



Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN



Mission Permanente de la  
République Démocratique du  
Congo auprès des Nations Unies



***“Maisha: A New Life Outside the Mines –  
An empowered community emerging from extreme poverty.”***

**February 4, 2016**

**1:15 -2:45 pm**

**Conference Room 6, UNHQ**

Concept Note

This side event is held within the context of the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission for Social Development entitled: ‘Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World.’ The documentary ‘*Maisha*,’ meaning “life,” set in Kolwezi, Democratic Republic of Congo, allows us to see an empowered community emerging from extreme poverty. It is an insight into social development that has a human rights-based framework at its core, ensuring ‘no one is left behind.’

Perhaps you have never heard of Kolwezi, located in the south of the mineral-rich Democratic Republic of Congo. But you probably carry around with you a piece of Kolwezi wherever you go. The copper and cobalt mines from the area provide the materials to make vital components for computers and mobile phones.

Despite the multi-billion-dollar mining trade, very little of its success ever reaches the people of the region. As a result, widespread poverty, chronic hunger and disease are a fact of life.

It was into this situation that the Good Shepherd Sisters came in 2010. ‘*Maisha*’ permits us to see transformation when a community is empowered through the use of community-based participatory decision making models. A sense of right, dignity and voice emerged with resultant education, economic opportunity and food sovereignty. The issues highlighted in this documentary relate to all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and provide best practices for the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Moderator:

- Clare Nolan, Training Facilitator, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Speakers:

- H.E. Ambassador David Donoghue, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN
- H.E. Ambassador Ignace Gata Mavita, Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of Congo to the UN
- Bernhard Warner, film producer, ‘*Maisha: A New Life Outside the Mines*’
- Bhumika Muchhala, Senior Policy Analyst, Finance and Development Programme, Third World Network

Outcome:

- Awareness of the historical social/economic/political impacts of corporate control in a globalized world on people and the environment through an example from the mining sector
- Recognition that a rights-based and alternative model of development is possible in the face of the dominant extractive model of development
- Recognition that change is possible for people and the environment through participatory decision-making processes recognizing the dignity of the person and the upholding of human rights.
- Recognition that change is possible through collaborative engagement of people, NGO's, local government and wider partnerships.

Questions:

- How do we ensure in new phases of development that there is participatory consultation, decision-making and ownership for local communities?
- How can global development policy be effectively shaped to recognize 1) the benefits of diversification of economies; 2) the need for strong, sustainable, human rights-based fiscal and environmental legislation; and 3) the reinforcement of local and regional and markets?