



PROJECT: Equip a vocational training center for girls in the DRC

CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) faces significant challenges, including a high social demand driven by rapid population growth (3.9% annually) in a context of poverty and severe underdevelopment.

Research has shown that, with equal access to schooling, families tend to prioritize the education of boys over girls. This is primarily due to differing expectations regarding the roles of each gender. Over the past decades, the DRC has experienced an unprecedented increase in the number of school-aged children enrolled, both girls and boys. However, gender disparities have not decreased. The Decennial Program of the Observatory of Governance and Human Rights in the DRC (OGDH-RDC ASBL) anticipated these frequent challenges, particularly when schools are opened in increasingly remote areas. While these activities have allowed continued growth in school enrollments, they have not succeeded in bridging the gender gap.

In response, the DRC, with the support of partners such as UNICEF, has adopted policies and strategies to accelerate girls' education. This strategy, developed with contributions from stakeholders at central, regional, and local levels, aims to stimulate demand for education by offering better opportunities for girls. However, in rural areas, parents do not always enroll their children in school. Even when they do, they often fail to support them throughout the school year, such as by providing school supplies, meals, or assistance with homework. In some cases, parents force their children to drop out of school to

engage in farm work, pursue apprenticeships, join religious orders, or migrate. Some parents even engage in child trafficking. Under such conditions, very few children complete primary school, despite the government making primary education free and compulsory up to age 16.

Women, especially in rural areas, face limited access to resources and means of production. They are often deprived of fundamental rights and are subjected to acts of violence, such as domestic abuse or rejection when they seek independence or economic empowerment. Women frequently experience similar violence in the workplace, often from male colleagues. The reasons cited for these incidents are usually jealousy from spouses, financial problems, or difficulty accepting paternity.

It is evident that extreme poverty renders women particularly vulnerable. Women from these marginalized communities perpetuate the cycle of poverty. To address this situation and reverse the trend of poverty, OGDH-RDC ASBL has decided to tackle these challenges head-on and provide assistance to the population of South Kivu in general, and to out-of-school young girls and women in particular.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project involves the construction, furnishing, and equipping of a vocational training center for women and girls. The center will offer training in fields such as computer basics, tailoring, soap making, food processing, and masonry. It aims to establish a suitable framework for the reintegration of out-of-school young women and girls into productive economic activities. These women will be organized into simplified cooperative societies.

The center will include training sections focused on:

- Basic computer skills
- Tailoring
- Soap making
- Food processing
- Masonry

In addition to these vocational trades, the center will provide training on leadership, gender, general health, and sexual and reproductive health. The goal is to empower women with the skills needed to lead fulfilling lives. Since women in Kivu play a major role in child education, empowering them will increase their children's chances of success.

The project will also train women in organizational leadership and teamwork, enabling them to conduct awareness-raising sessions in public spaces to educate their peers. These women will become agents of behavioral change, challenging perceptions that undervalue women's contributions to development.

Additionally, the children of the beneficiaries will receive guidance from OGDH-RDC ASBL volunteers and donations of school supplies to enhance their personal development. Roundtable discussions and awareness meetings will also be held. The project will recruit a master tailor to train the participants over three years.

3. PROJECT GOAL

The goal of this project is to provide vocational training to out-of-school young women and girls, enabling them to gain professional skills and engage in income-generating activities. Upon completing

their training, these women will have a trade and will no longer face financial constraints.

4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To contribute to women's financial empowerment through vocational training.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Equip a vocational training center for young women and girls in Nyangezi, Walungu Territory, near Kabare Territory.
- Recruit and train out-of-school young women and girls.
- Organize the women into simplified cooperative societies.
- Train women in gender, leadership, human rights, sexual and reproductive health, accounting, and other relevant topics.
- Select young women for training in high-demand sectors of the local economy (soap making, food processing, etc.).
- Provide training on creating and managing businesses.

5. Expected Results

1. The vocational training center is established and operational.
2. Young women and girls acquire skills and practice a trade.
3. Women and girls are organized into cooperative societies.
4. Beneficiaries gain knowledge of gender, leadership, human rights, accounting, and sexual and reproductive health.
5. Beneficiaries are equipped to start their own businesses.

6. Planned Activities and Beneficiaries

Activities

- Setting up and furnishing a training center.
- Recruiting 30 young women and girls.
- Hosting a launch workshop with administrative, traditional, and political authorities, development partners, parents, and civil society organizations.
- Training participants in various trades.
- Capacity-building sessions.

Direct Beneficiaries

- Young women and girls from Walungu and Kabare territories who will learn the proposed trades.

Indirect Beneficiaries

- **The children of these women:** They will benefit from improved nutrition, education, and healthcare as their mothers gain financial independence.
- **The families of these young women:** They will no longer have to provide financial support to the beneficiaries.
- **The two territories as a whole:** Improved economic participation and community development.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will ensure the project aligns with its objectives and progresses effectively. Evaluations will be conducted internally and externally by the project team, led by the project supervisor.

Internal Monitoring

- Conducted monthly to review progress against planned activities.
- Identify challenges and propose solutions to improve project outcomes.

External Evaluation

- Conducted periodically to assess the project’s broader impact and effectiveness in meeting its objectives.

This process will enable continuous improvement, ensuring the project delivers lasting benefits to its target population.

8. PROJECT DURATION:

The center's equipment phase will last 6 months, from February to August 2025, followed by the registration process and the start of training sessions. Each enrolled cohort will undergo a 6-month training program, followed by a social integration activity.

9. Budget (USD)

Budget Items	Amount (USD)
Center Renovation	5,000
- Purchase of furniture (tables, chairs, shelves)	
- Improvement of lighting and ventilation	
Training equipment and tools	25,000
- Food processing	6,000
- Soap production	5,000
- Sewing and tailoring	6,000
- Knitting	4,000
- Masonry	4,000
Trainer preparation and teaching materials	5,000
Management and monitoring-evaluation	3,000

Budget Items	Amount (USD)
Contingency	2,000
Total	40,000