Communicating in the Congo

Projects by Congloaise Industrielle des Bois

Republic of the Congo

ATIBIT Think Tank 2020

" Knowledge is power.

When imparted in the language that the listener understands, it can be life changing.
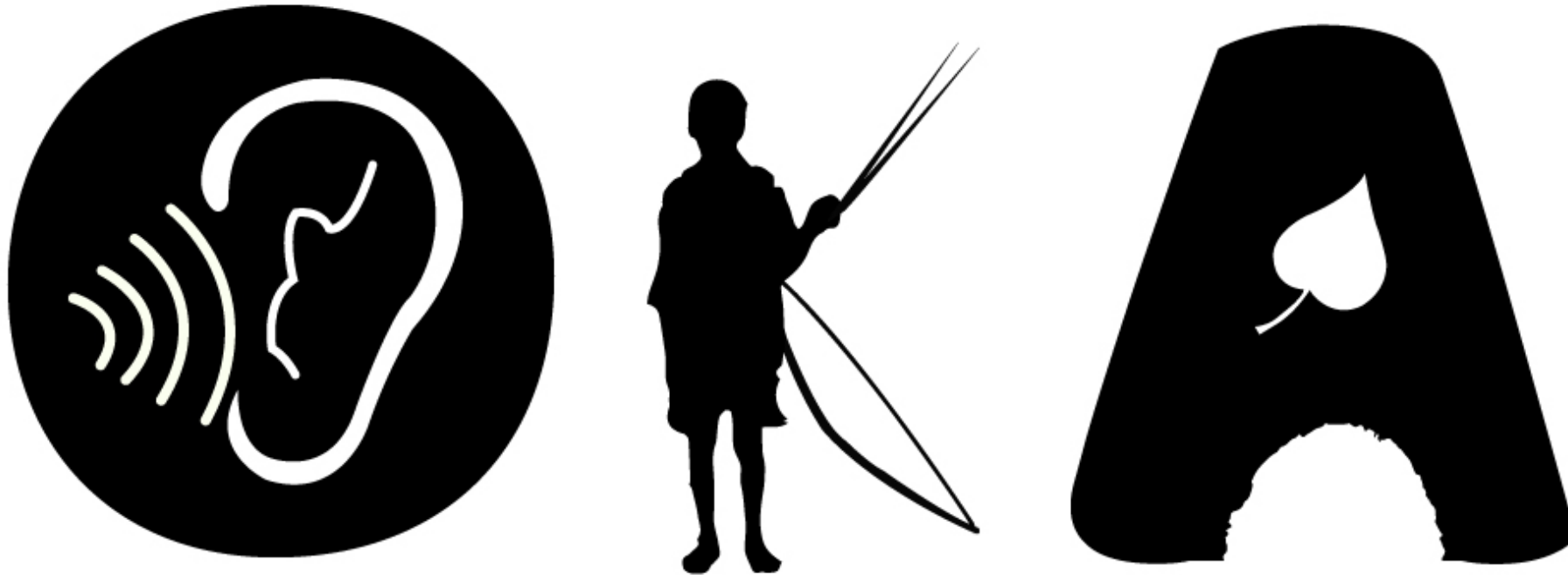
*The principal belief behind **Project OKA***

To empower every individual on our UFA with:

- Information that is useful, comprehensible

- Through a medium that is easy to navigate

Challenges:

- A nomadic population spread on a huge area who are difficult to track

- Language changes in every district

- Frequency of visits by the social team when weather does not permit

- Lifestyle – carry things on their back, so devices cannot be bulky, or complicated to manipulate

- Electricity/ battery

Empowerment despite challenges

Information simplified. For everyone. All the time.

Since July 2020

Themes

- Indigenous population rights
- Safety
- Health including covid-19
- Family

Area

- In our four concessions of kabo, loundoungou, enyelle and Pokola

Languages

- Lingala
- Mbengele

Content

- Around 500 responses in question answer format

Device

- A handy mp3 player with limited controls

Benefits

- Saves repetition of the same info by the social team repeatedly
- Leaves the information with the population, helping repetition and memorisation, listening at their convenience
- Helps create a base of information, over which dialogues and conversation can take place, thereby improving quality of conversations

Current status:

- Continually add content

- Expanding to the theme of Education – with a *For Kids* version that promotes literacy/ education

Timelines:

- With the pandemic, difficulty in growing.

- 2020 – Have devices in each village of the UFA

- 2021 to 2025: Ensure each inhabitant in the region has a device

Expansion plans:

- Include translation in Aka

- In the process of developing songs based on the info

- Develop content by enhancing traditional culture (traditional songs, conversations with elders, etc.)

- Research scalable solutions - Better devices that can enable device/content management of 30,000 devices

- Keep it useful, cost effective, and relevant, SIMPLE.

- Robust system of managing and updating data and content with the given challenges
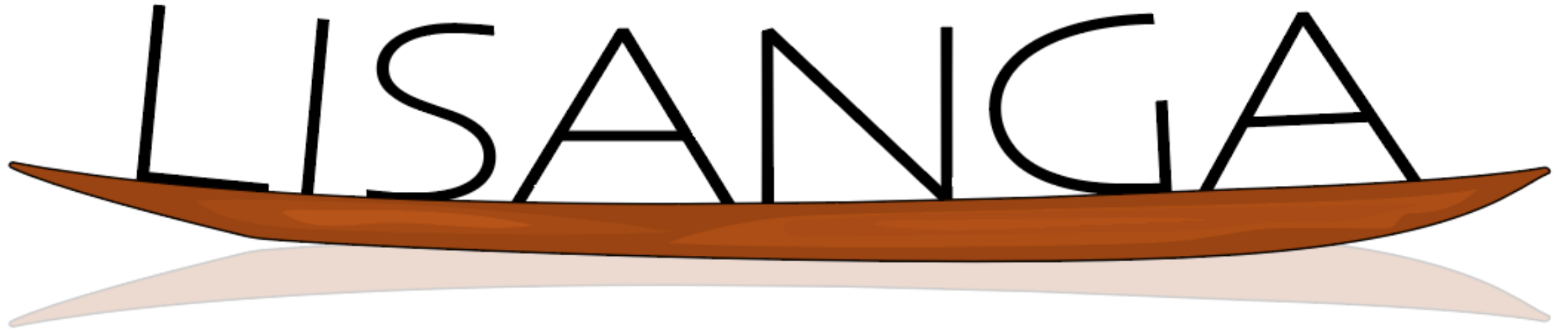
The future

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Good things happen when we synergise.

There is additional motivation when you are trying to create a structure and build something for posterity, with complete awareness that you might not even enjoy the benefits now, and your efforts would be for the larger good of someone else.

The principal belief behind **Project Lisanga**

- Idea born in March 2019.

- Lisanga means 'together' in Lingala, the national language of Congo

- A digital playbook, a reference compendium of every community and village on our concession.

- Not reinventing the wheel every-time we go out on the field.

- Knowledge, experience, expertise download into a tangible space

- Enabling us to build better in the region

- Have measurable targets based on verified information

The idea

LISANGA

Everything. All. Together.

The elements

- 5 concessions,

- Name of villages 135 villages and communities

- GPS location

- Baseline data from the state

- Weekly field reports from Social Communicators

- Important mobile numbers

- Multimedia: Audio interviews, pictures, videos

- Maps

- Observations, analytics and impressions

- Health & sanitary situation

- Telephone booth points

- Articles we write in that region

Moving beyond data entry

- No two villages are the same

- Who visited a village how many times on what theme or subject

- What are the recurrent challenges in a particular village, or conflict.

- What partners are present in that region, so that we spend our energy in a more synergised way

- What projects we are running there – water, healthcare, connectivity, economic activities

Phases:

- Phase I: We will keep updating the database on the villages that we have.

- Phase II: Adding new villages and communities to the database.

Timelines:

- 2020 to stabilise data

- First quarter of 2021 to make analysis and extraction

- Mid 2021 collaborating in expanding and bettering Lisanga to stakeholders, partners and researchers

- Use this database to support activities at the landscape level.

- The database is open for collaboration.

- We invite researchers, stakeholders to contribute to Lisanga

- Use this for the benefit of the livelihood, initiatives and understanding the region.

- Develop the database in such a way as to allow analyses and comparisons of the socio-economic and health evolution of villages according to their specificities and history (location, history of projects, means dedicated to education etc.)

The future

CIB

Thank you!

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