

Friends of CME Trust

registered charity number: 1104119

www.friendsofcme.org

Introduction:

40 years of work was seriously disrupted in 2002 when the Christian Medical Centre (CME) in Nyankunde was caught up in a long-running war (which has claimed 5 million lives) and was attacked. Following dispersion to Beni and Bunia, CME is now seeking to rebuild its operations.

Established in June 2004, the UK based charity, Friends of CME Trust, seeks to relieve sickness and poverty in the north-eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The primary focus of the support is CME in its medical and educational work.

The needs are vast, the resources are few, yet comparatively little can have a significant impact on the lives of many.

This leaflet sets out information about the charity ,which we hope you will find helpful .For more information visit our website: www.friendsofcme.org

Location of Beni, Nyankunde, and

1. Beni 2. Nyankunde 3. Bunia



DRC location in Africa

40 Years of Medical Care

In the centre of Africa, sits Nyankunde, a small village near the eastern border of the DRC (formerly Zaire). In 1966, CME was set up in Nyankunde by five local churches. For nearly 40 years, CME served an immediate population of 150,000 and supported medical services (a medical training school, a pharmacy, and specialist hospital treatment) in an area the size of France, with an estimated population of 8 million people!

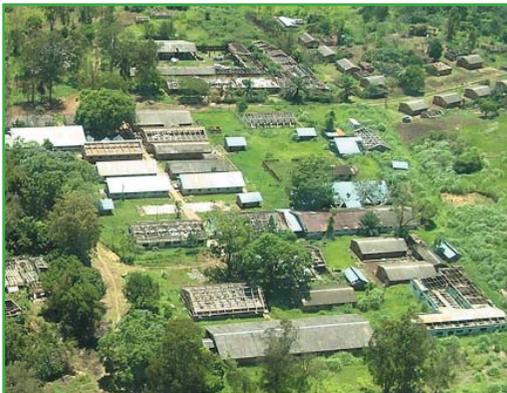
In 2002 CME employed 350 staff, had 250 hospital beds, saw 2,000 outpatients a month, performed 250 operations a month, distributed medicines to numerous out-lying dispensaries and, further still, ran a nursing school with 120 students and a university with 100 students.

Conflict and Destruction

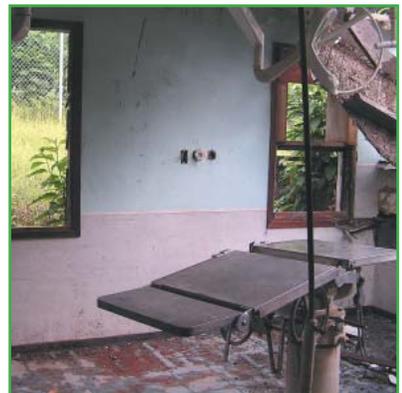
In 1996, war started in the north-east of the country and since that time, much fighting and bloodshed has taken place. Over 10 African countries have been involved and old tribal conflicts have been inflamed. Most estimates put the number of deaths resulting directly and indirectly from the war in excess of 5 million. 2.5 million people were displaced. Since 2003, United Nations troops have been deployed in various towns to try to bring peace and stability.

Massacre

On September 5th 2002, CME, which for the most part had been un-touched directly by the wars, was attacked. Within half an hour, 1,000 people were murdered including patients, hospital staff and villagers. After days being held hostage at Nyankunde, the remaining patients and staff fled on foot. Most travelled south, walking for two weeks through the rain forest with nothing but the clothes that they were wearing. Mercifully, no more died and 4 babies were born en route! Nyankunde became a 'ghost-town' and the medical centre was looted and largely destroyed.



Aerial view of the devastation at Nyankunde in 2002



Old operating room at CME Nyankunde

Rebuilding CME

Most of the people eventually settled in a town called Beni, situated 150 km south of Nyankunde. Since that time, they have begun to rebuild what remains of the medical centre in a collection of rented buildings such as a former school, a warehouse, and a family home.

(see pictures below)



Derelict pharmacy at CME Nyankunde



Operating theatre at CME Beni



Drug store at the CME Beni pharmacy



Hospital wards at CME Beni

Other CME staff settled eventually in Bunia to the east where a small hospital has been established. Eventually, people returned to Nyankunde too and CME has restarted its operations. At its three sites, CME now provides over 200 beds and employs over 200 staff including 14 doctors. In the first half of 2009 approximately 4,500 patients were admitted to the three hospitals, 2,000 operations were performed and 10,500 outpatient consultations took place.

The nursing school functions in Beni and Nyankunde with about 100 students enrolled. The facilities are basic and student accommodation is poor. In addition, nearly 300 university level students were enrolled in 2009.

A More Certain Future?

In 2006, DRC held its first elections in over 40 years. With increasing stability CME is starting the construction of its new buildings on recently purchased sites. The charity provides funds to enable CME to relocate from its rented buildings to its own purpose built facilities in Beni.

Photographs of the newly built intensive care unit and operating theatre in Beni.



Despite some hope returning to DRC, the international rescue committee has estimated that 1,200 people die daily as a result of what Unicef calls 'the world's deadliest humanitarian crisis since world war 2.' For the moment, therefore, the CME leadership has decided to support medical work at each of the three locations.

Would you like to support the charity?

We have no operating costs and all time and resources are donated by the trustees so that all funds received can be passed to CME. For more detailed aims or our work and guidance on how you can support, see our additional booklet, 'Giving to Friends of CME Trust'.

Or, contact the trustees, Chris Almond, Justin Burdon, Elsie Harris, Chris Heard or Remy Toko at:

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