

IPASC celebrated its 20th Anniversary with the people of Buta. The new Health Centre here was built with money raised by the Mayor of Wirral, Councillor Phil Gilchrist. IPASC used this occasion to promote health issues and to encourage the people to send their children to school and possibly to train with IPASC in the future. The Health centre is flourishing and providing a service to increasing numbers of people.



On 2nd June I attended a meeting of the GSEC (Groupement de Solidarité D'Epargne et de Crédit), Solidarity Group for Savings and Credit. La Vie de Demain - **LIFE FOR TOMORROW.**

Also present were representatives from various communities in the area. The meeting consisted of drama to demonstrate how the group operates and ended with the distribution of the savings credit. One woman LWA said she can now begin to build a house.



The Group waiting to receive their savings from the cash box on the central chair. The box is secured with 3 padlocks and the keys are held by 3 different people to ensure security.



A member receiving her credit

This first group was started primarily by staff of IPASC and People Living with AIDS; however anyone can join the group. The rules are strict. Members may borrow from the funds to start projects and must repay the loan with interest. The first group was set up to demonstrate that PLWA are able to take financial responsibility for their lives. As a result of the success of the first group 2 additional groups have already been set up in the City of Aru. The target is to help all vulnerable people to manage their finances in a more constructive way. In the absence of reliable banks the Congolese show their inventiveness by utilising other methods of increasing the value of their money. It is hoped that GSEC will be set up in other towns and villages in the area.

I have left what is probably the most important event of this past month until last. The previous Executive Director decided to stand down for personal reasons. On 15 May the Board of Governors met to decide on the future leadership of IPASC. It agreed to appoint Amuda Baba to this post. He will search for a replacement to be Director of ISPAC (University at Bunia). Amuda is eminently qualified to lead IPASC into the future. He will be ably assisted by Buli Ghessi as Deputy Executive Director. Kavira Sikuli will replace Buli as Head of Operational Programmes. You can see Amuda's profile which I hope will be added soon to the Friends of IPASC Trust's web site www.ipasc.net.

On a personal note I struggled with a tummy upset for over a week and was directed to go for tests in a Ugandan Hospital by Bishop Ande. I was given some strong antibiotics and have fully recovered. The people in Uganda were extremely kind but it was a relief that I did not need to be an inpatient. I love all the new things I experience in Congo but there is a limit!! Health care is very primitive!!

Thank you to everyone who continues to take an interest in the wonderful things God is doing in this part of Congo. While we enjoy peace in the Aru area please pray for the troubles in the Boga Diocese where the peace is holding but is fragile. The rebel soldiers are hungry and hunger leads to violence.

The Anglican Provincial Synod takes place in Kinshasa 18 – 22 June. Please pray for the Archbishop, all the Bishops and lay representatives during this important time.

IPASC and the Dioceses send you their warmest greetings
Best wishes

Gill