

## **Lumo**

### **Film of a young woman's struggle**

On Saturday evening, 14 June 2008, the film 'Lumo' was screened before more than 80 people in the Hall of St Mark's Anglican Church South Hurstville. Members of the audience were deeply moved by Lumo's story.

Lumo was just 21 years old when she was, in her words, 'destroyed'. Rebel soldiers overtook her on her way to market from her remote village in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Beyond the road, across a river, they raped and tortured her as part of their reign of terror. No one was near to hear her scream. When her ordeal was over they threw her on the road, bleeding and in intense pain. But Lumo was in one respect fortunate: a courageous woman travelled into the rebel held area to bring her to the HEAL Hospital in Goma for treatment. After 2 years and five operations to repair the internal injuries inflicted in the attack, Lumo has recovered physically. Not all of the 40,000 women who have suffered such violence in the DR Congo are able to afford or access treatment. Lumo agreed to tell her story to the cameras in order to raise international awareness and support for the other survivors.

5.4 million people in the DR Congo have died in the past ten years in this most deadly war since World War II. The causes of the war are varied and complex. However, they are related to the illegal exploitation of minerals and gems by companies and individuals through neighbouring countries. In particular, competition to control the mining of coltan, a mineral which is an essential component in our mobile phones, laptops and video game players, fuels the conflict. We enjoy our electronic gadgets but at what price for the women of the DR Congo!

You can help:

- borrow the DVD to show at your school, church or club.
- write letters to our politicians asking how they are supporting the peace process in the DR Congo.
- write letters asking for action to be taken against the companies and individuals named in the 'Security Council Report on the Illegal Exploitation of the Resources of the DRC'.
- donate to the HEAL Hospital – \$10 buys a dress for a woman like Lumo, \$30 pays a month's salary for a guard at a safe house for raped women, \$100 trains a counsellor for the raped women, \$300 pays for reconstruction surgery for a raped woman. Send donations to, or obtain further information, DVD and sample letter from, CNEC PI, PO Box 67 Croydon Park NSW 2133.

Relevant web sites:

[www.mediastorm.org/0022.htm](http://www.mediastorm.org/0022.htm)

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/621/79/pdf/N0262179.pdf?OpenElement>

[www.cnepci.com.au/lumo.html](http://www.cnepci.com.au/lumo.html)

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