

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



# friends of cme trust

charity number: 1104119

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Dear friends,

I hope this letter finds you well and with a measure of peace at this troubled time. Let's start with great news about the Ebola virus: it's now been declared officially eradicated from the eastern DRC. It has taken nearly 2 years with 3,444 confirmed cases and, tragically, 2,264 deaths. So we rejoice in this news. Here's a WHO article: <https://www.who.int/csr/don/05-March-2020-ebola-drc/en/> The WHO warned that further cases are still likely from time to time; for example, 1 case was reported in Beni on 10 April. And, of course, COVID-19 has now reached DRC so the country is in a state of lock-down like the UK and many others.

## Construction update

As mentioned last newsletter, we had already sent CME £18,000 for the construction of the new children's ward at Beni/Sose. We are really thankful to those who responded to our request last time which resulted in donations of £14,700. With this, and our unrestricted donations, we have been able to send the required funds to CME to complete the ward.



## Oicha orphans

One of the biggest impacts of the Ebola virus had been on schools which struggled to remain open. Added to this, the killings in the area by the Islamic extremist Ugandan ADF group, had caused many to flee their homes. The program to assist the orphans had to be postponed and we have been eagerly waiting for news that the schools could open and the program re-start. In 2019, we supported 210 orphans at Oicha near Beni who received our help to ensure they had a meal each day, could go to school and received trauma counselling. In our last newsletter, 333 orphaned children had returned and were waiting to start school. We were also waiting to find out how much the school fees would be. We are delighted to say that the schools re-started in January and 339 are enrolled in the program. We had received £20,500 in donations and when we added up the costs, the total we needed £20,200 – we truly have a God involved in our work who knows exactly what we need!

The COVID-19 virus has currently interrupted schools, but the program is going ahead within new limitations. If you haven't yet seen it, please click on the 4-minute video from this project which shows what we are providing and hears from children and adults involved. It can be viewed on our website by following this link:

[http://www.friendsofcme.org/Videos/2019-OEIL\\_ORPHANS\\_OF\\_OICHA\\_BENI\\_DRC.mp4](http://www.friendsofcme.org/Videos/2019-OEIL_ORPHANS_OF_OICHA_BENI_DRC.mp4)

Here are some recent photos from a classroom:



## Urgent Equipment needs

We have been asked by CME if we can help with some urgent equipment needs they have, particularly a portable digital X-ray machine and – because of COVID-19 – a ventilator. We have been in discussions with a UK charity, MedAid (<https://www.medaid.co.uk/>) which specialises in providing hospital equipment suitable for the environments of developing countries. MedAid also donates many useful surgical and other equipment as part of its service. Remy, one of our medical trustees, has visited MedAid and was impressed by the quality of its equipment. At the same time, we were contacted by a Canadian doctor, who used to work for CME, who is also using MedAid to send orthopedic equipment to CME. This seemed an odd 'coincidence'. Then, we discovered that MedAid is also in the process of sending other equipment via another UK charity known to us to other hospitals in eastern DRC. So, it seems too great an opportunity to overlook to collaborate on shipping and logistics which will save lots of money and time.

Remy has worked with CME and MedAid on a list of the most urgent items. In addition to the portable digital X-ray and a ventilator, there are oxygen concentrators, pulse oxymeters and an ultrasound machine required. Including the items donated by MedAid, the value is in excess of £70,000 but we can buy them for £42,000.

At present we and CME have just under £10,000 between us. It makes so much sense to try and maximise what we can send out in one shipment, since it's such a rare opportunity. So, forgive us for asking, but we want to let you all know in case you were able to make a special contribution at this time. We realise these are very uncertain times but it seems God has been at work again in bringing all these various aspects together. Just as He provided for the orphans, we trust Him to provide what is needed now in terms of equipment.

Our bank details are:

**Account Name:** Friends of CME Trust  
National Westminster Bank  
**Sort Code:** 60-12-45  
**Account Number:** 34512004.

Thank you, as always, for remembering the people of north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Trustees  
Chris Almond