

Beat: News

Attack on Jida primary school leaves 222 children without access to education

Democratic Republic of the Congo

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Yesterday's attack and looting by armed actors on Jida primary school has left 222 children without access to education. The attack is the fourth in a series of attacks on education facilities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) Ituri Province since December last year, and the second attack against a school supported and constructed by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) during the same period. NRC constructed four new classrooms at the Jida Primary School, and repaired the rest of the building, ensuring that vulnerable conflict affected children, including those displaced by violence, could attend school in a safe environment.

"I am outraged by these attacks against school facilities, but even more so as NRC has only recently constructed these new classrooms as a service to extremely vulnerable, conflict affected children. Children must have safe access to education, or there is no future for them. They are already living under constant fear of attacks in their villages, homes, and camps," said Caitlin Brady, country director for NRC in DRC. "Every effort must be made to ensure schools are protected, safe places where children can learn and grow in peace."

During yesterday's attack, armed men looted the roofing materials, equipment, and furniture; the school had previously served 222 children.

In the last six months, the schools of Langbe Ukpa, Dhedja and Olo, where NRC also supports education activities, were also looted and damaged making them inaccessible for students and teachers.

"These attacks constitute a grave violation of child rights in conflict. DRC is a signatory to the Safe Schools Declaration, which aims to protect students, teachers, and schools from the worst effects of armed conflict. We strongly condemn these attacks and call on all armed groups to uphold their commitment to protect children and respect schools and lifesaving education," Brady said.

Source: Norwegian Refugee Council via ReliefWeb (ARAC global media partner)

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