

The Anglican Grow Hope in Rupert's Land will be designating funds raised in 2026 to this food security project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) implemented by Church World Service.

## How you and your parish can participate



**PRAY:** Pray for the people in the DRC and the Alongside Hope partners working to make their lives better. Add them to your parish prayers too!



**ACT:** Get creative and hold a fundraising event! This can even be an opportunity to build relationships with other parishes with a co-hosted event. Send the proceeds to the Diocese of Rupert's Land with "Anglican Grow Hope" in the memo line.



**GIVE:** You can donate by cheque directly to the Diocese of Rupert's Land or to your parish, with "Anglican Grow Hope" in the memo line. Churches and individuals can make donations. Donations from individuals will receive a tax receipt either directly from the Diocese or your parish.

*Please note that funds raised for Anglican Grow Hope must be directed to the Diocese of Rupert's Land separately from other Alongside Hope donations.*



## Alongside Hope

Anglicans and partners working for change in Canada and around the world

[www.alongsidehope.org](http://www.alongsidehope.org)

**"Having enough to feed my children means regaining my dignity and my place in life."**



## Alongside Hope



## Hope rises in the DRC

The armed conflicts of 2015-2017 in the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) caused people to flee their homes and abandon their crops, leading to a food crisis that we are still witnessing to this day. Victorine Tshilomba Kazamba is one of the many people receiving cash and seeds from Church World Service, with support from Alongside Hope and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. **Read how this project is restoring life and livelihoods in the DRC on the next page.**

# Cash distribution project feeds families and restores dignity

The memories of the war still haunt Victorine Tshilomba Kazamba. Almost 10 years ago, amid the fields near her home about 45 kilometres from Kananga, soldiers were spreading terror. They killed her husband; her brother died while in the ranks of a rebel militia.

Suddenly a widow at 50, she found herself alone, taking care of her nine children and her brother's five children. In a region where subsistence farming is the main source of life, the violence and insecurity prompted people to flee. Since then, the death rate has skyrocketed and the population is struggling to survive.

Kazamba's story is not unusual. The armed conflicts of 2015-2017 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) led to a food crisis that we are witnessing to this day. Alongside Hope and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank are supporting local partner Church World Service in a project to distribute cash to internally displaced persons (IDPs), so they can buy food and improve food security and nutrition.

In Kasai Central province, the majority of the population relies on a diet of maize and cassava, typically eating one to two meals per day, with alarming acute malnutrition rates among children under five. In some areas, up to half of all children under five were reported as acutely malnourished in recent years, indicating a serious public health concern.

It's not easy to re-establish agricultural output. There is vast

farmland available but no clear land ownership structure. Women are worst affected by land ownership conflicts. For those who are able to plant some crops it is the husband who has the power to decide on how the harvest will be utilized. A nine-month rainy season supports robust crop growth, enhances soil health, and allows for multiple planting cycles. However, seeds are hard to come by in the local markets and must be imported from Kinshasa. There are limited finances to invest in modern agriculture methods.

Experiencing severe hunger, Kazamba's family lacked the strength to go and work in the field. Every day, she and some of her children travelled seven kilometres to collect palm nuts and sell them to artisanal soap manufacturers. But she seldom earned enough to feed her household. As a result, her children often suffered from malnutrition.

Now with the distribution of cash from CWS, Kazamba can buy enough food for her children, who are now eating two to three meals a day and have returned to school. She also received seeds from CWS, which produce a more diverse range of vegetables for the household.

Kazamba joined forces with eight other women in a solidarity group to take turns working in their fields.

And to assure her family's food supply after the project, she invested part of the money to clear a large field where she sowed corn, beans, peanuts and other seeds.



## “I couldn't imagine there were sincere people left in this world.”

“I lost my father but my other family CWS and Alongside Hope rescued me,” said Jeannot Lumgonzo Tshimanga, who lives about 50 kilometres from Kananga. In 2016, his father was killed amid land disputes.

Orphaned and landless, Tshimanga says he still finds it hard to articulate what he and his brothers have gone through. He used small portions of land for subsistence agricultural activities, but it was hardly enough to feed the 13 people in his household. Tshimanga's family lived mainly on fufou, a dish made from maize and cassava leaves.

As though in a dream, Tshimanga saw his name on the list of people who would receive cash for food assistance from CWS and Alongside Hope. “I couldn't imagine that transparency was still there and so were sincere people left in this world.”

With the cash distribution, he is able to buy food and vary the meals. Tshimanga planted seeds of amaranth, okra, eggplant and Chinese cabbage received through the project.

## “I am honoured by the support of CWS and Alongside Hope.”

Marie-Jeanne Misenga Kaditshia, 62, has 10 children with her husband, who is over 70. Collecting and selling palm nuts to soap makers rarely provided her with more than \$1 US a day, insufficient to feed her dependents.

With the cash received from CWS, Kaditshia was able to buy food for her family. “I am honoured by the support of CWS and Alongside Hope. I can now stand in front of the merchants and order anything I want. In addition to nourishing my family, I have seen my dignity restored. CWS means a miracle for me.”

CWS also provided support for Kaditshia to grow her own food. “Thanks to the agricultural training and technical supervision, I bought food seeds and opened a large field using additional labour with a margin of this food cash. The rice and maize harvests will be used to feed my family now and to keep a reserve of seeds for the next agricultural seasons. With God's help, everything is possible.”

## “It was a real relief.”

For Fidèle Kasonga, 48, the CWS project came just in time for seed sowing. Kasonga received cash for four months to buy food for his wife, four children and members of his extended family in need. No longer must they only eat cassava leaves. Household members can choose what they would like to eat and the number of meals per day has grown from only one, to two or three. “It was a real relief.”

With hunger no longer an issue for his family, Kasonga is now actively participating in community work and agricultural activities. His children have gone back to school, and he prepared for the next farming season by working hard with his other family members, even hiring additional labour to help work his land. Besides the seeds received from CWS, he also bought seeds for maize, beans, rice, soybeans and cabbage.

With the help he received, he not only fed his family, but he also reshaped their future. Today, his fields are a source of hope for the entire community.