



**CONGO  
INITIATIVE**



Dear Friends and Partners,

Over twenty years ago our family moved to Kenya for a year. Little did we know how life would be changed forever - literally for eternity. Leaving the routines of home as well as bidding friends, our jobs, and our church farewell seemed daunting at the time, but the Lord had lessons for us that could not have been learned without that time away from the comfortable and familiar. While my husband taught at [Daystar University](#), I did some graduate work. I was often the only Westerner in my classes. Courses such as *Journalism in Africa*, *Urbanization in Africa*, and *Anthropology* pushed my thinking and my growth.

After visiting an enormous urban slum in the *Urbanization* class, I was driven home by our next door neighbor, a Rwandan who worked for the Bible Society of East Africa. I was ranting, never having seen such poverty, such need, such housing. I raged, "How can the government let its people live like that? How can this be? Why doesn't the government do something?" (Again, remember I was ranting at quite a fever pitch.) My dear neighbor said, "Sister, sister, the government? The governments in Africa change every week. Where is the church?" And so began my journey and my learning.

That conversation was probably my first step to becoming involved many years later with Congo Initiative. CI is the church at work, doing the difficult task of reconciliation, of bringing hope to a place bereft, educating young people who will help transform the nation. Work done with integrity, not personal gain; serving the community, not themselves; developing leaders who serve, not take; reflecting God's grace to all, not just one's own group; depending on God's provision, not on the ability to find a job, much less a second one (as we do when we are in need); praying and praying and praying, then doing; educating women, not only men; becoming good stewards of the environment, not exploiting the precious resources in Congo.



In the intervening years we have had a number of people live with us for a few months or a few years, including folks from Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and, yes, the US. Currently we have a Congolese woman and her daughter staying with us, while the daughter is undergoing some medical treatment here in the States.

I still have not been to Congo. Most of you have not been either. But there are things we can do. Help a student by providing financial support ([Kipepeo Partners](#)), pray for peace in Congo, tell your friends about CI, pray for David and Kaswera Kasali, talk with a Congolese about what it is like to live in a place where lawlessness is the norm, pray for UCBC, support the [folks on the US side](#) to do the hard work here. Pray for Paul Robinson, Cullen Rodgers-Gates, and Mary Henton. Go and visit, pray, pray, pray.

Indeed where is the church? It is working in Beni.

Meredith Joss  
Board member, Congo Initiative

Join Meredith in supporting the church in Congo today. Make your tax-deductible contribution by clicking on the link below or by mailing your check to: Congo Initiative, P.O. Box 246, Germantown, WI 53022. Thank you for partnering with us!

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