

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Make Music Matter joins forces with World Vision Canada to bring innovative music therapy program to girls and young women in the DRC with funding from Global Affairs Canada

Healing in Harmony program empowers girls to speak out for right to education

OTTAWA, Canada – February 20, 2020 – Ottawa-based non-profit Make Music Matter is proud to announce the expansion of its Healing in Harmony program to the conflict-ridden Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a joint project with World Vision Canada.

A funding agreement of C\$1 million was signed this week by Make Music Matter and World Vision Canada as part of the Equality for Girls' Access to Learning (EGAL) project for which World Vision has received a total of C\$7 million from Global Affairs Canada. The aim is to remove barriers to quality education for girls and young women who are disproportionately denied access to learning opportunities.

A unique model of group therapy, the Healing in Harmony program will address the psychosocial barriers that girls face. Participants work with both a local psychologist and music producer to create and professionally record songs. They then become advocates in their community, helping to break stigma and promote their rights.

The new Healing in Harmony site will benefit girls aged 5 to 15, young women, and caregivers who have experienced trauma, including sexual and gender-based violence, and exploitation.

"We know that even in the world's toughest places education saves lives and builds futures," says Lindsay Gladding, World Vision Canada's Director of Fragile and Humanitarian Programs. "Eliminating barriers to access for girls to quality, inclusive education and changing mindsets around gender norms will enable them to live up to their full potential."

"Partnering with World Vision Canada represents a significant breakthrough in our reach and opportunity to scale our groundbreaking program globally," says Make Music Matter CEO and founder Darcy Ataman. "With music we can help alchemize the trauma of those we serve into moving works of art that help not only to heal and empower them individually, but cohere the fabric of the communities they live in."

Quick facts about the Healing in Harmony program

- The Healing in Harmony model was developed in part under the guidance of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege at Panzi Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Healing in Harmony currently works in 7 countries - DRC, Rwanda, Turkey, Guinea, South Africa, Uganda, and Peru - with a first Canadian site at Fox Lake Cree Nation, Manitoba, set to begin in early 2020. Target groups include survivors of sexual violence, people living in poverty and conflict, youth at risk, and refugee children with disabilities.
- Initial research has shown that Healing in Harmony has a positive impact on participants' mental health, with significant reductions in the prevalence of PTSD, anxiety and depression.

About Make Music Matter

[Make Music Matter](#) uses the creative process as a therapeutic tool to help empower marginalized individuals and communities. Its innovative Healing in Harmony music therapy program is centered on the belief that music can be an integral part of a community-driven, holistic healing model.

Working in tandem with a local trained therapist and music producer, participants write, record, and professionally produce songs about their emotions and experiences. Participants emerge as empowered artists and advocates whose music is distributed to millions via local radio, community concerts, and digital distribution worldwide. The music is disseminated by [A4A \(Artists 4 Artists\) Records](#), in partnership with Warner Music Canada, with rights and royalties returned to the artists.

For further information, hi-res photographs, or interviews, please contact:

Rebecca Purver
Media and Communications Officer
rebecca@makemusicmatter.org
514-578-2036

makemusicmatter.org
fb: [@makemusicmatter.org](https://www.facebook.com/makemusicmatter.org)
tw: [@mmm_org](https://twitter.com/mmm_org)
ig: [@_makemusicmatter](https://www.instagram.com/makemusicmatter)

###