

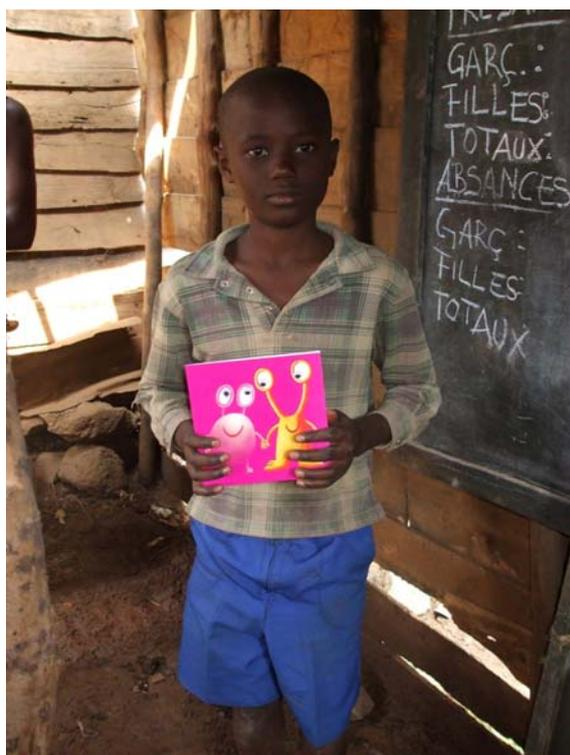
This is to say hello to all our supporters and friends and keep you informed of what is happening with Congo Action and what impact the Charity is having on people's lives.

The new school in Muganzo, South Kivu

The primary school that we built in 2008 is flourishing and providing education to some 350 children. It has proved so popular that we are currently building an extra classroom to benefit some 40 more children.

Congo Action last site visit was very encouraging as we were warmly welcomed by the parent's committee, who take great pride in looking after both the school and the teachers. For example they bring eggs, flour and beans to the teachers to show their gratitude.

The school has been officially registered by the government of Kinshasha, which means that the children can take exams and move onto official secondary schools. This is a great victory in ensuring that the school is up to standards and that teachers deliver good quality education.



The Sponsorship programme.

To all of you who are continuing to sponsor a child, we say thank you and can assure you that the money you give reaches the child and his family.

Several of the children who started on the programme are now in their twenties, and have moved on. Some have made it at university or college, and we ensure that they continue to receive support to finish their education.

For People who now come forward wishing to sponsor a child, we offer the "sponsor a school programme" instead, by spreading the benefits to the teachers and the whole school. We feel this is perhaps a fairer way of supporting a community.

The ladies sewing groups

These are of great concern to us as they are run for women who want to have an income of their own to send their children to school. In our last newsletter, we mentioned how a grant from the Hilden Trust enabled Congo action to merge 3 sewing groups together for training and exchange of skills and materials. They were able to use the same experienced teacher who divided his time between the three groups.



We are continuing to raise funds to set up workshops for the newly qualified ladies who in turn, will take an apprentice on board.

Tailored clothes are still the most traditional way of dressing in the Congo, hence for a group to have a tailor shop is a sure way of achieving self sufficiency.

Micro-credit projects

Congo Action vision and philosophy in working with community groups is to ensure that their members achieve autonomy and become self-reliant.

40 people have so far benefited from borrowing funds and have re-imbursed the money, which has then been passed to someone else. This way of working is very encouraging and teaches people the value of working for themselves as opposed to becoming reliant on "charity hand-outs".

Future projects

Lack of employment and lack of work opportunities is a huge problem in the Congo. Young people who have not gone to school are in a far worse position than others. Congo Action has just teamed up with a group of volunteers from East Sussex (called "Working together Congo") to raise funds and set up a training centre for disadvantaged young people.

They will be learning carpentry, tailoring, leather work, car mechanics and repairs, etc... all trades relevant to the local market.

On the Home front

Links with the school

Congo Action has linked with **Barming Primary School, Maidstone**, where in July we did a school presentation to show the children how their money raising efforts benefit other children.

Over the years, the school has been supportive of our work and contributed to the life of our projects.

In March, **St Francis primary school, Maidstone**, hosted our barn dance, which turned out to be a great success, and brought in £600 funds.

Thank you to St Francis school and all the volunteers who contributed to this event.

Future events: 12th of September, the annual MELA event in Mote Park, Maidstone. This is a rich and colourful festival to celebrate cultural diversity with music and food from all around the world. Congo Action will be there selling African crafts and our most famous "crepes" from Brittany.

Wanted: Wedding dresses.

If anyone has any knowledge of someone wanting to donate their wedding dress, please let us know. We need these to send to our sewing groups who will rent them and use the money to buy sewing materials.

Wanted:

Volunteers willing to put aside some hours throughout the year to raise money for our projects. It can be anything that inspires you, and any amount of money is great!



Best wishes to All from Congo Action

CongoAction

Head Office: 13 Upper Fant Road Maidstone Kent ME16 8BP

Tel: 01622 750979 **E-Mail:** congoaction@hotmail.com

Web: www.congoaction.co.uk