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## Out of Africa: 10-month expedition draws to a close

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**AN Australian cyclist is only five weeks away from the end of an epic 10-month expedition from the most western to the most eastern point of Africa, with the support of resource companies. Kate Leeming last spoke to *MiningNewsPremium* at the halfway point of her *Breaking the Cycle* expedition. *MNP* brings you an update as she nears the finish line.**

Since Leeming set out from Cap Vert, Senegal, she has tackled tsetse flies, flooded roads, illness and more in her bid to raise awareness of positive programs giving a "leg up" rather than a "hand out" to end poverty across the country.

She is currently in Ethiopia's Rift Valley, a three-day ride from the capital Addis Ababa, which will mark the 19,800-kilometre mark of her 24,000km journey.

Leeming expects to finish in Puntland, Somalia by August 21, travelling with support of Range Resources who has organised government-supplied security for her journey through the unstable nation.

Other resource companies providing support along the way include gold sponsor Ausenco, silver sponsors Bassaria Resources, Globe Metals and Mining, NKWE Platinum, and Continental Coal, and bronze sponsors Mineral Deposits, Gryphon Minerals, NGM Resources, DMC Mining and Avonlea Minerals.

Sundance Resources also offered unofficial support by providing Leeming, her support driver and cameraman a place to stay in Cameroon.

Since *MNP* last spoke to Leeming she has travelled almost 10,000km through another 10 countries, mostly on her own after companion cyclist Daniel Harman returned home to the UK after injuring his knee.

Leeming is dedicated to cutting through the negative image of Africa to shine light on programs and projects really making a difference.

"There are so many positive things happening," she said. "The best initiatives focus on skills transfer, motivation and organisational knowhow so that African people can manage their own issues and businesses."

"Anything that encourages trade, improves education, discourages corruption, [or] concentrates on the major health and environmental issues is definitely on the right track. Giving hand-outs really destroys people."

Recently Leeming has visited the Anvil cooper mine in Kinsevere, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, being built by Ausenco.

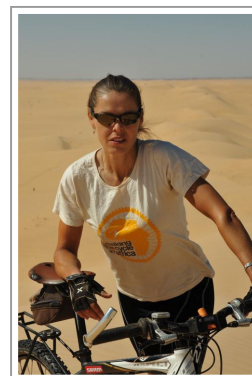
"As Ausenco are only there for the length of the contract, which is about two years, they have to be careful that the work they do for the surrounding communities is sustainable while avoiding the trap of just giving handouts," Leeming wrote in her blog.

"They are organising a contribution of some educational equipment and books to local schools before they complete their job in December."

She also visited the Global Metals and Mining niobium exploration camp in Malawi.

"While at Kanyika, I was particularly interested to visit the local Kanyika Secondary School," Leeming wrote. "Globe had financed the production of 100 new desks, employing local artisans to make them."

Leeming said she has seen how foreign miners could have a positive impact on local communities



when they foster a two-way relationship.

"The mining companies I have been working with all support local communities in different ways," she told *MNP*.

"They provide employment for skilled and unskilled workers, and have a commitment to facilitating sustainable communities, building infrastructure [and] supporting local organisations that have expertise developing education, healthcare [and] agriculture."

When Leeming last checked in she told the story of being shot at by Ninja rebels in the Republic of Congo. Soldiers hired by DMC Mining to protect her in this dangerous region sprung into action, firing back, ensuring Leeming got to safety.

Thankfully, there has been no more gunfire, but that doesn't mean Leeming hasn't had some scary moments.

"Cycling through the Caprivi National Park [Namibia] in the early evening, I was terrified as there are lions about," she said.

"Cycling in and out of large cities such as Kampala was also hair-raising."

With the end of her expedition only weeks away, *MNP* asked Leeming what would be next for this indefatigable explorer, who has already circumnavigated Australia and cycled across Russia.

"Watch this space," she answered. "I have a few ideas. I will not do another expedition as long as this one. Ten months is a very long time to be working so intensively both physically and mentally."

To support Leeming through the final stage of her journey, email [kate@btcycle.com](mailto:kate@btcycle.com)

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