

Piarists

To the rhythm
of Congo



IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Piarists reached Kinshasa, the capital of the DRC, in 2014. Three Piarists – one from the Congo, one from Cameroon and one from Guinea – initiated a mission in DR Congo under the Piarist province of Central Africa. The first community, established by these three Piarists, was located in the neighbourhood of Lemba. There are currently two communities existing in the DRC, one located in the capital and another located 62 miles (100km) to the south, in Kikonka.

In Kinshasa, the Pious School focuses its work on the capital's street children, assisting some twenty children between the ages of 6 and 14. The aim is to provide all of them with schooling and to guarantee food for these children. The ultimate goal is to return them to their families wherever possible.

In Kikonka, a conurbation of 15,000 inhabitants located near the town of Kisantu, there is an agreement with the Diocese whereby the Piarists have taken on the running of the parish of San Pedro and its three parochial schools





More information: <http://www.itakaescolapios.org>

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The mission and the Piarist project in Kikonka

The Piarist Solidarity Campaign “To the Rhythm of the Congo” focuses its activity on the awareness of Kikonka, making the Piarists’ educational projects known and supporting them economically.

Two Water Wells

Since there are no wells in Kikonka, the vast majority of its population collects water from small streams nearby. There is a low level of education among the inhabitants, which means they have little or no awareness of the health hazards surrounding untreated water and the need for safe drinking water. Due to this there is an elevated rate of infectious diseases, especially in children.

The goal is to drill two water wells so that the primary school and five “neighborhoods” of the town will have access to drinking water. We also seek to provide education on the importance of making good use of water, and facilitate the use and maintenance of these wells.

Kikonka Primary School

The primary school located next to San Pedro Parish Church serves a total of 885 children (463 boys and 422 girls) and employs 16 teachers. Along with the other two secondary schools, it is public, property of the Diocese of Kisantu and is served by the Kikonka Piarists.

The schools’ facilities are extremely run down: the doors and windows are broken; the roof is no longer waterproof and has fallen through in some areas; the floors are cracked and the walls are unpainted. There is also the need to build new toilet facilities, purchase school supplies and furnish the facilities.

The aim of the campaign is to ensure high quality education for the approximately 900 children who attend school there, having the school facilities restored and furnishing the centre with appropriate materials in order to create a dignified and effective class experience.

Women’s empowerment in Kikonka

The situation of women and girls in the DRC is especially concerning. The Piarists, aware of this reality, have launched a program for women’s empowerment in Kikonka together with the Congregation of the Missionary Crusaders of the Church.

In an area where there were no training centers for women, this program offers a necessary opportunity for a group of 60 women from the conurbation. During the school year, they will receive training on various topics, including basic agriculture, sewing, dyeing, health (reproductive health, water-borne diseases, children’s health, etc.) and French literacy. Since their arrival in the country, the Piarists have stated that any improvement in the situation of the country must include the fight for women to gain access to greater opportunities for equality and to their rights.

IN THE
Future

The mission in Kikonka will eventually require the rehabilitation of the secondary schools and, in all likelihood, the construction of a nursery school that will bring education to the children of Kikonka from an early age.