

Lockdown in our Mabala School



Planting 1100 palm nut seeds for 7 hectare plantation

Dear friends,

Since March of this year, all schools and universities in the DR Congo are closed due to the **COVID-19 pandemic**. Just like for the rest of the world, this was a first for the Congo and its population, which was completely unprepared for such an emergency.

There is a big difference between Congo's countryside and the developed

world. Without an Internet connection, the teachers and students in Mabala could not continue their education, as many schools in other countries did.

A big challenge for our school projects in Congo is that building a school is only the first step. The next step is how to get the school to **maintain and sustain itself**. In most countries of the world, building a school means that it will function properly as the teachers are either paid by the government as in governmental schools or by the parents in case of private



Teachers working around the schoolyard



Before lockdown, pupils were feeding our chickens

schools. Whereas if you build a school in Congo and have it registered by the Ministry of Education as in our case, this does not automatically ensure that the government pays the teachers.

Since the beginning of 2020, the new government in Congo officially offered more free education for primary schools. If you however open a new secondary school like ours in Mabala, this means that the parents have to pay school fees. In case you want to offer free education as we are striving for,



First fruits (papaya left) and more trees (avocado middle) and seedlings for future trees

you have to find another way to finance the teachers. Our school in Mabala is one of the few unheard-of secondary schools in this country which is giving its students an education free of charge.

First, our partner organization BBK was paying the teachers, but then it was not able to do so anymore. Since April 2019, ADH has taken over this bill which causes enormous pressure for us. We are hoping that the government will soon start paying its own teachers since it is a governmental school after all.

In order to supplement the teachers' salaries, we started an agricultural project around the school buildings which so far works better than the previous such programs, as in Mushapo. Thanks to our headmaster, the excellent agronomist Philemon, the agricultural project is making good progress. He also initiated a little chicken and rabbit farm which now consists of 43 chickens and 4 rabbits.

PIREDD, part of the "Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation" project, a UN supported program, saw the potential of our 40 hectares land



Water hole for agricultural project

and gave our school 1.100 palm nuts to be grown into seedlings and planted on 7 hectares of our property. Our teachers and students will have to take care of this **palm oil plantation**, planting, watering etc. Agronom and school director Philemon started a little nursery with his helpers for growing the seedlings. The proceeds from the sale of the products belong to the school and should help to support it in the future.



The banana plants are growing well

M a d l e n continues her sacrificial work

with about one hundred babies and small children at the Kimbondo orphanage on the outskirts of Kinshasa. She not only takes care of their daily physical needs, but also strives to provide them with better scholastics. She has been living in the orphanage since 2011 without being paid, which is why we gladly support her selfless work so that she can better care for the children. Just recently she cared for a malnourished baby, which was



Avocado and many other seedlings



Madlen and orphan baby Sissi

abandoned outside the main gate of the orphanage, until it was in good health.

One of our friends, Jakisa from Bunia, in the **east of the Congo**, reported about new atrocities. He wrote that again, thousands of people were massacred there and no one is allowed to take pictures or report on the casualties. He did send us some photos that show how the tragedy in this country continues – unreported and unnoticed by the rest of the world.

This brings me to the subject of my **book**, which I wrote to help this country even more. Therein I describe what is really going on in the Congo and I address many other interesting current issues. Close to being finishing with the manuscript in English and German, I am currently looking for the best way to publish it. If you want to know more about the content of

the book, you can take a look at a speech I gave based on this book:

<http://www.adh-congo.org/en/see/videos/item/1497-change-the-world-with-love>.

It takes extensive communication with our team in Congo to keep the project running and to make progress in spite of all the challenges. We are very thankful for your faithful support without which this all would not be possible. On behalf of our school director Philemon, the 276 pupils, 15 teachers and 2 guards, **thank you very much!**

We wish you a wonderful summer time and good health,

Wolfgang, Lenka and team



Pruning 3 rows of Acacia trees planted towards the street as a fence and protection of the school



Google Earth view 2020 (from bottom up): road, acacia trees, vegetable fields, school buildings, chicken yard and more fields for agriculture

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