



SANGO MALAMU

GOOD NEWS FROM GBA

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Where We've Been

Giving Back to Africa has made tremendous progress over the last year, in no small part due to our generous and faithful supporters. We are grateful that you, too, believe in our mission of *giving back* through education and community service.

Last year we made our first cash transfers of \$4,000 each to PAID and CFFL, which were used for teachers' salaries, books, food, and clothing. This year we will continue to support these two partners while also supporting the inaugural class of GBA Scholars at the Protestant University in the Congo (for more information, see "Partnership Updates" on the next page).

Malembe Malembe - Little By Little By Abbey Martin

I spent May 27th through July 2nd in Kinshasa, DRC, laying the groundwork for the GBA Scholars Program, which is set to begin at the start of the coming academic year. The program uses education, based on both service and practical training, to strengthen communities and institutions in the DRC. GBA will be linking Congo's best and brightest students at the nation's premiere university, the Protestant University of Congo, with the underserved and under-resourced people who need them the most.

I cannot think of how to describe this to you in the best way...What does it mean to work in Congo? Kinshasa is one of the largest cities in Africa and the world with its estimated 8 million plus inhabitants, yet there is no functioning postal system. Congo has the largest deployment of UN Peacekeepers, but fighting continues in the East. It is arguably the richest country in the world in terms of resources, but the U.N. Human Development Index ranks its quality of life at 167th of the 177 nations on our planet. It is a country of 60 million, half of whom are under the age of 15. At independence in 1960 there were fewer university graduates in the entire country than there are now at the Protestant University in the Congo (UPC) which boasts nearly 6,000 students (half of whom are women)...that's something.

Universities like UPC have the potential to make a difference. They are responsible for producing the future



Kindergarteners in Madame Denise's classroom at PAID

leaders of the country – a commitment the Protestant University takes seriously, as reflected in its motto "Education to build a nation." Our contribution to developing Congo's future leaders is the GBA Scholars Program, through which two UPC students per year will put their education to use in practical development situations – providing their services in Rural Economic Development or Public Interest Law, for example, to organizations that need

them in exchange for experiential learning in a real world setting. In this way the university and the community form a mutually beneficial relationship in which real development, real change, real grassroots can be planted.

I often have struggled with the notion of "the big picture" – what can one person do when social justice seems like too lofty or grand a goal, too out of reach? But being in Congo and working with GBA has changed all that for me. We partner not only with the Protestant University, but also with an orphanage in Kinshasa and a secondary school in Northwest Congo, and these partnerships can make a real difference. One of the students I met at the orphanage is a 6-year-old girl named Ruth (pictured above, first row, third from left). She is in the 1st grade and weighed only about 24 pounds when I met her, but in developing the relationship between the Protestant University and the orphanage, Ruth was able to be seen by the Dean of the UPC Medical School. He prescribed the \$9.50 worth of drugs that were necessary to take care of the worms and bacteria making her sick.

I know it is hard to imagine sometimes, but we really do *mean* something to one another. And we really do affect one another. And the life we are living here is not separate or isolated or inconsequential...how we live has everything to do with what we are giving back.

Partnership Updates

Protestant University in the Congo - UPC

Giving Back to Africa will begin the GBA Scholars Program in partnership with the Protestant University in the Congo at the start of the coming academic year (October 2007-July 2008). Masaani Matshi and Malivo Kagaba will begin their Masters coursework in Public Interest Law and Rural Economic Development, respectively, and are officially the first GBA Scholars! Masaani's interest and ethic of service come from his experience working in and responding to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in DRC. Malivo's belief in developing himself to serve others stems from his experiences growing up in the Eastern province of Ituri, where conflict goes on to this day.

In addition to their required Masters coursework, each of the Scholars will take courses comprising a GBA certificate program, while also using their skills to serve at the PAID orphanage (another GBA partner) and to further establish the details of the Scholars Program. Currently one of the best universities in DRC, UPC provides an ideal place for GBA to build on the high quality of students enrolled there and to develop a program that both furthers UPC's reputation and extends its reach to underserved communities in DRC.

Program of Aid and Integration to the Under-privileged - PAID

GBA continues to support teacher and staff salaries at the orphanage and school. The dedication of the faculty to the children of this impoverished community on the outskirts of Kinshasa is remarkable; often taking three overcrowded

minibuses to get to work, these teachers really are the lifeblood of the community. In addition to providing salary support, GBA supports PAID through the purchase of food stuffs, as rations from food aid have been drastically cut. GBA is looking forward to moving into longer term aid initiatives with PAID through the work of the GBA Scholars. Through this balance of long-term goals and short-term relief, GBA hopes to work with the staff and children at PAID to jointly develop holistic responses to PAID's needs, such as potable water, development of a farm, and well-trained faculty. PAID also offers many opportunities for GBA Scholars to serve and to gain expertise in the application of knowledge... Ruth is only the beginning, but what a beginning!

Training Center for Future Leaders - CFFL

GBA continues to support the staff of CFFL, which is located 900 air miles north of Kinshasa in the province of Equateur. These teachers are working to increase the matriculation rate of high school students in the region of the Ubangi River. High school students that fail the State examination are ineligible to continue on to University, and the CFFL school supplements the education of students facing the State examination by providing them with the practice and preparation they need in order to succeed. Last year, the school quadrupled the number of students in the region who passed the State exam, due in small part to the materials GBA shipped from Kinshasa to the school and as well as to GBA's support of their faculty and staff. CFFL also offers future opportunities for GBA Scholars to serve and to gain expertise in the application of their knowledge in a remote area of DRC.

New Board Members

This summer we have welcomed two new board members to the GBA team.

- Lori Arnold Garraghty is currently pursuing her Masters of Public Affairs at Indiana University, with a concentration in nonprofit management. Lori lived in Kinshasa from 1980 to 1983. She also has extensive experience volunteering with several nonprofit organizations in the Bloomington area.
- Andrea Lewis recently graduated from Indiana University with her Masters of Public Affairs, having focused her studies on nonprofit management and international affairs. She spent two semesters as a student consultant for GBA, assisting in our fund development and strategic planning efforts.

To Donors and Volunteers

GBA is deeply grateful for the many contributions we have received this year. Your willing gifts of time and money are essential to the success of our programs and partnerships in the DRC. In particular, we note the contribution of the Indiana University African Student Association, which sponsored a symposium and dinner in March that drew more than 100 attendees and raised over \$2,100.

A Note on Our Name

As you may have noticed, we have made a small change to our name, now *Giving Back to Africa*. The addition of this two-letter preposition is meant to clarify both the origin and intent of this organization. GBA came into existence because the founders, many of whom had grown up in DRC, wanted to *give back* to a country and a continent that had already given them so much. At the same time, GBA's purpose is to promote an intrinsically African concept of *giving back* within Congolese communities.