

Latest news from Claudaline (translated from French – she provides more information when replying in French) – WhatsApp 21st March 2025. We are still seeking ways to transfer money securely to her.

Extracts from Semiliki Trust bulletins about Goma & DRC follow.

“I am not feeling good at the moment; the situation we are in is very worrying, so I am wondering where will our help come from. As a Christian I believe in the Word of God, saying that my help will come from the Most High.

In Goma, people are dying because of hunger. Banks are not open and people are not getting their salaries. No business or agricultural work for women is going on, so there is more hunger. Children are going to school, but parents cannot pay, Boys aged 16 and above are being taken into military groups (rebel forces?) by force or killed if they refuse.

Two of my children are in Kinshasa (capital of DRC), my eldest daughter (Merveilles) and the youngest son (Jethron). I am in Kampala with my eldest son (Gloire) who is ill but he will be released from hospital soon. We are going to join the other two in Kinshasa to live there temporarily until peace returns to Goma. The biggest worry which complicates life for me is paying our rent and surviving in the capital of the Congo (Kinshasa); life is very expensive there...may the Lord come to our aid!

My second daughter (Sarah) and her baby Eden remained in Goma (when Claudaline went to Uganda) because her passport had expired; her husband works in Kinshasa.

We are really sorry to find ourselves so far from our activities (meaning ‘ministry’ I think). I wonder what we can do for our stability....oh God, please pray for me and the children; the rebels came once to my house to get my vehicle and a second time with my photo to find me; that makes me afraid – where can I go in this world to find refuge? Pray for us.

Next week I will be in Kinshasa. Thank you – we count on your prayers and support.

Extract from bulletin from Semiliki Trust February 2025

It has been very distressing following the news from Goma as it was attacked by M23 rebels and effectively annexed by neighbour Rwanda. Many hundreds of people have been killed and wounded. Rebels have been destabilising the whole eastern part of North Kivu province for the past 28 years, and conflict minerals have been exported out of the area to neighbouring countries, helping drive the conflict. Previously the volcano Mount Nyiragongo [erupted](#) in 2000 and in 2022 destroying large parts of this city of a million people including hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people.

Semiliki trustee Sam Pearson and health adviser Nigel Pearson visited our partners in Goma in November 2024. They visited the school for orphans which also feeds a hundred and fifty vulnerable children twice a week, supported by Semiliki.



The project is run by our partner [Claudaline](#), and a team that includes administrator Janvier, and Claudaline's daughter Sarah.

Project administrator Janvier, and Sarah (with her own daughter) with children in the nutrition programme



Our friends and all these children and their families lived through two terrifying weeks as rebels advance on and took the town. They heard repeated shelling and gun fire.

Many hundreds of thousands of people have fled Goma, across Lake Kivu to Idjwi Island and Bukavu. Residents are scared that the violence will spread to Bukavu, a city of as many as two million people. Amongst the displaced are those who were already displaced in camps around Goma.

Semiliki Trust - March bulletin:

Nb Semiliki Trust's main focus is on the provision of healthcare through hospitals and health centres in the region. They also support some disaster relief and community/school work, which is why they provide our link to Claudaline in Goma.

What's going on in Goma?

The answer is we don't know. The M23 rebels have taken over Goma and Bukavu cities and huge areas of South and North Kivu. Meanwhile troops from a neighbouring country have greatly increased their presence in the north part of North Kivu and in Ituri provinces. All the areas where Semiliki partners work are affected by this. Many of our partners have had to stay in their homes to avoid the worst of the behaviour of the armed groups.

As retreating military moved through parts of South Kivu, several of the health centres we support were partially looted. The microscope, solar panels, mattresses, some drugs and supplies were pillaged from Katasomwa health centre. The doctor managed to leave beforehand, but the nurse was terrified witnessing the looting before leaving to report to health coordinator Bahati in Bukavu. In Kabanda centre the nurse was wounded by armed people when they stole the microscope, mattresses, drugs, nutritional supplies for severely malnourished children and money. A few of the new metal doors and windows that had been purchased with funds from Semiliki for the new maternity at St Matthieu Hospital in Bukavu were taken before they had been installed, but despite this, builders have continued putting in the final touches, and doctors and nurses are working flat out meeting needs. With the increased poverty even fewer people are paying medical bills which puts extra strain on the hospital's finances. There has been huge displacement of people, including forcible closure of many camps for the displaced around Goma, leaving no safe options for hundreds of thousands of extremely vulnerable people. Chairs and tables were taken from schools and churches for firewood. Bukavu diocese has received many thousand displaced people and asks for our help to meet essential needs of food and supplies, and we would like to help the [displaced at Bushusha](#) on Idjwi Island. There has already been an outbreak of cholera at three sites of displaced people and the centre has had to treat 13 patients with cholera. They urgently need perfusions, drugs and food.

City centres are a little calmer with some people able to return and work, with shops open again (many having been looted), but many young people have been forcibly recruited into militia, with brutal exactions against those that resist, and violence against women has increased even more.