

# Butembo Shelter

## Annual Report 2023 - 2024

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**Butembo Shelter** is a registered charity in England and Wales (Charity Number 1199358). This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period (April 2023 – March 2024).

### Background

The armed conflict and violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has affected thousands of families and created a deteriorating humanitarian situation. Brutal clashes between groups have had very serious consequences for people: many have been killed, wounded, or traumatized, villages have been burned and

fields destroyed and there has been massive population displacement. The situation in north east region of the DRC remains volatile. Far from their villages and traditional means of subsistence, thousands of families are facing an increasingly critical food shortage. Butembo Shelter is one of the many charities seeking to help these families rebuild their lives.

## **Our objectives**

Our main objective is to relieve poverty through provision of immediate and long term grants to young people, families and communities living through conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our work covers the north eastern part of the DRC, a region where armed conflict has raged for several years. Children are the main victims of violence, at risk of injury or death in combat, as many children have been recruited into armed groups as porters, combatants, or sex slaves. Children recently released from armed groups have expressed fear of returning home, saying they will not be accepted back into their families and communities. In addition to food, shelter, and psychosocial support, children need opportunities for play and learning. Butembo Shelter also provides support to Congolese refugees that have fled the war and now live in the United Kingdom and our activities are currently in the East of England.

## **Our activities**

Through our volunteers in the Butembo area in North Eastern DRC we have been able to provide some grants to victims of war the country. These are predominantly women and children that have been displaced by the raging conflict in the North eastern region of the DRC. The majority of these kinds have become orphaned and have no one to look after them. The grants we sent have been able to provide just basic food and medical supplies. In the last year April 2023 – March 2024, over 400 children have come to us seeking help. It has been difficult to meet all the needs of these victims.

## **Challenges**

The last year has been really difficult for the victims of war in the DRC. Fighting has intensified in recent months between DRC government forces and the M23 armed



group – the most prominent of more than 100 armed groups reported to be active in the strategically important and resource-rich region, which has been at the epicentre of multiple conflicts since the 1990s. Civilians are bearing the brunt, with some 7 million displaced from their homes, many of them multiple times – 2.5 million of them in North Kivu alone. The complexity of humanitarian challenges is in stark evidence at the ICRC-supported Ndosho hospital in Goma, North Kivu's provincial capital. With a daily influx of wounded civilians – many of them children – the hospital is at more than double its normal capacity with more than 130 beds, many of them in tents.

## Financial Review

The charity is still in its infancy and we are still battling to raise funds to help the most vulnerable people in the SRC. Most of our donations come from well-wishers and individuals based in the United Kingdom. Out of that amount we were able to send a total of £1630 in the Financial Year ending April 2024. This money was used to buy food and basic medical supplies, as well as purchasing clothes and blankets for orphans and widows in the Butembo region. We have also sent a few applications for funding from organizations based in the United Kingdom and we are hopeful we can be able to raise more money in the next financial year. We also plan to organise some fund-raising activities. A summary of our income and expenditure is outlined below in Figure 1.

Income	Expenditure
<b>Total income = £2,430</b>	Orphans and widows £1,630
	Web subscription £546
	Insurance £170
	<b>Total Expenditure = £2,346</b>

**Figure 1:** Summary of income and expenditure

## Our future plans

We are committed to raising more funds in this next financial year and our plan is to help 500 displaced children in the DRC. We will be seeking continue working with other local partners especially educational institutions to make sure these children acquire the skills they need to be self-sustainable. In the United Kingdom we will work more with Congolese refugees to help them access local support for basic needs such as housing, education and health. We also plan to work with the local authorities in the Norfolk region to ensure we create lasting partnerships. Again, we are really grateful to everyone who has landed a helping hand in this past year.

On behalf of the trustees

Georges Muhiwa (Chairman)



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*Dated 4 September 2024*