

Seeding Peace – Plant With Purpose Cultivates Harmony in International Conflict Zones

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, USA, May 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Plant With Purpose](#), a Christian organization and an international leader in environmental restoration and economic development, is focused on helping to restore communities around the world. This includes conflict zones like those found in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) and [Haiti](#).

Political instability and violence can and often does complicate environmental restoration and development efforts. Widespread poverty, food insecurity, social tensions and political conflict frequently leads to violence which makes it challenging for organizations like Plant With Purpose to safely conduct their work.



Community and religious leaders in the Luvubu watershed located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo meet to promote unity and peace in the community.

Plant With Purpose offers a transformative approach to conflict prevention. Reconciliation happens by fueling economic stability and a positive environmental change and strengthening communal networks within villages. These people go on to be catalysts for greater peace and unity initiatives within the community. Purpose groups are at the center of what Plant With Purpose does. Based on a village savings and loan association model, these small groups meet weekly with the goal of improving their livelihoods and community both economically and environmentally. Through collective action, group members plant trees, restore degraded land, learn sustainable farming techniques and build small businesses. With a spiritual focus and shared accountability, these groups very often heal relationships between estranged individuals and even traditional adversaries. It is typical for 60% or more of the people in a sub-watershed to participate in purpose groups making them a powerful force for community transformation.

The very act of working together fosters a sense of unity and cooperation that transcends ethnic and political divides. In a region where suspicion and mistrust are deep seated, purpose groups

create a safe space for dialogue and collaboration. As members share meals, learn from each other and celebrate their achievements, they begin to see each other not as adversaries but as fellow villagers with a shared stake in their community's future.



Beyond this, meetings and events are organized by group members within watersheds to focus on peace and reconciliation where all stakeholders are invited to come and contribute to peacebuilding.



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*Christi Huizenga Renaud,
Plant With Purpose VP of
Development & Marketing*

"Our Community Designed Restoration (CDR) model works in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti because it simultaneously addresses the root causes of poverty and deforestation," said Christi Huizenga Renaud, vice president of development and marketing for Plant With Purpose. "It meets the needs of real communities in real situations. Since it meets the needs of people so well, they start to share the techniques that they're learning about CDR with their neighbors and friends."

The world's second largest rainforest is located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which makes it one of

the world's most important ecosystems. Despite its ecological importance, 99% of the country's rural population lives in extreme poverty. Persistent conflict and rainforest depletion provide significant challenges but Plant With Purpose saw a great need to help and started doing so in 2015. By building local enthusiasm and skills around forest protection, ecosystem restoration and regenerative farming, program participants eat one extra meal per day on average.

Nearly 4.4 million trees have been planted by more than 10,500 participating families in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are seven current watershed programs in operation with that number set to expand to 11 watersheds by the end of 2025. Nearly 400 purpose groups have been established with more than 89,000 people having been served in the region with 127 church partnerships.

Natural disasters have directly impacted Haiti in addition to poverty and political violence. Plant With Purpose has been helping provide long-term solutions through sustainable community development since 1997. Smallholder farming families have been focused on planting trees, implementing soil conservation methods and preventing erosion. Local savings groups allow participants to create a financial buffer against difficult times and create business capital.

Nearly 6.5 million trees have been planted in Haiti by more than 14,000 participating families. There are seven watershed programs currently in place with 605 purpose groups established. More than 85,000 people have been served in the nation with 127 church partnerships.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti, along with seven other countries that the Plant With Purpose CDR model is currently operating, have experienced a 55% reduction in poverty on average for participating families. That number is significant and the multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI) looks at poverty in a holistic way. In fact, there is a fundamental shift happening in the way people see themselves, what they believe and what they have to offer in their communities. At least 70% of people now believe their work is a good use of their talents, indicating a sense of self-worth and personal agency. As the numbers show, it is cultivating harmony in regions where conflict impacts everyone.

For more information about Plant With Purpose, please visit plantwithpurpose.org.

About Plant With Purpose

Founded in 1984, Plant With Purpose is a leading Christian environmental organization, based in San Diego, California. Now operating in nine countries, Plant With Purpose spearheads initiatives for environmental restoration, poverty alleviation and spiritual renewal. The group's holistic model focuses on community-led innovation and leadership that helps global communities reverse structural and environmental causes of rural poverty. Plant With Purpose's integrated solutions have resulted in more than a half-million people reversing poverty, more than 60 million trees being planted and 2.7 million acres of land being restored or protected. With local programs in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Haiti, Malawi, Mexico, Tanzania and Thailand, Plant With Purpose has a global team of more than 500 people. To learn more, visit plantwithpurpose.org.

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There are seven watersheds in the Democratic Republic of the Congo where the Plant With Purpose Community Designed Restoration (CDR) model is currently operating.

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