



TRAGEDY STRIKES AGAIN IN THE DR CONGO

Newly Orphaned Children Need Immediate Help!

Dear Friend of the Children;

September 2017

Overnight. In a moment. In an instant. Life can be forever altered. There are seven orphan children whose lives have been forever changed and who need your help right away! Please read on.

Several weeks ago, heavy rains fell in a province of the DR Congo. No one knew at the time that a tragedy was brewing. However, the heavy rains, combined with deforestation, were just too much for the saturated ground to hold.

Early one morning the earth trembled as a torrent of water, mud and debris gathered momentum and stormed down the hillside. Sleeping villagers had little time to react as the wall of mud crashed through their homes burying entire families and leaving behind a path of death and destruction. In just a few moments, scores of people died and over a hundred children were left orphaned.



These children (and many others) lost their families during a deadly mud slide in the DR Congo. They were brought to our Patmos Children's Village. They need your help.

Desire's message came as preparations were being made for a new edition of the *Que Pasa* featuring our project in Ghana. I decided to hold that edition until next month as I felt you would want to know of this urgent need in Congo. As is often the case in poor countries, humanitarian aid and assistance was slow to arrive to this remote area. The survivors suffered, and this was especially true for the children.

Nearly a month went by before the government assessed what to do with the orphans. That's when our Patmos Children's Village was asked to help. Désiré, project director, sent an urgent appeal to my wife, Sharon, ICC's director for children services. Here is an edited excerpt from that message:



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“Yesterday we received unexpected visitors – a team of five persons from North-Kivu Province. They had been sent to us by the Ministry of Social Affairs. This team brought seven children with them. The children had severe malnutrition. They were from Mabolio where a landslide had covered 129 houses. 329 persons were unaccounted for. 97 dead bodies were found along the river. 111 surviving children were without assistance and were half-dead.

“The province reported the case to the Ministry of Social Affairs. A meeting was held by the National and International Non-Governmental Organizations to study together a permanent solution to save these children.



“At the end of the meeting, the children were spread to 6 children's villages. That's how we have received 7 children who need urgent assistance. They need quality food, medical care, clothes, accommodation, psycho-social follow-up, protection, schooling, etc.

“We tried to explain to the delegation that we do not have enough financial means to take care of the children. They did not believe us because they had heard about our children we helped to become independent last year. They also heard that Patmos village has a tremendous reputation all over the country and provides appropriate care to children.

“In favor of these children, we beseech you Mother Sharon to introduce this case to the ICC Board so that the children may receive help for their salvation.”

For ICC–Congo Project

Désiré MURHIMA M.Sc

Administrator

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Désiré is aware of the financial implications of having seven new children to feed, clothe and educate. He has been trying to stretch the resources he has to provide for over

100 children who are currently part of the Patmos family. He has turned to us for help. And now, I am turning to you. Will you help these children in their time of need?

In considering this request, Sharon said, “How can I say no to this very urgent need? I was just feeling like we were getting down to the right number of children in the homes we have, and the Lord is sending more. Is a crowded home better than no home? Is a little bit of food better than no food? It is a life and death situation to these children.”

It will take some time before we have sufficient information on these new children so they can be assigned sponsors. In the meantime, they will need the things that Désiré mentioned — quality food, medical care, clothes, accommodation, psycho-social follow-up, protection, schooling, etc. This will stretch the Patmos budget even further. Your gift of support for \$50 or \$100 will be life-saving for these children.



Also, the DR Congo has 423 dialects. Each tribe has its local and/or regional language. None of those at the Patmos Children’s Village knows or understands the languages of these new children. Désiré indicated most of the children don’t know their own identities.

We must move forward to help them. To rescue and restore the lives of orphan children is our mission. We are counting on you as we always have when we face an urgent situation like this.

Thank you for your prayers!

On behalf of the children, thank you very much for your generosity and loving care!

May God bless you,

Rick Fleck

P.S. These seven children, orphaned by circumstances beyond their control, desperately need your help. Please send in your gift of support today!