

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

Despite many challenges, YOU have made this Women, Cradle of Abundance's best year yet! We are so very grateful to each one of you.

CONGO:

Education & Graduates:

11 young women from FEBA's sewing school;
12 youth from secondary school (A.A. level);
22 sixth-graders from Community Charity School, in the face of war conditions in Goma;
Solar panels & electricity for CCS.

Health:

Promesse's life-saving surgery thanks to GoFundMe;
Hundreds of food-insecure families fed;
Medical assistance for victims of violence & disease.

Construction:

A new roof for the Women's Center: thanks, Nassau!
Renovations & two new classrooms in the Center.

Farms:

The FEBA tractor busy at the farm & earning income by rental;
Rented tractor advancing Uvira women's farm to the next level of productivity.

USA:

A fine professional development retreat: thank you, Diane Mataraza & wonderful consultants!

An amazing new website, thanks to newest board member, Dr. Karen Brown!

A modified book celebration for Maman Monique's autobiography: Owing to visa problems we missed Maman Monique, but enjoyed board members' events celebrating her book, & hundreds of copies distributed to friends, churches, & supporters.

Upgrading financial processes: we are transferring records to QuickBooks; thanks to Jean Desravines & Christine Shungu for help.

YOU & Wonderful Partners: Our total income has surpassed any previous year! \$159,893 in cash, plus \$8,346 in-kind donations from board members for office/ operating expenses. Total cash to Congo partners \$141,685 (with more to come in Jan. 23).

Congrats, Ms. Lydie!

Meet Ms Lydie Mbelu Bukondo, FEBA's pastoral counselor. Following her master of divinity at the Protestant University of Congo she enrolled in a 2-year master's in pastoral counseling. This month she finished the first year with flying colors: of 28 candidates, she was one of 4 who passed the rigorous oral & written final exams. CONGRATS!



Community Charity School: Modeling Courage & Success

This has been a very difficult year for CCS in Goma. The decades-long guerrilla conflict escalated, intensifying danger, causing significant shortages of food & medicine, disrupting life.



Yet teachers & students at CCS are going about their business, as this spunky little girl at the chalkboard & kids at recess games demonstrate.



COURAGE & SUCCESS!!!

Have you ever imagined what it is like to try to feed & cloth, house & educate a family of 6 on \$11.40 per day? The majority of Congolese women constantly struggle to meet that challenge by working at subsistence farming in rural areas or little informal urban businesses.



FEBA helps its members by providing micro-savings & micro-loan opportunities. A bank account is out of reach but each one can bring her little savings: \$1 or perhaps \$3 or perhaps only 50 c./month, to build a tiny nest egg for a business or emergency. In these difficult times, more women are joining FEBA: 20 last month, 15 this month. FEBA has needed to print new savings books & member cards. The women take such pride in having their own little blue savings books to register their hard-earned nickels & dimes.



The covid shut-down devastated these businesses, so in late 2020 FEBA provided 60 women with very small loans of \$100 each. Success means constant self-denial, but what incredible things these women have done! In spite of astronomical inflation.

In spite of torrential floods brought on by climate change. They remain feisty & determined.

So now FEBA has started a second round of loans for the women who have managed to repay the first ones, & continues to mentor all the women. Given the handicap of inflation, these grants will be larger: mostly \$150, with a few women whose projects make that appropriate receiving more. (Repayment is sometimes impossible; it may be a choice between that & starvation, so FEBA may forgive the loan though these women cannot qualify for a second.)

Struggles with Climate Change

Climate change is a daily obstacle for survival in Congo. Traditional rainy & dry seasons have been severely disrupted in recent years. Rains which were expected at the beginning of September came late in Kinshasa. In the Kivu there was a burst of flooding but then no rain for many weeks.

Shortly before Christmas, when rains should be ending, Kinshasa province was inundated; 150 people lost their lives, roads were washed out, homes destroyed, entire households reduced to wading through waters looking for any bit of food or clothing they could rescue. Food prices tripled because the delivery routes were impassable. Government aid came to bury the dead, rebuild roads, but ordinary people were left to find what help their friends or neighbors might provide.

FEBA is deeply grateful that none of its members died, but it has had a major task to house & feed its devastated members, & provide medical care for many children ill from being unable to get dry or warm. Thank you for your year-end gifts which helped prevent starvation & restored health to the sick.

CONTRIBUTE OR GET INVOLVED

Donate securely via PayPal at <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1233641>, on FEBA, Inc. on Facebook, or on our website www.WomanCradleofAbundance.org. OR join our **monthly sustaining donations** & make remembering our friends in Congo easy!

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 treasurer at:

Woman, Cradle of Abundance
attn: John McGlaughlin, Treasurer
115 Maine Ave., Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

Does your company match donations? Consider nominating Woman, Cradle of Abundance. Shopping on Amazon? Name us: Amazon Smile.

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