of society. The revolutionary Ché Guevara was seen in every clothing chain printed on t-shirts or Starbucks who picked up the alternative model of Fairtrade to make a global corporate chain out of it. Movements are working with campaigns, protests, strikes and mass mobilization of civil society (which is now possible on an international level). Combine them all it is probably the biggest movement of all times. Yet, solutions vary massively from deglobalization and turning back to local markets, while others come up with ideas of democratically controlled institutions of global governance. However, there is no easy solution and particularly no perfect system. A major first step would simply be that lives, regardless to ethnicity, sex, age or religion, are put at the centre and take priority over profit and goods (Schuhmacher, 2013) because to pursuit happiness does obviously not generate well-being (Fromm, 2008).



III. Teaching
Material

Africa's Conflict Minerals

By Verena Bloch, Castellón 2015

Teacher`s Guide:

This guide has been designed to help teachers and students as well as any individual who wants to enrich their knowledge on conflict minerals and its local and global context. This material will give an overall view on conflict minerals of Africa. However, it focuses on the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kivu districts, where the extraction of minerals has a massive impact on the population. Furthermore, the material gives an introduction to the structures of the current world order and the prevailing neoliberal economic system. These introductions make students to understand better the issues along the supply chains of minerals, as well as the local Congolese conflict becoming a global concern through the daily consumption of products with conflict minerals all over the world. The material gives a range of web links and videos provided to support the learning process, as well as for further deepening the interest. Activities, questions and discussion points for the class are marked with a light gray background.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Obtain an overall view on ‘conflict minerals’: What are they? Where are they found? What are they used for?
- Learn more about the Democratic Republic of Congo: Some background information, an historical overview and the current social situation, which covers widespread human rights violations and issues of extreme poverty.
- Able to reflect on global connections and their own contribution to global issues.
- Gain a broader and critical view on neoliberal globalization by relating their own daily use and consumption of items to the situation in DR Congo.
- Learn more about the various solutions and initiatives underway, as well as sustainable options and ideas to act personally.

I suggest that the material is useful for people of 15 years and older. Due to the importance of the issue and the fact that children are already using items with conflict minerals an awareness can be also taught to younger ages. Nonetheless, this material carries as well detailed information on the life conditions of people suffering as a result of mining and mineral trading, especially women and child soldiers.

WHAT ARE CONFLICT MINERALS

Starting questions for the class:

"Have you heard of the term conflict minerals before?"

"Whose conflict is it?"

Write the answers down (sticky posts, cardboards, etc.) to use them at a later point.

Conflict minerals are minerals and its derivatives mined in conditions of **conflict-affected** and **high-risk areas**. The OECD identifies these areas "by the presence of armed conflict, widespread violence or other risks of harm to people. Armed conflict may take a variety of forms, such as a conflict of international or non-international character, which may involve two or more states, or may consist of wars of liberation, or insurgencies, civil wars, etc." Furthermore, it explains that "high-risk areas may include areas of political instability or repression, institutional weakness, insecurity, collapse of civil infrastructure and widespread violence. Such areas are often characterized by widespread human rights abuses and violations of national or international law" (OECD, 2013: 13). Conflict minerals are therefore used, when sold or traded, to finance or maintain conflicts and massive human rights abuses.

AFRICA'S Conflict Minerals



The four recognized conflict minerals that are mined and sold to fund rebel armed groups in conflict-affected area in central Africa are **gold** and the so-called "3 T's":

Tin, Tungsten and Tantalum.

In addition to the conflict minerals there are many struggles for diamonds, particularly in West Africa it is known to finance fighting groups for years.



Fig. 2: Conflict Minerals of Africa,
Source: Hearts, 2012.

Those diamonds are, however, not included into the term conflict minerals but have a similar expression of “blood-“or “conflict diamonds” (Burgis, 2015). There are two major ways how conflicting parties profit from the trade of these minerals, which is comparable to a mafia system. First, the armed groups have direct control of mines and own them. Second, they illegally tax the trade and the transportation of minerals along controlled routes of them. Traders need to bribe their way through for security (Smith and Bell, 2010). The minerals are thus a barrier in the way of peace and the opportunity for much needed change.

MAIN MINING SITES IN AFRICA

The mining and production of the 3-Ts and gold is done globally, including conflict-affected areas such as Afghanistan, Myanmar, or Colombia (Global Witness, 2015). Africa’s countries have an outstanding amount of natural resources. This continent is blessed with the richest diamond mines, huge crude oil reserves, gold, platinum, timber or jade – just to mention a few (Burgis, 2015). All of these resources play a significant role in the African economy and politics, as well as internationally. Conflict minerals, the 3TGs, typically come from the predominantly natural rich Democratic Republic of Congo and at times from surrounding countries in the Great Lakes region (Economic Commission for Africa, 2011). Exact numbers and data on quantity are hard to find or differ intensively. Campaigners for instance talk about 80% of known stocks of coltan (one extraction of tantalum) from the DRC, contrarily in a study by Michael Nest he estimates on the vague existing data that the DRC and neighboring countries carry about 10% of the known reserves (Burgis, 2015: 30). Yet, real figures might be much higher, given that Africa has been less thoroughly searched than others. Nevertheless, the DRC ranks as second-most important supplier of coltan after Australia (Burgis, 2015: 30). Although, the “3T mining used to attract more miners before”, it shifted presently, to the artisanal gold mining business which is by far the most important subsector in eastern DRC now (Spittaels, 2014: 11).

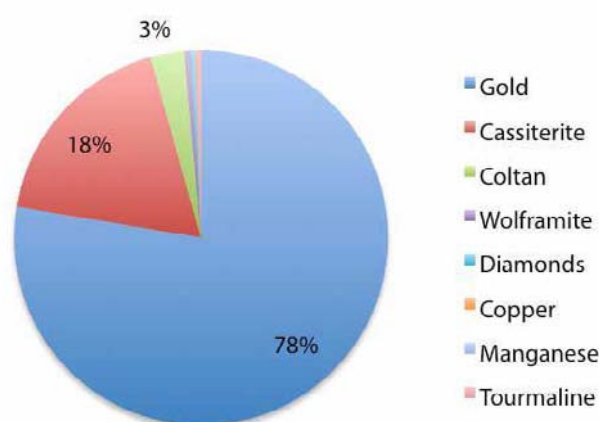


Fig. 3: Artisanal Miners/ Minerals in the DRC, Source: Spittaels, 2014.

DR CONGO, AN OVERVIEW³

Location & Size: The Democratic Republic of Congo, short DRC, lies in the heart of sub-Saharan Africa. Because of its massive size, it borders nine countries and has little access in the West to the Atlantic Ocean. The DRC is with its 2,344,858 km² the second biggest country of whole Africa. The size of Germany would even fit nearly seven times into the DRC.

Population: It has a population of 77,433,744. Consider that these are less people than in the so much smaller Germany (80,996,685).⁴ Within the DRC are over 200 African ethnic groups. Due to that, it is a big multicultural society with a multitude of languages and religions. Interestingly the demography counts 64,5% of the population under 24 years.

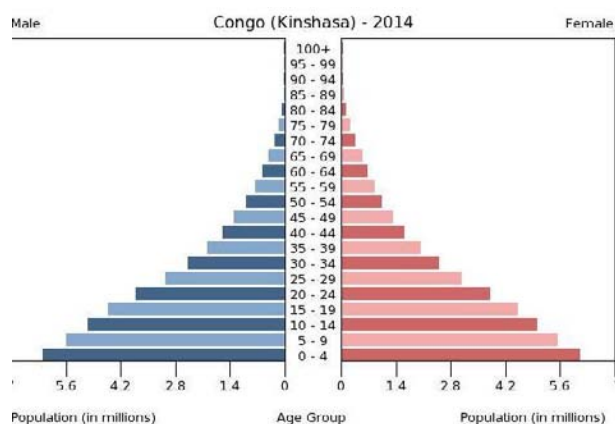


Fig. 4: The DRC Population Pyramid illustrates the Age and Sex Structure. Source: CIA: DRC Factbook, 2015.

Congo's Blessings: Due to its size the DRC has many different landscapes, from a low-lying plateau, access to the ocean, river valley, highlands and rainforests to mountains. As the landscape varies the weather changes: tropical hot and humid, but also cool and dry. Hence, the DRC is very fertile and has a high potential for agriculture and hydropower. Furthermore, it carries some of the most wanted natural resources: Cobalt, copper, niobium, tantalum, tin, petroleum, industrial and gem diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, uranium, coal and timber can all be found there.

THE USE OF CONFLICT MINERALS

Discussion: Question to the class: "How many items are you carrying right now with you that you think can be linked to violent conflicts or conflict areas?" Give them a moment to think about it and later open a short discussion on:

Who thinks that they do not have such items? Who knows or thinks that he/she have items with conflict minerals? If so, what are these items and identify the type or types of conflict minerals used in these items?

³ All facts are taken from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA): *The World Factbook*.

⁴ Estimated Population numbers are taken in July 2014.

Tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold are essential for the production of many items in various industries, for example electronics, engines, as well as in the jewelry sector. A smaller part is used for the weapon industry and for medical equipment. The rise of the high-tech era made the demand for the conflict minerals particularly high and is constantly increasing. The boom for mobile and smart phones, computer, laptops and tablets, printers and camcorders but also the usage of video game consoles like Playstation and Nintendos Gameboy made the world market price increase at astonishing rates. At the metal stock exchange in London, the value, between February 2000 and January 2001 rose from 180 to 950 Euros per kilo of tantalum. That is an increase of more than five times (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2011: 70).

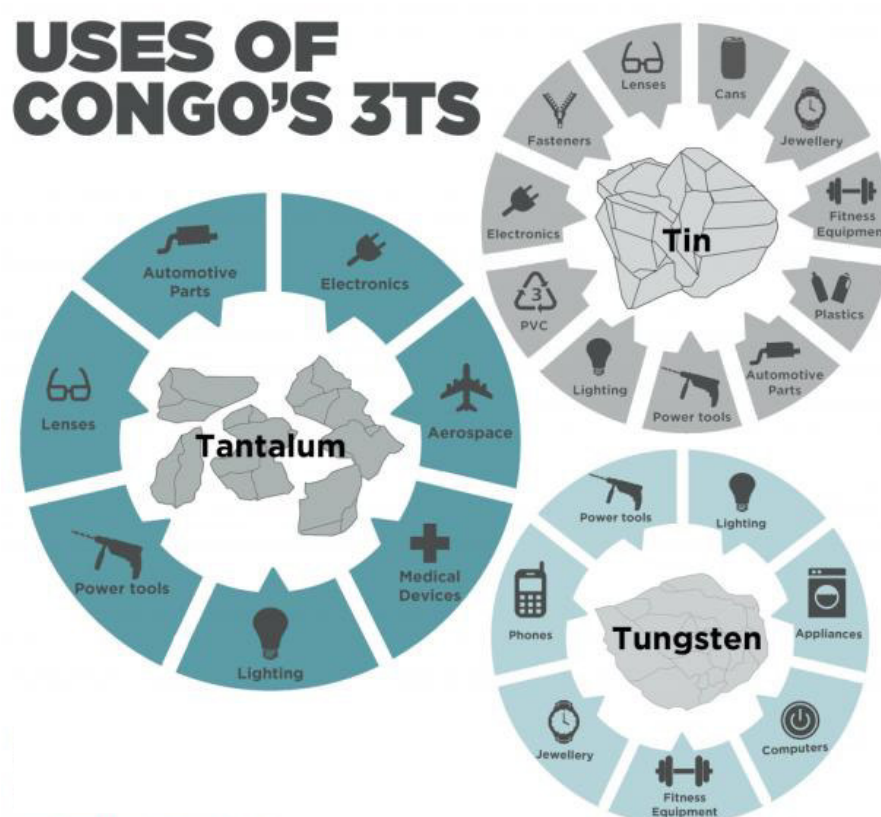


Fig. 5: Uses of Congo's 3T's,
Source: Resolution Possible, 2013.

Tin (Cassiterite)

The leading mineral in terms of dollar value contributing to armed groups in the DRC is the cassiterite ore, which is refined to produce tin (Sn). In 2008 about \$115 million got contributed to armed groups alone through tin. Over the past years the demand and the prices have fluctuated. This global price volatility is closely connected to the instability in the DRC and scarce supply. For example, a rebel offensive against the

Tantalum (Coltan)

country's primary tin trading center which let the prices increase for 31%. The major mines in North Kivu have changed ownership several times among different rebel groups (BSR, 2010: 6). Tin is mainly used in solders (predominantly for electronics) with over a half of the global tin supply. Further uses are tinplates (providing a basis for food cans and other materials) and a variety of chemical applications for instance catalysts or PVC stabilizers, as well as a decent amount in glass manufacturing (BSR, 2010: 6).

Tantalite is the mineral, and Tantalum (Ta) is the metallic element which can be extracted or refined from the ore. Extraction or production of tantalum raw materials of all kinds is widespread. The conflict mineral is defined as 'columbite-tantalite' and is mainly known as coltan. This abbreviation is used only in parts of Africa as kind of a local nickname. Coltan is only one of many sources of tantalum (Coltan, n.d.). Because of its consistency it is like no other means used for super alloys in surgical equipment, high technology weapons, nuclear reactors, camera lenses and night vision devices. Nevertheless, the biggest share of the world production is needed for electronic capacitors in mobile phones, computers, gaming consoles, or for cars. Tantalum was discovered in 1802 by a Swedish chemist named Eckberg. He became nearly exasperated with the difficult exploration of the acid-resistant metal. Out of that reason he named his discovery after the Greek mythological figure Tantalus, who "was not able to digest his great prosperity, and for his greed he gained overpowering ruin" (Burgis, 2015: 29). He was condemned to eternal suffering in the underworld (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2011: 71). The power of words can be seen as a parable for a whole country which is rich like a king and yet its people are permanently rated among the poorest ones on this planet.

Tungsten (Wolframite)

The use of tungsten (W) is a lot more widely spread across industries than the other three conflict minerals. It also may not be visible to the end consumer or part of consumer-facing products. While for tin and tantalum the electronic industry is the foremost user, tungsten is used

GOLD

“Gold has become the most lucrative conflict mineral for armed groups in eastern Congo.”

(Enough Project, 2012: 1)

Click to watch
about
conflict gold

in a large number of different supply chains. Sixty percent of its global supply is concentrated in ‘hardmetals’ and 20% on steel which is used for example in cutting tools for industries like mining, steelmaking, machining and manufacturing (BSR, 2010: 7).

The international prices for gold (Au) are immoderate high. Because of the informal business of the conflict minerals exact figures of the gold production of Congo do not exist, however it is estimated that the DRC trades out approximately 11 to 15 tons of gold a year, with an annual value of \$627 to \$855 million. A high amount of the extremely high profit is going directly to armed groups and used for their sake. Their interest in gold has been rapidly increasing because of gold’s low-volume nature it is way easier to smuggle than the 3-T metal ores (Enough Project, 2012). Gold is with 80% used to make jewelry. Furthermore, it is needed for the production of medical equipment, aerospace, in the financial industry and again in electronics (BSR, 2010: 8).

Activity:

Hand out the information sheet *Conflict Minerals in Your Daily Digital Life* (Appendix 2). Have a look at it and let your students. If possible bring an old electronic device which you can fully dismantle together. Ask again the entry question of:

“How many items are you carrying right now with you that you think can be linked to violent conflicts or conflict areas?”

WORLD ORDER & WORLD ECONOMY, AN OVERVIEW

The following section briefly explains the current world order regarding the structures of people and economy. It will first use some examples to demonstrate the prevailing unfair system within and among societies. Second, it shows how the current economy is a linear system. Combing those two issues is important to finally understand the system behind neoliberalism and the systemic exploitation by transnational corporation (TNCs), which will be linked back to the topic of conflict mineral and its global players.

Introduction to the New World Order

Activity: Hand out the worksheet (Appendix 3) for the students and explain the task. They need to find out about current world structures regarding class, race, sex and disability. The triangle therefore represents society. This is a pre-activity for further understanding of the mechanism of neoliberalism. For a better understanding of the facilitator watch:

YouTube, *Neoliberalism as a water balloon, Part 1* (2010, 6:28min)

Prevailing World Order

The current world order is arranged in a hierarchal system, divided horizontally in classes and vertically into race, sex and disability.

CLASS

Horizontal lines
→ Hierarchial System,
Ruled from top



Global Players: Some distinct leaders of TNCs, World Bank, IMF, WTO, financing institutions, ...

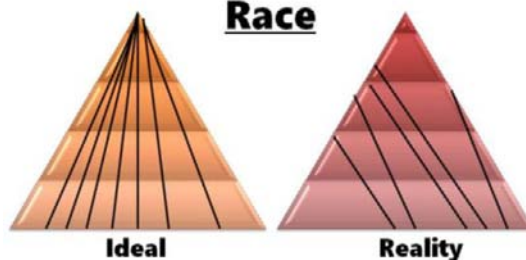
High Society: Rich, have control, like managers, stars, politicians, ...

Middle Class Society: Have decent jobs, better paid benefits, security, insurance, pensions, ...

Struggling Society: Lousy jobs, more than one job to survive, low-paid, no benefits or job security, no insurance or health care, struggle not to fall into extreme poverty

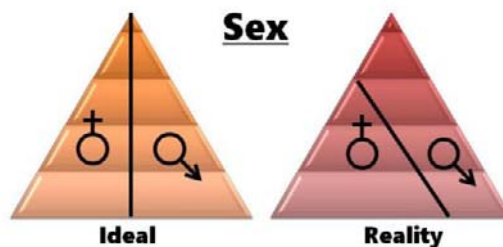
Poor Society: No jobs or very low paid jobs, daily struggle to survive

Race



If you look at the model of society all races should be equally represented in all classes. However, some groups are mostly at the bottom while others dominate from the top.

Sex



Sex should be represented equally among each class, however due to gender discrimination there are more women in poverty and in the lower classes while men rule at the top.

Disability





To change class differences we need to change the shape of society.



If society would look like this, the differences from bottom – up would not be nearly as huge.

People with disabilities face a lot of discrimination and are therefore also not fairly represented in society.



Race, sex and disability have in comparison to race vertical lines. If you want to change the way people are treated you need to fight discrimination.

To sum it up:

The world is structured in a **hierarchal system**, ruled and controlled from top – down. There are huge prevailing inequalities. First, there is a **system in social structures** (connected with economic possibilities that give an identity regarding class/status). In this hierarchy there are lots of people found on the bottom while a tiny amount is placed at the top. Second, **inherent identities** are furthermore **disproportionately represented** among the existing structures. Discrimination and racism are deeply implemented in our world order. The system itself never changed since the colonial past, just the ones on top of the pyramid. Instead of colonizer and colonized, terms got introduced like “underdeveloped”, “developing” and “developed” or “third world” and “first world” to point out the division.

Introduction to the World Economy

Activity:

Watch: *The Story of Stuff* (2007, 22min.)



The Story of Stuff is based on facts of the USA. Discover more of your own world and go to the interactive website of *Generation Awake*, an awareness campaign by the European Commission. Here students can explore a house full of items included with information, like the costs of production or what kinds of resources are needed.

Major points to remember:

- ❖ The world economy is a **linear system**, which carries on structures of human oppression and natural resource exploitation.

- ❖ A linear economic system is **not sustainable**. Environmental degradation and pollution is caused all along the line at the extraction, the production, the consuming process and overall at the disposal.
- ❖ The prevailing linear economic system benefits of the world's **systemic and constructed inequality** and fuels into the gap between rich and poor. The ones at the bottom of the hierarchy barely ever take some profit out of the global economic development. The already economically privileged gain the most benefits of financial growth.

Introduction to Neoliberalism

Our modern global world is based on new technology and transportation systems. Through these inventions our planet got intertwined and extremely interconnected in times of Globalization. The strife of this global era is consumption and gaining more, individual identification is experienced by what you have and what you do. These values and standards we get daily implemented via all kinds of media. TNCs take among others a key part in the systemic propagandizing due to the fact that they are the ones who profit the most out of the prevailing order. The ones with money are the ones with power and therefore their influence increased throughout the past decades. These corporations in combination with international financial institutions saw restrictions by governments as limitations of growth and therefore they took the opportunity to change the world system into so-called neoliberalism, which promotes free trade, deregulations of governments and privatization of actually common goods to replace it with individual responsibility. In the name of development financial institutions like the IMF, the World Bank or the World Trade Organization took the responsibility of economically poorer countries and created space through the neoliberal rules for the benefit of TNCs. The regulations of the free market grant the ones on the hierarchal top even more power. In contrary, this situation makes it very hard for economically weak and poor countries, mostly due to their colonial history and the post-colonial on-going oppression and exploitation by global players to keep on guaranteeing cheap excess to outstanding rich natural resources. Dependencies were therefore created by international financial institutions that kick the ball to transnational corporations beyond governmental sovereignty.

Activity: Hand out Appendix 4 and have a look how the system works (or try to rebuild this experiment):

YouTube, *Neoliberalism as a water balloon – part 2* (2010, 6:04min.)

To sum it up:

- ❖ The profit of the contemporary economic system is not fairly equaled out at all. Few get richer and richer, while many are stuck at the bottom in extreme poverty.
- ❖ The ruling powers who take all the benefits are mainly economic institutions, in particular transnational corporations and financial allies, such as the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO.
- ❖ In so-called development projects dependencies between global players and economically poor countries, but often extremely rich in natural resources, are constructed. Conditions are imposed by global lenders in return for their assistance. Those conditions are the neoliberal free market regulations which give corporations a great sphere of influence, access to natural resources, and limits government sovereignty. Through the force of privatization natural resources, like land or water, fall into the hands of TNCs.
- ❖ Neoliberal free trade market regulations fuels again into a world division of wealth and is not sustainable at all.

New World Order and Conflict Minerals

Combining the lessons learned from *The Story of Stuff* and *Neoliberalism* with conflict minerals, we will see all the mentioned issues along the line from mining and production all the way to disposal. Neoliberalism in an era of globalization which is based on modern high-tech, the demand of Congo's minerals by TNCs is convulsive. Consequently TNCs are more than willing to let

locals pay a high prize in regard to the question asked in *The Story of Stuff*: "If I don't pay who is paying instead?" (9th min.). We use products with conflict minerals every single day. We buy them to affordable prices and never question under which conditions they are made, nor do we think about the people or the environment. Europe is very poor in natural resources, the resource we have is science and therefore "modern knowledge". Africa instead is a storehouse of natural resources of which our society is dependent of. Systemic looting in the DRC is seen ever colonialism and generated an marginalized area of chaos which top world corporations are taking their profit off. TNCs are the ones who need the minerals. Over the years corporations have been deeply involved in the exploitations of Con-

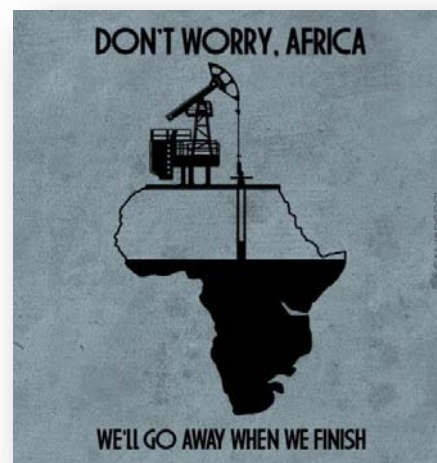


Fig. 6: Africa's Systemic Looting,
Source: Anonymous Art of Revolution, 2013.

go's minerals. The EU is one of the most important trading hubs for products with natural resources financing conflicts and human rights violations. "The EU is the world's largest economy, the world's largest trading block, and home to 500 million consumers" (Global Witness, 2015: 1). The international trade of 3T's and gold ores, concentrates, and metals was worth in excess of €123 billion, from which the import of mobile phones alone was of nearly worth €30 billion in 2013 (Global Witness, 2015). However, 93% of European companies do not reveal a conflict minerals supply chain policy on their corporate websites or reports, even though they are working with 3T's and gold (Global Witness, 2015). Furthermore, another 88% of EU listed companies do not even mention conflict minerals on their websites (Global Witness, 2015).

Activity: Every student chooses an electronic company and does their own research on the activism about conflict minerals. It is important to keep questions in mind like: Do they admit to the issue? Is there any willingness or progress towards a conflict-free mining sector and supply chain?



- Discuss the research findings in your group
- Make your own ranking in regard of 'denying the issue' towards 'very active in fighting the problem'.
- The solutions you find out may help you in your next purchase!

Resources to use: Personal website of the companies, Good Electronics & Electronics Watch give a lot of information on individual companies and general related issues.

Discussion: At the end refer to the question of the very beginning:

"Whose conflict is it?", "Why?", "What have changed your opinion/ did your opinion change?" Select the new answers on some sticky posts, cardboards.

Two short clips for rounding up:

- ❖ Sarcastic clip: YouTube, *Scandalous Press Conference at a trade fair* by Thank you Third World Campaign (2009, 1:15min.)
- ❖ Awareness clip: YouTube, *CES 2014 Conflict Minerals 90 second keynote version* by Intel (2014, 1:31min.)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE DRC

With a pencil, a ruler, and a map, the modern DR Congo was founded at the Berlin Conference in 1885. Ever since, the Congolese face a history of tyranny full of oppression, discrimination, terror and exploitation:

King Leopold II and the Belgians ran a brutal colonization in which it is estimated that during that era Congo lost nearly 50 percent of its population - approximately ten million people - due to a new kind of slavery, torture, forced labor, diseases and killing. The animating spirit behind these atrocities was to rob Congo's natural wealth, which in that time were mainly rubber and ivory. (Deibert, 2013; Hochschild, 1999)

Colonial Era



Fig. 7: King Leopold II

Independence



Fig. 8: P. Lumumba

After its independence in 1960, this suffering was followed by a short hope of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of Congo. But his socialist leanings made the West afraid that Congo was going to fall in the Soviet sphere of influence and, therefore, lose the access to it. Shortly after, in 1961, Lumumba was seized, tortured, and then killed by troops of Mobutu Sese Seko under the control of the West. (Deibert, 2013; Hochschild, 1999)

In 1965, president Mobutu came in power. He was backed by the USA and Europe during the cold war because of his staunch anti-communism. This ended in one of the most corrupt and violent dictatorships in Africa lasting nearly three decades. Like the colonial power, Mobutu showed high interest in Congo's resources. Mobutu named the country Zaire. (Deibert, 2013)

Sese-Seko Regime



Fig. 9: Dictator Mobutu

African World War

In 1997 Mobutus regime got overthrown by the opposition leader Laurent Kabila; the coup was supported by its Rwandan and Ugandan allies and the West. His mobilized rebel forces marched from the east of Congo to the capital in the West, raping and killing along the way. Afterwards, Kabila alienated from his former allies Rwanda and Uganda. This was the tipping point for what some have called Africa's World War which involved nine African countries with more than twenty armed groups. Kabila was supported by Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Chad and the Sudan in his fight against Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, which were backed by the USA and the Brit-

The deadliest war after 1945 has never evoked any peace demonstration in the world.
(Werner-Lobo, Weiss, 2010)

ish due to their guilt of nonaction in the Rwandan genocide. Underlying interest of each country was to steal Congo's mineral wealth. It is estimated that this was the deadliest conflict worldwide after WW II. (Deibert, 2013)

Joseph Kabila came to power in 2001 after his father was assassinated. He was able to bring the fighting parties to negotiation table with a result of an agreement of a government in unity. In 2006 Kabila won the first multiparty election in Congo in forty years. Nevertheless, tensions remain ever since because oppositions refuse to recognize the results. Congo is still on the brink of civil war and suffers from a weak government and constant corruption. Particularly the east of Congo, called Kivu, is in chronic struggles and the centre of conflict now. (Deibert, 2013)

Post-War Era



Fig. 10: Joseph Kabila

Kivu Conflict



Fig. 11: Kivu Districts

The current Kivu conflict is a result of past political events in Congo, regime changes in neighboring countries and the tensions between those governments. First in 1986 when Y. Museveni overthrew the Ugandan government, followed by the Rwandan genocide in 1994 when P. Kagame came into power, lastly by the war in Congo. All those changes of governments caused refugees and internally displaced persons who gave birth to new violent armed oppositions and rebel groups. Military interventions forced certain armed groups with ethnic or political interest to move. For example, the Ugandan rebel group Lord Resistance Army (LRA) shifted into the Congo, as well as the Rwandan Hutu – Tutsi conflict. Kivu is currently savaged by dozens of armed groups. Among those are Congolese rebel groups, units of the Congolese army, local militias, Rwandan and Ugandan rebel groups and armed forces (BSR, 2010: 5). All of them are trying to gain greater control over Congo's mineral pie. It is not by accident that the hotspot of the conflict is all along the line of the big mines (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2011: 68). The most serious rebellion carried out by the so-called M23 rebels started in 2012. The Congolese army and a new UN formation defeated them in 2013. This was the first UN peacekeeping intervention to carry out offensive operations (Deibert, 2013). Thus, if one armed group goes another one will cause trouble and terror soon after.

You find a summary in Appendix 5

SITUATION NOWADAYS

Throughout history, conflicts and wars have in recurring waves plaguing the DRC. Nowadays, it is a complex system of armed groups and fighting parties which each has their individual interest and committed allies. The underlying motivation is a combination of ethnical and economical interests. These conflicts combined with a global economic context, Congo is doomed to failure and performs on the last ranks of any country assessments for years. The history has caused devastating effects on this resource-rich country whose population has paid an enormous price for its natural wealth, in their case it is more a curse than a blessing.

Numbers can only reflect a tiny dimension of it:

2 millions fled home and are stuck in IDP camps. (Enough Project)

One of the most tragic conflicts of our time with more than five million dead. (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2013)

In the decade from 2000, the DRC was the only nationality whose GDP per capita was less than a dollar a day. (Burgis, 2015: 30)

The people, particularly in the eastern part, suffer massive human rights abuses and are under constant threats. They are living in a system of chronic violence from various domestic and foreign ac-

tors, who use them, oppress them and exploit them with no sense of humanity. The UN called it one of the most severe humanitarian crises on the planet (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2011: 67). Due to the cyclic conflicts in eastern Congo the chaos hinders development (Global Witness, 2015). There are a number of issues which are directly linked to the mining industry and the trade of minerals. Others have indirect linkages as results that grow out of poverty, which is seen around the world.

Activity: Watch: YouTube, *Conflict Minerals 101* by the Enough Project (2009, 4min.)

Exercise: In the following there is a listing of the current living situations. Students split up into 5 groups and work on different aspects of the realities in the Kivu districts. For each team the teacher hands out a short summary with further links to information and discussion ideas. Also, encourage the students to do their own research. At the end each group presents their topic.

Team 1: Modern-day Slavery and the Mining Industry

Team 2: Supply Chains

Team 3: Children in Eastern Congo

Team 4: Women as Weapon of War

Team 5: Impunity of War Criminals

Modern-Day Slavery and the Mining Industry

The minerals are mainly mined by small scale miners and informal artisanal mining. In many cases there is a lack of labor rights and bad working conditions including safety concerns. The collapse of mine shafts is just one example. Furthermore, mining is linked to environmental degradation, like deforestation. The impact of mining becomes worse when conflict is brought into the picture. The citizens are on the mercy of armed groups, which profit through illegal taxation or forced labor. These miners are not necessarily controlled by illegal armed groups, yet their livelihoods depend very much on the supply chains (BSR, 2010). Nonetheless, the Belgian research institute *IPIS* published in 2014 that yet over half of miners in the DRC work in mines where armed groups are present (Spittaels, 2014). There is an extent link of slavery to the mining and trade of minerals. According to a research released in 2013 by *Free the Slaves* there are several types of slavery in the Kivu districts: Debt bondage, forced labor and peonage slavery. In all those common practices children are not excluded (FTS, Free the Slaves, 2013).



Organizations and Research Centers with lots of information on the topics:
Friends of the Congo, Somo.nl, Enough Project/ Raise Hope for Congo, Free the Slaves, Global Witness, Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), International Peace Information Service (IPIS)

Keywords/ questions for research: Small scale mining, forced labor, modern-day slavery,

Resources to use:

- YouTube, *Conflict Minerals, Rebels and Child Soldiers in Congo* (2012, 38min.)
- Free The Slaves reports: *The Congo Report* and *Congo's Mining Slaves*
- Spittaels (2014): *Analysis the interactive map of artisanal mining areas in Eastern DR Congo: May 2014 update.*

Supply Chains

The minerals are smuggled out of the DRC via neighboring countries to get to the coast to be shipped out of the continent. "These minerals move through complex and non-transparent supply chains, beginning with artisanal mines, becoming blended with minerals sourced from

other regions, and go into the manufacture of billions of items in a range of industries” (BSR, 2010: 8).



Fig. 12: Simplified Electronics Supply Chain for Metals Sourced from the DRC, Source: Global Witness, (n.d.).

Example of Gold:

Ninety-five percent of eastern Congo’s gold is traded informally (BSR, 2010: 8). A supply chain therefore might look like this: **Gold mines:** Child miners and soldiers → **Congolese smugglers:** Paying off the warlords → **Regional smugglers:** Carrying gold in briefcases from Uganda, Burundi, and Tanzania → Either **cash-for-gold dealers and refiners:** melting centers in Dubai, or **jewelers in the Middle East and India** → **Banks:** Holding gold for investors in Switzerland → **Jewelry stores:** On to the consumer (Enough Project, 2012: 3).

Keywords for research: Supply chain/ trading routes conflict minerals

Resources to use:

- Enough Project Report: *From mine to mobile phone.*
- Intel: *The Conflict Mineral Journey.*

Children of Eastern Congo

Children in the DRC are growing up in great hardship. Their families are often too poor to provide for education or basic health standards. Children are exposed to the worst forms of child labor. Furthermore, there is a constant threat of abduction and recruitment by rebels who socialize them through personal terror into soldiers, who torture, rape, and kill. They become from being a victim to being a perpetrator. The occurrence of child soldiers is very widespread among many armed groups in the DRC, including the government. As children make up the majority demographic in the DRC, there is a continuous supply of potential recruits.

Keywords/ questions for research: Child Soldiers, recruitment and use of children by armed forces, how and why children become soldiers, abduction, child labor, child slavery

Resources to use:

- YouTube, *Children of Conflict - Congo - Part 1 + 2* by Aljazeera (2007, ~ 23min.)
- Websites of: WarChild, Child-Soldiers

Women as Weapon of War

Women and girls in the DRC are often victims of forced prostitution and marriage, sex trafficking, and sexual slavery; these gender-based tactics are also used as weapons of war. Gender-based and sexual violence (including mass rape) are a dominant feature in the ongoing Kivu conflict. The eastern DRC is believed to have one of the highest rates of sexual violence in the world because combatants in the area routinely use the targeted rape of girls and women as a weapon of war. The UN even called the country “rape capital of the world” (Townsend, 2015). Sexual violence and rape is a common tool of warfare, it is systematic and

In the DRC ...

1152 women are raped every day,

48 women are raped every hour,

4 women are raped every 5 minutes!

(Adetunji, 2011)

widespread and is an increased peril. It is a tactic of torture, a tool of oppression and power. Besides the long-lasting psychological harm and trauma on women, this domination also humiliates their husbands and men of the community. It demonstrates their powerlessness to protect their women and families (Deibert, 2013: 88). Out

of that reason you can destroy whole families and communities. The high risk of infection with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS, accompanies all sexual violence against women and girls. The International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia convicted first rape as a crime against humanity (Hagen, 2003).

Keywords/ questions for research: Women as weapon of war, sexual violence, forced prostitution, forced marriage, sex trafficking and sexual slavery

Resources to use:

- YouTube, *Inside Story – Rape in the DR Congo: A ,weapon of war‘* by Al Jazeera (2013, 25min.)
- *Women of the Congo, their stories ...* by Breaking the Silence

Impunity of War Criminals

One of the major underlying problems in instable countries or systemic poverty is the lack of or outdated justice systems. These justice systems were built by colonial power to actually oppress the population and protect the colonizer instead of helping the locals (Haugen, 2014). In the DRC, the legal roots are from a Belgian past. Barely any war criminal are accused of their crimes, and in the rare case of conviction, it is easy to get out through corruption channels and bribery (Hall and LaRocco, 2012). Due to the lack of law enforcement, the people do not seek legal justice and passively endure a bizarre level of violence (Hall and LaRocco, 2012). In a prevailing culture of impunity without protection for the civilians, there is barely a chance for positive development. These countries remain on the world's bottom; they do not have good governance, access to education or public health, and there is hardly any hope for profit out of the economy for the population. Furthermore, national reconciliation and finding peace with the past is hard to foster without apparent justice. Nonetheless, it is important to understand that justice is not universal and might look very different with its cultural components, like rural and tribal systems (Bloch, 2011). Yet, "The absence or failure of judicial mechanisms and the culture of impunity in the Congo, particularly in the East, are the most significant impediments to stability and development in the country" (Hall and LaRocco, 2012).

Keywords for research: Impunity, reconciliation, International Criminal Court, violation of international humanitarian law

Resources to use:

- Hall, Aaron and Annette LaRocco (Feb. 2012): *Time Works Against Justice*.
- TedTalk by Haugen Gary (March 2015): *The hidden reason for poverty the world needs to address now*.

Round off the topic:

- ❖ Watch: Friends of the Congo: *Crisis in the Congo – Uncovering the Truth* (2011, 26:26min.)
This documentary summarizes the humanitarian crisis of the DRC in a historical, social, political and economical context.
- ❖ Watch this powerful encouraging video by young Congolese artists, who spoke out for their country, by the *Art on the Frontline* Project in Goma:
YouTube: *Mazao (EP.1) Art on FrontLine* (2013, 4:18min.)

A BETTER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

The link between natural resources and conflict in the Great Lakes Region was first identified in 2000. Soon the problem was seen in the lack of transparent trading routes and unsustainable management; therefore, the demand for a “comprehensive mineral tracking and certification mechanism” arose (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2013: 8). Ever since an increasing amount of various stakeholders admitted to the issue and started to address it. Campaigns from NGOs predominantly in the USA were able to publish reports, information and videos to spread awareness to the public. Governments and corporations were pressured to act and rethink on-going systems. In the past few years different approaches and efforts could be seen which face the problem. Governments, but also industry-led initiatives have planned and established solutions which mainly focus on tracking down supply chains, monitor transactions, building up certification mechanisms and design policies which prohibit trade with armed groups (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2013). The booming demand for ethically-certified products by consumers also fuelled into the solution-oriented acting.

A relatively new creation in the aftermath of globalization, certification is the result of the desire of global consumers to ensure that the products they use in their daily life conform to certain ethical and environmental standards, even if the supply of raw materials and manufactured products has moved overseas beyond the reach of their own domestic legislation. [...] Certification is therefore by nature a voluntary agreement between consumers and producers, without consideration on where they physically live in the world (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2013: 8).

The consumers gain power to selectively choose certain standards and therefore the list of initiatives and new strategies, such as minerals tagging or fingerprinting, is growing (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2013). For years most corporations fully ignored and even denied the issue. Due to rising activism addressing the topic and spreading awareness new regulations, initiatives like the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform were introduced. Companies had to react on the consumers demand and progress in eliminating conflict minerals in supply chains can be seen among leading electronic companies (Lezhnev and Hellmuth, 2012).

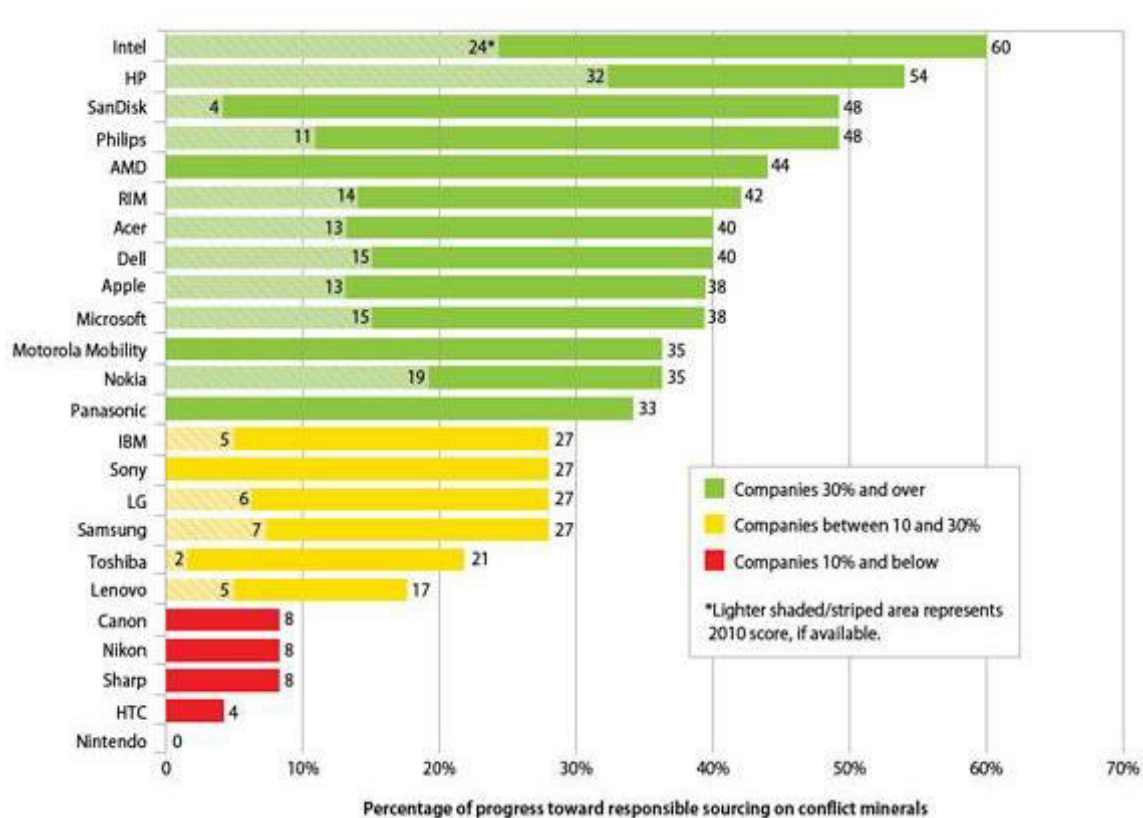


Fig. 13: Electronic Companies Ranked by Progress on Conflict Minerals, Source: Enough Project, 2012.

Although there are many changes underway on macro and micro level, the issue of conflict minerals is still an up-to-date topic that needs further global solutions in regard to the fact that products are yet not conflict-free. There is still no significant success due to the overall complexity of supply chains and high risks along the line (see Appendix 6). The UN Economic Commission shows the difficulty in an example of a communication network: “The company would need to filter through 35 manufacturers, 60 to 80 parts suppliers, more than 1000 commodity parts suppliers, and an unknown number of distributors to get to all of its sources” (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2013: 9). Solutions and strategies focus mostly on one aspect along the supply chain and are losing track somewhere else. In 2012, however, a network of industry partners established the Conflict-Free Tin Initiative which showed that sourcing conflict-free due diligence and traceability is possible.⁵ The so-called closed-pipe model is used by the Dutch company *Fairphone* who promote their phone as fully conflict-free and show a high transparency, from their origin in the DRC all the way to the final product.⁶ Not alone small companies benefit from the established conflict-free supply chain, but also partners like Motorola Solutions or Nokia. Few TNCs are personally facing

⁵ This information has been retrieved from www.solutions-network.org, June 9th 2015.

⁶ This information has been retrieved from www.fairphone.com, June 9th 2015.

the issue without being forced by delayed laws. Intel is outstanding in its very positive progress towards conflict-free products and is even eager to be conflict-free in 2016 (Intel, 2014), similar progress is seen at HP. Those leading companies have developed programs towards conflict-free which makes it possible for other companies to follow (Lezhnev and Hellmuth, 2012). Among their ideas were “smelter auditing program and an aid project for lagging smelters, direct sourcing and aid projects to help Congo develop a clean minerals trade, and tracing projects to dig deeply into their supply chains to identify precise numbers of smelters” (Lezhnev and Hellmuth, 2012: 1). Change is seen among some corporations and industries, yet others remain far behind. For that reason, besides the initiatives on an economic volunteer level, there must be worked on the legislative level as well. By law it needs to be assured that not only few responsible companies act. The US American Dodd-Frank Act, established in 2010, which requires transparency all along the supply chain and domestic reforms in the Great Lakes Region have been able to gain a success (Global Witness, 2015). The EU, however, has not yet worked anything out. Considering that the EU is responsible for almost a quarter of the global gold and 3T’s trade, it is a shocking truth that they are just about to discuss mineral regulations in 2015 (Global Witness, 2015). An existing guideline by the EU Commission on conflict minerals does little since it is a voluntary act and it only accounts to few companies that directly import conflict minerals. “Voluntary measures do not change companies sourcing practices” (Global Witness, 2015). There is a current European Commission’s proposal, voted by the European Parliament, which call out for mandatory responsibility in sourcing and trading covered by law for a wide range of natural resources coming from conflict-affected and high-risk areas. It

- 2002: **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)**,
by the British government and the World Summit on Sustainable Development
- 2009: **Certified Trading Chain (CTC) and an analytical fingerprint technology**,
by the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR)
- 2009: **Conflict-Free Smelter Program (CFS)**,
by the Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC)
- 2010: **OECD Due Diligence Guidance** for Responsible Supply Chain Management of Minerals: A five-step good practice framework for companies
- 2010: **Dodd-Frank Act**,
this act is only a US legislation that imposes legal obligations on companies trade
- 2010: **Fairtrade and Fairmined (FT/ FM)**
standard for artisanal gold
- 2010: **ITRI Tin Supply Chain Initiative (iTSCi)**
- 2012: **Conflict-free Gold (CFG)**
standard by the World Gold Council

Fig. 14: Main Solutions & Initiatives

builds on lessons-learned by former international standards and goes in line with the OECD Guidance for companies to publicly report on their supply chain at all stages due diligence effort. Furthermore, it is designed for a global scope, not restricted for one area (Global Witness, 2015). These negotiations are supported by European campaigns like the multi-stakeholder Mad-Mining Campaign, which aim to get ethical and environmental standards in the mining sector.⁷ Overall, there is still a long way to go to change the prevailing systems, here in Europe as well as in Africa and all along the line.

Activity: Corporate Letter Writing

It is important to take a stand for political democratic engagement and more resistance against the power of TNCs and their influence on politics. You want change? Say it out loud. Tell your politicians what you do not like in our system and tell them your dreams or the changes you want to see. Leaders need to know what bothers the population, does not matter if political or economical ones. You can write to electronic companies. You can confront them personally about their progress towards conflict-free supply chains and remind them on how important it is to you. You as consumer can use your power to pressure companies for their true corporate social responsibility.



Fig. 15: On the Wrong Side of Capitalism, Source: Films for Action, 2015.

⁷ This information has been retrieved from www.stop-mad-mining.org, June 1st 2015.

You're the Solution!

Waste has been constantly growing since the industrial revolution.

The reason is that our economies have used a “take-make-consume and dispose” pattern of growth how we have seen it in *The story of stuff*. This prevailing economic model is a



linear model which assumes that resources are abundant, available and are cheap and easy to dispose. Natural living for centuries has proven systems are always circular. Therefore, we need to establish a circular economy which instead of a system of ‘take-make-consume and dispose’ is using norms and values of **reusing, repairing, refurbishing, sharing and recycling** existing materials and products. Waste can be turned into a resource again. There is a high need that all resources are managed more efficiently throughout their life cycle. This systematic change need to be internalized by governments and economies, but also by every one of us! Behavioral change is in general very difficult. However, a long-term study in which researchers observed a population of monkeys slowly learning to wash the sand off their sweet-potatoes in the ocean before eating showed that the top of the social hierarchy were the ones slowest to adopt the behavioral change (Matsuzawa, 2008). Similarly, if those in charge of scheduling our lives - economies and governments - are not yet amenable to change then it is about us.

“BE the CHANGE you want to see in the world!” (Mahatma Gandhi)

We need to take responsibility on our own behavior in every action of our life, this involves on the one hand our daily responsible shopping and consuming, and on the other hand, thinking on what will happen with the products after we used them. We do have an influence on the actions in our lifestyle. It seems like one drop in the ocean but many drops can turn into a river.

● ● ●
REDUCE.
REUSE.
RECYCLE.
UPCYCLE.
BORROW.
SHARE.
SWAP.
REPAIR.

Round off the topic: Read the poetry by JJ Bola: *Tell them*. (Appendix 7)

The poem is about remembering and humanizing the victims of tragedy, whether in war, conflict, or other tragic mass loss of life. That their existence is not just reduced to a number or a death toll, but as people who lived and were loved. It is about challenging and changing the narrative which dangerously dehumanizes and reduces them into a single story of nothing but violence and warfare. (JJ Bola)

● ● ●

IV. Conclusion

The Congolese case of conflict minerals is just one example of post-colonial plundering to point out the overall picture and damage. Humanitarian tragedies cannot be explained by internal or external factors only. The international structure of incoherent donor-country policies driven by contradicting interests plays a crucial role in the DR Congo, as well as in other conflicts (Gebrewold, 2009). Most conflicts worldwide are held in regions where large stores of natural resources are found; corporations play a significant role in the maintenance of these conflicts. Africa is not underdeveloped; it is overexploited over the centuries. Corporations, governments, and international financial institutions all tower above the oppressed at the bottom, who are slaves to an economic system exposed to follow the interests of American empire and being subdued as the rising threats from below. Nonetheless, likewise I criticized the author of *Another Man's War* (Childers, 2012) separating the victimized child soldiers from the aggressive rebels, the same way you cannot victimize some and fully blame the others in the global structure. Like the rebels of the LRA there is a gradual transition from being oppressed and a victim to being aggressor in the global system. It is not an either/ or – it is a spectrum. In particular speaking out in my perspective as middle – class female German: Am I myself a victim to some neoliberal elites making daily decisions about my life or am I a consuming perpetrator on behalf of unidentified less developed ones. There is no apparent division and no one is somehow exclusively evil. Blaming the West, some high up financial elites or corporations for the problems and going disliking against its people shows only that also peace and social movements do not hold back of a simplified good – evil perspective which only leads to one set of conclusions and strategies for change (Werner-Lobo and Weiss, 2011). The individuals of the financial and corporate institutions are only a part off some deeper cultural and economic forces and therefore the products of our cultures which rewards and even values the behavior of elites through our own deeds. It is time to shrug off these disempowering narratives and realize the ruling class is a collection of human beings who have been taught and socialized by their family, friends and social circle a number of abnormal beliefs about their meaning in life which shaped badly their identity. “Our wealth, so-called, is a veil for our poverty, a substitute for what is missing. Because it cannot meet most of our true needs, it is an addictive substitute. No amount can ever be enough” (Eisenstein 2013: 154). Frankly, this world order of rulers and ruled has been going on all over world history. Our generation of controllers is not more special than the rulers of

any earlier generation. This assumption would just be a lazy excuse for people as it puts the blame on others and make you look incapable of acting. But it is time we start taking responsibility for our own role in the world we live in. We create this world together. Every day we hold up social and economic relationships which keep things as they always have been, and every day we have the power to alter those situations in ways that imagine another way for the world to be. It is time we stop feeding these corporations so much of our energy and attention and start occupying our minds with our true identity of *being* to gain solutions and practical strategies for creating a better world.

Although the DRC is one of the worst humanitarian crisis in which we are all somehow involved, it has been ignored worldwide and comparably few actually talk or even know about it. Because for me some of those involved have names, faces, and stories – I really do not want to keep this structural violent system alive. I am also realistic enough to know I am too deep inside a system to escape of it, but I believe we have the power to transform it. I ended my Bachelor thesis with the words of a formerly abducted friend, who begged me to take that report to Germany to tell my people their stories and their suffering, because so many people remained still behind without any help (Bloch, 2011). This time I want to end my report with a quote from Martin Luther King to show with this thesis that I am not a friend who keeps quiet and forget. I very much remember the people of the African Great Lakes Region and I want to show, although the DRC is so often underreported, that there are friends who are with them and do not keep quiet. For this reason, I dedicated my work to the citizens of the Great Lakes Region and to wake up people in the West, because throughout the years I did realize that I do not need to go to Africa to fight extreme poverty and injustice.

**“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies,
but the silence of our friends.”**

- Martin Luther King Jr. -

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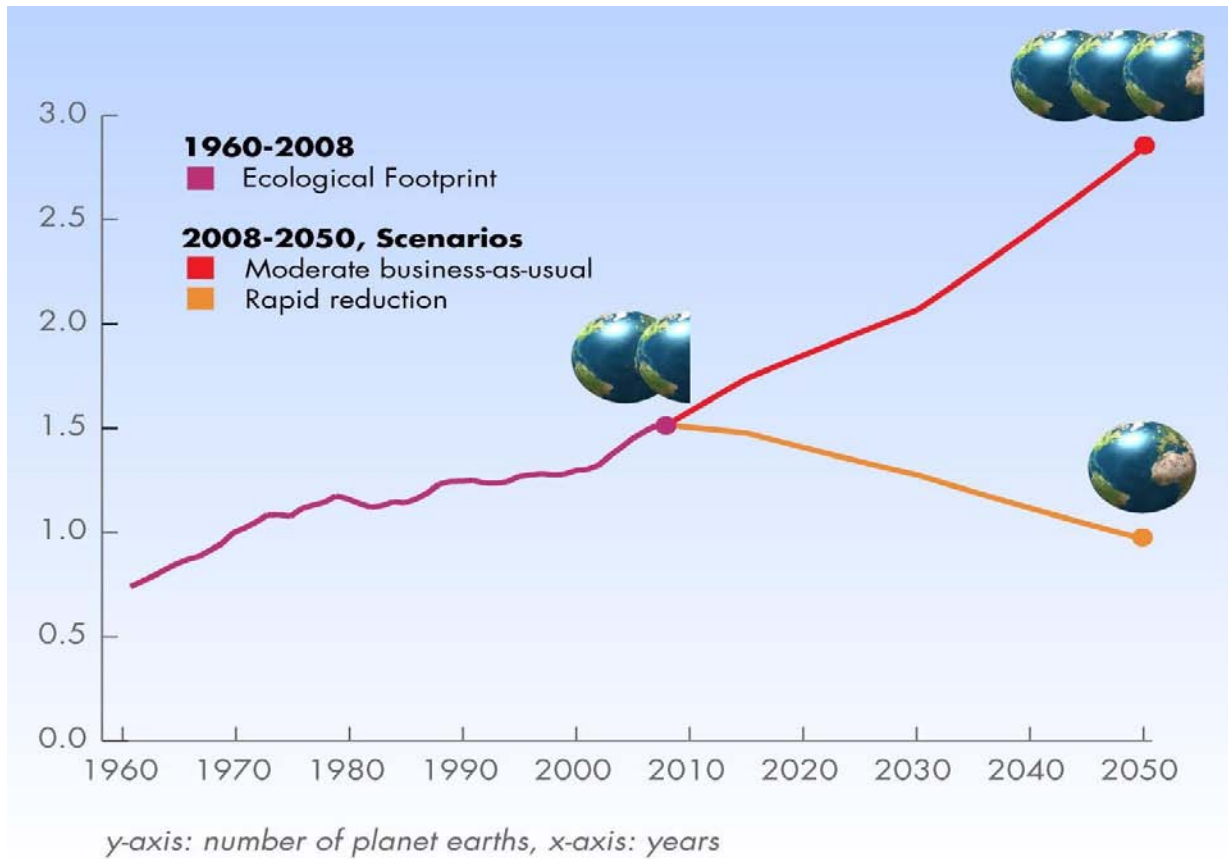
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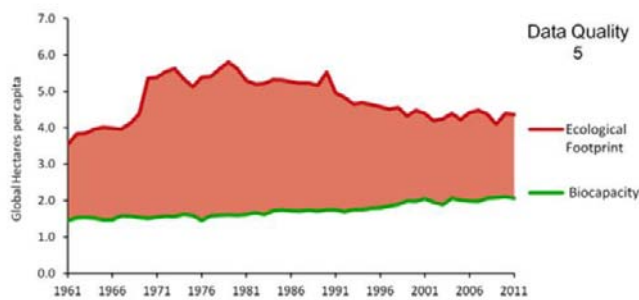
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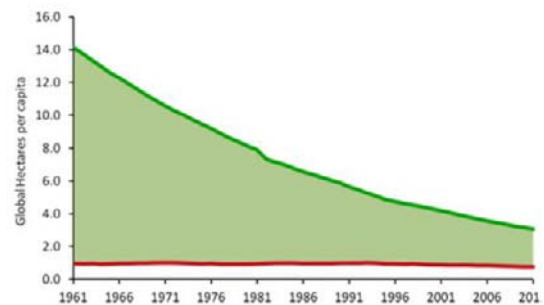


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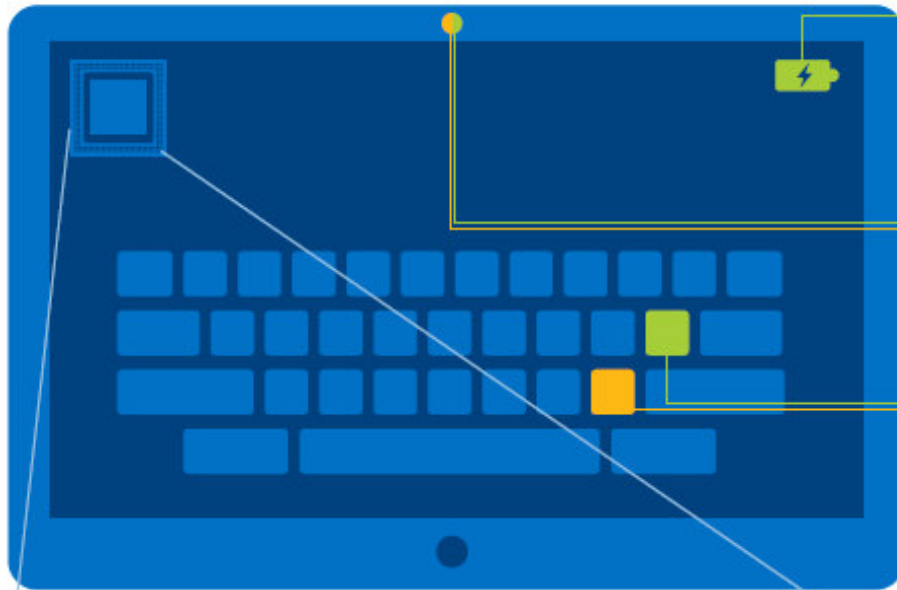
Democratic Republic of Congo



The Ecological Footprint, Germany in Comparison to the DRC.

Source: Global Footprint Network (n.d.): *World Footprint – Country Trend*, retrieved from www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/world_footprint/, June 1st 2015.

Conflict Minerals in Your Daily Digital Life



Charging Battery (*Tantalum*)

Over the years our electronic devices have slimmed down dramatically. A key mineral to thank for this is Tantalum. Tantalum stores electronic charge, packing high capacitance into a small volume.

Camera (*Tin, Tantalum*)

Taking a picture activates the camera's logic board which is soldered together with tin. Tantalum Oxide also helps create thinner, smaller lenses.

Texting/Emailing (*Tin, Tantalum*)

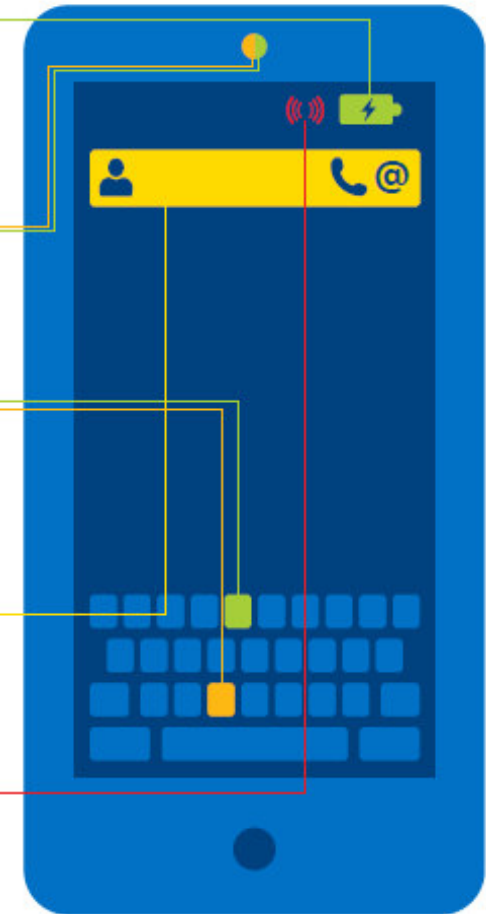
With each message sent, we transmit data through a circuit board. Tin is used to solder the circuit board. Tantalum helps keep highly conductive materials in check and helps signals pass swiftly through the device.

Viewing Contacts (*Gold*)

Gold is highly conductive. Though used sparingly, your SIM card may contain a layer of gold thinner than a strand of hair, assisting every time you pull up a phone number.

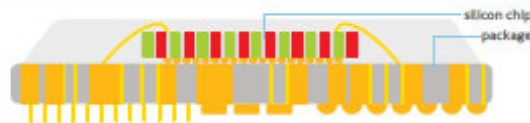
Vibration (*Tungsten*)

Tungsten creates the familiar vibrating alert of an incoming call or message. Beyond vibrations, Tungsten is a dense, wear-resistant metal used in everything from golf clubs to instrument strings.



Microprocessor (cross-section)

Packed inside an Intel processor are many complex layers. These key metals are used to make power efficient electrical connections within the silicon chip itself, from chip to the package which carries it, and from package to the circuit board.



- **Tantalum** and **Tungsten** are part of the "wiring" connecting transistors and act as a barrier to maintain the integrity of the transistors inside the chip itself.
- **Tin** is used to connect the chip out to the package and the package out to the device board.
- **Gold** is highly conductive and used in wires and films when a very pure connection between components is required.

■ Tungsten ■ Tantalum ■ Tin ■ Gold

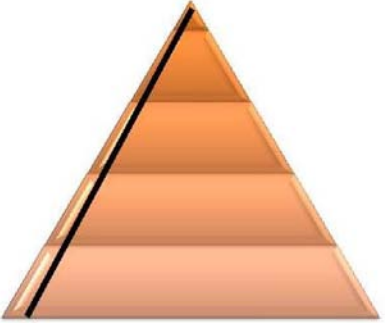
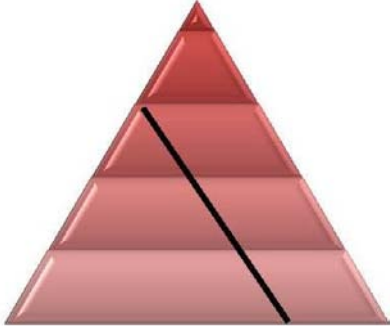
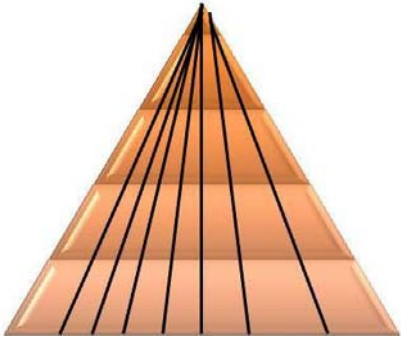
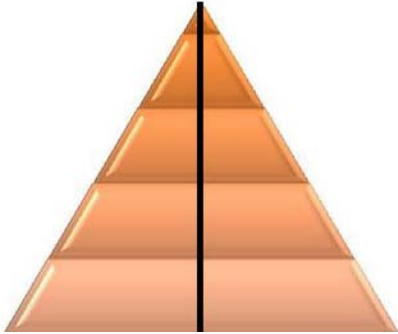
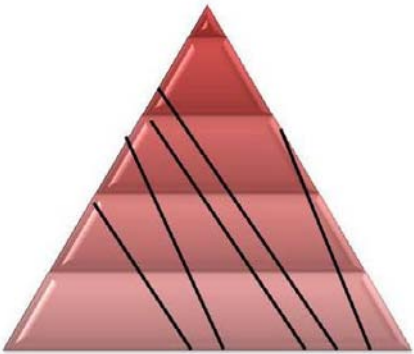
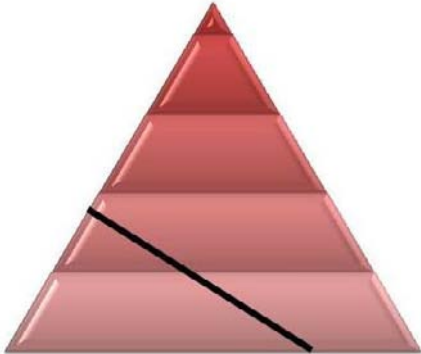
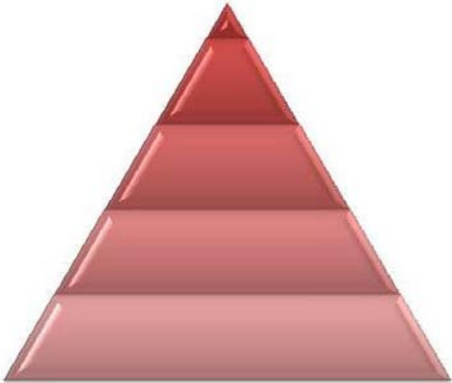
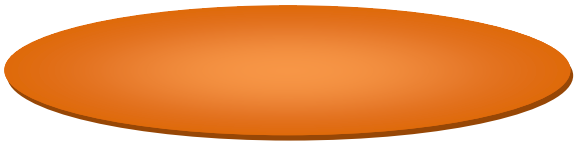
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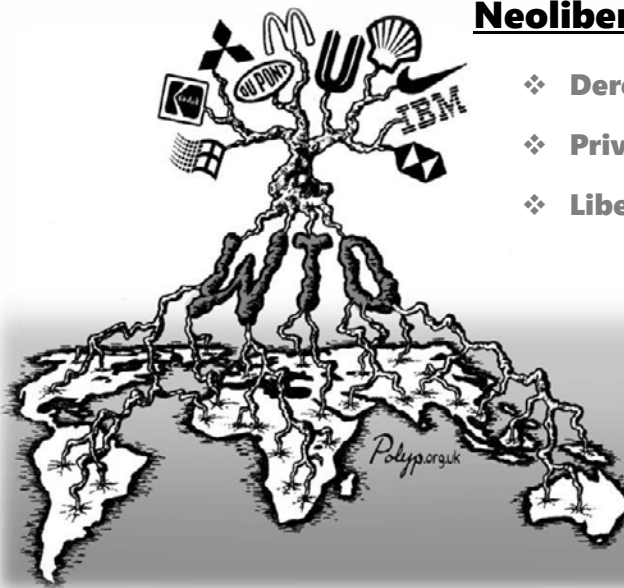


Source: Intel, *Conflict Minerals in Your Daily Life*,

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Activity: Cut into pieces. Try to match each of the words race, sex, class and disability to one graph (which reflects society) which shows an ideal situation and one which mirrors the reality. Think about the deeper meaning of each graph and what the lines and forms could represent.

Race	Sex	Class	Disability								
											
											
											
			<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 1780 1109 1836">Ideal</td> <td data-bbox="1109 1780 1420 1836">Reality</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 1836 1109 1892">Ideal</td> <td data-bbox="1109 1836 1420 1892">Reality</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 1892 1109 1948">Ideal</td> <td data-bbox="1109 1892 1420 1948">Reality</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 1948 1109 2004">Ideal</td> <td data-bbox="1109 1948 1420 2004">Reality</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ideal	Reality	Ideal	Reality	Ideal	Reality	Ideal	Reality
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Neoliberal Principles: Free Market

- ❖ Deregulation
 - ❖ Privatization
 - ❖ Liberalization
- }
- Through minimum barriers and the separation of politics and economy

The idea of Neoliberalism¹:

- ❖ Economic growth: corporations and their agents need to be free to pursue whatever gives them an economic advantage, in consequence, internal and global markets must be free to operate with little government constraint or regulation.
- ❖ All nations benefit of free trade, because every state has a comparative advantage.
- ❖ Government spending creates inefficiency, public expenditure is wasteful and can be reduced.
- ❖ In the distribution of economic goods, individual responsibility replaces the concepts of public goods and community.

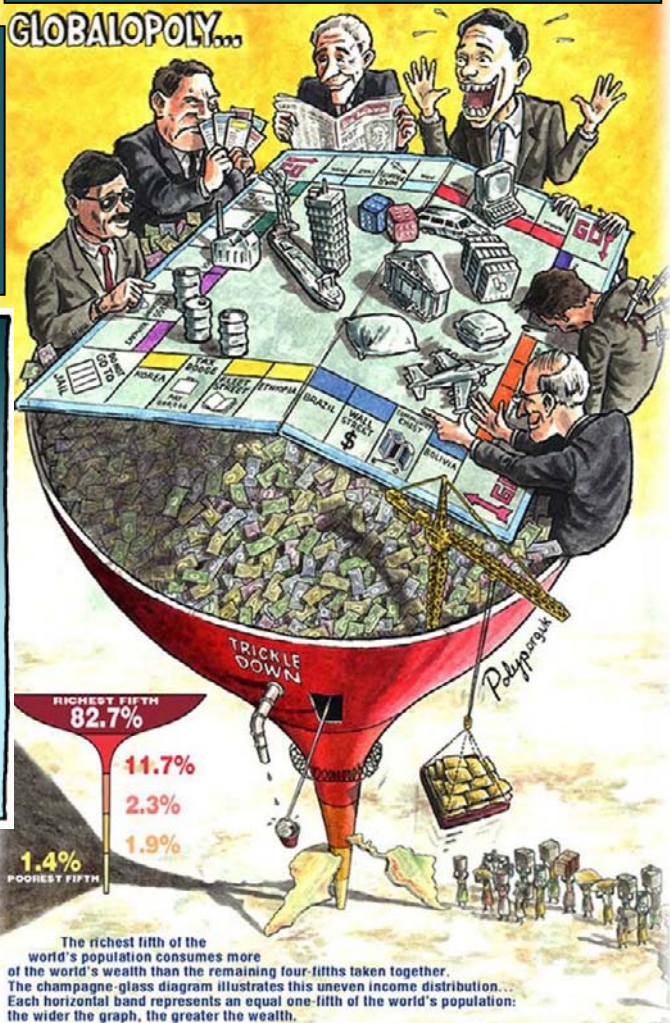
In the name of Development international financial institutions, such as the WTO, the IMF or the World Bank, implement neoliberal market conditions in return for their 'aid', for the benefit of transnational corporations.

Outcomes of Neoliberalism:

- ❖ Inequalities between poor and rich broadens
- ❖ Economically poor countries fall into high debts and dependencies
- ❖ Human and Resource Exploitation
- ❖ Environmental Degradation
- ❖ Democracy, state sovereignty in danger



'CAUSE AND EFFECT'



¹ Source: World Health Organization, Cartoons by Polyp, retrieved from www.polyp.org.uk, June 9th 2015.



CONGO

AN OVERVIEW OF ITS GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND POLITICS

GEOGRAPHY

The democratic Republic of the Congo is literally and figuratively the heart of Africa. The country of an estimated 65 million people straddles the equator and is bordered by 9 other countries. It is the size of Western Europe and the fulcrum on which the African continent swings. Congo is the third largest country in Africa in area and the fourth largest in population. Congo is a young country with the majority of its population 18 years old or younger.

HISTORY & POLITICS

Congo is home to one of the oldest mathematical artifacts in the world, the Ishango Bones, a binary counting system and lunar calendar, which dates to 20,000 B.C. Pre-colonial Congo region was governed by federated states. However, since the modern founding of the Congo in 1885 when Congo was given to King Leopold II of Belgium at the Berlin Conference of 1884/1885 as his own personal property, Congolese have been engaged in a social justice movement to control and determine their own affairs.

WHY CONGO MATTERS

Congo is arguably the richest country on the planet in terms of natural resources. It is the storehouse of strategic and precious minerals that are vital to the functioning of modern society. Its minerals are key to the consumer electronics industry, the technology industry, automotive, aerospace and military industries. Its diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, uranium, timber, iron, tin, tungsten, and coltan (mineral that is central to the functioning of our cell phones, laptops and other technology and electronic devices) are coveted from China to America.

Due to Congo's strategic location in the heart of Africa and the lust for her wealth powerful nations have repeatedly intervened in the Congo over the past 125 years. Congo is literally and figuratively the heart of Africa and the fulcrum on which the African continent swings. Former South African president Thabo Mbeki says "there is no new Africa without a new Congo." And president Obama proclaims, "If Africa is to achieve its promise resolving the problem in the Congo will be critical."

CONGO'S POTENTIAL

In spite of the remarkable challenges faced by the Congolese people, those challenges can be overcome, especially in light of Congo's incredible human and natural potential. Congo has the agricultural potential to feed the entire world through 2050 when the world's population is expected to be 9 billion. Congo also has the hydro capacity to provide electricity to the entire African continent with some left over to export to Southern Europe and the Middle East. Congo is a part of the second largest rainforest in the world and is vital to the fight against climate change and global warming.

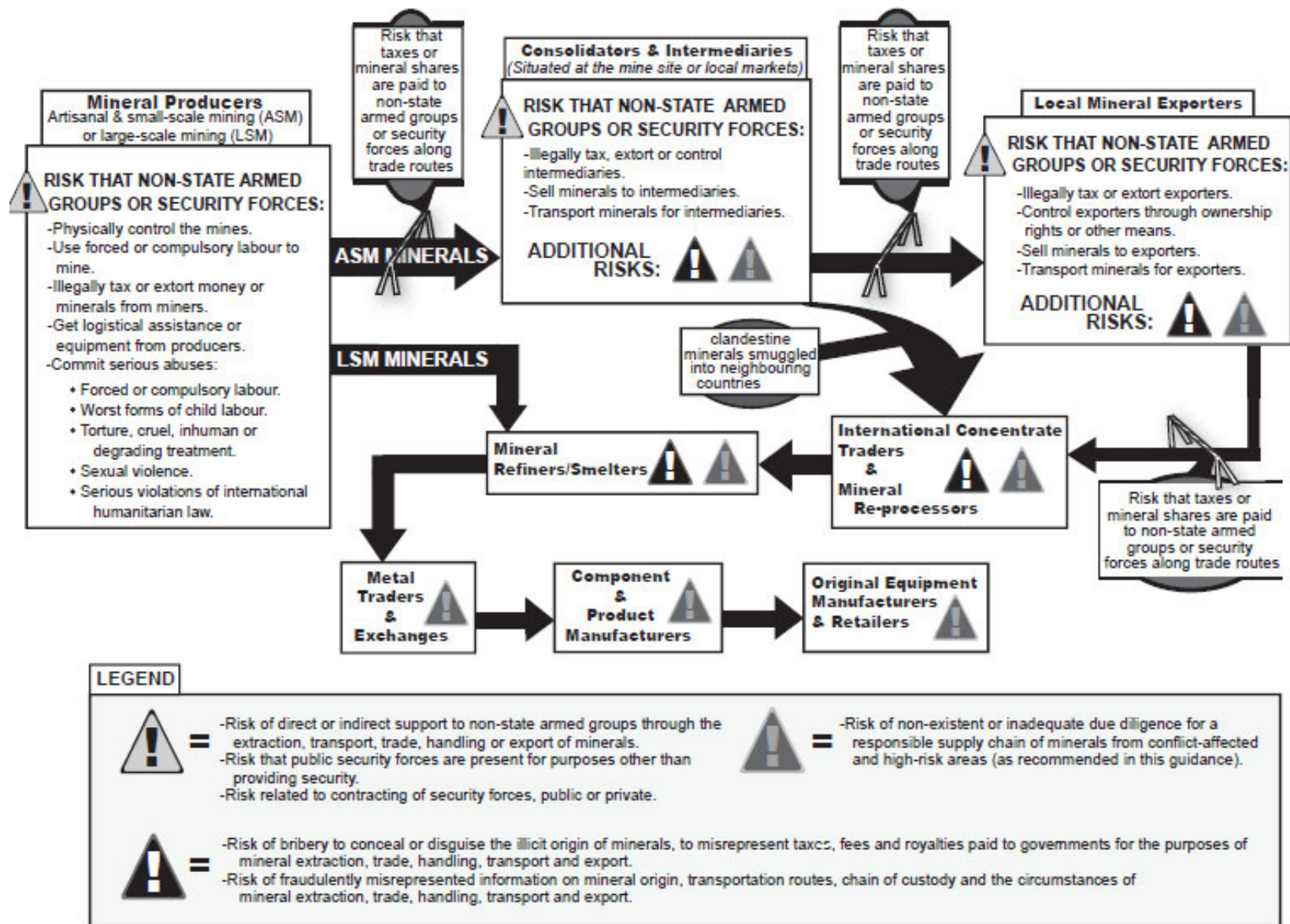
CONTACT FRIENDS OF THE CONGO:
1629 K Street NW | Ste 300 | Washington, DC 20006 | Ph: 202-584-6512 | Fax: 775-371-1064 | info@friendsofthecongo.org | friendsofthecongo.org

PIVOTAL MOMENTS IN CONGO'S HISTORY SINCE 1885

- 1884 to 1885** Berlin Conference, Congo given to King Leopold II as his own personal property.
- 1885 to 1908** Brutal reign of Congo Free State by Leopold II. An estimated 10 - 15 million Congolese perished under Leopold's regime of rubber and ivory extraction.
- 1960** Congo gains its independence from Belgium and elect its first democratic prime minister Patrice Lumumba.
- 1961** Less than 6 months in office, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated by Western Powers and Congolese elite. Belgium apologized in 2002 for their role in the assassination of Lumumba.
- 1965 to 1997** The United States installed and maintained Joseph Desire Mobutu in power for over thirty years in spite of a number of attempts by the Congolese people to overthrow him.
- 1996** United States and British allies, Rwanda and Uganda led the invasion of the Congo.
- 1997** Mobutu is overthrown in May and Laurent Kabila is installed in power by Rwanda and Uganda.
- 1998** US and British backed Rwanda and Uganda invaded Congo a second time in an attempt to remove Laurent Kabila from power whom they had installed in 1997. The second invasion unleashed the deaths of an estimated six million Congolese.
- 2001** Laurent Desire Kabila was assassinated and replaced by his son Joseph Kabila.
- 2002** The war officially ends but the conflict continues to this day, mainly in Eastern Congo.
- 2006** Joseph Kabila was elected president and will run again in 2011 for president.
- 2010** The United Nations publish the UN Mapping Exercise Report which documents the atrocities, crimes against humanity, war crimes committed in the Congo from 1993 - 2003

Source: Friends of the Congo, retrieved from www.friendsofthecongo.org , 9th June 2015.

Figure 1. Risks in the supply chain of tin, tantalum and tungsten from conflict-affected and high-risk areas



Source: OECD (2013): *OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas: Second Edition*, OECD Publishing, p. 35.

Tell them (they have names)

*And when they turn the bodies over to count the number of closed eyes, and they tell you
800,000: you say no, that was my uncle, he wore bright coloured shirts and pointy shoes.
2 million: you say no, that was my aunty, her laughter could sweep you up like the wind to
leaves on the ground.*

*6 million: you say no, that was my mother, her arms, the only place I have ever not known
fear.*

*3 million: you say no, that was my love, we used to dance, oh, how we used to dance,
or 147: you say no, that was my hope, our future, the brains of the family,*

*and when they tell you that you come from war: you say no,
I come from hands held in prayer before we eat together,
when they tell you that you come from conflict: you say no,
I come from sweat, on skin, glistening, from shining sun,
when they tell you that you come from genocide: you say no,
I come from the first smile of a new born child, gentle hands,
when they tell you that you come from rape: you say no,
and you tell them about every time you ever loved.*

*tell them that you are from mother carrying you on her back,
until you could walk, until you could run, until you could fly,
tell them that you are from father holding you up to the night sky,
full of stars, and saying look, child, this is what you are made of from long summers,
full moons, flowering rivers, and sand dunes,
tell them that you are an ocean that no cup ever hold.*

- JJ Bola / WORD, 2015 -

*hype.
your.
writers.
like you do.
your rappers.*