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# APPRENDRE TOUS ENSEMBLE! (LET'S LEARN TOGETHER!)

AUGUST 2021 – AUGUST 2026 | IMPLEMENTERS: EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER (EDC) / INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC) / ALFALIT INTERNATIONAL | PLANNED BUDGET: \$25,000,000

Apprendre Tous Ensemble increases education accessibility, quality, and inclusiveness in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). It aims to ensure that children ages 6–9 from marginalized and vulnerable populations, including the Batwa indigenous group, girls, and children with disabilities gain foundational literacy and social and emotional learning (SEL) skills to enable them to succeed in school at a grade 2 level or above. The project focuses on the provinces of Équateur, Maniema, Tanganyika, and Kinshasa.

## BACKGROUND: KEY CHALLENGES

The DRC adopted a policy of fee-free primary education, enabling more than 4.5 million children to join school. Nevertheless, over 7 million children aged 5-17 remain out of school. With the increase in school enrollment and no corresponding increase in hiring qualified teachers, classrooms are overcrowded, and the quality of instruction remains a significant challenge. National and regional data indicate that 67 percent of children who enter first grade will complete sixth grade and only 3.4 percent of ten year olds can read a simple text with comprehension.

Significant disparities persist between genders, geographic zones, and socioeconomic groups. Apprendre Tous Ensemble takes into account the unique additional barriers to education that affect girls, children with disabilities, and the Batwa population. Early and forced marriage and adolescent pregnancy often prevent girls from completing school, as do household labor, long distances to school, and sexual harassment by teachers. Most schools make no accommodations for children with disabilities, and many never attend school. The Batwa have long faced systemic discrimination and marginalization. Batwa children are more likely than others to have never attended school, and those who do attend often face discrimination from both teachers and other students.

## IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION

To improve the accessibility and quality of education, Apprendre Tous Ensemble:

- Works with community leaders, parents' committees, and school management committees to enroll children into formal and non-formal learning pathways and support the retention of students in these learning pathways
- Works with school, district, and provincial leaders to ensure that children are not charged fees to attend public schools and catch-up learning centers

- Develops a basic literacy model to improve teacher instruction and student’s performance in reading and literacy
- Adapts existing teaching and learning materials in both formal and non-formal schools to improve quality and enhance learning gains
- Uses interactive audio instruction to provide high quality, learner-centered literacy and SEL content to promote continuity of education and system resilience

## **PROMOTE INCLUSIVITY IN SCHOOLS**

To promote inclusivity in schools for marginalized and vulnerable populations, Apprendre Tous Ensemble:

- Recruits and trains volunteer teachers in literacy instruction for the education of out-of-school children and over-aged children in catch-up learning centers
- Implements SEL curriculum that helps teachers promote positive, nurturing learning environments and teach students about bullying, discrimination, and harassment
- Implements a social and behavior change campaign within communities to facilitate anti-discrimination messaging, reduce tension between groups in support of their children’s education, and address attitudes toward violence against girls
- Adapts existing teaching and learning materials to incorporate content and language resources relevant to the Batwa and Bantu communities
- Provides school-based training and support to promote specialized and inclusive teaching approaches and materials for children with disabilities
- Provides teacher training to ensure the equitable and positive participation of girls in the classroom and promote the protection of female students

## **EXPECTED RESULTS**

Apprendre Tous Ensemble will implement two cohorts between September 2022 and June 2026, allowing 85 intervention communities in the first cohort and 170 in the second to benefit from the project activities.

Over the life of the project, Apprendre Tous Ensemble aims to reach 68,000 learners.

Each year of the project, Apprendre Tous Ensemble will partner with approximately 217 new educators in intervention communities.