

Afrika Direkt Hilfe Newsletter 12

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Behind the Scenes

Dear friends,

We just returned from an evaluation visit in the Northwest of Congo in Mbandaka. The terrible civil war raged the worst in the North and East of the country. Although the situation is still the worst in the East because of ongoing unrest there, we decided to help in the North for now, because the East by far



Wolfgang and Mathew before boarding UN plane in Mbandaka

receives the biggest help and finances from a lot of international organizations while little help goes to the North. Before we get into more details, we would like to give you a little insight what all goes into this work, especially at the beginning stage of establishing a new mission station.

When we arrived here last summer for the first time to check out the situation, we literally didn't know a soul. Only by a miracle one week before our flight from Cameroon we met a Congolese man, who gave us contact to one of his friends in Kinshasa. This dear man didn't just receive us at the airport, but also opened his house for our three men team. We stayed with him for the first few weeks with a total of twelve people in his small house, he gave us food and helped us tremendously to get a good start here.



Wolfgang & Genevieve at the orphanage Molende outside Kinshasa

The Lord did another miracle for us just before our return to Congo in October. Missionary friends of ours in Europe "by chance" met a Congolese lady who offered us to stay in her house in Kinshasa. When we later arrived at the door of her family with just her name as a referral, they immediately agreed to let us use a small apartment in their house for a month. Such sweet and hospitable people!

The next step was to find a suitable house for our future team. Everybody told us that it was the worst time to find housing in Kinshasa as the prices had gone sky high recently. Again we needed a



miracle, a place which was safe, inexpensive and close to downtown since Kinshasa is very large and we don't have a car yet. And that's exactly what the Lord gave us! The rent is very reasonable as the landlord wanted to help our work in this way and the house needed a lot of repairs. The house is in a very good and safe location, so we gladly took over the needed repairs, getting the roof fixed, building in a new toilet, bathroom and

Genevieve & Lenka giving flannelgraph story in orphanage „PROKIN“, Kinshasa

kitchen, new water connection to the house, overhauling of the electric appliances etc. We don't know how long we can stay, but are very thankful for the dear landlords to help us get a good start in this city of 6 million inhabitants. We had to get basic furniture until we get more materials in the container, find the best ways to go shopping and the many little jobs which go into setting up a new base.

Another important and time consuming aspect of our work was to prepare the shipping of our container which took a lot of research, prayer, planning, finding the right contacts, looking for better ones etc. After lots of trial and error we believe that we found the best possibility to get the needed tax exoneration. Then we had to find the best and cheapest way to get the container from the harbor in Matadi to Kinshasa, which is very expensive because of the high transport costs, harbor and "control" charges etc.

At the same time we are preparing for the distribution, to find where our help is needed the most, who is trustworthy and takes good care of our wheelchairs, sewing machines, PCs etc. This concerns especially the complete dentist office equipment and shoemaker set-up.

Besides all this there is legal paperwork to do, like visa extensions and finding the right local organization to work with etc. Our team's been slowly arriving and everyone has to be introduced to the work and new situation, with more people still coming.

Every Sunday afternoon we have a meeting for people who want to know more about the Bible or have other questions about life, faith etc. For this we also had to find the right place. We visit people and people come to our house for spiritual support if they can't come to the Sunday meeting or need more personal attention. In between we are writing Newsletters, had to find the best E-mail connections. E-mails? Oh yes, they are waiting for an answer since a long time... We hope this helps you to get a bit of a picture of what we do "behind the



Genevieve, Lenka & Wolfg. bringing bread, stories, games and joy to the orphans

scenes".

Back to our introductory story: in Mbandaka we talked with different UN and local organizations to find out where the greatest need is for our aid. There are so many whom we would like to help, but our resources are limited and few compared to the vast need. After several days of research we met Seraphin from OCHA - UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid. He doesn't look at his work like a normal job but



Mathew and our new friends in Mbandaka singing together before a Biblestudy

was willing to meet and take time with us outside of his working hours. We are planning to see on another trip what he described to us: in the far North of Congo live thousands of people in the woods, where they took refuge from the rebel fighters in the war and from where they can't go anywhere since they have no clothes! They will need clothing before they can return to their villages.

Our plan: around Abuzi live about 6500 of these forgotten and internally displaced people in ten camps. We want to distribute our clothes, sheets and shoes there to the most vulnerable, like the old people, widows, orphans, handicapped etc, so they can return again to their villages. Seraphin was especially happy that we didn't just want to help them physically, but also spiritually. From experience we know that people in such extreme situations need an extra dose of encouragement and power from Above. For all this we need your continued prayers and support, without which we couldn't do it. Thank you so much!

You might have heard in the News that fighting erupts sporadically between opposing groups in



different parts of the country. We would like to ask you to please keep praying with us for the peace process in this troubled country. Thanks!

We wish you all the best,
In His love,

Your Congo Team

Biblestudy at our house: f.i.t.r.: Genevieve, Eric, José, Lenka, Naomi and Doudou

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