



INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY
DR of Congo context
November 20 2020



Theme : For Every Child : A Future

Photo of a malnourished child at the DW nutritional Center at Yanonge



*Children at the school -
Wisdom Complex
Isangi RDC*

What future for these children?

« Every child born is a sign that God has not yet despaired of humanity. »

Rabindranath Tagore, Indian poet, Nobel prize in Literature in 1913.

Taking into account the diversity of specific problems that imprison children, we can present some that we frequently find in the context of our country DR Congo:

- 1. Displaced child: a child who is unaccompanied by his or her parents or guardian and who has been forced to leave his or her living environment as a result of war, natural disasters or other serious events and has moved to another place "within the country in which he or she resides"
- 2. Refugee child: who has been forced to flee his or her country by crossing an international border and who claims refugee status or any other form of international protection.
- 3. Child in a difficult situation: a child who does not enjoy his or her fundamental rights and does not have access to services.
- 4. A child in exceptional circumstances: a child in situations of armed conflict, civil tension or unrest, natural disasters or a significant and prolonged deterioration of socio-economic conditions.
- 5. Physically or mentally handicapped child: a child in a situation that may constitute an obstacle or difficulty in the normal expression of all his or her physical or mental faculties, including intellectual and cognitive functions, language, motor skills and social performance;
- 6. Separated child: a child separated from his or her parent or the person who exercised parental authority over him or her;
- 7. Child in conflict with the Law: a child who is 12 years of age and under the ages of 18 years who commits a criminal offence (child soldiers).
- 8. Discrimination: any exclusion, any arbitrary distinction in the enjoyment of the rights guaranteed by law, based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions of the child, of its parents or legal representatives national, ethnic, tribal or social origin, wealth, health, physical disability, disability, age, membership of a national minority, birth, family status or any other Situation.

Every child tells us in his own way, the beauty and wounds of life and thus reminds us of our responsibility. His birth represents a new hope for humanity who owes him her best. This is why the ICOC (International Catholic Office for Children) is committed to promoting the dignity of all children and enforcing their fundamental rights, which are still too often violated.

Affirming that the child has rights

As a full human person, the child has inalienable fundamental rights. He is vulnerable and must be protected and accompanied. African States, for their part, adopted in July 1990 the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child to ensure protection and to take a special look at the critical situation of many children throughout the continent.

However, despite efforts, in our country, many children continue to be abused, discriminated against, accused of witchcraft, infected or affected by HIV/AIDS or are the object of trafficking. They are deprived of their right to succession, health care and education; many children are living on the streets, victims of social exclusion, economic exploitation and sexual exploitation, while others are associated with armed forces and groups.

The Child Protection Act has the following objectives:

Right to nutrition which plays a major role in child development. Half of the deaths of children under five in the Congo are linked to undernutrition, which increases the risk of infections... These occur more frequently and are often more severe.

Progress has been made: between 1990 and 2018, the number of stunted children under the age of five fell by 40% worldwide and now stands at 149 million compared to 253 million.

Access to clean water and hygiene that is equally essential. But 2.1 billion people do not have access to safe drinking water and 4.5 billion (more than half the world's population) are unable to use safe sanitation facilities.

However, in order to live, survive and develop, you must be able to drink drinking water, do your needs in good toilet conditions and benefit from good hygiene conditions.

Education: Every child has the right to education and to quality learning opportunities (section 28). Yet 262 million children and adolescents of primary or middle school age are out of school (364 million in 1989 ¹).

Together, let us continue the fight to ensure that the rights of every child are respected, everywhere and at all times.

*For more information on the situation of children: visit **UNICEF DR***

¹ A charter to defend the best interests of the child As an NGO for the protection of children, the International Catholic Child Bureau