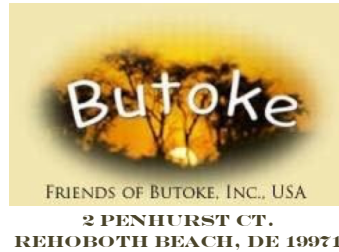


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## **Lack of Food - a consequence of Covid 19**

May, 2020

We are afraid that in the near future, we will witness a lot of deaths. The strict measures are difficult to observe because in everyday life, there are enormous difficulties. Public transportation is one way of the spread of the Corona virus because people sit side-by-side, sweat, cough, and are always close together which facilitates contamination. Of course, people know of the dangers but the hungry areas have no ears. All our people live hand-to-mouth; that is to say that they work every day to find the meal for that day and so on. But unfortunately, the markets are closed. Entering the city center is difficult because people are told to stay at home, they have no access to necessities. Now young people are looking for ways to get money and their needs, such as prostitution and theft, which lead to contact and spread of the virus. With the closing of their access to food, search makes the strict measures difficult to respect.

Continued awareness of the problem, and the demand for hand washing and use of masks have become the only barrier to this pandemic. People say that now we will die, not from Covid 19, but from hunger and from lack of food. This situation demands the involvement of all: the compulsory wearing of masks for all and relaxation of the rules, to allow the population to go about their business while respecting the restrictive measures.

We would be very grateful for your financial help. We are facing a great need, especially at this time. If we could buy more masks, the vulnerable and needy people could be admitted to our Center for a single meal a day instead of facing starvation at this very difficult time in the history of the pandemic.

We beseech you in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,

Dr. Jean Lumbala

In this latest letter from Butoke, Dr. Jean tells of the current dire situation unfolding for people in Kananga as they await the arrival of the Covid-19 coronavirus, and he appeals for help to supply food and masks.

To provide some background, Covid-19 has entered the DR Congo, with 1,600 cases and 61 deaths so far, mostly in the western capital city of Kinshasa (14 million population), some cases in East Congo. The

virus hasn't come yet to Kananga, located in the center of the country. Public health containment measures of identify, contact trace and quarantine continue to work. Airports and travel between cities remain closed down. Social distancing, hand-washing and masks are urged. Schools, churches, social gatherings of 20 or more are not allowed. Most businesses are closed (a mainly small business economy). People are without work and income; food availability is shrinking and food costs are rising.

In Kananga as elsewhere in the country, people are already weary and scared of this mysterious coronavirus. They are well aware of the dangers faced by people in East Congo from the recent two-year Ebola outbreak (which killed about half the people it infected). Now, they are beginning to realize that Covid-19 is far more contagious than Ebola and spreads through the air easily between people. They face this when, already, other conditions of life are very daunting: scarce water for hand-washing; poor sanitation; close living conditions; high incidence of asthma and other lung diseases; many with diabetes; poor nutrition; little food. Many who already lived on little income have no income now and struggle not to starve. All this, before Covid-19 even arrives.

Let us all add our prayers for Dr Jean, Butoke, and the people of Congo in this time of great, coronavirus - induced need. As Friends of Butoke, we can pull together to help Butoke provide for the people in Kananga. Please consider making a donation to Friends of Butoke at this time.

Bill Moore - Friends of Butoke, Board Member

Thank you for showing your love and support in a tangible way.

**Friends of Butoke, Inc. is a tax-exempt public charity under Sec. 501-c-3 of the Internal Revenue Code.  
friendsofbutoke.org**