



PRESS RELEASE

EquityBCDC launches Equity Leaders Program (ELP) a mentorship and leadership development program

- *EquityBCDC will champion socio-economic prosperity through six (6) pillars; Education and Leadership Development, Energy and Environment, Enterprise Development and Financial Inclusion, Food and Agriculture, Health and Social Protection.*
- *EquityBCDC launches Equity Leaders Program (ELP), a rigorous leadership development program that will benefit 131 top-performing young scholars including 81 boys and 50 girls who topped the final 6 secondary school examinations*

Kinshasa, 14th December 2021EquityBCDC has extended its social impact contribution through scaling up the various programs that are already under implementation through Equity Group. The Bank, whose purpose is to transform lives, give dignity and expand opportunities for wealth creation, has launched a mentorship and leadership development program dubbed the Equity Leaders Program (ELP).

The Equity Leaders Program, which is one of the programs under the Education and Leadership Development pillar has launched in the DRC by selecting 131 top-performing young scholars including 81 boys and 50 girls who topped the final 6 secondary school examinations. The scholars will form the first cohort of ELP beneficiaries in DRC.

The 131 scholars will undertake a one-week induction process and proceed to join EquityBCDC for a 2-6 months paid internship program where each scholar will get a monthly stipend of USD400 and will experience on-the-job training and mentorship within various departments. The mentorship and coaching engagement with the scholars will also continue for the period they will be in university as students. They will continue to earn as they learn by way of earning commissions from marketing the Eazzy suite of digital banking products.

In addition to the skills training, ELP aims to empower young academically gifted scholars through mentorship and leadership development and is keen on spurring personal and professional development, creativity and innovation and community engagement amongst the scholars thus moulding them into forward-thinking young professionals with a heart for community give back.

While speaking to the scholars H.E Eve Bazaiba, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Environment said, "On behalf of the President of the Republic of DRC, I would like to congratulate you for emerging amongst the top and for being selected to form the inaugural class of the Equity Leaders Program (ELP) in DRC. You are all bearers of the torch for the future of this country and Africa at large. EquityBCDC has given you the ability to take charge of yourselves and purpose in life. Congratulations once again and all the best in your endeavours."

Celestin Muntuabu, the Managing Director of EquityBCDC said: "Education is one of the pillars that we hold dear and one that our Congolese youth need for their development. Today, we are proud to launch the Equity Leaders Program which will give young scholars an opportunity to develop their leadership skills and get exposure from industry captains preparing them to be next generation leaders who will contribute to the socio-economic prosperity of the nation".

Equity Group Managing Director and CEO Dr. James Mwangi said, "The youth hold great potential and are the future of our region. The Equity Leaders Program, which has been in existence since 1998 in Kenya is being launched in DRC to offer an opportunity to youth in the DRC to explore their potential, enjoy a unique experience of getting on the job training even before joining university and also enjoy access to a regional network of professionals. They will also have a chance to network and form strong professional relationships critical in promoting innovation, entrepreneurship and research among others, thus contributing to social and economic development of our region."



Dr. Mwangi also noted that Equity Group is a purpose-led business with a unique shared value model that pursues a mission that is both profit and social impact led. EquityBCDC will implement its programs through six key pillars which are; Education and Leadership Development, Energy and Environment, Enterprise Development and Financial Inclusion, Food and Agriculture, Health and Social Protection. These pillars are mapped against Equity's values and the UN 2030 SDG goals.

The Equity Leaders Program has been designed uniquely and will also offer scholars an opportunity to apply for admission and full financial aid at global universities through admission into the College Counselling Program. The program runs for 3 months and is aimed at exposing them to the global universities admission process and how to manoeuvre through a new education system.

About EquityBCDC

EquityBCDC is a commercial bank operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It was born from the merger, after 112 years, between Equity Bank Congo and Banque Commerciale du Congo (BCDC).

EquityBCDC serves over 1,000,000 customers through an extensive network of 70 branches across the DRC, 13 dedicated western union branches, 214 ATMs, 14 ATMs, 10 Master Agents and over 3,700 banking agents to complement its digital channels, making it the largest financial services network in the DRC.

EquityBCDC is a subsidiary of Equity Group Holdings Plc, a financial services company listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange, Uganda Securities Exchange, and Rwanda Stock Exchange. In addition to Equity Bank Uganda, the Group has banking subsidiaries in, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, DRC, South Sudan, and a Commercial Representative Office in Ethiopia; with additional non-banking subsidiaries engaged in the provision of investment banking, custodial, insurance agency, philanthropy, consulting, and infrastructure services.

Equity Group is the largest bank in the region with assets of USD 11.2 billion. It is also the largest bank in terms of deposits, with a market capitalisation of USD 2 billion and a customer base of over 15 million. The Group has 337 branches, 58,756 agents, 34,941 merchants, 691 ATMs and has widely adopted digital banking channels.

The Banker's Top 1,000 World Banks 2021 ranked Equity Bank 761 in its global ranking, position 39 globally on return on assets, position 71 on return on capital, and position 149 on soundness (Capital Assets to Assets ratio). The Banker's Top 100 African Banks 2020 ranked the Bank 7th among the top 10 banks in Africa, 5th for strength, 9th for growth performance, 8th for return on risk and 6th for profitability and leverage category. In the same year, Moody's gave the Bank an overall rating of B2 with a negative outlook, identical to the Kenyan government's sovereign rating, due to the Bank's strong brand recognition, strong liquidity buffers and resilient funding profile, well-established national franchise, and strong adoption of digital and alternative distribution channels.

About the Equity Leaders Program

The Equity Leaders Program was founded in 1998 and has scaled up over time to benefit 37,140 scholars. The paid internship component of the Equity Leaders Program admits the top performing boy and girl in the secondary level final exams from each region in DRC where Equity Bank has a branch. The program aims at empowering young academically gifted scholars by supporting their access to education in public universities in DRC and around the globe, as well as equipping them with leadership skills.

The paid internship runs for the 2 months between secondary school completion and the beginning of university. In Kenya, 6,713 scholars have benefitted from internships at Equity Bank prior to joining local or global universities. Of these, 688 scholars have secured admissions and scholarships in top global universities.

The leadership development model seeks to develop scholars in four program areas:

1. **Personal and Professional Development** to enable scholars to identify their unique talents and strengths and to match their individual interests with meaningful career opportunities.
2. **Global exposure** to encourage scholars to expand their horizons and become world class-leaders who can compete and succeed in a global marketplace.



3. **Creativity and Innovation** to empower scholars to think creatively about providing solutions to the challenges and opportunities facing communities around the world.
4. **Community Engagement** to inspire scholars to use their abilities for good and to make a positive impact on society.

While developing individual scholars in these thematic areas, the program also endeavours to create a strong network of scholars working together across disciplines and sectors to transform their communities, their country, and the world at large. This leadership development model is delivered through the following initiatives:

- The Internship Program which allows scholars at local universities to return for internships with EquityBCDC and its partners during university holidays to get professional experience while saving for their university education. The program runs for the 2 months between secondary school completion and the beginning of university.
- The Global Summer Internship Program which allows scholars studying at international universities to return to Africa for their summer holidays and intern with Equity BCDC and its partners, giving them work experience and building their professional networks on the continent.
- The College Counselling Program which supports Equity scholars to access admission and scholarships to some of the world's leading universities, including the Ivy League universities in the US.
- The Annual Leadership Congress which allows scholars to connect with each other to form a strong community, learn about leadership and employability skills, and interact with successful leaders from various industries
- The Innovators Program which trains and develops scholars in innovation and entrepreneurship skills, allowing them to write business plans and pitch their ideas for seed funding.
- The Centers of Excellence Program where scholars provide residential mentorship to various secondary schools.
- The University Chapters at campuses in DRC and abroad that serve as platforms for interaction, networking, and activities for the scholars during their university session.
- The *Wings to Fly* Mentorship Program which enables scholars to visit *Wings to Fly* high school scholarship recipients at their respective high schools to provide mentorship and academic coaching.

For additional information: www.equitygroupholdings.com - www.equitygroupfoundation.com - EquityBCDC <https://equitygroupholdings.com/cd/>