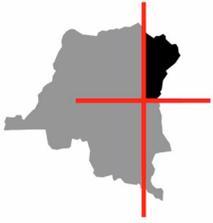


'...helping to bring hope to the people of the democratic republic of congo.'



friends of cme trust

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November 2009

Dear supporter,

URGENT APPEAL FOR HELP WITH NYANKUNDE SCHOOLS

The Problem

This newsletter will be slightly more personal than usual. I feel torn in writing, I don't like to ask for money but, after a lot of thought and prayer, have decided to do so since we are about to run out of money for the schools in Nyankunde village.

When we first started the schools work in August 2006, it was in response to the children who had returned to Nyankunde and who couldn't go to school. Some teachers were available but the government was not paying them salaries. We wanted the children to go to school without their parents having to pay. We started with 15 schools, 120 teachers and 2,739 children. The cost was £1,100 a month – the equivalent of £5 a year per child. The teachers received about \$15 salary a month. We committed to a two year project. We hoped that as DRC stabilized, the government would take on responsibility for the teachers' salaries.

Since then, considerable progress has been made. The government currently pays about \$40 a month to each of 126 teachers. However, the number of teachers stands at 234. Also, as people have resettled at Nyankunde, the number of children has risen to over 5,500 at 24 schools. 1,517 of these are orphans. We have managed to continue our financial support of £1,100 a month for a year beyond our initial target. The project has also been supported by Mission Aviation Fellowship in Kampala. Each month our funds are added to the government salaries and the teachers in each school share the total. Most teachers are receiving between \$20 and \$30 each month. Sadly, this is 30% less than they were receiving at the beginning of the year because of currency devaluation.

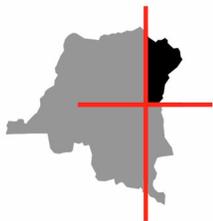
A \$30 monthly salary seems hardly fair for a qualified teacher! In terms of what it can buy today in DRC, it just covers modest essentials. Only one meal a day is usually possible. The staple diet consists of beans (\$14 a month), manioc (\$18 a month), palm oil (\$15 a month) and with just this the salary is insufficient! What about clothes, medicines etc? It is a massive problem and of course would be so much worse if we were not supplementing their salaries.

As for the children: well if they have no school, it hardly bears thinking about. Their futures would be even more bleak. A basic education is so essential to helping them try to escape the cycle of poverty. They would be easy targets again for the child soldier press-gangs that we often hear about.

The Response

Our problem is the foreseeable future. Should the government be fully paying all the teachers? – Yes! But we don't anticipate this happening soon; the DRC is in bad financial shape. Isn't some of this due to corruption? – Yes! But should these children have to wait until a problem they have had nothing to do is resolved? The British government has promised to make primary education free to all in DRC, but while they have accomplished much in other areas, they seem stuck on this one. I have not managed to get an answer from them as to why although I am still pursuing this.

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So, I ask you to consider whether you can help financially to give these children their primary education – either yourself or people or organisations that you know. We need £2,200 a month. This letter is being sent to 163 people (at no charge to the charity). **If we could all give £11 a month under Gift Aid, our goal would be reached!** Could you make some minor adjustments to your monthly expenditure – like one less takeaway a month; reduce your weekly shopping bill by £3; walk short journeys to save petrol; forego some exercise/gym class; wash your car if you use a car wash – to give these children a life-changing chance? Perhaps you know a church, a school, a club, a business which could give a substantial gift or match any gifts that you make? Or do you know someone who doesn't yet know of CME who might be willing to help? Whatever you are able to do will be much appreciated. Enclosed with this letter is a Gift Aid form and Standing Order form. Again, I hesitate to enclose them and don't want to be presumptuous but, if you are able to give, then I hope it will make it easier for you to have the documents to hand. Please remember the Standing Order goes to your bank; the Gift Aid form to us.

Since we hope that our support won't have to be for too long, we commit to giving you quarterly updates of the situation and will inform you should we no longer need your support. Be assured that everything you give will go to CME. As a charity, we have no costs. All time and expenses are donated by the trustees and Guy & Hannah Morrell who distribute this newsletter for us.

SECURITY SITUATION

While the general security situation remains stable, there are still pockets of trouble from time to time. Of course, for those caught up in these isolated incidents they are still traumatic and tragic. While one of the CME Nyankunde leaders was away from home a couple of weeks ago, his home was specifically targeted and looted by armed militia and his 17-year-old daughter taken captive for one night and seriously abused. Our hearts go out to the family and we wonder how people can continue in such circumstances. We in our countries are so fortunate in our relative safety and comfort.

Finally, on a positive note, work continues well on the Intensive Care Unit being constructed at CME Beni. The photo here shows the interior cement floor being laid.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in our work. We hope you find this quarterly update useful, but should you wish to unsubscribe, please email: info@friendsofcme.com.

Best wishes,

Chris
(On behalf of the Trustees)

