

## THE BEST OF TIMES, THE WORST OF TIMES

**Friends, we THANK YOU from the DEPTHS of OUR HEARTS for all the ways you have worked hand-in-hand with our sisters & brothers in Congo over many years!**

Your faithful interest, encouragement, contributions, & unfailing caring have spoken in loud & clear voices of your solidarity with African people & have brought tears of joy & gratitude to the eyes of all our dear friends in Congo. In this time when the depth of racism & white privilege have been again so clearly manifest, with righteous cries for real, concrete change, we want to express both our gratitude to all who work for justice & to thank you for extending your concern to those who live with their own form of **this colonial knee on their necks.**

In this special issue we want to show you the amazing fruits of your work over the past seven years since FEBA-USA/ FEBA, Inc. was founded. We also want to give you a glimpse of the ongoing struggle in Congo & appeal for your continued partnership.



### Timeline April 5, 2020

# WOMAN

CRADLE OF ABUNDANCE

Regular font - in USA • Italic font -in Congo

**1999**  
FEBA in Kinshasa established by Maman Monique and friends.

**2006**  
CENEDI in Uvira, Kivu, established by Saida Bahininwa and friends.

**2008**  
Maman Monique and Elsie meet.

**2010**  
FEBA re-launched in Kinshasa.

Elsie visits Maman Monique.

**2011**  
Elsie begins to document the story of Maman Monique and FEBA.

**2012**  
10 sewing students graduate from FEBA school.

**2013**  
10 sewing students graduate from FEBA school.

FEBA, Inc./ Woman Cradle of Abundance, Inc. as 501(c)3 founded [= "FEBA-USA"].

Maman Monique visits the USA to meet FEBA-USA and speak in churches.

\$100,000 Capital Campaign for a Women's Center launched with Jazz Concert by Karrin Allyson.

**2014**  
8 secondary students in Kinshasa graduate.

3 secondary students in Uvira graduate.

\$50,000 to purchase land in Kinshasa for Women's Center.

Maman Monique speaks at Princeton Seminary Conference.

Revised goals for Capital Campaign, with another Karrin Allyson concert.

Hands Across the Water (Plainsboro, NJ) & CENEDI-Kivu affiliated with FEBA.

**2015**  
Construction of the Women's Center begins.

Elsie visits Congo to document more FEBA stories.

12 sewing students graduate from FEBA school

10 secondary students in Kinshasa graduate.

9 secondary students in Uvira graduate.

Goma Community Charity School is launched.

Karrin Allyson gives a third great Jazz Concert.

**2016**  
FEBA mentors a sewing school in the Kasai; its director visits FEBA's school.

13 sewing students graduate from FEBA school

10 secondary students in Uvira graduate.

Maman Monique and Maman Antoinette visit the USA.

2 concerts "Pour Femme" by Anna de Groot (Preston) and friends.

#RunAgainstRape #RunForCongo5K off-site launched by Shari & becomes an annualevent .

**2017**  
FEBA buys a 25-acre farm. Half is cleared and put into production.

Basic construction of Women's Center nearing completion.

Maman Monique and Maman Jeannette do a workshop for the Kasai sewing school.

10 sewing students graduate from FEBA school

9 secondary students in Kinshasa graduate.

Capital Campaign reaches \$155,000.

J&J CaringCrowd fundraiser to begin furnishing the Women's Center.

**2018**  
Woman Center is opened. FEBA's sewing school moves into its new home.

11 sewing students graduate from FEBA school

10 secondary students in Kinshasa graduate.

10 secondary students in Uvira graduate & celebrate 32 graduates in all.

1 sewing school graduate has paid her own way to complete secondary school.

FEBA's farm now cultivating all 25 acres; good harvest, despite terrible weather.

Maman Monique speaks at Princeton Seminary Conference.

3<sup>rd</sup> annual #RunAgainstRape/RunForCongo expands to youth "real run" in Virginia.

Successful Facebook fundraiser for pick-up truck for FEBA's farm.

**2019**  
Peaceful transfer of power in Congo for the first time since 1960.

New pick-up arrives and is soon at work, as farm has expanded production.

A market garden pilot project is added, small animal husbandry launched.

Women's Center courtyard is roofed for more space & protection against violent rains.

Peace-making Workshop in Uvira continues educational opportunities & benefits the whole community.

Pilot project farm in Uvira leads to plans for a new farm for 100 women.

17 young women graduate from sewing school at the top of the national exams.

12 secondary school students graduate in Kinshasa.

6 sixth-graders graduate from Goma's Community Charity School.

Uvira women's micro-business supplies school uniforms for UN project.

New brunch fundraiser, + 5K & Facebook continue to support projects.

**2020**  
Women's Center residential floor being prepared for orphans & girls/women.

FEBA suspends its sewing school because of COVID-19, but provides emergency food to members.

J&J CaringCrowd fundraiser to buy a farm for women of CENEDI near Uvira.



## Faithfulness in the Worst of Times

COVID-19 is continuing to spread in Congo, though the totals are as yet quite low by comparison with the USA & Europe, thanks in good part to stay-at-home orders. The further evolution of the pandemic is uncertain, as Congo gradually re-opens.

Everyone is ordered to wear masks & FEBA has recently made 25000 for a medical NGO. (This was done basically at cost; 25 cents per mask only covers transportation & lunch for the workers, but FEBA wants to serve.)

This good news about COVID has another side: dreadful effects on health & economy from the enforced stay-home orders. Those who have obeyed have risked death by starvation... & starvation has won. The morgues in Kinshasa are full – though relatively few are virus victims. Most are people who have collapsed from hunger, or died of minor complaints because they had no resistance.

Maman Mbombo Véronique has been a vital presence in the community, an active member of FEBA & her church, a source of help to many. This week she died very suddenly, after only a few days of illness. There is no sign that it was COVID (though that cannot be ruled out), but she was “well” one day & gone three days later. There is shock. There is sadness. There is anxiety about burying her. Funerals are a major expression of cultural honor & religious piety, & families will do everything in their power to bury a loved one decently. Most of the time that means taking up a collection from all willing friends & neighbors. FEBA is contributing for Mbombo Véronique... contributing from its scarce pennies.



The (barely) living members of FEBA are the primary concern. The corn & cassava from FEBA's farm have been used up & the new harvest will not be ready until late July, so food must be bought, even though prices are high. Emergency funds from the US were sent on June 10 to buy more food, which was distributed on June 13 & 15. The women came to Maman Monique's home in small groups. Each received 7 kilos of corn (above) & 9 kilos of cassava (below: a much heavier root crop), to help her family through another month – if they are careful. They cried. “Thank you so much for this manna!”



## SCHOOL & FARM, HOPE & THANKS

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU** to all who answered our appeal for help for the Community Charity School in Goma! Your generosity means so much. The repairs are made, & when it reopens soon, CCS will be able to finish this year!

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU** to all who made our J&J Caring Crowd fundraiser successful! The money to buy the women's farm is on its way. Stay tuned for their thank-you & photos.

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## Join our distance 5K!

Who says you can't do a 5K while following all the rules for sheltering in place?! We are giving a prize for the most creative way to do an in-place 5K – let us know (eamckee28@gmail.com). Time: the rest of June up to July 4. The suggested amount is \$25 per participant. **THANK YOU** to Shari's & Anna's groups & all who have run already! Link here:

<https://www.facebook.com/evevents/303986551007208/>

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## CONTRIBUTE OR GET INVOLVED

Contribute: Donate securely via Stripe at [www.WomanCradleofAbundance.org/donate](http://www.WomanCradleofAbundance.org/donate) or on FEBA, Inc., on Facebook.

Please designate “Sewing School” or “Goma School” or “Women's Center Orphans” 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  
25 Alexander St.  
Princeton, NJ 08542

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.