

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



friends of cme trust

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Dear friends,

We are writing to give you an update on the support of the orphans in Oicha that we wrote about in December. In addition, there is some recent information on the new hospital at Sosé.

New orphans

We wrote last time of the 199 children that had been identified as needing food, help with school uniforms, materials and trauma counselling. Thanks to £9,000 of donations we received, the children attended school from November to June with the required uniform, books and bags. The children have been taken in by foster families and we are supporting those families with rice, milk and bread. The project also provided them all with bars of washing soap. The children's teachers report that they are achieving more as a result of this food aid. The orphans are overseen by Daniel Masumbuko and a team of trained trauma counsellors along with community leaders who distribute the food and ensure the children are settled in foster families. The school teachers seek to normalise their lives and are trying to integrate them into their classes. Families and teachers report progress for the children who have found some psychological healing from the counselling. We have updated our website with a 4-minute video, more detailed reports and some testimonies of the children:

<http://www.friendsofcme.com/>. Here is one example of Kahindo:

When war came to Mayi-Moya, a village located to the North of Oicha, everyone fled. Kahindo got a lift in the car of someone who was also fleeing. She heard people who came from the forest saying that her father was among those who had been killed. She still doesn't know where her six siblings and mother are. Whenever she thinks of them, she feels overloaded with pain. Life in her foster family, according to her, is tough. If people are unkind to her this makes her miss her parents and siblings very much. However, from attending the counselling sessions, she is progressively feeling better. Kahindo also mentioned that she has forgiven those who killed her father and perhaps the rest of her family. Though it is still hard for her to deal with that situation, she has realized that her inner pain has gone.

One of the most moving aspects of the project is that the children and families have felt love and hope after their tragedies because people from so far away are concerned about them.

The future for these children?

Going forward, we would love to support Kahindo and the other orphans for at least another school year. The approximate cost is £6 a month or £70 a year per child. The number of orphans being looked after has grown to 269 and inflation of around 15% is pushing up food

costs. To accommodate all the children last year, milk and bread had to replace the more expensive beans in their food parcels. We need to raise about £20,000 and this will also enable the reintroduction of the more nutritious beans into the food parcels, as well as providing school materials, uniforms and soap as before.

The great news is that we have already received £12,500 of this target. Would you be able to help ensure that we can provide the same level of support to all the 269 children? If you can, the easiest way is to go to our website and press the button 'Support us at Give.Net': <http://www.friendsofcme.com/> . Our bank details are Nat West /60-12-45/ 34512004 or you can send us a cheque. A massive thank you if you can help!



Above: These pictures show food and clothing being distributed to the orphans.

Recent progress at Sosé/Beni

We thank God that, in general, the region is safer. However, there was a recent bomb attack on a school in Beni which, as you can imagine, was very unsettling for the children. Thankfully there were no casualties. The CME hospital at Beni/Sosé has decided to erect a fence around its site to help improve security. We provided funds to enable this and we recently received these photos [*below*] of the hospital.



Thank you for all your concern and support.

Sincerely, on behalf of the Trustees,
Chris Almond