



**EEP: Nyragusu Camp**

Logan Cochrane

HIV/AIDS has taken a massive toll, and continues to do so, upon individuals and societies around the world. With around forty million infected and twenty-five million already dead, the results are unparalleled in history. The virus is not only killing those infected but is destroying countries, communities, and families.

Generose lives in Nyragusu refugee camp, sixteen but not attending school. She is now living with a foster family as her mother died of HIV/AIDS and her father returning to DR Congo. She says, "I want to attend school to have knowledge and to prepare for my future." The cost of secondary school prevents her from doing so. Generose's story is not of many. She is one of fourteen million children orphaned by HIV/AIDS death.

Working To Empower acknowledges that community awareness and sensitization of HIV/AIDS is not enough. Factors related to HIV prevalence include education, poverty, and access to care and support. These are not direct causes, but knowledge is often not sufficient. For example, the widow who can not feed her children may know the risks of infection but feels she has no choice or option. Or, the orphan, desperate to attend school may know the risk but meets with the teacher of 'Sugar Daddy' as it appears to be the only solution.

The Emebet Education Program is one such program so help, being a sponsorship initiative born in war-torn eastern DR Congo. Introduce to fifty orphans by an organization of illiterate women, they explained their situation: "We try to find homes for the orphans. No orphans are attending school because of the cost – not just the fees but the uniform and supplies." Facing such a situation, WTE created a way for these children to attend school. Sponsors can support a child for one year or for their whole education career via donations. Each sponsor is also encouraged to be in contact with the child so as to provide some social support and encourage learning.



The program has now been expanded and works in five locations. Since each situation is different, each sponsorship fee is also. Such costs range from \$10 per year per student in Tanzania's Lugufu refugee camp to \$240 per year per student for secondary boarding school in northern Uganda. Currently over one-hundred and fifty orphans have applied for sponsorship and look forward to your support.