



May 15, 2017

Illuminating the Value Chain: BanQu and Eastern Congo Initiative launch pilot program to revolutionize the way farmers work in eastern Congo.

Eastern Congo Initiative (easterncongo.org) and **BanQu** (banquapp.com) are proud to announce an innovative pilot program to fundamentally improve the lives of farmers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Currently in the DRC, most farmers have no access to banking services, no reliable information about their productivity and harvests, no access to reliable and trackable economic information, and no possibility of attaining a loan or even basic credit. A massive knowledge gap exists – to the extreme detriment of the Congolese farmer.

To address this problem, Eastern Congo Initiative (ECI) and BanQu will implement a data safety net for farmers on the **blockchain** – a decentralized network of secure data storage. Using BanQu’s blockchain-based network and app, farmers will be able to maintain a stable economic identity, track purchases and get essential information on farming conditions and opportunities.

This partnership represents a massive step forward in the way farmers in Congo work. Thanks to BanQu and ECI, with support from **SHIFT Social Impact Solutions**, farmers in eastern Congo will be able to access data to document and drive their work.

Reliable, secure information illuminates deficiencies in value chains. ECI and BanQu are proud to ensure that light remains in Congo for years to come.

About Eastern Congo Initiative

Founded by Ben Affleck in 2009, ECI has worked to improve economic and social conditions in the eastern region of the DRC. Through grant-making and private-sector partnerships, ECI has helped triple the income of 5,000 coffee farmers, supported the purchase of over 2600 tons of cocoa, and positively impacted the lives of 25,000 people. Learn more at EasternCongo.org.

Contact

martin@easterncongo.org

About BanQu

BanQu is a software technology company on a mission to connect refugees, the displaced, and the world’s poorest to the global economy through a secure, portable digital identity that maintains transaction history through a proprietary blockchain-based platform. Learn more at www.banquapp.com.