

KIWIS IN THE CONGO

Les aventures des Geoff et CarolAnne en RDC!

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27 May → 29 May

We left Nelson on a sunny Wednesday morning and headed to Wellington then Sydney. After stopping overnight in Sydney we caught our flight to Johannesburg where we spent another overnigher, before departing to Lubumbashi in Friday morning. All bags arrived with us and no excess baggage payments! The trip was uneventful but pretty tiring, with us spending some 18 hours in the air.

30 May → 16 May

This time is being spent with a team here in Lubumbashi who are helping proofread and correct the new course. Louise is Geoff's translator for this trip, and they are working at getting used to each-other's accents during the proofing process.

Our preparation is all focused on having the first version of the course revised and printed by 16 May, when we begin our first "Training of Trainers" Seminar in Lubumbashi.



The hazards of travel in the rainy season!

Life on the ground in DR Congo

The day we arrived we heard from André and Mubunga who had set off on the road north with medical supplies for the hospital at Mulongo. The trip is about 600km long and according to Google Maps it should take around 10 hours. Ha! Obviously calculated by someone who has never been to DR Congo.

With the rainy season only just drawing to a close, the roads are terrible and any "pot-holes" are full of water. In the photo above, the truck in front of these ones was stuck in the trench pictured, so trees had to be felled and ground cleared to allow other to pass by.

What would have taken one long day in New Zealand took 7 days for André and Mubunga. Poor André then had to turn around and make the return trip on the back of a motorbike so he could take up another load of stuff in the Landrover!





US \$1 goes a long way here!

CarolAnne's Column

So . . . here we are, back in Lubumbashi. Things are the same but also different. There is still so much music wherever we go. The people are still warm, friendly and ever so patient with the "Mazunga" who butchers their French! But seriously, my French is improving day by day. The difference is seen in things like a new bus station in town, new shops opening and a bit more variety to be found. This is a result of peace and stability. We pray this peace remains.

It is hot here, approximately 27-29C during the day. But, the Congolese keep telling me how cold it is! The funny thing is, I think Geoff and I are acclimatising as we now need a blanket on our bed at night whereas upon our arrival, we needed to sleep on top of the bed. I don't know how we will manage when we get back to a NZ winter.

Your prayers have been, and still are, so appreciated. Things have gone well in the proof reading work, and we start printing the courses tomorrow in preparation for the "Training of Trainers" sessions next week.

A Time of Solar Searching

While our first priority here is to see the new *Living the Gospel* course firmly established, we also have a solar project to work on in our spare time. Using funds generously donated by people in New Zealand, we have begun to look around at what is available to use here in DR Congo. As you would expect, the selection is very limited, and because all this sort of equipment is imported, it is slapped with very high import taxes.

We have found a good source of solar panels, so that has been encouraging. We managed to bring a number of lighter items with us that we knew would not be available here, along with some good quality tools that we will leave here for future projects.

Encouraging Others

On Thursday this week we had an encouraging visit with some representatives from another denomination here in Lubumbashi. They have been invited to attend our "Training of Trainers" sessions next week, and are very enthusiastic about meeting with us. It is so good to see this sort of collaboration between churches who are of like mind. A friend of ours from Gordon-Conwell Seminary was also very pleased with the meeting, as he and his wife have just completed some training with this same group. They immediately saw the benefit of us working together. We look forward to seeing how this partnership in the gospel will develop!

As always we would greatly value your prayers for wisdom, safety and good health. We are so grateful to God for the opportunity to serve him in this way, and grateful to all of you for enabling us to be here "on the ground." For more recent info see our online updates (the link is on the top of the front page).



Reaching out to other denominations