

## GRADUATIONS!

### Overcoming COVID to Succeed!

In Congo, the school schedule has been altered to take into account 6 months of COVID shut-down in 2020; instead of finishing in June-July, the 2020-21 year has just ended. Just in time for two weeks off & the beginning of 2021-22.

Despite disruptions, our partners proudly announced great success in all their programs, both formal school & technical-vocational classes. Here we will give most attention to Community Charity School (CCS) in Goma, which had to deal with the volcano as well as the pandemic.

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### Community Charity School!

CCS is a primary school with about 200 children in grades 1-6 (although numbers this year were reduced when many people fled Goma after the volcano). It has been housed in an inadequate rented building, which was vandalized several times during COVID & further damaged by the volcano, but will be getting a real "own" home, next year. (See last newsletter.)



Some students came to hang out at school during the break between academic years. Most orphans live with families in the community, but they have nowhere to go in the daytime.



Teachers & principal gather in front of the school.

L-R Muhindo Muhambikwa (leaving CCS to continue his own education); Bahati Shukuru- 6<sup>th</sup> grade; Exaucé Balume- 3<sup>rd</sup>; Aliane Lumona – 1<sup>st</sup>; Jacky Furaha- 2<sup>nd</sup>; Riziki Mirindi-4<sup>th</sup>; Mulamba Shabani Jacques-principal; Okovu Kasole- 5<sup>th</sup>.

The faithful CENEDI leader of the Goma project, Bahininwa Saidia, is extremely ill, suffering from poisoning probably from someone in the city jealous of his success. Serving the least is a very risky business.



Teachers taking exams to qualify for their teaching certification. Observe the conditions. Note also that the teachers took a 50% pay cut during COVID & kept up with students in their lock-down. This is a dedicated staff.

## CCS Graduation!

Despite all the severe interruptions, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class of 14 all completed their state examinations in great style!

One young girl, Neema Kachondo Collette, was off the charts! So we want to share her story here.

### Neema Kachondo Colette.

Colette lost her father at a very young age. Her mother, determined that her children would be educated, continued to pay the fees & tuition charges at La Providence elementary school. But Colette's mother died when she was in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade & she & her younger brother & sisters went to live with her paternal aunt who is a widow. Her aunt did not have means to pay for schooling for the children but was told by a neighbor about a wonderful school which did not charge tuition or fees for orphaned & extremely destitute children. Colette was enrolled in CCS in 2017 & completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade this year. Her teachers at CCS say she is a hard working, caring student who always tries her best & respectfully cooperates with classmates & teachers. From a young age Colette was a leader. Her elementary years would certainly test her resilience.

In August Colette received an exceptionally high score on her state testing required for graduation. This is a testament not only to her hard work & ability, but also to the excellence of the instruction at CCS. Sadly, there is no way Colette would be able to continue with her education, & this bright young woman would enter the workforce at the tender age of 12. HAW was not about to let that happen!



On Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> Colette joined the ranks of entering 7<sup>th</sup> graders at Musamaria Mwemba high school in Goma with all fees covered by HAW.

It all happened so quickly! Colette was offered this opportunity on October 4<sup>th</sup> & was walked to her new school the following morning by the principal of CCS. She said that she was unable to believe what was happening & she was so grateful for the opportunity. She wants everyone to know her motto "To work hard is to gain independence."

## FEBA Graduations!

FEBA in Kinshasa also has exciting news of student success! Photos next time!

Twelve young women passed their state tailor exams with flying colors, as usual. They are making their dresses for graduation on Nov. 6. FEBA supplies the matching material but the young women choose individual patterns & buy the trim, as a way to contribute to their celebration.

Sadly, some students cannot manage that. The highest-ranking student, Sita, could not find the few dollars she needs for her zipper & trim. Her mother died years ago & her father abandoned her to relatives, who house her but refuse to give her even a few dollars. (Her aunt is a teacher; she had not been paid & that was that.) When FEBA learned of Sita's problem, they bought the trim & she will have her pretty dress like her class. A classmate has been very ill but the relatives who house her treat her as a drudge & FEBA had to intervene to get her medical care. These & other graduates will need to find new homes; FEBA will help but there are no funds for rent yet...

FEBA also assists students in formal schools, with uniforms & supplies at the start of the year, & funds to pay for state exams at the end. (This year both expenses came at the same time - not easy!)

Twelve secondary students, 7 girls, 5 boys, have received their state diplomas. Six primary students have passed & can enter 7<sup>th</sup> grade. All thanks to FEBA – & you. (Thank you, Beth!)

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## CONTRIBUTE OR GET INVOLVED

Contribute: Donate securely via PayPal at <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1233641>, on FEBA, Inc., on Facebook.

Please designate "Sewing School" or "Goma School" or "Micro-loan Program" or "Farm Needs," or "Sustaining Gift" to support ongoing work.

Checks payable to Woman, Cradle of Abundance can be mailed to the following address:

Woman, Cradle of Abundance  
attn: John McGlaughlin, Treasurer  
9 Lytle St.  
Princeton, NJ 08540

Volunteer: Contact Cheryl Ciaranca, Community Outreach Coordinator, at [cciaranca@gmail.com](mailto:cciaranca@gmail.com) or 215.292.3290 to discuss ways to partner with Woman Cradle of Abundance.