



The

PROLASA News

Caring Healing Ministering

What is PROLASA?

It is a non-profit organization in Congo dedicated to ministering to the medical, physical, educational and spiritual needs of the local population. They have been working in Congo and Rwanda since 1990 and have made great contributions in the areas of health care, orphan care, education, community development and evangelism.

In an area filled with political conflict, waves of refugees, disease and poverty PROLASA reaches out touching the lives of those around. Many of these individuals, if not for PROLASA's work, would be left with no chance and with no hope.

Note From the Editors:

This is the first edition of the PROLASA News, but not the last. Newsletters will be circulated periodically to share news of the work taking place in Congo on their orphan campuses, in their hospitals and health clinics and even in more remote areas with their mobile clinic, evangelism programs and community development projects.

How Are the Kids?

School's out! As of June 3rd, exams are finished and the children are starting their summer vacation. 22 children from the Goma Orphan Centre have even graduated from kindergarten and will be starting primary school this September.



Studies at the Idjwi elementary school

The children will still be busy with chores and work but once the chores are done the days will be full of swimming, soccer and games. A week long summer camp is also being held to give the children a week full of crafts,

games, sports, Bible study and music. The children are very eager for the program to start.



Morning bath-time at the lake

The health status of the children has been good. As with all children, the orphans do get sick occasionally but the PROLASA team makes sure that they receive prompt medical care. The children are also getting along well in their 'family' groups. According to Désiré Murhima, head administrator of PROLASA, "The children are feeling united to their family's" and "they help, advise and defend each other". Very good signs.

What's New at the Goma

Health Centre?

PROLASA's Health Centre is located in the heart of Goma and has been struggling to reestablish itself after a time of closure during 2004 due to political instability in the city. During

this time of closure, two PROLASA physicians also took leave in order to pursue further studies. Dr Ntabe is doing a surgical residency in Kenya while Dr Masoda works on a family medicine residency in Rwanda. We look forward to welcoming both of these physicians back to the hospital upon the completion of their studies. They are both greatly missed.



Surgery at the Goma Health Centre

Work continues at the health centre, however, with an active surgical program, maternity, inpatient care, an ophthalmological program, outpatient management and health education. The centre also provides diagnostic testing with laboratory, xray and ultrasound.

The workers hope to expand their services but they are not permitted to do renovations on the rented buildings or land. The team now works to earn the money to purchase the facilities and enhance their work.



Clinical building for the Health Centre

Sharing God's Word

Evangelism is another great thrust of PROLASA. In the fall of 2004 an evangelistic crusade was held on the orphan campus on Idjwi.



Church Service on Idjwi

Exciting talks sharing teachings from the Bible were given by Pastor Kavis Kasereka, the dean of the faculty of theology in Lukanga. The meetings were well attended and those present were very interested in the message which was shared. The 10 day campaign ended with the baptism of over 100 people who had, after hearing about God's love, decided to commit their lives to Him. Among the people who had decided to be baptized there was a soldier from the area. He had been posted by the military to monitor the orphan campus during the meetings in order to provide protection and avoid any rebel activity in the area. The assignment allowed him to be present at each of the meetings and his ear was open to the message being presented by Pastor Kavis. He gave his life to God and his excitement was unmatched as he came up from the water with his arms up in the air as if a tremendous victory had been won; and in reality, it had.



Campaign Baptism in Lake Kivu

The soldier's face was beaming as he overflowed with gratitude for the way that God had worked in his life. "This was the best assignment that I've ever had! At first I didn't know what it would be like but it has been the best assignment ever! Praise God!"

What Would Become of Him?

Political instability, war, disease, famine and poverty all take their toll on the people of Central Africa. Often times, though, the highest price is paid by the youngest and most vulnerable of children. Dieu Merci Singirankabo is one such child. His mother was a local prostitute lead by her desperate situation into a miserable and abusive life. Unwilling or unable to care for her child, or perhaps thinking that the orphanage would be able to provide a better future for him, this mother left the child on the doorstep of the orphanage located in Goma.



Near death and abandoned...
What would his future hold?

This is where he was found by PROLASA personnel. No information was left with the child but dental examination placed his age at nearly 2 years old though his state of malnutrition would have delayed his development making it difficult to know for sure. When he was found Dieu Merci was described as having no life in him as though he was ancient and dying. His skin was pale to gray and stretched tautly over bone so that the skeleton was practically visible. Dieu Merci was not able to walk or even sit up despite his age. He only lay and cried continually. In spite of his 2 years of age malnutrition had left him without even the capacities of a newborn. To make matters even worse, he needed to be isolated from

others because of concerns of infectious diseases which would quickly compromise the health of the other children. The first concern of the PROLASA team was to try to restore the child to health which was initiated through a rich and well balanced diet.

After 2 weeks he started to become more responsive. After 2 months he was starting to be able to walk and talk. Little by little, the child returned to health and with the continued support of his care givers at the orphan centre of Goma Dieu Merci is a healthy child with much possibility ahead of him. The workers of the orphan centre say that he plays well with

the other children, behaves well for all of the supervisors and is doing well in the preschool program based on the centre's campus. In spite of these things, however, the look in Dieu Merci's eyes is often one of sadness. Whether this be from his early emotional trauma, from some deep understanding of his abandonment or from some other reason, Dieu Merci has emotional scars which have yet to be healed. It is our hope that a future filled with love, support, Biblical teaching and a family environment created by the PROLASA team will give Dieu Merci a vision of hope for the future and a sense of family for today and for the rest of his life.

In Closing...

Thank you for taking the time to get to know PROLASA. Keep your eye open for further newsletters. Also, if you would like to be added to our electronic mailing list please contact us via email and your name will be added.

As PROLASA serves the people of Congo the need can often be overwhelming. If you would like to support PROLASA's work in orphan care, health care or evangelism please contact us.

*I am only one, but still I am one.
I cannot do everything, but I can still do
something. I will not refuse to do the
something I can do.* -Helen Keller

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