

Children's Voice

Project title, location and timing

Project Name	Children's Voice Tumaini project
Country/Region/Location:	Dem Republic of Congo, East DRC, Goma
Organization:	Children's Voice (CV)
Organization contact:	Christine Musaidizi
Project or program goal and outcomes	Contributing to the provision of a education, safe , healthy environment for vulnerable streets children living in the township of Goma
Project or program manager contact/primary point of contact (address, phone, mail)	Christine Musaidizi 144 Mont Goma Avenue, Commune de Goma, +243818888706 ; christinemusaid@hotmail.com

Description of context

DRC is a country of severe conflict. The last democratic election in 2006 and agreements with militia have provided some stability. In Goma, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the orphaned and vulnerable children have no system of social support apart from families and communities. Basic Government social services are almost non-existent. Many orphans are stigmatised due to the possibility that they have been soldiers, have been raped or accused of witchcraft. Most are unable to continue school and many have never been able to afford to go at all.

In addition, the years of contact conflict including tribal conflict has caused the death of many family members and traumatised the children who bore witness to many of the atrocities. This conflict has also led to a shift in population towards the "safer" urban areas. This has increased the economic vulnerability of families who are forced to leave their farms and livelihoods.

Many children are more vulnerable in urban areas to exploitation, including sexual exploitation such as child labour and prostitution. Due to the economic difficulties and the stigmatisation of many of these children, most families are unable to take on the responsibility of caring for orphans, even if they are linked to their previous communities. Many of these children are forced to earn a living by begging in the streets, being involved in early marriage or sexual exploitation, having their labour exploited and suffering from violence, illnesses and malnutrition.

In the town of Goma several hundred vulnerable orphaned and vulnerable children with themselves and exposed to all forms of violence and do not attend school.

Children's Voice provides a safe place for children to receive informal schooling, vocational training and find the time to play, under the supervision of facilitators.

Focal problems

Focal Problem	Response/Outputs
Describe the focal problems identified	
Many children are living on the street because of the political, economic and social problems. They are abused and neglected and have little or no literacy skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe environment to street children • Provide family reinsertion and following up • Provide vocational training in mechanic, cooking and masonry • Provide to read and to write • Provide health support and potable water • Provide some basic toys and educational resources
Opportunity (Strengths)	Response/Outputs
Currently run by Children's Voice as stable locale NGO with 2 children's centers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for advocacy • Opportunity for future psych social support
Government partnership	Certificate form Social Affaires Ministry

Major Development Outcome: Protection of vulnerable children living on streets through provision of a safe and educating environment

Participants

The program will be run in Children's Voice centers. The training equipments existent as other program were done. The program will be managed by Christine Musaidizi, the Coordinator of Children's Voice and the centre's team. MONUC will continue to supply potable water. Children's Voice will obtain assistance as necessary from its partner organisations and Social Affaires Ministry. Children's Voice is very involved in working with parents, guardians and children. It has facilitated a number of radio ads and trainings on child rights and the accusation of child witches. UNICEF will provide educational materials for students such as books, rulers and pencils.

Consideration of cross-cutting issues

Gender: some of the street children attending are female. Many suffer from abuse living on the streets have been raped.

Disability: the centre will provide a sanctuary to children with all disabilities. Currently children with severe disabilities are unable to attend due to the terrain and lack of facilities.

Peace building: many of the children know little but the violence that have enveloped their country from before their birth. Most of their games revolve around playing militia and violence towards other. The centre is working with the children around issues of violence and trauma to ensure they do not continue in the cycle of violence and war.

Child protection: The primary objective of this project is to improve the protection of vulnerable children but providing them with a place to obtain education, clean water, food and psychological support.

Sustainability (Transition)

The issues of sustainability are interlinked with the viability of Children's Voice. As it is a local NGO, it has received local support for the project and owns the land. Donor's involvement in this project will end in October 2010, however as the primary focus of both agencies is child protection, we foresee future partnership opportunities.

Knowledge Management

Children's Voice is working with a wide variety of partners- NGOs, Government ministries and faith-based organizations. Learnings from this organisation will benefit the local and national child protection policies and provide an avenue for the care and protection of children throughout DRC by providing examples to similar projects. It is entirely community led and owned. Children's has a strong advocacy activity.

There is a potential to network with psychology interns to provide psychosocial support and counseling. This would increase the awareness of the issues amongst the community.

Possible opportunity

This program will help 250 children from streets. If more support, the beneficiaries children will be more.

Children's Voice
Coordination office