

# Deaf Ministries International

Issue 49 | December 2023



*Taking the Gospel to the Deaf*

## An evangelist rises A church is born RWANDA

A young Deaf man named Fulgence Uwimana joined the DAR (Deaf Action Rwanda) team at the International Conference in Kenya. On his return to Rwanda, Fulgence, inspired by what he saw and experienced, went to his home in the Eastern Province of Rwanda and personally visited the homes of Deaf people, inviting them to gather on Sunday at the house of a Deaf friend so that he could share the Word of God with them.

They came. More than 10 Deaf gathered and he shared with them the good news of Jesus. The next week they came back. Fulgence reported this good news to DAR and asked for assistance to find a place where he could share the Word of God with the Deaf community every Sunday. The DAR leadership wrote to the pastor of the ADEPR Ngarama School who kindly agreed to lend a classroom for the Deaf to meet. And so the ICDR (Immanuel Church of the Deaf Rwanda)



*Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year*

FROM ALL THE STAFF, BOARDS, MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS OF DMI ALL AROUND THE WORLD, WE WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



*Give praise to the Lord, proclaim His name;  
make known among the nations what  
He has done. Psalm 105:1*

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### **Fulgence with group.**

church in the Eastern province was born. 70% of Deaf attendees are not familiar with sign language, so Fulgence is working hard to

rectify this. Each Sunday from 9:00am, he teaches Sign Language to the Deaf who have never learnt it, from 10:00am they have their church service, and from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM Fulgence teaches the Symbolic Universal Notation (SUN) program which is designed to bring Scripture to illiterate Deaf.

Director Patrick rejoices, "Fulgence is doing a wonderful thing

in establishing an ICDR branch in Eastern Province in Rwanda!" We have assured Patrick that we rejoice with him and pray for Fulgence and the Deaf who meet in the church. God is good. Last week the new church began to put their faith into practice. A local Deaf man and hearing woman have just welcomed their first child. Church members visited them with gifts like rice, fruits, and so on. The couple were so happy and the church was blessed to be able to share God's love in such a way.



*Gifts for the new parents*

## **MYANMAR Surprise Baptism**



Director Pa-lian and Ps. Naing Naing Kyow were pleased to have opportunity to conduct home visits in Yangon last month. When they entered the home of one couple who had only visited the church a few

times, the husband (Deaf) immediately asked when he and his wife (hard of hearing) could be baptised. Knowing they were from a Buddhist background, Pa-lian asked if they were really ready to be baptised. They assured him they were and confessed their

belief in Jesus to him. So, Pa-lian and Ps. Kyow baptised them. After the baptism, the wife said her body seemed "very light" and she was "full of joy in [her] heart".

Another Deaf Burmese lady also accepted Christ but is refraining from baptism because she's scared of how her mother will react. Her name is Yee Yee Win (which sounds like what the angels might have been shouting when she confessed her faith!). Join us in praying for her and giving thanks for the faith of the couple of who were baptised.



## **UGANDA Reclaiming the Vision**

Uganda is one of our oldest and largest fields. It's also one of our most complex. The mission started with a bang over 30 years ago when Neville appointed David Bulime as Director. David was a divine appointment and DAU (Deaf Action Uganda) flourished under his anointing, reaching many Deaf for Christ and planting over a dozen churches. Then in 2010, David suddenly passed away, aged 45, and DAU lost its way a bit. Division and uncertainty saw the vision that Neville and David had for Uganda fade.



Last year, after a sometimes-tumultuous process, Tonny Eyoku was appointed the new Executive Director of DAU. He has, with wisdom and determination, risen to the numerous challenges he inherited. Slowly but surely, Tonny is leading the DAU team back on track - reclaiming the vision that Neville and David had for the Deaf of

Uganda - and our most recent quarterly report reflects this, at times gloriously. An increase in evangelists has seen DAU's territory expand to new regions of Uganda. This has resulted in 8 Deaf in the Bugiri district receiving Christ and being baptised. It has led to an increase in churches and fellowships in the Kisoro, Mbarara, Mayuge, Soroti and Kumi regions. We have seen new partnerships

formed with Wycliffe Associates and the introduction of the DOT Bible translation program.

DAU members also attended the National Deaf Youth Camp which was held under the name "Rebuilding the wall" (based on Nehemiah 2:5 - a timely theme for DAU). The camp attracted 121 participants from different regions of Uganda and other countries. Two young Deaf came to Christ and were baptised at the camp. Numerous activities and sustainability training programs were held, including liquid soap making, sustainable agriculture, the making of necklaces and bracelets, and cookery. Bible studies, times of worship and praise, games and camp fire moments were all enjoyed at the camp. DAU members were grateful for the opportunity to attend.

Tonny still has his work cut out for him. DAU must become more self-sustainable through IGAs, the Bible school needs a fresh focus, and the loan program needs to be strengthened. But Tonny and his team are committed to meeting these challenges as well as working to strengthen their core mission goals.



## NMCS Graduation



Under blue skies, the Neville Muir Comprehensive School in Lira held their 6th graduation ceremony last month. The graduations are always colourful, vibrant affairs and this year was no different – except that it was even more colourful and vibrant! 50 students graduated, far more than any previous year, and the school enjoyed the largest parent and community turnout they have ever experienced, too. Traditional groups and student groups provided entertainment. A wonderful day for everyone.



## Emmanuel Baptised



Last year we reported on the cover of our January newsletter the good news that Emmanuel, the young Deaf Zambian man who had been wrongfully imprisoned, had, after 10 years of incarceration, been pardoned and released. To help rebuild his life, we enrolled him in our Bible school in Uganda. This was challenging for him because he had had so little education. It took him some time to learn sign language and to adjust to an academic environment. He is now doing well. Best of all, last month, Emmanuel decided to be baptised. Bible school Principal Paul says, “We give glory to God. Emmanuel has begun his journey of salvation. He loves God and demonstrates humility.” We rejoice in this news.

## Blog Book Coming Soon!

Three years in the making!  
50 extraordinary interviews!  
170 pages of gorgeous full colour portraits  
and testimonies!

This beautiful coffee table book is a collection of 50 testimonies from the fields in which DMI operates. These are amazing testimonies. Yet in DMI, they are common. They tell of lives that have been radically transformed, sometimes miraculously, from darkness and despair to light and hope. They testify to the dedication and endurance of DMI’s workers, and they testify to a God who hears, cares and rescues the Deaf.



## D.R. CONGO

### Light in the Darkness

DR Congo continues to be one of the most dangerous and challenging fields for us to work in. Last month a young Deaf grade 2 boy was walking home from the Ephphatha school and was shot in the head and killed - by a soldier of all people. Terribly sad. The whole community is mourning.



In such horrible darkness, the light of the gospel still shines. Two Deaf women and a young man gave their life to Christ and were baptised in our church in Goma. Our church in Sake has grown to 18 members under Ps Luanda, and many ICDC members joined a

Bible Camp held in Buvaku run by Christian Mission for the Deaf (CMD).

Many of our staff and church members celebrated the International Day of the Deaf and of Sign Language in Bunia city on the 30 September under the theme "A World Where Deaf People Can Sign Anywhere". It was a time of great encouragement for all who attended.



### School in Beni

Beni School Principal Alain happily reports that the new toilets for the secondary school have now been completed. This has been an urgent need since the school was built and all the staff and students have expressed their relief (pun intended) and gratitude for the new loos!

Construction work began on October 11 and lasted for one month. Rain caused delays. Alain says it rained almost every day during the building process! There were also challenges with the fluctuating price of materials but it was completed in the end. 11 builders worked on the project, 6 of whom were Deaf.

### School in Minova

DMI began to support the school in Beni in 2014 and in 2022 added a secondary school. It now has 60 students enrolled, many who started as teenagers and had never been to school before. By all accounts the school is developing very well.

More recently, we have begun to support a school in Minova, a 12-hour drive south from Beni and right across Lake Kivu from



Rwanda. The school was started by Temo Mwindi, a Deaf man with a heart for Deaf education. He asked us to support the school two years ago but we were unable to. He started the school anyway with

nothing but a piece of land granted to him by the local government. Today, supported by DMI and other organisations, the school in Minova is blossoming. It currently has 64 students, 30 of whom stay at



The school rents a small farm which grows potatoes, beans and maize and these, more than anything else, sustain the population of the school.

DAC (Deaf Action Congo) Director Papy recently visited the school. The teachers there shared with him their appreciation of the US\$150 DMI provides monthly which the six teachers share. Temo serves at the school for free because he receives an evangelist's allowance. The staff juggle a true gratitude for the support they receive with a genuine need for improvement in the very rudimentary facilities they have. There is nowhere to store the produce from the farm; there are no toilets, no tables and chairs. The students eat their meals sitting on the floor.

But, there is good news too. On November 28, Temo married his sweetheart, Christelle, who is a student at our Bible school in Uganda.



the school in the sparsest of conditions. Facilities at the school are extremely basic and the 7 staff work with very limited materials. Yet for the students, they cherish the opportunity to receive an education. It is their lifeline to a meaningful life and an abiding faith.

## EGYPT

### Middle East Outreach

Through our partnership with Sahel Al Ababseh, General Manager of Peace Dove for the Deaf, we are seeing foundations laid in Egypt and across the Middle East. In an 11 day trip, Sahel developed contacts with four churches: an Anglican Church, a Catholic Church and two independent churches. The focus was primarily on reaching Deaf children by developing Sunday School programs for them. Initial challenges included teaching the churches how to best minister to the Deaf, selecting material, training of Deaf Sunday School teachers, and convincing the respective churches of the value of bringing the Deaf from each church into one learning Christian community. Churches can be a little bit skittish about this sort of thing!



One of the encouraging things was how each of the churches opened to Sahel's leading with regards to ministry to the Deaf. Days 8 and 9 of Sahel's travel diary capture this openness well:

#### Day 8

*In the morning I've visited some friends there and after lunch I went to Anglican church to meet the team and to teach them how to make the story with the scene for the deaf children and they was really amazing and I felt that they want to make this job from there hearts .*

#### Day 9

*In the morning I've visited Prince church to meet the deaf then at 2pm I went to catholic church they have a bible study and they asked me to share a story with them so I shared Luke 5:1-26 Then at night time I meet many deaf people talk and chill.*

The Deaf in Egypt and the Middle East are a vastly unreached people group. With prayer and resources, we can achieve our mission to take the gospel of Jesus to the Deaf throughout the region. We are grateful for Sahel's experience, passion and friendship in this endeavour.

## Clothing Factory

"The dream became true and the Deaf are delighted and glad." So begins Joseph, our Coordinator in Egypt, in his first report on the new clothing factory in Cairo.



The first trained group started their work in the clothing factory in late November. They produced a collection of bed sheets for which there is currently a high demand in the market. Other Deaf groups are training now and will join their coworkers in the coming weeks. Each group will be trained to make a particular kind of clothing or textile. This will give them a variety of products and goods to sell. They've had a great start and the Deaf are full of vitality and excitement about this project.



Joseph sends his heartfelt thanks from the Deaf to all who have so generously helped and responded to their employment needs.

## KENYA

### Kenya Church

Kenya is one of our oldest and most vibrant fields with 34 churches for the Deaf meeting across the country. Faithfully overseen by Director Joseph Mulongo, who is also a member of the International Board, our Kenyan churches minister to 2500 Deaf every week. With 3 Deaf pastors and 18 Deaf evangelists, DAK/DMI is the largest faith-based organisation in Kenya for Deaf people. Truly, it is a jewel in the DMI family. Yet staggeringly, DAK (Deaf Action Kenya) has no church building of its own. It has a grant to build a church, but no land on which to

build it! The purchase of land to construct the church building will be one of our priorities for 2024. Watch this space.



DAK's newest church in Voi has been growing well and members have been faithfully attending services in an economic climate which is forcing many to stay away because of transport costs. One of the ways DAK has been addressing this matter is by streaming services online from its church in Nairobi. Streaming draws around 300 Deaf each week who would otherwise not be able to make it to church.

Sadly, in August, the entire monthly budget for DAK was stolen. Josephat had withdrawn the money from the bank and left it hidden in his car while he ate in a restaurant.

According to police, the thieves would have followed Josephat from the bank, probably tipped off by banking staff, and broken into his car once he was out of sight. The DAK Board has determined that



half would be waived, and of the remainder, Josephat would pay 80%, the chairman 10% and the treasurer 10% in instalments.

## BURUNDI Corny Farming

One year ago, we began our self-sustainability (SSF) farming project in Burundi. The most recent harvest in October was a good one with AUD\$540 of soya produce sold and a promising corn crop on the way. The 5 smaller fields we originally rented have been exchanged for a larger single field which provides much better efficiency. Eugene, our head farmer is working hard to keep the fields safe, productive and successful in achieving our SSF goals of meeting a community need, employing the Deaf, educating the Deaf, and producing an income for the community.



## PHILIPPINES - Ryan Starts Seminary

Ryan Meñoza, a student mentored by Ps Albert and Kim at their boarding house in Bacolod, enrolled at the Deaf Evangelistic Alliance Foundation School in Laguna on July 28. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of a couple in Australia, Ryan is now a 1st year College student studying a Bachelor of Elementary Education and Pastoral Training. We wish Ryan every success in his studies!



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# News from Supporting Countries

## International Board Meeting

The International Board of DMI met online on November 23 for its second meeting of the year. The Board makes decisions that have a significant impact on our Deaf workers, students and church members in the field, and helps ensure that DMI is achieving its mission goals in the most effective, efficient and transparent way possible. We are blessed to have such a committed team of wise and experienced Christian men and women on the Board.

The current Board consists of 9 members representing Norway, Australia, Asia and Africa. Meetings start and end in prayer. The November meeting heard reports from Gunnar (International Advisor), Matthijs (International Development Coordinator), Andrew (International Operations Coordinator) and Josephat who reported on the International Conference in August. Other items discussed and moved include matters regarding the development of the African Bible school in Rwanda, the new sign name for DMI, struggling fields and how to strengthen them, and the 2024 budget.

## INTERNATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

*Gunnar Dehli (h), Norway*

*Heo In Yeong (D), South Korea*

*Steve McAllister (h), Chair, Australia*

*Andrew Miller (h), Secretary, Australia*

*Josephat Mulongo (D), Kenya*

*Pablo Sbertoli (h), Norway*

*Matthijs Terpstra (D), Norway*

*David van Namen (D), Australia*

*Heidi Woll (h), Norway*

## 2023 Projects Blessings & 2024 Wish List

We thank God for the special projects we have been able to complete this year, and extend our gratitude to our many generous supporters:

### 2023 Project

- ✓ Kenya Kitchen garden land purchased
- ✓ Burundi joinery rebuilt
- ✓ Malawi disaster relief
- ✓ Congo war relief
- ✓ Uganda food relief
- ✓ New school garden in Minova
- ✓ 15 Tablets and projectors distributed
- ✓ 10 motorbikes given
- ✓ Bambanze's rice mill funded
- ✓ International Conference held
- ✓ New churches planted
- ✓ New employment projects started

On top of these special projects, for the third year in a row, we were able to send 100% of our budgets to the field every month this year. We praise God for these wonderful provisions. Thank you all so much for helping us to do this.

And here is next year's wish list. So many needs! So many lives to lift!

### 2024 Projects Wish List

- ☒ African Bible School, Rwanda USD260,000.
- ☒ Nairobi Church building USD18,000.
- ☒ Motorbikes USD10,000.
- ☒ Papy's university study USD480.
- ☒ Judith's university study USD2000.
- ☒ Burundi Church and Training centre USD120,000
- ☒ IICS (Kenya), Toilet and painting of the school. USD2700.
- ☒ Beni School, 3 wheeled motorbike. USD 3000.
- ☒ School and dorm in Minova (DRC) USD 60,000.

Please join us in prayer and giving to help us develop these projects.



## IN NEED OF ACCOMMODATION FOR VISITORS TO MELBOURNE

We are in need of someone who is able to provide a room in their home for visitors coming to Melbourne for upcoming events. It would be an extra bonus if the house had easy access to public transport. A couple from Western Australia who are both wonderful representatives of DMI would like to attend the AGM meeting next June and need somewhere to stay.

If this is you, please contact the office at [info@deafmin.org](mailto:info@deafmin.org) and we will be in touch!  
Thank you!

### Praise and Prayer

Prayer is such an important part of this ministry, and we'd like to ask you to partner with us in praying for the work that DMI is involved in. We may not be able to do much by our strength, but with God, nothing is impossible!!

#### Egypt

Give thanks for our new clothing factory in Egypt and for the first items produced.

#### D.R. Congo

Pray for the family of Mumbere, a grade 2 boy who was shot and killed on his way home from school last week. Pray for his family and all the school members as they grieve.

#### Bible Schools

Continue praying for the development of our Bible Schools in Rwanda (securing land) and in Asia (settling on a location and set up).

#### Baptisms

Give thanks for the many baptisms that are being conducted across our fields. We pray that those who have been baptised will continue to grow in their faith, sharing the joy and grace that they have found in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Weekly prayer points can be found on our website or sign up to be a prayer partner and receive them directly to your email.

<https://deafmin.org/prayer/>



Andrew Miller  
International Operations  
Coordinator



Matthijs Terpstra  
International  
Development Coordinator



Susi Tjhai  
Finance Coordinator



Amy Jack  
Communications  
Coordinator



Kay van Namen  
Sponsorship &  
Administration  
Coordinator



Neville (OAM) & Lill Muir  
DMI Founders



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