

Educate A Child

For decades, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been characterised by extreme poverty, cycles of violent conflict, and lack of socio-economic opportunities, with children and youth among those most affected.

Nearly 60% of the DRC's 3.6 million people live on less than US\$1.25 a day, orphans make up approximately 10.7% of all children under 18, and chronic malnutrition, malaria, and early pregnancy delay or prevent regular schooling. While concerted efforts have been undertaken by the government, 29% of children who enrol in primary school do not complete the cycle.

Educate A Child (EAC) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) have joined together to improve children's access to quality primary education in two of the most affected provinces in Congo. Since its start in 2014, this programme has provided access to primary school or its equivalent for 13,452 marginalised boys and girls in the DRC, and aims to reach an additional 33,500 by the end of 2016.

EAC is a programme of Education Above All, a global initiative launched by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser of Qatar, which aims to significantly reduce the number of children worldwide who are missing out on their right to education. IRC is a global not-for-profit organisation that responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people to survive and rebuild their lives.

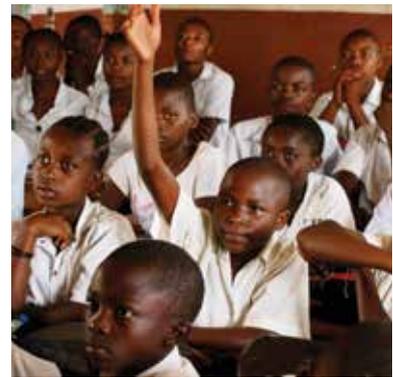
Poverty is one of the primary barriers to education for children. EAC and IRC are addressing this by providing those most vulnerable to not receiving an education with scholarships and school supplies. As Esperance*, a sixth-grade scholarship student in Bukavu, South Kivu, says,

"Before the scholarship, I would get kicked out of school all of the time because I hadn't paid my school fees. Even when in school, I couldn't concentrate because I was always afraid that I'd be forced to leave." Reducing the financial barriers to education ensures that students stay in school without the burden of worrying about their family's economic situation.

This programme is also supporting Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) centres, an informal education approach that allows children to complete a six-year primary school cycle in three years. ALP students include orphans, children with HIV/AIDS, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have had their schooling interrupted for various reasons.

Once enrolled, children in the DRC still face barriers to quality learning, including damaged and poorly stocked facilities. With programme investments, schools and centres now have proper roofs and classroom windows, working latrines, water pumps, and well-equipped classrooms. Another barrier to quality learning is the lack of quality teaching. As over 90% of teachers in the DRC have never received training, EAC and IRC have provided training for all ALP teachers.

The programme has also revitalised parent committees, ensuring that members have the tools to build awareness about the importance of education among other parents and to actively involve communities in



their children's education after the programme's end.

(*Names have been changed to protect beneficiaries' identities.)

Qatar Airways is honoured to partner with Educate A Child to bring access to education to out of school children. To make a contribution, please look for a donation envelope in your seat pocket or request one from a member of the cabin crew. You can also donate through our website educationaboveall.org/donate

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The Centre Brigade des Filles in Lubumbashi, DRC, before and after support from the programme to rehabilitate the school's infrastructure.

