

The Anglican Diocese of Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo

Could your church partner with the Diocese of Goma?

Could you put a roof on one of our rural parishes once the congregation has laid the foundation and built the walls? Could your church help open a health centre where people currently have to walk 5km to get to the nearest health professional? Could you contribute to the funding needed to train the chaplains in our 106 schools? Could your church support training in conflict-resolution in every parish? Could you buy the land on which we want to plant one of 35 new churches? Or fund an evangelism campaign? Or build a house for one of our archdeacons?

1. An overview of the diocese

We are a new diocese, founded on 20 November 2016, but with big plans. Our first bishop, Bishop Désiré Mukaniirwa, was a man of great vision with a particular concern for peace-building, evangelism and the marginalised. He died of Covid in July 2020 aged 52 and since October 2020 Martin Gordon, a CMS UK missionary, has led the diocese, first as Vicar General and then Bishop from 23 April 2023.

The diocese is in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, where the Anglican Church was first planted 125 years ago by a Ugandan missionary and where it remains strongest. It is twice the size of Belgium covering an area of 3.6 million people over 7 archdeaconries with 10,000 believers in 60 parishes served by 70 clergy and 20 evangelists. We also have 106 schools teaching 22,000 pupils, a fledgling university and 2 Bible Schools training 30 future church leaders.

We are looking for individuals, churches and organisations to partner with us

The archdeaconries are hugely varied

Goma - the city of Goma has more than half of the population of the diocese. It has grown from ½ million in 2002 to over 2 million and is one of the 10 fastest growing cities in the world. It is divided into the city proper with more middle-class parishes, and the area around Mount Nyiragongo with volcanic rock making even subsistence farming challenging.

Masisi - our 2 archdeaconries in Masisi are in mainly Kinyarwanda-speaking areas, rich in agriculture (milk, potatoes) and in minerals (coltan, cobalt) and very poor in education. Illiteracy is high. Only a handful of our clergy in Masisi have been to Bible College, or even finished secondary school.

Rutshuru – our 3 archdeaconries border Uganda and it is here we find Virunga National Park with its famous gorillas. Large swathes are occupied by the M23 rebel group, with our believers regularly having to flee into the forest. During the conflict in eastern Congo since 1994 over 20 Anglican parishes have been abandoned.

Walikale – The territory of Walikale itself is the size of Belgium, with the archdeacon as the only clergy for now. It is a fertile and peaceful, if slightly inaccessible area. It's really a missionary archdeaconry and we have 10 students in training ready for church-planting.

2. Vision and funding priorities

Our unrestricted general funds amount to around £20,000 each year, which we use for some core staff salaries, our annual audit, legal, office and vehicle costs, diocesan meetings and some parish and clergy support. **But, for much of our evangelism, parish development and training we rely on external funds for now.**

Four areas of our vision for the next 5 years where external financial support can have the greatest impact are.

Training – For various reasons such as poor education or hurried ordinations or simply lack of resources - we have an urgent need of training and retraining – particularly in preaching, parish management, conflict-resolution, Sunday school ministry, marriage, and community development.

Evangelism – our vision is to plant 35 churches in the next 5 years – one new church per year in each archdeaconry. At the end of year 1 we have already planted 6. Funding can help fund evangelism training and campaigns and put roofs on churches.

Parish development – as well as planting new churches our aim is for every one of our existing parishes to have its own land (with legal documents) with a church and a pastor's house. Normally the local believers build the majority of the church and the diocese helps with the roof.

Books and Bibles – we have the aim of massively increasing the number of believers in our churches who have their own Bibles and prayer books, as well as continuing to provide all theology students with a bundle of essential books when they graduate.

3. Partnership with the Diocese of Goma

Could you partner with the Diocese of Goma to help us fulfil our vision?

£1,000 – would buy 200 prayer books OR 100 Bibles OR provide 25 students with a book bundle

£2,000 - would fund a vacation evangelism school for 50 students culminating in an evangelism campaign OR provide the roof for a church

£4,000 - would buy land for a new rural church complete with documents OR provide in-depth training and materials in a specific ministry area (children, youth, women, chaplaincy) across all 7 archdeaconries

£8,000 - would buy land for a church in an urban area, complete with documents

Larger capital projects – Two immediate larger-scale priorities are to firstly to build a health centre in Bujari, north of Goma, where there are thousands of displaced people, complete with maternity ward and children's care services. Secondly, to rebuild our diocesan offices on existing land with space for 60 staff and meeting rooms for the rapidly growing staff team.

For more information and to explore further contact Martin Gordon, Bishop of Goma, martingordon2@gmail.com, WhatsApp +44 7715 735120

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Pictures are from top to bottom: a church in Rutshuru that needs a roof, building an extension to a church in central Goma, a portable Bible school in a school in Walikale