

CAN WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Yes We Can



We cannot hide from the problem of poverty – it is everywhere; but we can make a difference. The words of our Lord Jesus in Luke 12:48 are challenging . . . “From the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” In Australia, we have been given much.

COMMUNAUTE EMMANUEL 39 (CE39), with whom we partner, is the registered name for Christian Brethren churches in North East Democratic Republic of Congo. Our first recording trip to NE DRC (then Zaire) was in 1986 when a recording base with national leadership was established at Nyankunde. Recordings were not only produced for evangelism but also for teaching believers, many of whom were illiterate and without regular Bible teaching. Lack of security and general instability was evident throughout the area even at that time, with tribal fighting and rebel activity.

POVERTY AND UNREST

From the outset, many ministries and projects were undertaken by Emmanuel Community Churches in the Eastern and Kivu Provinces of Democratic Republic of Congo, as a means of reaching people with the Word of God. However, with constant wars, unrest and atrocities, many chapels, properties, schools, hospitals and homes have been destroyed. Thousands have been killed, and many others displaced, traumatised and often left with severe injuries and insufficient aid from humanitarian organisations.

EDUCATION OF LOCAL CHILDREN

Our concern, in particular, was for the traumatised children in the North East DR of Congo. Many children were left orphaned or with one parent, personally experiencing tragedies that no child should ever encounter. The thousand or so who escaped from Nyankunde settled in the Manzali/Oicha area in the Kivu Province and, 'Yes', the purchase of land with finance from Australian Christians has made a difference.

On that block of land, 900 children now attend Manzali School; we hear it is the most popular school in the region! From a small beginning there are now two primary schools and one high school, along with a medical block with a separate maternity section. The school children and pygmy squatters benefit from these medical facilities.

Approximately 220 children (orphaned or with one parent) are sponsored by Australians. Sponsorship of \$120 annually provides school uniforms, school fees, personal needs and help for the family caring for them. Non-sponsored students are able to pay a small amount to attend school, and this payment covers teachers' wages. We continue to pray that the second primary school and high school will receive registration from the government. This would mean that the teachers will receive a small wage. For some reason, this is a very long, involved and expensive process which hopefully will take place after the projected elections in

November. However, God is in control and we are praying that it will eventually become a reality.

EXTRACTS FROM CHILDREN'S LETTERS TO SPONSORS

Children write regularly to their sponsors and vice versa. Here are some extracts from recent letters:

"If it was not for your support I could not study . . . Thank you . . . I need your prayer so much for me and for peace in our country."

"I will not forget you till I go in my tomb. I will be remembering all you have done. I have nothing to give you. I know our God is faithful and he is going to bless you in his time."

"My holiday from school was not well, it was destroyed by the insecurity which has taken residence in our territory. Pray for peace in our country."

"To tell the truth, you are nice parents. No-one in Africa as a black one can do what you are doing. I am called to worship your God."

"Thank you for your prayer. We continue in insecurity. We are moving every time from our house to another place to pass our night. We do not know when we can stop that. We need your prayer."

Happy children from the conflict-stricken DR Congo





"I love Sunday school and my school. The rebels activities continue to disturb us but God knows all things."

"Very nice to have your letter which makes me happy and gives me an ending laugh. I promise I will continue to be a good student."

PRAYING AND GIVING

YES, our involvement from Australia in prayer and giving can make a difference. Currently, nine students who passed their government exams have continued studying at different universities with their sponsor's support. They are studying for various degrees including Building, Agriculture, Environment, Medical Doctor, Paediatrics, Nurse and Teacher. One student is doing a short course on computer skills.

Our goal (before retirement!) and the desire of the Congolese School Committee is to see the work self-sustaining, with possibly one more building on site for school leavers to gain practical skills in sewing, computers, woodwork etc. Acira and Berocan Thuambe, our fellow

workers, coordinate this project; we thank God for them and ask that you pray for them. As "workers together with the Lord Jesus," lives are being changed and, YES, together we can help make a difference!

by Noela Elvery & Julie Loudon



Funding for the above ministry is through
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