When Godi Godar Moteke Molanga was growing up in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as the eldest son of the chief of his tribe, he dreamed he would move across oceans and return home to support and protect his people. He came to the United States when he was twenty-one, and now, thirty years later, he is fulfilling the second part of his dream through the organization he founded in 2012, Go Conscious Earth (GCEarth).

The organization works to preserve large tracts of land in the Congo River Basin, the second largest rainforest in the world, while also addressing the needs of the communities in the Lake Tumba (or Ntomba) region of the DRC where he grew up and where his members of his Bantomba tribe still live. This project grew from words spoken to Godi Godar by his mother just before her death when she revealed the dire situation of their people. She asked him to stop the rainforest destruction that was devastating their lives, killing endangered animals, and ruining the air of the planet. In 2014, due to his strong ties to the local community and to the government of the DRC—the second largest country in Africa (known as Zaire from 1971 to 1997)—Godar secured a one-million-acre land concession for his village and neighboring villages. In each area of conserved land, GCEarth asks the communities what they need most, and those needs become initiatives. In the first one million acres of conserved lands, the Bantomba tribe prioritized clean water, schools, healthcare clinics, women's income generation projects, sustainable farming and fishing programs, and boats and walking trails for transporting goods and services as well as materials needed to fulfill the other initiatives.
GCEarth began with clean water. Most people draw their water from the lake, which is contaminated because of the lack of sanitation in the surrounding villages. Because there are no roads into this region, well drilling companies cannot get their drilling rigs and trucks to these remote areas. The Village Digger pictured below has made possible five clean-water wells in five villages to date. These wells provide clean water to 10,000 people.

Most other villages nearby still do not have access to clean water. They heard the good news and started coming every day to the wells to collect clean water for their families. Godar asked one of these villagers, "Why do you choose to travel to get this water instead of using the lake water that is so close?" She replied, “Because we heard of the big improvements from the village with the well. And the lake water makes us sick and kills our children.”

The Village Digger drill was purchased with money raised by GCEarth in 2015 through crowdfunding and other small donations that brought in a total of $75,000. As an all-volunteer organization through the end of that year, operational costs were less than 7% of the total revenues. The website lists thirteen impressive people in Africa and the United States who compose the board, advisory board, and officers of the non-profit 501c3 based in Durham, NC.

Godi Godar recently went home to DR Congo for his father’s funeral. He recounted his experience. “In my home village, we burn amber at night as a candle. Before he died, my father said to me, "Mbaka kaki oepete epolimake," which means, "You have lit the amber. The light is bright, let it shine." Before her passing in 2012, my mother’s last words to me were, “Nyambe angoko twa kwela," meaning "God will bless you with success in this project."

Initially, my mother's words were the driving force behind the founding of Go Conscious Earth and our protection of one million acres of rainforest. Now my father's words have given me the confirmation that the work we are doing is making a real difference.”