

DRC PYGMY REPORT

OCTOBER 2025

(Way Alege)

The active engagement of the Brethren Church of Congo in the Ministry towards the Pygmies has been constantly in our thoughts for the last 19 years. Finally, God answered our prayers by using Dr Mark and his wife Corine a couple from Holland who have always been an encouragement for us. Dr Mark is a medical doctor who was first based in Lolwa, one of the well established Brethren mission stations approximately 112 kms South of Bunia. Some time ago they evacuated to Bunia because of insecurity and remains actively involved in medical work. He helped us set up a dispensary at Komanda and provides consultation on line to our nurse for help with the Pygmies.

Corine (Mark's wife), had previously met with us to discuss some ways in which local Congolese could be actively involved in the Pygmy ministry.

It was only in October 2025 that Corine brought to us pastor Timothé (Timothy) Lombu (Right in blue jacket), to discuss the way forward. I have known Timothé since he was a Théology student at Shalom University some years back, and also his more recent designation to lead the Bankoko Brethren church in Bunia. I know his zeal is to win souls for Christ, something that earned him the second position in charge of evangelism in the Brethren churches. But I had no idea that he was interested in the Pygmy ministry until three of us met for a vision sharing session



This vision sharing meeting led us to a joint successful field trip full of fond memories of 13 years separation with many Pygmies since 2013.



This was a time to listen to the suffering the Pygmies are going through at this moment of insecurity in different camps to which we used to visit.



We also had time to listen to the local non Pygmy chiefs, their responsibility in protecting the rights of the Pygmies as well as their land rights.



This time shared on the field was also important to share our joint vision for the ministry with Pastor Timothé.

New vision

This field visit was a spiritual eye opener to Pastor Timothé. The welcome and love that we received on the field, and the night we spent at Komanda with the staff, positively inspired Pastor Timothé. As a result, he woke up with a new vision: To engage his local Bankoko Brethren church in the Ministry towards the Pygmies.

He also learned about the struggles **Shalom** is going through and immediately decided that he would like to become his prayer partner and encourager.



This urge comes at the right time as Shalom was wrestling with health issues and spiritual breakdown especially after the killings of people in a Catholic Church at Komanda. The calls from his friends urging him to evacuate; the restriction from Ugandan soldiers from accessing farms in Ataloholu; and the

pressure to feed, especially breastfeeding mothers who are learning to weave baskets, put a lot of pressure on Shalom.

However, Shalom was able to see the doctor and now Pastor Timothé is encouraging and giving him good company through prayer times, discussions on the ministry and also spiritual refreshment. We are glad that he is doing so much better.

Next plans

After sharing the vision sharing trip, Pastor Timothé planned a meeting with the elders of his church on November 12th. After this meeting, Pastor Timothé thinks that the next step will be sharing the ministry with the whole church for at least 4 Sundays. The main goal is to encourage church members to get engaged and to pray for the ministry.

As we are not able to access fully the properties that are at Ataloholu, we have opted to use part



of the playing ground near Komanda school to plant vegetables. As we are at the end of the rainy season, it will be very hard to offer the Pygmy children and breastfeeding sufficient supplementary food.

Failing to offer supplementary food will lead to malnutrition, sickness and death. This initiative has led to significant decline of death cases among children.

Shalom has also gone to villages that are free from rebel attacks in the savannah in search for land for farming



We have been offered one hectare of land that we can hire and plant vegetables. Though this exercise will lead to extra expenses, it is important because we do not want staff to risk their lives at this time when Ugandan soldiers have restricted farming activities in the area. Our prayers are that their work will be successful and they will be able to go back to Ataoloholu.

Praises:



- We praise God for having helped Shama (21yrs with her mother Sylvia) complete here BA in Development Studies. We are also glad for the progress her young sister Neema is making. She turned 18 last April and has just completed her first year in medical studies.
- We praise God for his healing for. Shalom who has developed kidney stones lately. He has been experiencing a lot of pain. We thank God that he is doing much better. The doctor thinks that it could be the result of poor feeding mainly and not drinking sufficient water.
- We praise God for the impact that we are having with the College in Aru. Slowly by slowly, the school is gaining a positive image in the community. We trust that God is going to use graduates to positively impact the society.

Prayer requests:

- Pray for holistic restoration of Shalom's health (physical, emotional and spiritual)
- Pray for the new farm that we are setting
- Keep praying for the skills training that we are organizing. We are not selling baskets.

But we hope that they will become a source of income for the Pygmies.

