

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



friends of cme trust

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Dear friends,

Firstly, we send you our warm greetings at this Christmas time.

New orphans

Following our last letter and appeal, we are thrilled that we have raised sufficient funds to feed, send to school, and provide counselling for 315 orphans. Last year the number of orphans rose to 269 so accordingly we set a fundraising target of £20,000 to support these again. Thank you to those of who were able to give and to those who pray. The Lord was totally in control: we received £26,000 in gifts and – without us telling CME that our target had been exceeded – we then heard that there were now 315 children in need and that the cost to provide for them all would be £25,700! We praise God for His kindness to these children. You can find out more about how our support helps from a 4-minute video on the bottom right of our homepage: <http://www.friendsofcme.com/>

The children are being homed by foster families and we supply the families with enough rice, beans, milk and bread for a daily meal. The project also provides them monthly with bars of soap. The DRC government increased the annual school fees to \$33 this year which is a struggle for many – imagine if you had to pay half a month's salary for each of your children in school fees. Through your support, we have been able to pay the fees for the children. We also provide school uniforms, bags and some basic note books.

The project continues to be 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. The school teachers seek to normalise their lives and are trying to integrate them into their classes. Many of the children had behavioural problems after the trauma they had seen, a number were unable to talk and found it hard to concentrate. Many of them were determined to avenge their parents. Teachers report progress in all of these areas but there is still much to be done and since these children are mainly young, we would like to support them for a number of years if possible. Here is one orphan's experience:



She is called Gentil. Her father was killed by the ADF in a field. She and her mother heard that he was caught and killed but didn't have the chance to see his body and bury him. She felt very shocked by that news and took the decision to do her best to revenge her father one day. But since attending the trauma healing sessions, the pain she used to feel whenever she heard about the ADF is diminishing. Gentil has already forgiven those in the ADF who killed her father.

The schools started in November after the children returned from harvest. However, insecurity has meant they have been closed for two weeks since then. If you pray, please remember this continuing struggle for these vulnerable children and those caring for them.

Recent progress at Sose/Beni

Around the new CME hospital in Beni/Sose there has been much unrest and sporadic looting and killing. Last time we mentioned that we had helped erect a fence around the hospital. Unfortunately, in spite of this, a month ago the CME hospital was attacked at night. Some patients were hurt and robbed as were CME staff. We sent funds to CME so that the patients affected didn't have to pay their bills and to replace and restore damaged and stolen goods.

How effective is CME's work in view of the troubles in the country?

- This photo shows the hospital at Nyankunde which has been restored and looks even better than before it was attacked in 2012.
- Over its 3 sites, CME now has 373 beds, 310 employees and trains 243 medical students.
- During this year so far, nearly 13,000 patients have been consulted, 2,300 operations performed and 2,600 babies born.
- In addition, 800 patients have benefited from nutritional support, of which 500 were severely malnourished.
- Spiritual healing has also taken place with 392 people becoming Christian believers and 511 renewing a previous faith in God.



Thank you for all your concern and support. Once again, we send you all our greetings and best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year. One of the most moving impacts of our support for the orphans is that the children and families have felt love and hope after their tragedies because people from so far away are concerned about them. I am sure the orphans, like Kahindo/Patrick (photo above and who features in our video) would love us to pass on their thanks and greetings too.

Sincerely on behalf of the Trustees,

Chris Almond