

PYGMY REPORT - JANUARY 2022

(Way Alege)

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Romans 15: 13)

Restoring body and soul

For the last 25 years, the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in general and the Ituri province in particular is marked by recurrent internal displacements. The latter have resulted into intensive relief care which has become the main mode of operation of NGOs. This care is based on the belief that the most important thing is “saving dying lives”.



While humanitarian assistance is genuine in a vulnerability context, saving body and soul should be a priority in a country that is believed to be approximately 96% Christian. That is why we believe that in addition to material assistance, restoring faith, internal peace, joy and hope should be the major ingredients in our activities.

Despite addiction to humanitarian assistance, some people still believe that only God can change the situation of DRC. But they need to be reached by the gospel. This is the case with why our December 2021 retreat incited displaced people to return to Ataloholu. In addition, the church attendance has increased from 12 to 25 people and 4 believers are being prepared for baptism.

Social cohesion activities at school



Before the retreat, there was a lot of discrimination among felt less intergrated during games or sports. However after the retreat, teachers have noticed that social cohesion has increased.



Currently Shalom and teachers are organizing different activities that can help children build quality relationships. Approximately 80% of the children suffer from domestic violence and as a result are often aggressive towards their friends and teachers.



Shalom is taking more time to help them change their attitude.

Transfer of skills

After having completed one fish pond with the help of the agronomist, the Pygmies decided to practice what they have learnt. This initiative has helped us bring them back from concentration camps to their property.



Many displaced people were lured by humanitarian assistance, drawing them to the main road where they can easily be assisted. This attitude was making them more dependent on relief instead of thinking about their own development. After awareness creation and food for work activities, the Pygmies were the first people to return to their

property. In a few weeks, they will be able to complete their fish pond. This initiative is timely as for security reasons, the military government has prohibited fishing on the Ituri river where the Pygmies have fished for centuries.



Accessibility to school and timber work

For the last 16 years since we purchased Ataloholu property, access was by the Ituri River or motorcycle. As mentioned previously, the military government has prohibited any activity on the river. The main reason is that rebels use the Ituri river to launch attacks on villages and military positions. People are allowed to travel only on the main road. However, access from the main road to the site is not easy.

We are happy that our son Shaddai who trained as a Civil Engineer in Uganda has donated 6 IPE 270 I beams of 6 m length, height of 270mm; breadth of 130mm; flange thickness 10.2mm and web thickness 6.6mm; worth 4,000USD. This steel work will cover 4 rivers in total.



Shaddai trained as civil engineer in Uganda. This is the largest gift ever received from him since he graduated. Shaddai earned a contract as consultant in a project they implemented. He decided to be paid by the IPE so that he can donate them to the bridge building project.



As far as timber is concerned, despite scarcity, we are able to produce necessary quantity to carry out our construction project. Even though production cost us some money, it is less expensive than buying on the market.

Skills training

Sadly our tailor who was supposed to launch the dressmaking project this month is sick. We were worried that it could be COVID 19 as he is elderly. We praise God that he is safe from COVID 19. Now we pray that he recovers quickly and will be able to kickstart the project. Parents and students are eagerly waiting for him.

Praises:

- We praise God for Shalom's recovery. He is back on the field.
- Our Engineer David got their first baby girl. Unfortunately the mother underwent caesarean section. The baby is fine but the mother had some complications and is still recovering.
- We thank God for the completion of 5 staff houses
- We praise God for peace in the region. Despite sporadic cases of killings, our staff members and the area is still secure.

Prayer requests

- Pray for the completion of staff houses
- Pray for our tailor and launching of the skills training
- Pray for the income generating project. We are aiming at starting a palm nut crushing unit that will help to produce oil for making soap. Soap can generate income and can also be used to improve students' hygiene. The palm nut cake can be used in animal husbandry. Students can also learn to make their own soap and make profit out of it.