

ECHO PROJECT

Newsletter

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Contact Person

Yakubu Saani

Country Director
ActionAid International, DRC
Email:
saani.yakubu@actionaid.org

Eustache Masasi

Project Coordinator
ActionAid International, DRC
Email:
Eustache.masasi@actionaid.org

Beneficiaries Reached



8375 children



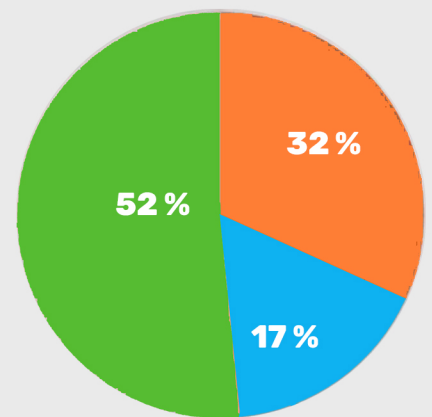
1044 PWDs



3168 Men



2215 women



■ Host Populations
■ Returnees
■ Displaced Persons



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Improving access to education and protection services for conflict-affected populations in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Introduction: A Glimpse into the Journey

Welcome to the 3rd Quarter 2024 update of the ECHO-funded project, where we continue to improve education access and protection services for conflict-affected communities in South Kivu. In this quarter, we focus our updates on progress with regards providing protection for people of concern and support for victims of SBGV in the project area. We will also explore beneficiary testimonies, depicting how the lives of people have been touched by the project. Together, with the support of our donor ECHO and local stakeholders, we are transforming the lives of children, women, and vulnerable groups.

Project Overview

The ECHO project aims to increase access to education and community-based protection in South Kivu and bordering areas in Maniema Province. The project's specific objective is for conflict-affected children, their families and caregivers in South Kivu and Maniema Provinces to access a protected environment and high-quality education, freely.

Target Result

- Result 1 - Increase access to a safe and quality learning environment for children.
- Result 2 - Strengthened protection for conflict-affected children, their families, and caregivers.
- Result 3 - Enhanced security, dignity, and empowerment of affected community members through establishing women and girls-led community-based protection mechanisms.
- Result 4 - Immediate and urgent needs of people of concern addressed in case of emergency Contingency planning and preparedness for response.

Key Facts

- Project Duration** : May 2023 – May 2025
- Location** : Fizi, Minembwe, Salamabila
- Donor** : ECHO
- Target Population** : Internally Displaced Persons, Host Population, Returnee Population

Key Achievements (July 2024 – September 2024)

Continued Support for Multipurpose Centers (MPCs)

The project has continued its support for the **eight multipurpose centers (MPCs)** established under previous ECHO interventions. These centers, **5 in Fizi, 2 in Minembwe, and 1 in Salamabila**, have become crucial spaces for children, women, and other vulnerable groups to rebuild social networks and foster **resilience, empowerment, and social cohesion**. Key activities that are being implemented at the centers include the following:

- **Women’s Rights and Health Awareness:** Information on women’s rights, health, and available protection services, with access to listening and counseling services.
- **Inclusive Psychosocial Support:** While primarily focused on children and women, the centers are open to men, providing psychosocial assistance and legal information to promote overall well-being.
- **Safe Spaces for Children:** The centers serve as a connecting point for eight Child Clubs to hold meetings during weekends and vacations. Activities include games, informal education, and recreational programs designed to build cognitive and emotional capacity. Each center supports approximately 150 children throughout the project’s implementation.

The centers are fully equipped with essential amenities such as chairs, toys, IGR training equipment etc. to ensure a welcoming and functional environment. Through these efforts, the MPCs continue to offer safe, non-stigmatizing spaces where internally displaced persons (IDPs) and vulnerable groups can access protection services, rebuild relationships, and strengthen their resilience.



Men group at the MPC, Salamabila meet to discuss positive masculinity

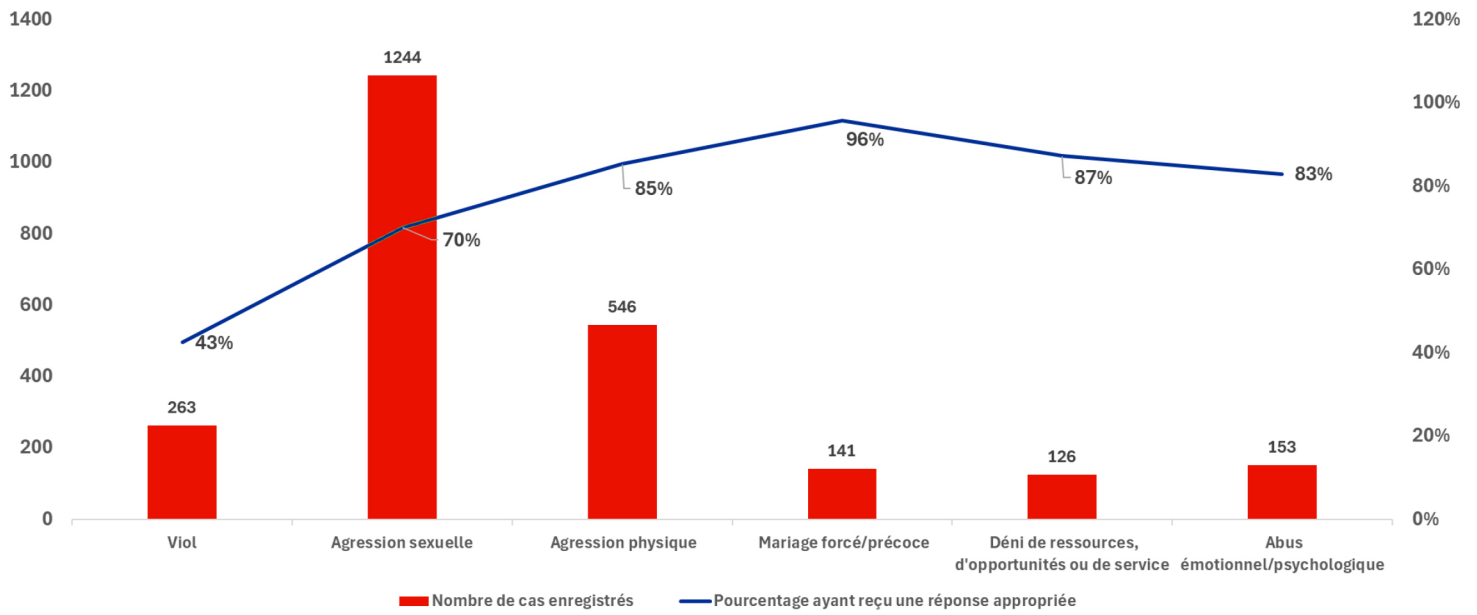


Children engaged in recreational activities at the MPC in S



Madeleine mentoring apprentices at the MPC to learn how to sew, MPC Salamabila

Cas de VSBG enregistrés et proportion ayant reçu des réponses appropriées



Progress on Classroom Construction and Rehabilitation

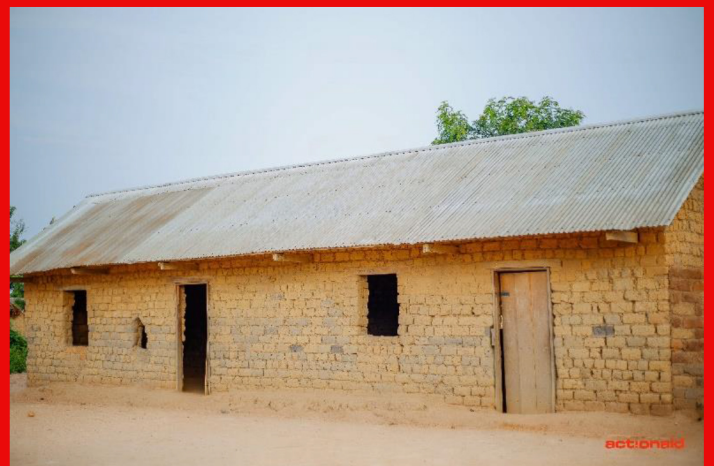
Our efforts to improve the learning environment continued:

- 85% of classroom rehabilitation is now complete.
- 75% of construction for new classrooms is done, with handover expected towards end of November next month.

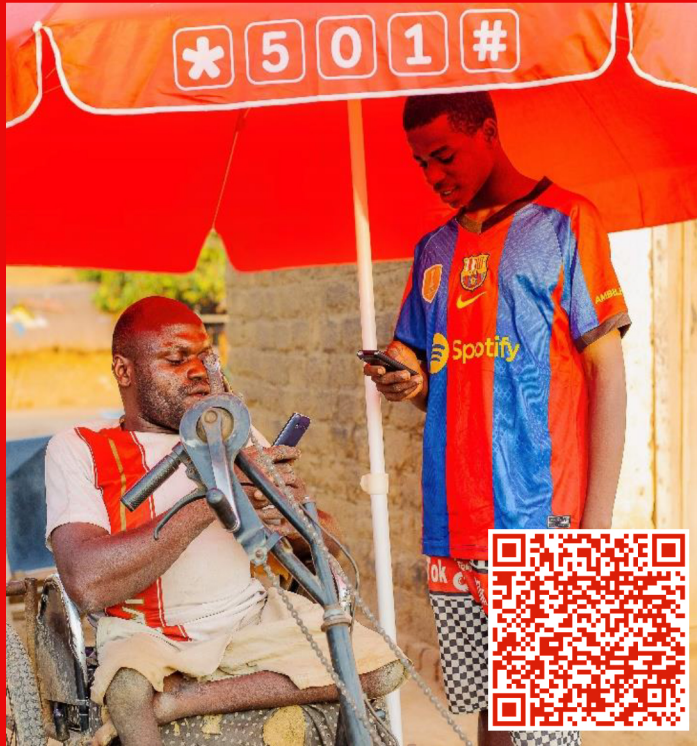
These infrastructure improvements create safer and more conducive learning spaces, helping children focus on their studies and teachers enhance their instructional practices.



Ongoing construction at EP Ngunda in Koiyitanga community, Salamabila



State of classrooms before intervention by ECHO project



Resilience in Action: Baraka's Transformation Through Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance

Baraka Shukuru, an internally displaced person (IDP) and physically challenged individual, found hope through the **ECHO-funded Multi-Purpose Cash** assistance. With the support he received, Baraka started a small business selling mobile credit, allowing him to regain financial independence and rebuild his life. His inspiring journey is a testament to the power of resilience and the impact of tailored humanitarian aid.

Read the full story here:

<https://drc.actionaid.org/stories/2024/la-resilience-en-action-la-transformation-de-baraka-grace-une-aide-en-especes>



Displaced by conflict, empowered by opportunity: The Story of Madeleine Kasumbu

Forced to flee conflict, Madeleine Kasumbu resettled in Salamabila, Maniema Province. Through the **ECHO-funded Multi-Purpose Center**, she learned how to sew and has since launched a new chapter in her life. Today, Madeleine not only earns a living through her sewing business but also trains other apprentices, passing on the skills she gained to empower others in her community.

Read the full story here:

<https://drc.actionaid.org/stories/2024/deplacée-par-les-conflits-renforcée-par-les-opportunités-l'histoire-de-madeleine>

Looking Ahead: Strengthening Our Impact

As we continue to empower communities affected by conflict, our focus remains on sustainability and resilience. By building local capacities, fostering economic independence, and strengthening protection systems, we aim to ensure that beneficiaries like Madeleine and Baraka can thrive long after the project ends. Together with our partners and communities, we envision a future where every individual, regardless of their circumstances, can live with dignity and purpose.

Closing Remarks from the Country Director, Saani Yakubu

The data we have collected throughout this project highlights both the significant challenges we face and the progress we are making in supporting survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). With over 2,400 cases recorded and 74% of them receiving appropriate responses, it is evident that our efforts are yielding results. However, the numbers also remind us of the urgent need for continued work, especially in addressing cases that remain unresolved, such as those involving rape, which saw only a 43% response rate.

This project represents more than statistics, it is about restoring dignity, safety, and hope to individuals who have endured unimaginable trauma. As we move forward, we will keep enhancing our support systems and strengthening community structures to ensure that no survivor is left behind. Together with our partners and communities, we are committed to fostering a future where everyone can live free from violence and fear.



Web Site & Mail

www.actionaid.org
www.drc.actionaid.org
actionaiddrc@actionaid.org



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 Appel gratuit : 082 082 0800