

'...helping to bring hope to the people of the democratic republic of congo.'



friends of cme trust

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Dear friends,

I hope you will find this newsletter helpful in bringing you more up-to-date with the situation in North-East DRC. Since our last newsletter there has been progress on the political front, with action against the rebel movement that was invading the country from Rwanda. Our dear friend Masumbuko wrote last week to say that the M23 group now seems to be in-fighting rather than attacking the Congolese population. One impact of the invasion last year was that Mission Aviation Fellowship – which still serves CME by flying in patients and distributing medicines – had to evacuate its staff from Bunia. We heard this week that they have all returned to Bunia now and plans are afoot for some of their staff to settle back at Nyankunde. This will be fantastic news for Nyankunde, since MAF have not had a permanent presence in the village since the attack on CME hospital in 2002.

Container arrives!

We received good news that the container, of mainly physio equipment, has arrived at Nyankunde. Sadly, however, Chris Phillips did not recover from the illness we mentioned last time and is back in the UK undergoing numerous tests. She is quite unwell and unable to return for the foreseeable future though she is very keen to do so as soon as she can.

We have heard that the micro-credit project at Nyankunde is continuing to grow with over 700 women now involved. Also, good news for Nyankunde is the arrival of two American doctors from Samaritan's Purse, Drs Warren and Lindsey Cooper, who will stay for 2 years.

Schools at Nyankunde



The two pictures (*above*) show a number of the children from the schools around Nyankunde that we have helped over the years. Last month there were 7,096 children at the 24 schools. There has been a slight increase in the number of teachers now being paid by the DRC

government – 146 out of 255. However, parents are still expected to pay a monthly school fee to supplement the salaries received. Nearly 1,500 of the children are orphans and we are concerned that this number has dropped slightly. Jean-Luc, who helps manage the project for us, says that a few families have moved back to their home areas and their fields since security has improved but that there are no schools in their villages. Other families remain near Nyankunde but cannot afford to send their children to school. Exam fees for the 501 finalists are due soon and these amount to about one month's salary for the secondary students and \$6 for the primary children. It would be very sad if these children could not take these exams and so we are hoping we can pay these fees for the children. The total cost will be \$6,700. We have some funds available and hope that we can at least pay for the orphans' fees. If you are able and willing to help us pay for more students, please do get in touch.

4th building at Sosé is on its way!

Since our last letter, we have received funds to help build an additional ward at the new hospital site in Sosé, near Beni. These came mainly from the *BIKE100* sponsored ride last summer organised by Dennis Tailor (thanks Den!). You may remember that men and women were having to share the main ward and this will solve that problem. Construction started a few weeks ago with the foundations, as can be seen in the pictures (*right*). More money will be needed to complete the ward so, again, anything you can spare would be hugely appreciated.



Change of leadership at CME

At the recent bi-ennial meeting of the non-executive Council that oversees CME, Dr. Mike Upio stepped down as CEO and was replaced by Pastor Tsongo who has been a faithful worker at CME for many years. Those of us who know him will be pleased with this bold appointment of a non-medic as the new executive head of CME.

Google CME Nyankunde

We recently found out that Nyankunde is on Google Earth! You have to misspell it as 'niakunde'. Take a look!! Some of us who lived there will find it quite sad to see the shell of many buildings we used to live and work in.

Thank you, as always, for your interest in supporting the people who are usually forgotten.

Chris Almond
For the Trustees