



**John 16:21-22**

21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

Women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo suffer from the country's legacy of conflict and corruption. Many are desperately poor and subject to exploitation. Unskilled and unschooled, they struggle to provide for themselves and their children.

Let us pray for women in the Congo.

As a brutal consequence of war and lawlessness in the DRC, violence against women is all too common, and even condoned. Perpetrators often go free.

*Dear Lord, strengthen the protection of women in the Congo. Lift them up when they fall under the weight of their life's burdens. Unite churches, community groups, and government leaders to recognize the dignity and worth of women and support their development.*

Mortality rates for children and mothers in the DRC are among the world's highest. One in ten children will die before the age of 5. Mothers die in pregnancy or childbirth in 13 out of 1,000 deliveries.

*Lord Jesus, in Your life on earth You knew a mother's love, and on the cross You made provision for Your mother's care. We pray for the mothers and children of the Congo. Give them the skilled healthcare, nutritious food, and spiritual nurture they need to live a full life.*

Families in Gemena earn, on average, \$1 a day to meet all their needs. Lacking skills and schooling, they eke out a living by growing a few crops or buying and selling inexpensive household items. Less than 11 percent of women complete secondary school. Good jobs are scarce, and women are often discriminated against in job opportunities.

*Heavenly Father, bolster the courage and determination of the women of Gemena. Let them see Your hand at work in creating opportunities for them to improve their lives. May they know the joy of seeing their children grow and prosper.*