

PROPOSAL OF GIVING OPPORTUNITIES IN the Democratic Republic of the Congo

MITENDI PRIMARY
SCHOOL BUILDING &
ANNUAL FUND



MITENDI WOMEN'S
CENTER ANNUAL FUND





INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES is a global mission movement. With our partners and global servants, ***we respond to God's call as Jesus taught us and as the Holy Spirit leads us*** to serve with our partners in over 70 countries. By engaging cross-culturally, we focus on discipleship and education, work for peace and justice, advocate for those caught in human trafficking and global slavery, nurture economic and community development and offer opportunities for others to participate in our work.

Global servants sustain and fuel our mission movement. They are answering the call, deciphering global needs and helping to bring about change through their sacrificial and transformative ministries. They have answered God's unique call on their lives to grow and steward our mission.

We've been responding for centuries. International Ministries is the oldest Baptist international mission agency in North America. Founded in 1814, International Ministries remains connected to its rich heritage while pursuing creative exploration and inventiveness in ministry.

OVERVIEW

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a country with vast resources. It spans over 900,000 square miles. According to the latest National Statistics Institute estimates, there are over 1,100 minerals and precious metals identified that could make the DRC a driver of African growth.

In spite of the vast mineral wealth of the country, the Congo is ranked as the second poorest nation in the world. According to the United Nations Development Programme, 87.7% of the population lives below the income poverty line, with the average person making only \$30 per month. There are many contributing factors, with political instability and lack of education and job training being the greatest.

In the capital city of Kinshasa, where International Ministries partners with the Congolese Baptists Community, the population has burst to nearly 12 million. But the infrastructure in Kinshasa, including the clean drinking water and sanitation systems, barely supports 1 million people. To further exacerbate the situation, an estimated 390,000 people per year, fleeing from areas of conflict and poverty, are flooding into Kinshasa looking for help and work. With no place to call home, no government services and no income, many families live like refugees on the outskirts of the city—which is where the Mitendi Women's Center is located.

Daily survival is what consumes most Congolese people and clouds their vision for future change. Under these circumstances, the Congolese Baptist Women are extraordinary in their ability to look beyond their own needs. Their faith and tenacity for over 50 years of ministry is remarkable. They are bringing hope and providing education under dire conditions. Therefore, International Ministries believes that with your support and the power of God, together we can help alter the future course in the Mitendi area of Kinshasa.

BACKGROUND

The Mitendi Women's Center opened in 1999 with the vision and dedication of the Congolese Baptist women. The Center reaches the most vulnerable at-risk women, offering them hope of a better life through education, job training, counseling and a relationship with God.

Six full-time staff, two house mothers and four teachers, along with the national women's staff and over 5,000 active members of the Congolese Baptist Women's Association, are all dedicated to the success and sustainability of the work of the Mitendi Women's Center.



It is a two-year residential training program for young women at risk for prostitution and unwed mothers. This program provides classes in basic education (literacy and math), life skills, small business, knitting, sewing, nutrition, restaurant work and esthetics. In a Christian context, the residents receive comprehensive care—support for body, mind and spirit—that offers hope and help through regular Bible study and worship as well as counseling.

The Mitendi Primary School for grades K–6, launched in 2011, is named in honor of Mama Marie Matty, the visionary founder of the women's association. The need for a primary school has grown out of the population explosion over the past 10 years in the Mitendi area of Kinshasa and the desperate need for education to keep the children off the streets and out of prostitution and gang life. With parents leaving their communities in search of work, their children are left on their own to fend for themselves. More and more school age children in the immediate area are not able to receive an education.

The Congolese Baptist Women spearheaded an informal survey of local children to determine how many were not attending school. They stopped counting when they reached 1,000. International Ministries came alongside the women and agreed that unless someone intervened, an entire generation of children would be lost.



The Congolese Baptist Women, the pioneer leaders of the women's center, could no longer ignore the fact that so many children in the immediate neighborhood were not attending school and took action by converting the only available space they had in the Mitendi Women's Center. In 2011, the doors opened to over 300 children—none of whom would otherwise be in school.

Today, the Mitendi Primary school is registered and officially recognized by the government. It has a professional teaching staff, but only a few can be paid because funding is simply not adequate. The ministry is at risk, but the Congolese women are willing to devote themselves to keeping it open because its work is so crucial. The children are the future of the Congo.

Mama Mfulu, a Mitendi staff member, said, *"This is a disaster waiting to happen. We can either wait 5 or 10 years, when all of these children are deeply imbedded in gang life and prostitution, or we can do something now to provide for their education and offer a more secure future. For me there is no choice!"*

The choice is clear for International Ministries as well. We want to send help and hope.

SITUATION

The primary school program in the Women's Center building has reached its maximum capacity of 330 primary school students (grade levels 1–6), yet there are still more than 1,000 children in the immediate area without access to education. In addition, there are 90 at-risk girls and young women in the residential training program and 13 permanent staff members.

When the plight of the children was first shared with churches in the U.S., a church in Bakersfield, California, responded generously by providing desks. The much-needed desks further reduced the space in the women's center, however.

The primary school program is limited to three classrooms and holds classes in morning and afternoon, while the training program for at-risk women is confined to a single classroom. The Mitendi Women's Center building simply cannot continue to accommodate both programs.



OUR PROPOSAL

Within the wall that secures land ownership and safety, the Mitendi Center has 12 acres of available land. After prayerful consideration, the decision has been made to build a separate primary school building on the property. Estimates for construction have been approved, and a work plan is prepared. God willing, construction will begin in the spring or summer of 2017.

The school building plans include:

- six classrooms
- a meeting room
- a library
- a storeroom
- an administrative office
- furnishings

This building will have the capacity to serve over 700 students, more than double the number of students currently enrolled in the primary school. With a school building, children will have dedicated space that is conducive to learning and the Center will be able to expand the school program to include secondary education. The building will also provide much-needed relief for the overcrowding of the women's center so that residential treatment and training programs can continue uninterrupted.

The primary school building cost is \$167,351

YOUR OPPORTUNITY

To help build the primary school, generous donors have already pledged half the amount of the building cost (\$83,000) and are challenging others to respond with gifts to cover the rest.

Your gifts can help fund the balance of the building cost of \$84,351

Fifteen gifts of \$5,000 or more could complete the school building fund. Would you consider a gift of \$5,000 or more to meet the challenge?

By constructing a primary school, International Ministries will be assisting the Congolese Baptist Women in building a community—a place that honors the many Congolese women who have sacrificed for 50 years in order to alter the future for the next generation of marginalized and vulnerable women and children in the Congo.

The ongoing Mitendi Primary School Annual Fund need is \$36,240

The primary school serves children who would not otherwise have access to an education, and so your long-term commitment is essential to keeping the school in operation. Your gifts

to the Primary School Annual Fund will cover recurring annual expenses such as building maintenance and teachers' salaries as well as up to 200 full scholarships of \$140 per student.



The ongoing Mitendi Women's Center Annual Fund need is \$33,300

To relieve the burden on the Mitendi Women's Center even before a new school building is constructed, we are seeking to raise funds for ongoing maintenance, project support and scholarships for women at risk. Your gifts to the Women's Center Annual Fund will cover recurring annual expenses and will provide up to 65 annual scholarships of \$380 each.

Annual Fund gifts are crucial to the future of the Mitendi Primary School and the Mitendi Women's Center. They provide critical assistance and ensure that both the school and women's center can continue to offer an educational experience in a safe, fresh air environment. Your gift to one or more of the funds will offer scholarships to extend hope and help to children and women for future generations.

Contributions to the Annual Fund can also be endowed. With an endowment gift, the principal is invested and only the income from the investment is spent, allowing the legacy of your generosity to continue in perpetuity. The International Ministries Mission Advancement office would be happy to answer any questions about this type of giving at 610-768-2311.

WHAT YOUR GIFT WILL DO

- Provide much-needed relief for the overcrowding in the Mitendi Women's Center that now hampers the training programs for vulnerable women.
- Strengthen the capacity of the Congolese Community to educate the next generation of leadership.
- Encourage the Congolese women who will continue to operate the school and the Women's Center and ensure future sustainability so that the program will be able to continue educating the Congolese children and offering hope to women at risk.

WOULD YOU PRAYERFULLY CONSIDER A GIFT?

International Ministries global servant Jill Lowery and the Congolese Baptist Community (CBCO) remain committed to stewarding your gifts and will provide regular updates on the Mitendi projects. Prayerfully combining your financial support, the CBCO women's expertise and passion for ministry and International Ministries partnership will have a greater impact than any of us could achieve alone.



International Ministries global servant Jill Lowery is an advisor and member of the national staff with the Baptist Community of the Congo, a partner of International Ministries

To contact Jill, email:
jill.lowery@internationalministries.org

Thank you for keeping us in your prayers and for being part of these exciting projects!
God bless you!

Jill

For further information, please contact International Ministries Mission Advancement at 610-768-2311.

Your donor advisor is:



International Ministries
1003 W 9th Ave, Ste A
King of Prussia, PA 19406-1210