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# Mamy & Ruth's CHAT

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from Congo-Brazzaville

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Dear friends,

Greetings from Brazzaville as we come to the end of dry season and await the first rains... We are currently taking a few days' break from work to rest and recharge our batteries.

**Remember your Creator in the days of your youth... (Eccl. 12:1).**

Ok, so Mamy and I can no longer pretend to be "youth", but we've recently had the



unexpected **privilege to get to know some teenagers and do Bible studies with them.** They live in a church hostel for kids from broken homes, and when our church started up Bible study groups in local neighbourhoods (an encouraging development, since home groups are largely unknown here), the hostel was picked as the best location for our group, led by a young medical doctor, Lyonel Mondzele (*top right in the photo*). To our surprise, the teenagers who live at the hostel were all keen to participate!

During the school holidays these teenagers are mostly stuck in the hostel with not much to do, so we decided to invite them over to our house to watch a film together. Unfortunately the event coincided with a 36-hour power cut<sup>1</sup> in the whole of Brazzaville! So it quickly became instead a **Pizza, Pictionary<sup>2</sup> & Prayer evening, powered by solar lamps!** We pray that these young lives will continue to be transformed by the love of their heavenly Father.

**...before the days of trouble come... (Eccl. 12:1).** Mamy and I are aware that our bodies are not as young as they used to be. I recently had malaria, which then developed into a chesty cough, on top of sleep problems, eczema, etc. Mamy does better, but also takes some medication these days. **We give thanks to God who strengthens us daily!**



With the university on holiday, Mamy spent three weeks down at the coast in Pointe Noire during August, doing exegetical checking of **Deuteronomy** with the Kituba translation team.

<sup>1</sup> Power cuts and fuel shortages are happening quite a lot at the moment... perhaps the economic fallout from COVID?

<sup>2</sup> Like charades, only you have to draw the word for your team to guess, rather than acting it out.

At the same time, I spent a week in another town (Dolisie) with two linguistic students and other colleagues, running an **orthography workshop** for five languages spoken in the south of Congo. The participants had already been together for two weeks for on-going training as **Bible story narrators**. They translate and memorize Bible stories in their languages which they then narrate in their churches and villages – it's a powerful way to communicate the Gospel. But they also want to learn how to write their languages, so we investigated together the sounds and grammatical structures with a view to producing **reading and writing manuals...**



(Above: Ruth with Kuni speakers at the workshop & left: praise time at the closing session)



It was a great opportunity for the two linguistics students to get experience in applied linguistics. One of them, Hérítier Epola (far left), has been working under me for the past couple of months. In coming weeks I plan to train them both to use the computer program for making dictionaries. This is part of **my strategy for passing on skills to Congolese**, so that others can take over some of my tasks when I leave.

**Yes, that time is drawing nearer.** We have around 12 months left based in Congo, although we expect to continue working remotely for Congo for a while from Sweden/UK. Mamy in particular is committed to seeing the whole Old Testament in Kituba finished, hopefully by the end of 2023. **Please pray for energy, health and God's leading for all we would like to achieve here in Congo over the coming year.**

*...we do not lose heart, though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day (2 Cor 4:16).* Thanks for your friendship and support.

We wish you an enjoyable & productive autumn, **Ruth & Mamy**

**Mamy & Ruth Raharimanantsoa**

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*Gecko in our garden*