



CONGO CONNECTION

Winter/Spring 2017 Newsletter



A message from Rev. Kizombo Kalumbula, Sr. - Field Director in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Updates on the work in Bukavu and Kitindi

Dear Friends and co-workers in God's ministries, Greetings in the Holy name of our God and our wonderful Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! May His peace reign in our hearts and spirits as we enter a new year, 2017! May this coming year be a year of happiness and blessings throughout all your families.

Despite the current political unrest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we thank God for you, your families and your churches; for your continued prayers and giving.

EVANGELISTIC OUTREACH GAINING MOMENTUM

So many things have happened in our personal lives and ministries since last August. Through Communauté des Eglises Bibliques Indépendantes en Afrique (CEBIA), our combined church organization, the Lord has been working in many wonderful ways. One of the primary objectives of CEBIA is to start churches in every town and every village through evangelism and church planting. The IBM-Congo ministry, currently based in Bukavu and Kitindi, is working to spread IBM's influence into two larger towns, KAMITUGA, southwest of Bukavu, and SHABUNDA, located west of Kitindi. Even though an evangelist has been assigned to each area and is responsible to bring forth the gospel in that area, CEBIA leaders agree that "evangelism is the responsibility of everyone."

Let me express my joy about our evangelistic work. In the second week of October, Mukumbi Katanda and Mabanze Kabobela took an evangelistic trip to the town of Kyelu (in Maniema province), traveling to Tanganika, and then went on to Shabunda. This one week trip ended in establishing a new church in Shabunda. We thank God for brother Kitemagu Kikukama Gerome who, despite his heavy schedule at the University, has allocated a portion of his time twice a week to gather these brothers and sisters in Shabunda for teaching God's word, preaching, and prayer. Willy Wasso spent Christmas in Shabunda encouraging and strengthening those brothers and sisters.

NEW EVANGELISTIC METHODS BEING ESTABLISHED

Several methods of evangelism and church planting were agreed upon; one to one evangelism, house to house evangelism, social work evangelism (to create schools, health centers, nutritional centers for disadvantaged children,...) and sport ministries which we initiated late last year. The formal launch of this Sports Ministry is scheduled for later this spring. We have found Sports Ministry to be very effective in attracting many children. Mabanze Kabobela, our CEBIA evangelist, has been using this method in Bukavu and Willy Wasso has just started using it in Kitindi. Mabanze and Willy traveled to attend a four-day sport's ministry training program in Uvira. Praise God. The sport's ministry is off to a good start in our organization.

School news and updates

As you know, IBM-Congo has two Christian schools: Complexe Scolaire Amani/CEBIA in Bukavu and Union Académique de Kitindi in Kitindi. I thank God for these two schools because several hundred children have the opportunity to hear and be taught the word of God on a regular basis.

There is also good news. At the IBM/CEBIA run schools, the high quality of teaching, compared to the state-run schools, leads to higher test scores by our students in the annual national high school completion exams. For example, Union Académique de Kitindi took 14 students to take national exams in June of 2016. Thirteen out of fourteen succeeded and got their high school diplomas. That's a 93% success rate and this has been the trend for the last 4 to 5 years. Thanks to the Lord for giving IBM-Congo opportunities to efficiently serve the community in which it is located.

However, we still have struggles. Both schools are confronted with the lack of classrooms, teaching materials, and equipment. For Complexe Amani/CEBIA in Bukavu, the situation is difficult because expansion is nearly impossible due to the lack of available land and funding. At Union Académique de Kitindi, expansion is not an issue because we have land available. With a detailed campus plan developed by our brother Peter Baldwin of AMDG Architects, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, we only lack the funding to move forward with building classrooms. As we enter into a new year, we ask that you pray with us for that funding will become available. Pray with us as we implement a new program developed over the last three years; to continue to elevate the quality of education for our students by

Complexe Scolaire Amani/CEBIA



sending some committed teachers to University. Two teachers were selected to go to University this academic year; Wasso William White and Elie Walonda.

Elie is already at the University in Bukavu. He studies computer science and management. Unfortunately, at the time he should have left to enroll, Willy became ill and had to postpone his admission. Willy has recovered and returned to work at Union Académique de Kitindi helping with our sport's ministry and traveling as an evangelist. This September he will be ready to join his colleague at the University. IBM-Congo is committed to sending two students every year to University and share the expenses with their families. IBM-Congo will cover the yearly academic expenses, and the student's family is responsible for their health and living expenses.

We ask that you pray for Elie as he embraces city life and the higher education challenge. Pray also for Willy as God prepares him to efficiently serve his community spiritually and intellectually.

International Berean Ministries celebrates over 20 years of sharing the Joy of Jesus in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Evangelism team to plant new churches and support established churches

In a discussion at the last IBM-Congo churches conference, we made a plan to put more emphasis on reaching out to new evangelism fields. Our evangelistic plan for the year is to send a team of evangelists out to either Shabunda or Kamituga every three months. These trips would seek to establish new relationships within communities that would grow into church plants. The team would also visit established churches and mentor/train pastors. In October, we sent a team of two people to Shabunda; a trip that resulted in establishing a new church. In

December, it was planned for both Mabanze Kabobela and Willy Wasso to return to Shabunda for Christmas. However, at the time scheduled for departure, Mabanze's wife gave birth. At the same time his two older daughters were sick, and he was with them in the hospital. So, the plan slightly changed. Willy went to Shabunda alone during Christmas and Mabanze traveled to Kamituga in January. We will continue to give you updates on the progress of our evangelistic outreach in future Congo connections.

From the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Christ. This Lenten season, as I reflect upon the love of God for the whole world, I am further reminded of our shared calling to spread his message of hope to everyone with whom we come in contact. What an awesome privilege we have to be the vessels of the message of the grace of God to the world! Lent reminds me of the importance of prayer, confession, and fasting. I pray for you, friends, that God will deepen your understanding of how much he loves you. His love for the lost has not diminished. He still loves lost people and desires to see them come to the saving knowledge of His beloved Son, Jesus the Christ. Through fasting, I have the opportunity to empathize with the suffering of our Savior. Friends, last month, I shared what God is brewing in my heart regarding IBM's ministry this year. Among our many initiatives, please pray for the following:

- Evangelism through sports ministry
- Strengthening our agriculture cooperatives
- Journey of hope 2017, our yearly ministry trip to serve in the DRC

Last year, IBM-Congo planted five new churches in Sud-Kivu, our school ranked amongst the highest in high school graduation rate, and we launched our agricultural cooperatives in Kitindi. For the next three years, we will strive to reach the youth and children of the DRC with the good news through sports. Our team in the DRC has begun recruiting and training potential coaches and mentors on how to share the story of Jesus with the young people they are reaching through this ministry. We are encouraged by their enthusiastic participation in the training.



In the USA, we are excited to prepare our Journey of Hope trip to Bukavu and Kitindi this summer. Please pray for the following members of our team:

Kizombo Kalumbula	Kwabene Kalumbula
Jerry Montague	James DeZwaan
Randy Mead	James Anderson
Kasongo Kalumbula	

Following will be our ministry foci:

- Teach carpentry skills: build desks, tables, and other furnishings

A personal greeting from the field director: We spent more than 40 days in Bukavu watching to see if any major troubles would arise. We returned to Kitindi in the middle of January so we could keep up with our projects. We nearly missed the planting seasons for soybeans and corn.



I close this report by asking God to make all His heavenly blessings to fall upon each of you - day in and day out - as you persevere in His service! May you double your commitment to pray for the salvation of the multitudes of unsaved people in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I think about you day and night!

In His marvelous love, *Rev. Kizombo and Wababili Kalumbula*

Prayer Needs for the Ministry in the DRC

The Country and Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo

- Safety for our brothers and sisters preaching and teaching the Gospel

Our Health and Welfare

- Reliable transportation to and from Kitindi and surrounding areas
- Personal items to make life easier in Kitindi

Evangelism and Sports Ministries

- **Evangelism and church planting:** for Kamituga, Shabunda and surrounding villages
- **Sports ministries:** growing in Bukavu, Kamituga, Kitindi and Shabunda

Women's Ministries

- Weekly Bible studies and reading/writing classes
- Personal health training
- School lunch program at UAK

Schools and Teachers

- Union Académique de Kitindi plans to build a multipurpose center and classrooms
- New Bible teachers staying in the Word and training students
- Sending and supporting students at University to train more qualified teachers in our schools

Agriculture Program

- Harvesting soybeans and corn and preparing for the new planting season
- Increasing our gardens for more vegetables and fruits

Animal Husbandry

- Completing necessary fences to contain and protect the animals
- Training someone to care for and treat animals

Praise and thanksgiving

- Five new churches have come out of our Bi-Vocational training program
- Mukumbi and Mabanze are making quarterly visits to the new churches
- We hired two new Bible teachers - one for each school

- Teach and equip teachers in current pedagogical methodologies
- Explore how to bring clean water to our school campus in Kitindi
- Graduate the 1st cohort from the Pastors and Lay Leaders training program
- Map out our campus and plan for the building of the multi-purpose building
- Participate in the launch of the sports ministry

We need both your prayer and financial support in order to successfully accomplish these goals as well as to continue reaching many others with the good news of our Christ. I am convinced of your love for God's Word and people and of your generous giving in the past. I believe these will move you again this year to partner with us. In the words of Amy Carmichael (1867-1951), who said, "You can always give without loving, but you can never love without giving." We are excited about these ministry initiatives as they will lead to improving the health of our ministry in the DRC; they will give us opportunities to serve, and they will give you opportunities to pray and to generously give financially. Would you consider a generous gift to help us further spread the gospel? Your investment in the Kingdom through IBM will yield immeasurable return.

With much love, your fellow traveler,

Kizombo L. Kalumbula



"Farming God's Way" agriculture initiative successful



Another important element in our ministry is the agriculture program. When Wababili, Mukumbi and I came back from the Foundation for Farming conference in Zimbabwe last March, we initiated two experimentation plots: one for soy beans and another for corn - approximately 52 x 128 feet each. The purpose of our experiment was to implement the methods and principles we learned while in Zimbabwe so we can train others to farm in God's way.

Our team has harvested the product of our labor. On our soy bean plot, we saw 11 pounds of planted soybeans return a harvest of more than 500% - over 50 pounds. We planted over 50 pounds of corn seed, and they will produce about 450 pounds of produce. Despite the bad quality of corn seed we bought, our trial is a success. We are planning a return trip to Zimbabwe in March for more training. After that trip, we will be ready to invite people into the agriculture training program.



Clearing more land for future farming