

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



friends of cme trust

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(Copy of Aug 2008 newsletter)

August 2008

Report on Activities of Friends of CME Trust

I am writing to update you on our recent activities to support the work of *Centre Medical Evangelique* in north-east DRC. We are thankful that there has been relative calm in the region since the elections last year. On the other hand, there have not been noticeable positive political, social or economic developments yet and the Government still has a lot to do to improve democracy, accountability and the standard of living for its people. I have attended meetings at the Houses of Parliament recently where British MPs are unhappy at the lack of progress by the DRC elected politicians. While rarely in our news, most people of the DRC are still living in deep poverty on less than £1 a day and over 1,000 still die every day from poverty-related factors.

CME continues to operate from its three centres in Nyankunde, Bunia and Beni. We currently support CME financially each month with about £2,750 in the following areas:

Subsidies for hospital beds:	Amount (£)
Nyankunde	250
Beni	260
Bunia	200

Subsidies for operations and medicines:	Amount (£)
Nyankunde	40
Beni	300

Food for children:	Amount (£)
Nyankunde	352
Beni	50

Other Activities:	Amount (£)
Orphans support	180
Nyankunde schools	1,100
Womens' work	20



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Hospital Report

In February, CME was able to hold its first AGM in Nyankunde since the destruction of the hospital in 2002. The Medical Director gave a report on the work at the various sites, some statistics of which are below. A copy of the whole report can be found on our website at: www.friendsofcme.com > home > latest news > CME Annual Report 2007.

	Nyankunde	Beni	Bunia
No. of inpatients:	3,932	3,868	1,404
No. of beds:	80	77	40
No. of operations:	274	2,972	384
No. of personnel:	111	69	46
Outpatient consultations	42,074	7,571	6,858

Beni Hospital Rebuilding

Since the beginning of the year, we have sent CME the remaining funds necessary to complete the new operating theatre in Beni. Thank you again to all of you who gave to support this. The world-wide increase in prices impacted the project in March when the builder could not continue due to the elevated costs of materials. Thankfully, the work has recommenced now and is nearing completion. The Intensive Care block will commence soon after – again many thanks to our donors who have provided the funds.



Support for Refugee Camps

At the end of last year, in consultation with Mwaka – who set up and runs the refugee camps around Beni – we stopped funding the food programs in the camps, since most of the refugees had returned home. Encouragingly, Mwaka reported that, as a result of our recent programme, there are now no malnourished children in the eight Beni camps!

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Mwaka relayed the following message of thanks from those at the camps:

'The whole beneficiary community conveys their thanks to the donors who made this programme possible through PPSSP. "In spite of multiple socio-economic and health and nutritional difficulties encountered in our daily life, we will remain thankful and pray God to bless them richly".'

Those who remained in the camps were from areas still deemed unsafe to return, or who have lost their previous jobs and lands in the war. The families remaining needed support to become self-sufficient and less reliant on our funding in the future. To this end, we sent £7,000 to provide agricultural seeds and tools, livestock, and funds to enable the women to start making soap from palm oil. Eight camps are benefitting from this project: 248 families. Despite some initial frustrations, including rats destroying crops, theft of produce, some teething errors in agricultural techniques and timing, and a lack of enough tools, the results are so far generally very positive, with the displaced persons wanting to continue their start in agricultural self-sufficiency. There are also reports of families being able to sell their crops in exchange for other essentials such as oil, salt and salt, and to send their children to school.



At the refugee camps: woman working on their crops and children enjoying the harvest!

Nyankunde Schools Project

During the first half of 2008, we are pleased to report that the schools in Nyankunde, with their 3,500 children, have functioned almost without interruption. Our support, in collaboration with Mission Aviation Fellowship, continues to provide a basic salary of \$15 a month to each teacher. In recent months, about half of the 160 teachers began to receive a Government salary of \$50–\$60 a month. They agreed to 'pool' this salary with the monies received from us and then divide the total with their colleagues. We were very encouraged by this collaboration which enabled everyone to receive an approximately \$40 a month combined income.

Unfortunately, with no prior warning, the Government stopped most of the salaries in May. This affected all teachers in the region who then went on strike. After a couple of days with no

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school the teachers at Nyankunde agreed with the parents to return to work with the parents contributing about 25p a month for the remaining 3 months of the school year (orphans will go free). We hope and pray that the government will see sense and restart the salaries for all the teachers.

Administration

Friends of CME Trust is currently assessing how we can best provide regular news to you. We would like to become more 'green' by distributing quarterly web newsletters by email where possible, but recognize that some will still prefer to receive a newsletter by post. To help us, we would be most grateful if you'd complete the section below, indicating whether you would like to continue receiving news by email or post or not at all. Please return the form to us by one of the methods specified below as soon as you can. Finally, please do visit the website at: www.friendsofcme.com.

Thank you for all your continued interest in, and support for, our friends in DRC.

Best wishes,

| Chris
(On behalf of the trustees)

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