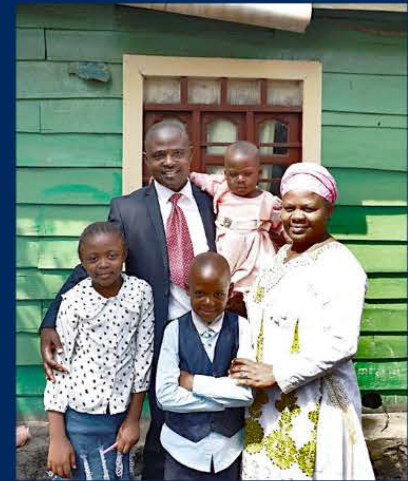


ReachOut™
YOUTH SOLUTIONS



**Country Leader
Mwema Bertin**

2023 UPDATE

DRC



A world in need of a Savior...

Reach Out's global impact in 2023



Reach Out Global Map

God moved mightily through our Reach Out team in 2023, more than we ever could have imagined! Investing into the training and equipping of youth leaders is crucial in spreading the message of the gospel to the younger generation. Our Country Leaders witnessed God's hand in allowing our team to train and equip more than **5,000 youth leaders** this past year who are now implementing the six essential characteristics taught through Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry into local churches in countries all over the world. Accounts were received about the impact of our JFYM Forums that brought newly certified Eagle Leaders (leaders who are now equipped to train other leaders), churches planted, and onlookers saved. Over **18,000 students were saved** through the ministries of those trained in **Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry**. And thousands more are currently being disciplined into disciple-makers for their generation!

JFYM Forums have sparked the establishment of **85 new churches in just one year**. These churches addressed crucial needs in areas where JFYM Forums were held. Thousands of students also participated in biblical training when our teams were allowed to enter schools in certain countries. Students were given the opportunity to participate in activities that impacted their spiritual, emotional, and relational growth. One of our Country Leaders has even been invited by their government officials to create such a program in their nation!

New opportunities were plentiful in 2023. Youth leader training started in **Pakistan** and **Belize**. Translations were completed in **Hindi** (India) and **Kirundi** (Burundi). And, we were able to add **Ukrainian** as an additional language to our JFYM online training platform! We also trained Links International missionaries from multiple countries in JFYM.

Reach Out hosted its First Annual Golf Tournament early in 2023, which was a great success and was enjoyed by all who participated. We were also able to highlight Reach Out Youth Solutions and Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry at the Southern Baptist Convention, the Texas Baptist General Convention, and Movement Day at Dallas Baptist University.

Thank you for your generosity, support and prayers throughout 2023 to help us extend God's love to the countries we serve. We would not be able to do it without you and your faithfulness in coming alongside us. **Thank you!**



God's hand extended...

despite major conflict happening throughout the area...

48 leaders from different denominations in the surrounding areas attended our first JFYM Forum of year. As a result of the impact of that Forum, **13 people were saved that weekend!** The church leaders expressed how delighted they were to receive the training and JFYM materials. Many of them are going to implement the principles in their denominations, churches, and schools.

God made a way...

when there was
none...

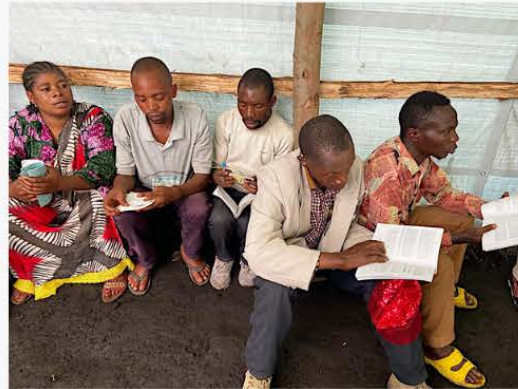
The situation in DRC is dire. Many internally displaced people (IDPs) are now living in tent villages in Goma, the capital city and hometown of our Country Leader, Mwema Bertin. Thousands of them are living in shanties made from **paper from the trash**. They fled from the **M23 rebels** who are wrecking chaos throughout the country. Apart from hunger and starvation, horrible things are happening in these refugee camps, including rape, prostitution, food for sex, sickness, torture, etc.

But Mwema Bertin and his team are working amongst these IDPs to meet physical needs. In this dark and seemingly hopeless environment, they are ministering to those traumatized by the killings, rapes and destruction they have witnessed. He and his team are **preaching Christ and restoring hope** to many, and because of the need, they started a new church in the camp! These photos are young people who have given their lives to Christ and were **baptized on Easter weekend!** Bertin shared: **“11 people received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We are penetrating the culture even though there is a situation of war around. We still appreciate your prayers.”**





Our team had planned to have approximately 40 attendees for their second quarter JFYM Forum, **but 70 attendees showed up!** Additionally, the church they started in the Goma refugee camp was thriving despite the severe flooding that occurred just after our team planted the church.



times a thousand...

God moving through adversity...

And God brought more to Him...

with our team ending the year in His strength...

More than 50 leaders from different denominations attended this JFYM Forum and are now implementing JFYM principles into their denominations, churches and schools. After the Forum, some leaders reported that they organized an outreach crusade and **14 people received Jesus!** Also, because of the JFYM training, **two churches were planted, 31 people received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and are now being disciplined**, and many were baptized! [More photos on p. 7.]





4th Quarter JFYM Forum

DRC has the second highest amount of Internally Displaced Persons [IDPs] in the world, the highest amount of food insecurity in the world [26.4 million people], and an average of 68% of the nation living on less than \$2.15 PER DAY. So, it is incredible what God has been doing through our team in DRC!

In March, Mwema Bertin shared a prayer request for his hometown of Goma where thousands IDPs have fled the M23 rebels and are now living in refugee camps there. (*The UN estimates that there are over 5.8 million IDPs living in DRC and that 800,000 people have fled from eastern DRC just since January of 2022. voanews.com; jurist.org) As he was walking through the camp, he came across several of the pastors and youth leaders whom our team had **previously trained in Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry**.

While fleeing the Islamic extremists these JFYM leaders entered the camp clinging to only a few physical items they carried with them in their hasty escape. One of the items Mwema noticed in their belongings was their **JFYM training booklet!** The leaders talked about how they were regularly meeting together in the camp to “**pray with passion**” and were hopeful that God would bring peace back to the land. These pastors and youth leaders have had very little access to food, medicine, or clothing. They were instrumental in **starting the church in the camp and our team is helping them and ministering to them**. God is so good in the details we don’t expect.

We appreciate your kindness, support, prayers and gifts in helping the impossible happen in a nation that is facing great trials. Thank you for being a part of this journey with us and for all that God is going to do through our team in DRC as we follow His lead!

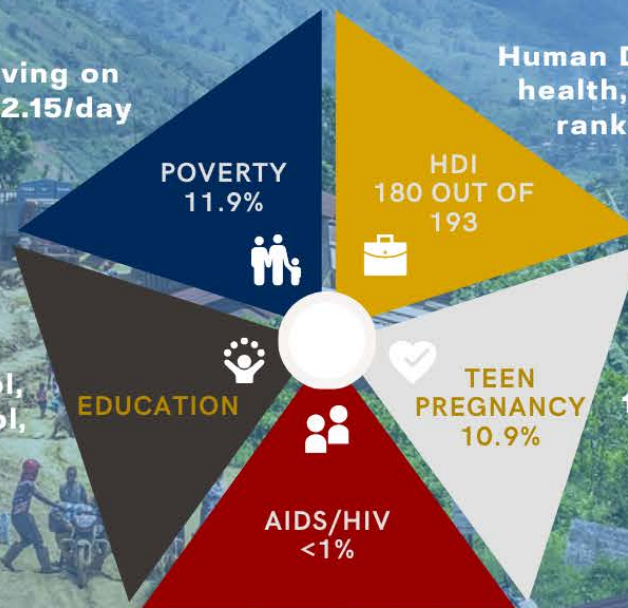
COUNTRY STATISTICS DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

POPULATION = 102.2 million



11.9% living on under \$2.15/day

Human Development Index = health, education, income rankings in the world



78% attend primary school, 32% attend lower secondary school, 34% attend upper secondary school, 67% complete primary school

10.9% of girls ages 15-19

but equals almost half a million people

Challenges

- life expectancy is 60 years old
- 47% of the population are under 19 years old, and the median age is 15 which has been reduced from 17 almost 75 years ago
- surging armed conflict and intercommunal clashes led to unprecedented levels of displacement, with nearly 15 million children bearing the brunt of escalating violence and recurrent disease outbreaks, further exacerbating chronic poverty and systemic weaknesses
- 6.5 million people are IDPs because of the conflict on the eastern border
- 20% in child recruitment and abductions compared to 2022
- 40% increase of sexual violence against children from January to June 2023, and may be even higher in the combat zones
- 130% increase in reported child protection incidents including arbitrary killing, kidnapping, extortion, rape and other gender-based violence in the first half of 2023
- government withdrew from the UN in 2023
- 300,000 measles outbreaks in children with over 6,000 deaths (almost double 2022)
- 55,000 cholera cases which is the worst outbreak in 6 years and 65% of those were children
- 13% have access to safe sanitation, 3% have access to basic sanitation, 19% have access to safe water, 27% have access to basic water
- floods in Kalehe in South Kivu province, causing a major landslide led to the death or disappearance of 3,000 people in May

Reach Out

- A gift of \$1,000 helps indigenous leaders train 50 youth pastors through an “in-person” forum in their country.
- A gift of \$500 helps provide scholarships to train and mentor 20 youth pastors online.
- A gift of \$200 (\$3.85 per week) helps us equip 1 leader for 1 year, with the goal of that leader moving from being introduced to JFYM to implementing and multiplying JFYM. As a result, that new leader will begin training 3 additional leaders, so that from those 4 new leaders, there are a total of 12 young people disciplined and praying for opportunities to influence 36 of their friends to follow Jesus.
- A monthly gift of \$100 helps us continue current ministry to leaders around the world who are trained and resourced through Reach Out.

Sources:

Human Development Index at <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/country-insights/#ranks>
 UNAids at: <https://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/democratic-republic-of-the-congo>
 UNFPA at: <https://www.unfpa.org/data/cd>
 UNICEF at: <https://data.unicef.org/country/cod/> AND
<https://www.unicef.org/media/152761/file/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo-2023-COAR.pdf>
 World Bank at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099042404052410072/pdf/IDU13362b141b47a1426196001039d698bfd.pdf> AND
<https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/economies/congo-dem-rep>
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