

# Promoting Transformational Community Engagement in Education through Participatory School Management

Catholic Relief Services – DR Congo

Presented by  
Joseph Mahula Mange,  
CRS DR Congo Education Coordinator

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# 1. DRC education overview

- DR Congo is the second largest country in Africa, with 2,345,000 square kilometers of land occupied by more than 70 million inhabitants,
- A country rich in natural resources, but population is poor (81 % of households live on <\$2 per day)
- 28 % of people aged 15-24 can neither read nor write (36 % of women)
- 49 % of women aged 15-24 years are illiterate

## 2. DRC Education Overview

- Low rates of access and equity in (gender, ethnic groups and socio economic classes)
  - basic education rate enrollment is 51.7%,
  - 48% of girls and 54, 8 % of boys
  - Only 28 % of children in rural area
- Poor quality of education
- Inefficiency with a high dropout and low completion rate (28 %)
- Even if parents continue to support the education system, they are not often part of the management of the resources of the schools

## 3. About the Presentation

How CRS is empowering parents to improve local governance and to ensure a safe and accessible school environment for students?

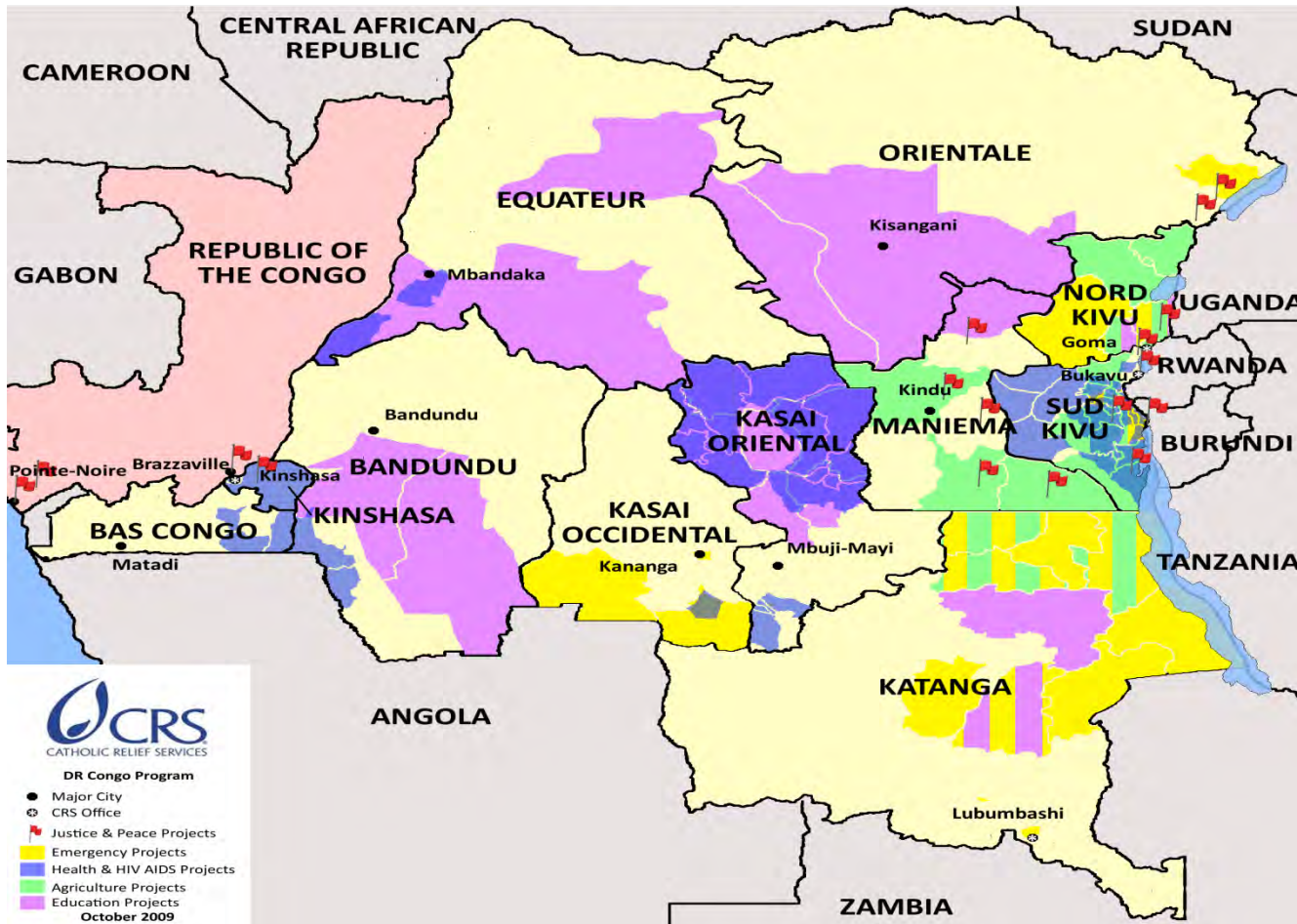


Parents discussing the priorities of their School Improvement Plan

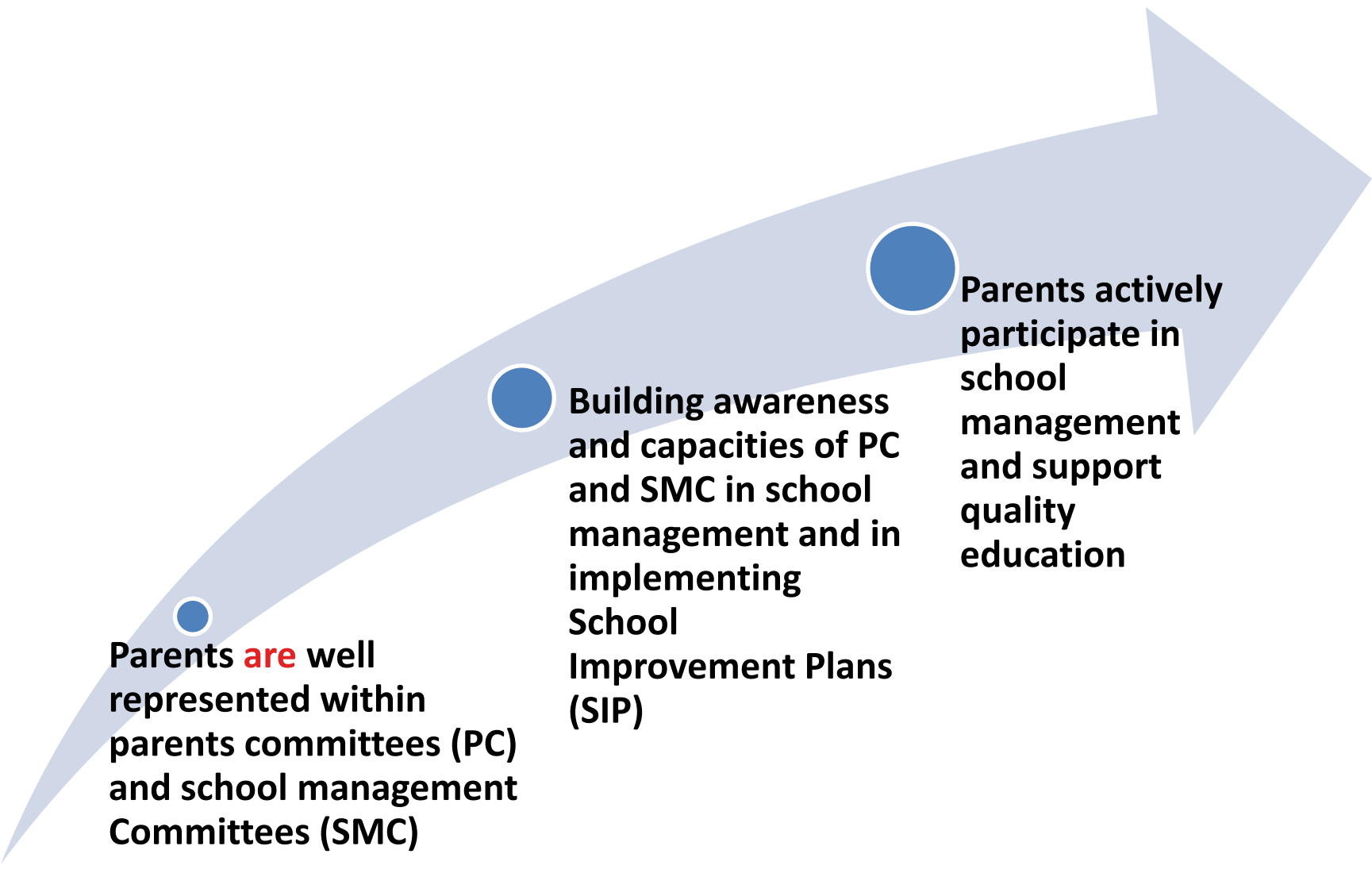
# 4. Overview of PIEQ project

- 5 Years initiative (2009-2014) USAID funding
- Implemented by EDC, CRS, RTI and NGMA
- PIEQ aims to increase student learning especially in reading and Math by improving the quality of teaching and school environment in 3 provinces of DR Congo (Equateur, Bandundu and P. Orientale)
- CRS is responsible of objective 3: improving learning environment by enabling communities to create productive and save learning environment.

# 5. CRS in DRC MAP



## 6. Community participation PIEQ theory of change

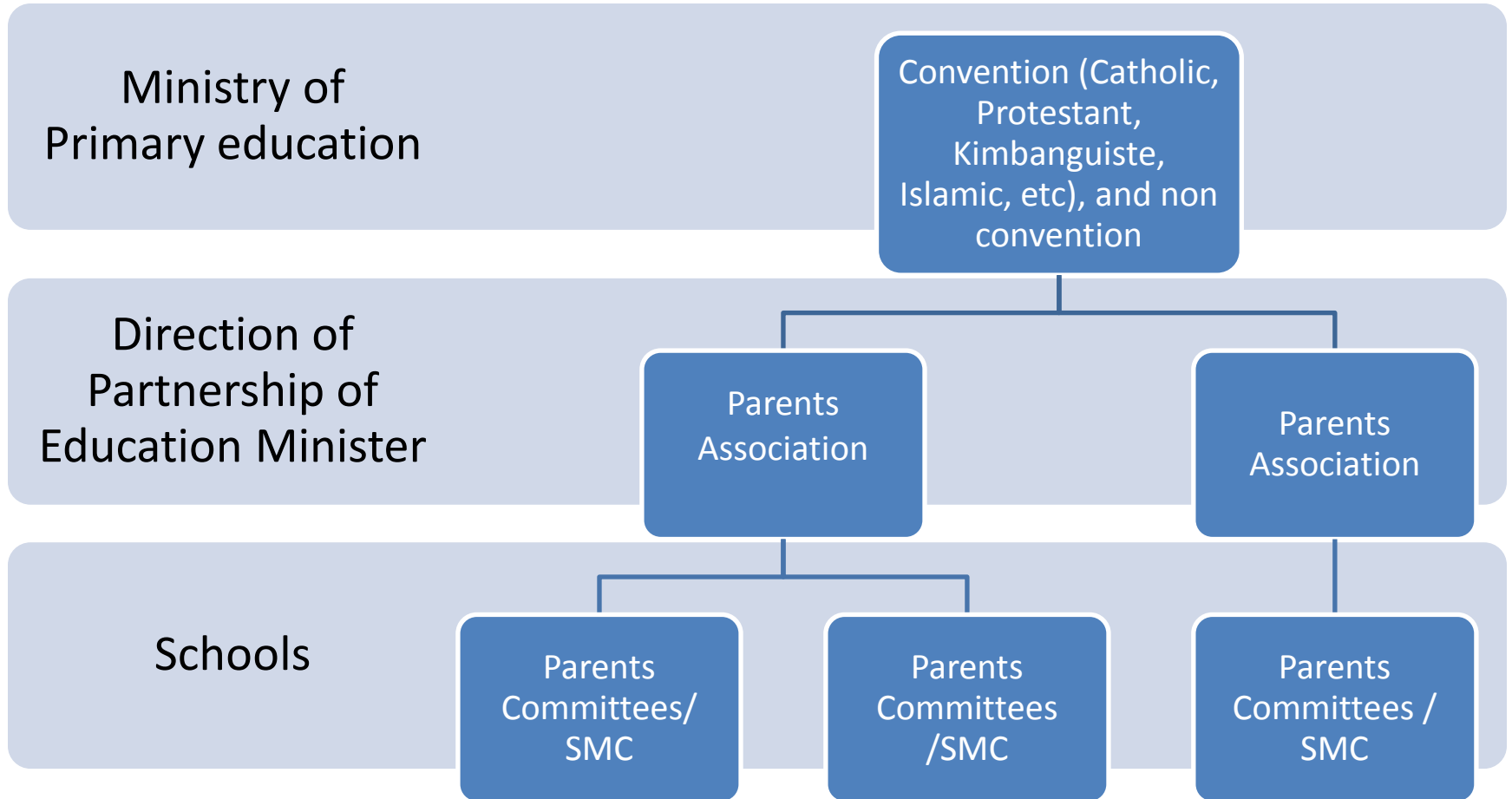


Parents **are** well represented within parents committees (PC) and school management Committees (SMC)

Building awareness and capacities of PC and SMC in school management and in implementing School Improvement Plans (SIP)

Parents actively participate in school management and support quality education

# 7. Parents Associations / Committees in the DRC





# 8. Implementing activities

1. How is CRS /PIEQ putting the Theory of Change in action?



## 8.1. Facilitating parents best represented within Parents Committees



- Parents understand the statutes of their Association
- Elections are transparent and involve all stakeholders and gender
- Election are organized with support from parents' associations and local education authorities

## 8.2. Facilitating parents best represented within School Management Committees



- Increasing parents number within SMC
- All members should be from Parent Committee
- Quality of members: availability, accountable, honest etc.

## 8.3. Building awareness and capacities of PC and SMC

- ✓ Practical training program (role and responsibility for quality education, importance of education, participatory management, SIP -School Improvement Plans-, development and management).
- ✓ Radio program with PC leading listening groups
- ✓ Experiences sharing through PC/SMC cluster meetings



## 8.4. Implementing School Improvement Plans

### Process

- ✓ Training PC on quality of education including SIP development
- ✓ Parents Committees evaluate their school conditions and submit the assessment to community workshop
- ✓ With all stakeholders community identify priorities action items and develop SIP
- ✓ Receive small grants from the project (parents submitted a simple proposal)
- ✓ Implement their SIP
- ✓ Evaluate their accomplishments in Parents Committee/SMC cluster meeting



## 9. Project outcomes

- SMC and PC are connected for advocacy (facilitated again connection of Parents Association).
- The SIP developed by communities with support from PIEQ are posted at their schools and other education actors in DR Congo, such as UNICEF, are supporting their SIP implementation
- Among 52 first SIP awarded, 49 have been successfully implemented
- With support from PIEQ the Ministry of primary education signed two decrees on parents committees and on school management functioning.
- Decrees increases number of parents in SMC from one to three. This innovation has been appreciated by parents and has improved resource management at the school level;

## 9. Project outcomes

- With support from PIEQ, National parents associations are stating to pay attention to their respective local Parents Committee and developed an action plan to better support them; e.g. they are attending all PIEQ training to Parents Committee to ensure sustainability;
- SMCs are using simple tools (transactions details) to show traceability of all school expenses including PIEQ small grant;
- Some communities are beginning some actions aimed at improving school environment as well as teachers monitoring and evaluation

## 10. PIEQ effects on children' education

Even though PIEQ community engagement is at initial state, the following effects are observed:

- Improved attendance of 10 % in the community where classrooms have been rehabilitated by parents Committees
- Starting to improve children reading ( at 10 %) in those where black board manufactured and placed and small reading project implemented.
- Where parents built latrines drop out of girls have been noted reduced



# 11. Lessons learned

- Age, sex, education level, socio economic activities influences the transformational community engagement
- Involving parents association is most important to ensure sustainability of parents Committees
- Increasing numbers of parents within SMC is very important to promote good governance
- Radio programs is a key tool for community mobilization to empower parents /community engagement and transformation
- SIP awarding will not be consider as “An End in itself” but as the “Means”
- Clustering approaches is most important to promote good competition and experiences sharing between parents Committees

I would like to say  
Thank you in over 245 DRC local languages