



---

---

# SANGO MALAMU

## GOOD NEWS FROM GBA

Volume 3, Issue 1

March 2010

---

---

### Where We've Been

It has been a year of transition for GBA. Our first two scholars have completed their studies at the Protestant University of Congo (UPC) and have begun their intensive Giving Back Projects (see their reports on the next page). We've adjusted our programs to better address the complexities of working in Congo, and we've added new staff in Kinshasa and in Bloomington to support our progress. This year we'll continue supporting the GBA Scholars in applying their education through these community-based, collaborative efforts to build capacity and commitment in the DRC.



*Students at PAID (Program of Aid and Integration to the Underprivileged)*

---

### Progress and Promise

By Richard Peterson

I am sitting outside writing this, looking out at the vibrant green courtyard of the guesthouse where we've stayed during our trip to Congo (Nov 2009). Last night's heavy thunderstorm lingers on in this morning's drizzle, which hopefully will keep today a bit cooler than yesterday. The courtyard is surrounded and its walkway lined with a colorful variety of African flowering plants.

This morning we will continue working in intensive tutorial mode with Masani and Malivo as they refine their projects, both of which gained valuable clarity after an amazing two nights at PAID. It is hard to describe the impact of that experience and the deeply satisfying work of collaborating with bright, committed Congolese to help strengthen the work of caring for the 16 orphans that live there and the nearly 300 kids that are coming there for school. It was the kids—their individual personalities, the smiles on their faces, the way they were making their own little family there—who really frappé-ed (hit) me and linger longest in

my recollection: Jeremie, Shadrach, Ephraim, Dieu Donné, Godé, Noella, Titi, Liticia, little Christ-en-Vie, Sapi, Peter, and others. The first night at PAID they had us all gathered around them as they took turns telling stories about mboloko (blue duiker) and koi (leopard), each one with a call and response beginning and ending, which marked the collective nature of their fun together.

We had three long meetings with PAID staff and the scholars over the course of the two days, but equally valuable were the numerous hours just spent talking together informally. Yesterday we went classroom to classroom handing out pencils and balloons to each and every kid in the school after giving a short explanation. In each classroom we heard their loud "Merci" in response.

I get excited thinking of the hands-on nature of the learning and doing that will be involved in the scholars' projects, although Masani & Malivo's first step will be to do more research on all that is needed, on identifying the 30 children and families to target, and on the costs involved. The challenge is to design a project that is feasible in the short time that GBA can currently afford to support the scholars. This is not easy, and we have had some good discussions with scholars about the ethical dilemmas posed when community members have many expectations which, given the current level of resources, simply cannot be realized. This is a situation they will confront again and again in their future work in community development. I have been very impressed by all four scholars and their commitment to this vision, hard as it is to realize, and as our discussions brought the projects alive the mood of the group began to really soar as we together dreamed of what PAID could become.



*Development of GBA Projects at PAID with Masani, Malivo, PAID staff, and GBA board members*

## GBA Scholars Projects

While Mihigo and Thontwa continue their university studies this year, Masani and Malivo have begun their Giving Back Projects. These projects are located at PAID, an orphanage and school in a community outside of Kinshasa, the capital city. Over the course of four to six months, both scholars will develop programmatic and business plans for their specific undertakings and then coordinate with PAID staff to begin implementation. Read on for their reports about each of their projects.

### Masani Matshi Desy

As planned, at the end of our university year we began preparing the community development project to help disadvantaged communities of our dear and beautiful country, DRC. I chose to focus on supporting education, which for me is a priority when you consider achieving development in a country where more than half the workforce is illiterate. My project is to recruit children not attending school or who could no longer study for lack of financial means, and to set up a practical way to provide for payment of school fees for the 2010-2011 school year.

To achieve our objectives, we conducted surveys in poor communities of Mpasa 2, our target area, to determine if the children recruited were actually in need and to find out what business can be conducted that will generate the needed profits. We have chosen to put up a mill whose profits will help with this concern.

We emphasize that before implementing this project, it has been necessary to develop a business plan and undertake a viability study, taking into account all the contours of our project, including elements related to daily management, managing the profits, and legal requirements, etc. Within this framework we are working with Mrs. Younker of Hope

International for a full consideration of all these aspects. We will in the coming days finalize our business plan to start in a practical implementation of the project.

### Malivo Kagaba Jeannot

Our first objective in this Giving Back project was to start a garden behind PAID in the place that was provided for us. However, after our research, this component will not continue because yield on this area (approximately 6x15m) will not be sufficient to meet the project objective. For vegetables, one can earn 4,500fc (or \$5) per crop row if you sell the entire production. The place available to us can only take 4 crop rows, resulting in 18,000fc (or \$20) over 3.5 weeks. Since the primary objective of the project is the nutrition of the children, we should not hold back in terms of financing for future work in the garden. Also, given the size of land and agricultural technique developed by gardeners, growing vegetables is not very profitable.

The best solution for the project is to concentrate on a single activity at the beginning to provide a minimum chance for failure. The garden will be a next step after an initial step of raising chickens. We had originally investigated rabbit farming but decided to concentrate on chickens because rabbit farming practice has remained unperfected in this region and requires special attention. This was a risk to the success of our project, and chicken is a rich animal protein food as much as rabbit is. The breeding of chickens to eat and chickens to lay eggs are the subject of this opportunity early in the project. In sum, the estimated cost stands at \$750.

The final choice of chicken farming aims to involve community members of PAID in all tasks to be performed during the execution of this project. This activity is known and practiced by those resources we need here locally.

## From the GBA Administrative Director

You may have noticed a new signature on your thank you letters. I am Michael Valliant, GBA's new administrative director. I have a deep commitment to the service centered, collaborative mission of GBA. Since December, when I joined GBA, we completed our winter direct mail fundraising campaign, sending letters to over 800 people, convened an advisory forum of non-profit and fundraising experts, and are collaborating with the IU Student foundation to create a series of Congo and GBA related events. Look for a special guest speaker and concert the first week of April in Bloomington. Thank you for your continued support!

*You can reach Michael at [givingbacktoafrika@gmail.com](mailto:givingbacktoafrika@gmail.com)*



*Masani and Malivo use a new water pump at PAID with several PAID students.*