



Henriette's Relief Project

www.henriettesrelief.org

Newsletter No. 4, May 2009

Friends,

Suffering, misery, disease and death are the words which describe the situation of the children in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This situation is the result of the long years of bad management of the country as well as conflicts and wars which have followed one another over the last decade. As if that were not enough, it is accentuated today by the international financial crisis. With inflation of prices, access to basic food has become a luxury reserved for a small class of people who live in opulence.



The infant malnutrition rate is estimated at 12%. This rate does not reflect the reality of the malnutrition situation because it is calculated only from 28% of the population who have access to public health institutions.

Most of the humanitarian agencies report that the infant malnutrition rate in Kinshasa and suburb areas is beyond 25%. So far it's one of the causes of the high morbidity and mortality of 0-5 year olds in the capital city of DRC. Malnutrition also affects mothers increasing the risk of their life, mainly during childbirth.

In a joint initiative that we qualify as carrier of hope, the United Nations Population Funds (UNFPA) hosted a one week workshop organized by the National Health Program of Reproduction (NHPR) and other local partners from March 4th through March 11th. As participants, the workshop targeted the staffs of the Ministry of Health, journalists, parliament and members of various NGOs. It consisted of building the capacity of these stakeholders with regards to the management of reproduction health products and the promotion of family planning techniques.



Although people welcomed this initiative, its effectiveness in improving life quality of Congolese families, particularly of women and young children remains questionable. The health infrastructures in Kinshasa have been inadequate for many years. To this are added the lack of basic products in the Kinshasa health facilities and the lack of medical equipment for front-line services.

In this context, we hope that investments in health infrastructure, medical products, and equipment will precede the simple continuous training workshop. Such investments require strong political good-will to bring social affairs to the top of Congolese government priorities in

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the context of decentralization. It also requires rigorous control mechanisms to minimize or to avoid corruption.



With these measures, decentralized local entities can address and provide, in an effective manner, the basic services to their communities.

At the same time, the Congolese people should be conscientious of the crisis and try to invest in areas which aim at improving the living condition of their compatriots. This is what the Henriette Kutuka Memorial Funds is doing with the support of Henriette

Relief Project (HRP), a non-profit organization based in Vermont.

Through an integrated activity package, HRP and its local partner based in Kinshasa, provide assistance to malnourished children in three feeding centers. We also organize workshops to raise the knowledge of parents of malnourished children and other community members with regard to related malnutrition topics. In so doing, we bring back hope to hundreds of children, to their families and to their communities. We contribute to childhood malnutrition status improvement and we support the return to school of some of them.

So we invite all people who would like to join us in this effort to contact us at the address below. Together we can save children's lives;

Help us Fight Malnutrition

\$10 - 10 kgs of sugar

\$25 - 12.5 kgs of milk

\$50 - 10 kgs of frozen fish

\$100 - 200 kgs of maize (corn)

Please send your donation today or on-line.

HRP, a United States non-governmental organization, has been funded by private individuals and Woods Tea Company, a Vermont based, national touring band. True humanitarians through their care, concern and generosity, Woods Tea Company has raised thousands of dollars for HRP. For more information on Woods Tea Company and a schedule of their performances, visit their website at www.woodstea.net.

we can contribute to the process of building a new world where justice and peace go hand by hand, a world where everybody has access to food. Together, we can dream of such a world.

Baudouin Kutuka and David Hallam

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Henriette's Relief Project, 170 Chipman Park, Middlebury, Vermont 05753, (T) 802.388.1561 or

www.henriettesrelief.org. HRP is an IRS recognized 501c3 organization.