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## **Newsletter July 2024 - The Friends of Butoke Charity (Registered Charity no. 1140094)**

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### **How much did you raise in 2023?**

Welcome to The Friends of Butoke Charity's annual newsletter in which we look back on last year and discuss the impact of your donations this year.

In 2023 the Charity's income was £27,795. We sent a total of £26,021 to Butoke to support its work (leaving a little over at year end for emergencies). A big 'thank you' to everyone who contributed, whether by donating each month, supporting one-off projects, or buying Christmas cards. 100% of your donation is sent directly to Butoke. The running costs of the Charity are covered by the trustees.

The cost-of-living crisis has continued to reduce the charity's income this year. If you'd like to make a one-off donation, just press the button below to be taken to our JustGiving page.

[Click here for JustGiving](#)

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### **In numbers...**

Since the beginning of 2023 your donations have helped Butoke to:

- Organise schooling for over 1,350 children.
- Provide life-saving medical care for over 9,200 people (the majority of whom are

children under 10).

- Feed hundreds of malnourished children.
- Provide seeds and training to subsistence farmers through over 120 agricultural associations.
- Train over 1,000 farmers in fish-farming.
- Ensure clean drinking water for over 34,000 people by refurbishing capped springs.



*Pictured: Students in Tshimbundu, where 99% of students passed their state exams.*

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## **The Elsa Corp Justice Project**

The Elsa Corp Justice Project helped 14 rape survivors in 2021/2022. The Corp family, their friends and acquaintances generously renewed the support and a further seven girls and women were helped in 2023. The survivors, some as young as 14, are provided with legal and medical assistance, alongside psychological support and basic necessities such as food, clothing and medicines (they are often destitute when

they contact Butoke).

Butoke believes that this work is important not only because it helps the individual survivors, but also because it helps combat the culture of impunity from which perpetrators of sexual violence often benefit in the DRC. Due to the Elsa Corp Justice Project, a number of offenders have been prosecuted and imprisoned. This is far from normal in the DRC, and Butoke believes that the communities in which the offenders lived have taken note.

*Women's empowerment is at the heart of everything Butoke does. Butoke insists on women being involved in the leadership of its agricultural associations, and sponsors female students to university.*

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## **The main activities of Butoke in 2023**

**Education:** Butoke operates two six-classroom school complexes, both including primary and secondary education, along with vocational training in agriculture, tailoring and mechanics. This year saw great successes, with 99% of students passing their state primary school exams, and 100% passing qualifications in pedagogy, agriculture and tailoring in the secondary schools.

Butoke also supports several university students in the cities of Kananga and Kinshasa. They study a variety of courses, including medicine, teaching, nutrition and midwifery. All agree to return to the community and work for at least 5 years once they have completed their studies.



*Pictured: the construction of the additional clinic.*

**Healthcare:** Butoke operates the Musue Bantu Health Centre as well as the Maternity Unit in Tshimbundu (which also provides general medical services). It also operates a small health post in Tshikaji. Work has begun on the building of an additional clinic, which will focus on providing services for newborns and their mothers.

Many in the DRC die of preventable illnesses like malaria, tetanus and numerous waterborne diseases. As such, the clinics focus on training in preventative care and public-health education.

The maternity clinic in Tshimbundu is rudimentary, but offers essential ante-natal and childbirth services that would otherwise be unavailable. *‘As mothers, we give birth on the road on our way to the maternity hospital, and very often with many complications that sometimes lead to maternal death, and also to contamination of the children born if the objects used to cut the umbilical cord are dirty.’* Butoke’s work provides safety and dignity to those giving birth.



**Orphanage and shelter for the elderly:** Butoke continues to operate an orphanage and shelter for the elderly. It generally has about 90 young people who are residents and many others who live with foster families but who are fed by Butoke. There are usually around ten elderly people living in the shelter for the elderly.



*Pictured: Children awaiting their lunch, and a woman taking water from a local spring.*

**Spring development:** Butoke has worked to cap springs in the area, providing water for the local community. The provision of clean water has led to an observed decrease in cases of water-borne diseases. Butoke also works to build straight, properly cleared paths to the capped springs, which help prevent snake-bites and sexual violence targeted at those collecting water.

One resident said: *'We often die of water-borne diseases, malaria, and kwashiorkor, especially among children, and even some of the adults often die of typhoid fever. We ask you to intercede, so that we can finally have [...] drinking water.'*

**Agriculture:** Butoke works with 82 food crop associations, and 139 vegetable crop

associations, providing seeds and training. Butoke insists that women are involved in the management committees of its association partners. This year Butoke reported a particularly good harvest, including high amounts of soy and beans, which will help reduce rates of malnutrition amongst children in the community.

**Fish farming:** Butoke introduced fish farming to a number of its association partners to increase the amount of protein available to villagers. It provided training and technical assistance to over 1,000 fish farmers last year. A couple from Papa Kapila testify that *'meat is a stranger here at home, only the fish produced in Butoke's ponds allow us to eat the meat of the fish regularly'*.

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## **Butoke in 2024 - how you could help**

Due to the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, Butoke's running costs have increased significantly. In particular, the cost of fuel and foodstuffs has risen. If you are able to make an additional donation, we have set up a Just Giving page you can use - the button is higher up this newsletter. Alternatively, if you are one of our regular donors, we would be very grateful if you were able to increase your standing order.

If you're not a regular donor, but you'd like to become one, please send Paul an email at [paulevans@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:paulevans@blueyonder.co.uk) and we will send you details of how to set up a standing order.

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**Easyfundraising** is a great way to help the Charity raise funds at no cost to yourself. Many big online retailers (John Lewis and booking.com, for example) will make a small donation when you visit their website through the [easyfundraising portal](#). Over the last 4 years the Charity has received £1,273 in this way. Easy fundraising provides an [easy add-on](#) to your web browser that will tell you which online shops will donate.

**Christmas Cards:** We raised £1,500 from the sale of Christmas cards in 2023. Thank you to all who bought some. Some stock remains. If you'd like to stock up, they're going at a discount price of £5 plus postage. [Email Paul](#) with orders or questions about which cards are available.



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## Just remind me again, what does Butoke do?

Butoke is a small NGO working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Its core activities are to run several schools, two big and one small clinics, an orphanage, and a food security programme. The on the ground expertise comes from a medical team lead by Dr Jean Lumbala, who is also a trained agronomist. The Friends of Butoke Charity raises funds to help Butoke continue its activities. We have four trustees: Matthew Pollard, Adriane Pollard, Marleen Tiemens and Paul Evans. Our accounts are independently examined each year and copies of the independent examiner's reports are available on request.

More information about Butoke's activities are available on [our website](#).

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