



Peace Ambassadors: Approach for Sustainable Peace

When action becomes a responsibility
ElikiaAfrika | QuarterlyNewsletter2 —2026

Understanding local realities

Since my last message, our work at Elikia Afrika has continued to evolve from vision into practice.

In Goma and surrounding communities in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, daily life continues to be shaped by fragility, uncertainty, and recurring cycles of violence. At the same time, we are witnessing something equally important: the growing determination of young people who are actively seeking alternatives to exclusion, insecurity, and a lack of opportunity.

Rather than revisiting the origins of our work, I want to take you one step further into what we are currently learning from the field, and how this is shaping the way we respond.

Because in contexts like ours, the challenge is no longer only about identifying problems. It is about building systems of response that are realistic, locally grounded, and sustainable over time.

This is where our focus has deepened: not only strengthening the capacities of young people, but also engaging the social environments that shape, limit, or enable their choices.

What We Did

This quarter, our work focused on strengthening capacities, expanding networks, and engaging young people in meaningful dialogue.

1. Organizational and Technical Capacity Strengthening

We invested in improving our internal systems and technical skills to ensure that our interventions are more structured, effective, and sustainable.

This included strengthening planning processes, coordination, and preparation for upcoming youth-focused programs.

2. Multimedia Training – Arua, Uganda

We participated in a multimedia training in Arua, Uganda, in collaboration with Adiko Art.

During this experience, we developed skills in:

- Video and audio editing
- Storytelling for social change
- Digital communication tools

These skills will be transferred to young people in Goma, helping them tell their own stories, raise awareness, tracking misinformation and access new opportunities.

3. Strengthening International Networks – Kenya

We were invited to Kenya by: twajali & Siana Afrika, both are part of the global Kanthari network through KNOCK (Kanthari Network of Change and Knowledge).

This engagement allowed us to:

- Exchange experiences with other youth leaders
- Strengthen regional collaboration
- Explore joint initiatives for community development

4. Double activities: Youth Dialogue in Goma & in Namanga Secondary School Kenya (May 16)

We co-facilitated a youth dialogue session at Namanga Secondary School, focusing on:

- Youth resilience
- The role of young people in development

This activity was organized around the International Day of Living Together in Peace and was conducted simultaneously in Kenya and in Goma. In Goma, our team engaged directly with students from the Complexe Scolaire les Pelerins, creating a space for open dialogue and shared reflection.

Students actively shared their ideas, challenges, and aspirations, demonstrating a strong willingness to contribute to positive change within their communities.

5. Awareness Activity – Day of the African Child (June 16)

On the Day of the African Child, we organized a sensitization and exchange session bringing together child protection actors.

The discussion focused on critical challenges affecting children in conflict-affected areas:

- Ongoing insecurity and its direct impact on children
- Continued serious violations of children's rights
- Limited access to basic social services (education, health, protection)
- Disruption of education
- Growing mental health challenges among children

This activity created an important space for reflection and coordination among stakeholders.

- Public speaking and confidence building
- Conflict resolution and nonviolent communication
- Ethical leadership and responsibility
- Community engagement and mobilization

What made this experience powerful was not just the content, but the transformation. Many participants arrived hesitant to speak. By the end, they were standing in front of others, expressing ideas clearly and with conviction.



Challenges We Faced

This quarter was not without difficulties:

- Ongoing insecurity in and around Goma, affecting mobility and implementation of activities
- Limited resources to respond to growing community needs
- High levels of vulnerability among youth and children in conflict-affected areas
- Increasing needs related to access to education, protection, and basic services
- The outbreak of the Ebola health crisis, further complicating community engagement and increasing fear and uncertainty among populations,

These overlapping crises, both security and health-related, continue to deeply affect communities and require adaptive, flexible, and context-sensitive responses.

How We Are Responding

In response, we are adapting our approach:

- Integrating skills development (multimedia, leadership) into our programs
- Strengthening partnerships at regional and international levels
- Creating more dialogue spaces for youth and stakeholders
- Focusing on both skills and psychosocial resilience

We continue to learn that sustainable impact requires consistency, adaptability, and strong collaboration.



What Comes Next

In the next quarter, we will focus on:

1. Youth Multimedia Training in Goma

Transferring newly acquired skills to empower young people to tell their stories and engage in community change.

2. Expanding Youth Engagement Programs

Our goal is to reach more young people, especially those at risk of exclusion or recruitment into armed groups.

3. Strengthening Child Protection Advocacy

Continuing dialogues and actions to promote children's rights and well-being.

4. Building Partnerships

To sustain and grow this work, we are actively seeking partnerships with organizations and individuals who believe in youth-led peacebuilding.



A Personal Reflection

“The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything.” by Albert Einstein

For decades, the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has endured cycles of violence that, to many, have become distant almost normalized. Yet behind that distance are broken lives, entire generations growing up in uncertainty, and a resilience that should never be a requirement for survival.

The silence of the world is not always the absence of voices, but often the absence of action. To witness without responding is, over time, to allow the unacceptable to become tolerated. **And in that quiet indifference, silence risks becoming a form of complicity.**

But every voice raised, every act of engagement no matter how small begins to break that silence. Because choosing not to look away is already the beginning of change.

Gratitude & Invitation

I remain profoundly grateful to everyone who has supported this journey, our partners, volunteers, and community members. My appreciation continues to renew itself, growing deeper with every step we take.

I would also like to once again express my sincere thanks to kanthari for standing alongside us and strengthening this work.

If you would like to support, collaborate, or learn more, I warmly invite you to connect with us.

Elikia Afrika is a community, based organization dedicated to sustainable peace, ethical leadership, and social transformation in conflict, affected communities of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Contact Information

Elie Mastaki
Founder, Elikia Afrika
Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo

Phone: +243 993 755 270

Website: www.elikiafrika.org

Email: info@elikiafrika.org