



August 2022 Featured Project

Collaborative art, mentorship, and education for girls
and their community



TOGETHER WOMEN RISE

Introducing Colors of Connection

Girl Awakening

Colors of Connection engages youth from conflict-affected countries and their communities through collaborative art-making to promote

- hope
- well-being
- and self-determination in the pursuit of social justice.



About Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

- Population is 102 million, more than 200 ethnic groups
- Third largest population of poor in the world, $\frac{3}{4}$ live on less than \$1.90 per day
- Violence against women is common – the "rape capital of the world"



Life challenges for women in DRC

- Girls face daily risks often leading to abuse, exploitation, and denial of basic human rights
- Pervasive and deeply entrenched gender discrimination consistently excludes girls from societal benefits and protections
- Gender discrimination erodes girls' mental health, education, income earning capacity, maternal and child health outcomes, and social support systems



The Project

- Year-round, art-based program for marginalized adolescent girls in Bujovu, DRC, in partnership with local organizations
- Provides girls with the essential life skills to keep themselves mentally and physically safe and healthy and develops them as leaders who advocate for gender equality in their communities
- Art-making, community building, and emphasis on gender equality helps 10- to 12-year-old girls stay in school
- Provides a mentorship program for older girls ages 18 – 24 who mentor the younger girls

DIRECT IMPACT: 15,623; INDIRECT IMPACT: 48,000

The Project

Year-round program has four components:

- **Art and life skills sessions:** builds skills and knowledge in health (including mental health), financial literacy, self-esteem, leadership skills, and civic engagement
- **Public art engagement:** participants create four large scale public art murals centered on gender equality issues
- **Mentorship:** ages 18 – 24 with a higher-than-average education level can receive training and stipend for mentoring
- **Scholarship support for girls to attend formal school:** tuition, school fees, and liaison with parents

Budget

Item	Description	Cost
Personnel	Includes portion of salaries for Goma-based Colors of Connection Operations Director and TES - Tulizo Elle Space program staff	\$25,155
Community Engagement	Food and session prizes for youth participants	\$20,645
Community Engagement	Community leader meetings, forums led by adolescent girls for community members, community engagement events, miscellaneous participant expenses	\$1,450
TOTAL		\$47,250

About Colors of Connection

- 10-year-old nonprofit focused on psychosocial arts engagement, public mural making, and community building in conflict and post-conflict areas
- Focus on adolescent girls and violence prevention in East and Central Africa, primarily in DRC
- Mission is to engage youth from conflict-affected countries and their communities through collaborative art-making to promote hope, well-being, and self-determination in the pursuit of social justice



Share your thoughts

1. How do you think the mentorship component of this program benefits both the young and older girls – mentors and mentees?
2. The murals offer visible proof of participation after the program ends. How does this add to the long-term benefit for participants and community members?
3. Do you think it is important that the girls come from the same general neighborhood? Why or why not?



