

HEALING CLASSROOMS INITIATIVE



Afghanistan / IRC



Afghanistan / IRC



Ethiopia / IRC

About half of the world's 35.7 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are under the age of 18. Forced to leave their homes and communities, these young people are often exploited, abducted, used as soldiers, compelled to take on extreme responsibilities and deprived of their right to education.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has over fifty years of experience working with displaced and conflict-affected populations, and understands the unique challenges posed by the often cyclical nature of violence and conflict. IRC responds by protecting young people and meeting their developmental needs during wartime and through post-conflict reconstruction.

For more information about the Healing Classrooms Initiative or the International Rescue Committee, please contact us at:

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**PROMOTING STUDENT
WELL-BEING THROUGH TEACHER
DEVELOPMENT**

**Child & Youth
Protection and Development**



PROMOTING STUDENT WELL-BEING THROUGH TEACHER DEVELOPMENT



East Timor / IRC



Ethiopia / IRC



Liberia / IRC

IRC'S Child & Youth Protection and Development Programs

As part of its programs to support children in emergencies and post-conflict settings, IRC supports formal and non-formal education programs for children, youth and adults in 20 conflict-affected countries around the world. Education in these contexts plays a key role in mitigating the effects of war. It provides structure, stability and protective environments that enable young people to regain hope and dignity.

Teachers are on the frontlines caring for children in crisis. They have enormous potential to ensure children's positive socialization, academic development and psychosocial well-being.

To maximize this, teachers need support and professional development opportunities. They need special skills to meet the challenges of teaching in war-affected communities, and on-going assistance to cope with their own trauma. Without support, this potential may not be realized. In extreme cases, teachers can be abusive and exploitative.

HEALING CLASSROOMS INITIATIVE: Promoting Student Well-being through Teacher Development

The **Healing Classrooms Initiative** is an innovative IRC project that addresses teachers' critical roles in creating supportive and healing learning environments for children. This initiative analyzes and builds models for teacher development that promote student well-being.

Healing Classrooms Initiative approaches are being piloted in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Guinea and Sierra Leone and are being integrated into a new educational development project in earthquake affected areas of Pakistan, amongst other places.

The lessons and tools from these countries are being disseminated and adapted for education programs in over 20 conflict and post-conflict settings around the world.

IRC is also sharing the Healing Classrooms Initiative research findings with the wider international community, including education practitioners, advocates, donors and policy makers at community, regional, national and international levels.

Resources developed by this initiative to promote healing classroom environments are available upon request. Key areas of focus include:

- Student Well-being
- Teacher Identity
- Gender Dynamics

"Child-friendly or healing classrooms recognize each child as an individual with unique abilities, personality traits, learning styles, interests, needs, background and ways of responding to the world. Such environments allow children to become fully involved in learning, play and interaction with others, develop self-esteem while being challenged to excel. Child-centered teaching allows teachers to know their students and address their individual needs; this plays a particularly important role in situations where stability in children's lives has been threatened or disrupted."

—Rebecca Winthrop,
IRC Senior Education Technical Advisor