

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



# friends of cme trust

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Dear friends,

Thank you so much for your ongoing interest in the work of our charity and for taking time to read this newsletter. We really appreciate your support whether in prayer, gifts or both. All the money we receive is from our supporters and every penny of it goes to CME.

Thankfully, the number of COVID-19 cases in north-east DRC has been few so schools are re-opening and CME operations have continued largely unaffected. This letter focuses on our work with orphan children and gives updates on the equipment we sent out and the nearly completed children's ward.

## **Children's support – we need your help please**

We provide ongoing support to children in two main ways. The first is to pay the **exam fees for orphans** who live in Nyankunde, where the original CME hospital was established. There are usually 100–150 orphaned children who sit their school exams each year at Nyankunde and some schools charge an extra exam fee. We pay this for the orphans since, at nearly \$50 (at least half a month's salary), it is beyond the means of most families who may also have their own children's fees to pay. Thankfully, we already have funds allocated to this for the current year.

Secondly, we support **orphans around Beni and Oicha** where CME established its second hospital after Nyankunde was attacked in 2002. For each child, we provide a family meal each day (rice & beans) and pay the annual school fees, along with school stationary and uniforms when needed. These children have been orphaned due to militia attacks and are often traumatised, hopeless and vengeful. Through the programme, the children receive counselling and we hear moving stories of healing, forgiveness and hope. The overall costs per child are less than £90 a year. The programme has been running now for 5 years and, thankfully, most of the children return annually despite local insecurity. Last year we supported 339 children but the school year was short due to COVID-19, Ebola and militia attacks. This year there are 344 children and the school year is longer so the financial need is higher at £30,000. We really want to maintain our support of these children throughout their schooling. They have already suffered so much and are vulnerable without the education and care. Might you be able to manage a **monthly standing order of £7** to support a child, or send a one-off gift?



This (*left*) is Patrick who we first helped in 2016 when he was left very despondent and deeply saddened after witnessing his father's murder. He was reported as being distracted and disruptive at school. On the *right* is Patrick now: a hopeful young man who, with our help, is starting a part-time business milling flour.



These children (*left x 2*) were kidnapped after their parents and grandparents were murdered. The older boy was forced to be a soldier. Fortunately, all were recently rescued and have joined the school programme.

If you are able to help, we would be most grateful. Our bank details are: Friends of CME Trust, NatWest, Sort Code: 60-12-45, account Number: 34512004 or you can send a cheque to the address above. THANK YOU SO MUCH.

## Urgent Equipment received

In our last newsletter, we mentioned that our first ever delivery of urgent medical equipment, in collaboration with MEDAID, had left the UK. Amazingly, it took only two weeks to reach CME. The roads were typical of north-east DRC and difficult to navigate but the pictures (*right*) show the safe arrival.



This X-Ray (*left*) was taken with one of the two portable digital machines we sent. They have greatly enhanced the medical team's ability to diagnose and treat. These severe fractures were from a 21-year old woman whose village was attacked by armed militia. During the attack, she tried to flee but was tragically caught by some men who broke her legs by beating her with sticks and then raped her. 13 months later she went to CME hospital where the X-Rays were taken and she was able to have surgery and be stabilised by the clamps. She is doing well and attending periodic check-ups.

## Construction of children's ward at Beni/Sose – update

This photo (*right*) shows the new paediatric ward in January and we look forward to hearing when it will be open. It will enable 30 children around Beni to have their own space to be cared for rather than, as now, sharing with adults. Thank you especially to those of you who sent us gifts to build this ward.



We hope this letter helps give you a feel for the challenges and work of CME. Thank you for partnering with us so that we can support CME and its care of the people of north-east DRC.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Trustees  
Chris Almond