

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



As we approach the end of the year, we have much to celebrate. I am deeply grateful for your unwavering support and the dedication of our leadership, staff, and students at Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC). I am grateful for you. Together, we accomplished some remarkable things, most recently the graduation of **82 UCBC students**. These are among the **419 individuals** who received a transformative education this year!

As you will see below, the impact of your support is profound and it's just a glimpse of what is made possible when a community of people come together in Christ-centred faith and action to reflect light into this world.

I will never tire of sharing the story of Congo Initiative - because it is a story of hope. It is a story that points to God's peaceable Kingdom - a reminder that there is life even amidst darkness. Having been born in Congo of missionary parents and lived and worked there with my wife for over forty years, I am truly thrilled, and blessed, to have assisted in bringing about this great change in education among this new generation of young Congolese, and thrilled that this is a testament to my parent's life-long ministry in the Congo.

Thank you for standing with the rising generation in 2023.

David McAllister MBE
Congo Initiative UK CEO



419
STUDENTS



82
NEW GRADUATES



937
ALUMNI SERVING
THEIR COMMUNITIES





“We have dreams, visions, and goals to achieve. We have crowns to win that sometimes seem elusive and hopeless to reach. Every day, someone or something seems to tell us, ‘Stop dreaming, stop trying; it’s too difficult for you; it’s not meant for us.’ My message today is emphatic, ‘Yes, we can.’ Whatever the challenges and obstacles, ‘Yes, you can!’

...Remember, your feet cannot go where your mind and faith have not gone first. So, never give up. Be all that God wants you to be.”

Dr. David Kasali

President and Co-Founder



Priscille is the first woman in her family to attend university and appreciates that UCBC promotes women’s education, “UCBC is a university that pushes women to have confidence and not underestimate themselves so that they can impact their communities. UCBC wants women to feel empowered to make decisions and pushes women to develop through the various activities that the institution provides.” She wants girls and women in Congo to know, “we have potential in us and we should have confidence in ourselves that we can positively impact our communities and our beloved Democratic Republic of Congo.”

“Congratulations to you, on your achievements and for choosing UCBC for your studies. Today is the crowning moment of your efforts to move into professional life. Our congratulations also go to parents, friends, and all faculty members and staff, heroes behind the curtains, thanks to whom you have made it thus far. It is now time to live what you have received from us, assured of our support, as much as possible.

We wish everyone a happy celebration! TukoPamoja!”

Dr. Honoré Bunduki

UCBC Rector



Bibuya “In just four years, my life drastically changed during my time at UCBC in the Computer Engineering department. Initially drawn by a passion for software development, UCBC revealed to me a broader purpose: solving real-world problems at local, national, and global levels, with software development as one of the tools. Now, I am proud to be an agent of transformation, passionate to make a positive impact wherever my path takes me.”



Ornella is a third year UCBC student studying communications. She hopes to become a journalist and use her skills to restore peace in her hometown of Bunia. Her experiences at UCBC have shaped her as a person. "Being at UCBC has helped me to be open and think out of the box. Before that, I was closed to myself and afraid to express what I felt in front of an audience." Through her classes, her work with UCBC's radio broadcasts, and time spent working with others in groups, Ornella has discovered more about herself. Now she knows she is a changemaker. "I will be a changemaker wherever I work...promoting women is a great opportunity to develop a community because a transformed woman is a great agent of change for a nation."

Potent is a second year Agribusiness student at UCBC. His dream is to one day work on food security in the DRC. Potient notes that, "the community life, wonderful teaching, smart teachers, and exceptional activities," are what makes UCBC special. "Every moment on campus is a perfect opportunity to learn something precious for life...UCBC is not just a university, it is a transformative system for producing leaders."



ADVANCING EDUCATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

In July 2023, UCBC unveiled two updated computer labs on campus which house 55 new computers and provide faster, more reliable internet. Access to consistent and quality technology has remained difficult in Congo and these computer labs are a huge gain for the students, faculty, and staff. Thanks to funding from First Fruit Inc., a longtime CI partner, we have been able to upgrade the technology department. Before receiving this grant, UCBC had only 10 outdated computers and 20 mini computers for the entire student body to use.





ALUMNI In October 2023, several UCBC alumni gathered at an event in Bunia. The event was part of a series of visits organised by the UCBC Development Office to strengthen alumni relations and meet with potential partners. Community is an important part of the UCBC experience and these events help strengthen the bond of UCBC alumni living and working throughout DRC.



Marc "I would not be where I am today if not for UCBC. UCBC has transformed me and many others. It has inspired a new vision, infused in us enduring values, and equipped us to be agents of change...not only in our country, but our continent and even the world. I am evidence of the new thing God is doing."

Busike is a UCBC Agribusiness graduate. "My journey at UCBC has been shaped by community life and service. UCBC, through its various activities - academics, chapel, mentoring, service learning, work-programme, women's voices - helped me know and develop myself better. I also learned more about good resources, the environment, relationships, and time management. UCBC is a true transformative machine that has helped me acquire values, critical thinking, and the spirit of entrepreneurship. Today, I am able to create my own company to solve some problems in my community and maintain myself [well] in the business world. For those who want to make positive changes in their academic and professional lives, UCBC is the right choice."



ADVANCED STUDIES PROGRAMME

19 UCBC faculty and staff members are fully financially supported for their Masters or PhD programmes this year. This is the largest cohort we have ever had at one time participating in the Advanced Studies Programme. With this progress, we are on target to have 22 total graduates by the end of 2025 and 29 by the end of 2026!

Viviane Bibuya Bwirabuli is pursuing a Master of Arts in Organisational Leadership at Africa International University in Nairobi.



350+

children are receiving an education through our primary schools Académie Bilingue du Congo and La Charité in 2023. 49% of these students are girls.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RELIEF FOR THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

Over 2,600 families who are internally displaced were beneficiaries of relief materials and counselling services from Congo Initiative's Bethesda Counselling Centre and Centre for Church Renewal and Global Mission.



JUSTICE INITIATIVE

In March 2023, the Justice Initiative hosted its 6th International Justice Conference at UCBC. At least **120 law students** and **legal professionals (including 40 women)** attended the International Justice Conference in March 2023. An estimated 1,400 listeners tuned in to sessions by radio and 1,000 tuned in on Facebook Live.



In October 2023, UCBC law professor, Sandra Nyandulu, along with two law students (Grace, centre; Freddy, right) attended the iPeace Great Lakes Regional Training in Kigali. The annual conference brings together law professionals and students from DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda, and Kenya, and focuses on human rights and international humanitarian law.



NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

Natural Resource Governance creates a more equitable land management system, especially for women and youth. The team hosts community dialogue and mediation workshops in various regions of the country. Over **8,000 people** participated in workshops in Nyunzu Territory in 2022-2023! Of that number, **4,691 were women**. It's estimated that over **500 women's land rights** were secured by being digitally mapped through this process.

HOLISTIC FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The construction on the new Holistic Family Development Centre building was completed in April 2023. A joyful dedication ceremony was held on the campus to commemorate the occasion. UCBC Rector, Honoré Bunduki, was at the celebration and took part in the tree planting – a UCBC tradition to mark something new.

Over 250 women and children benefit from vocational training and education at HFD.



72

people have been served by pro-bono services through CI's Justice Initiative in the last six months.



ASANTE

Asante Sana (“thank you very much”) for providing pathways of hope, healing, and renewal. We, as a Congo Initiative community, give thanks for your support, prayers, and for **standing with the rising generation in Congo**. As we enter 2024, we invite you to join us and be inspired by the story we are writing together in Congo.



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