

PYGMY REPORT - FEBRUARY 2024

(Way Alege)

After 22 months of displacement since April 2022, we have set up plans for farming in **Ataloholu**. Certainly, this move has to be taken with a lot of precautions since security is not totally guaranteed. On the other hand, it is not



ideal to rely too long on NGOs as far as food assistance is concerned. Despite the fact that we have been encouraging the Pygmies to continue farming in **Komanda**, it has not been easy for them to adjust to the savannah farming habits as the soil is rocky.

Returning to their village, though the future seems to be uncertain, so far is a joy for women, men and children as some couples are willing to live in **Ataloholu** briefly. In order to maximise working hours, two staff



members (**Shalom** and **Maliamungu**) have decided to spend a few days with them for encouragement and security purposes. Since the land has remained fallow for the last two years it is likely to give a good yield of crops as long as we receive regular rains so we are hurrying to plant because the first rains are expected within a few days.

Joint evaluation

The military officer in charge of the Irumu territory security invited all the local NGO's on 26 January 2024 to a joint evaluation of their activities. **Shalom** represented CERCEP and was able to brief the members about our achievements since we settled in 2022.



This is a big encouragement for Shalom because when he settled the Pygmies in April 2022, he unknowingly hosted them in a school that was in a zone which was listed unsafe according to the security measures by the military. Shalom was pushed in front to explain his intentions and was warned he would be arrested if he did not resettle the Pygmies in a safe area. That is how we came to buy the land where we are currently settled. Thanks to God, two years later, CERCEP is gaining support from many people.

Women's Bible study

We have always loved to see ladies who share the same vernacular with the Pygmies rising up to organise Bible studies with the Pygmy ladies. We are thankful for **Lylian Asseru**, the nursery school teacher who has initiated Bible study sessions. We realize that preaching does not help enough for Pygmies who cannot read the Bible for themselves.



The Bible study sessions are in addition to the initiative

of **Robert Mokili** who has time for face to face Bible studies with every household. We are happy that since Marceline Apoumu received Jesus, she is receptive to Bible Studies. Our prayers are that her husband comes to know the Lord as well.



Building bonds around meals

Culturally, the Pygmies hardly share meals with other people who are not close family members. However, we have encouraged children to share their meals as it is in African villages. This habit gives them the opportunity to create bonds among themselves. The main reason for doing this is to reduce violence among them. In most cases, parents including children are violent. But this practice is slowly bearing positive fruits.



Sports

The school inspector has encouraged every school to value games and sports.

Known as a Pygmy school our children were selected for the tournament and were able to play their first football match.





Unfortunately, the height and weight of our children downplayed on their performance. They lost the game with a score of 3-4. However, all enjoyed the opportunity to be included in the competition

Praises and prayer requests



- We praise God for the donation of a **motorbike** from Samaritan's Purse which was used and had to be fixed. The Country Director has allowed us to sell off the donated bike and get a cheaper and easy brand to fix.

- We praise God for the medical eye care for our son **Will**.

He was able to visit a doctor at Mengo hospital in Kampala, Uganda and was given appropriate medication and glasses. He is now in Kinshasa waiting for his internship. Pray for him as it is expensive to settle in Kinshasa for 10 months.

- Pray for the **team** working with the Pygmies in **Komanda** and the two members of staff who are working presently at **Ataloholu**.
- We praise God for the **hopes of peace** in Ituri Province. Warlords are slowly building relationships and are willing to stop waging war with each other. Keep praying for the **security** of the country in general and the eastern part in particular.
- Keep praying for God's **provision**. The owner of the property where we built the school is willing to free up the space. We have advanced some funds and are planning to complete the payment in the new future.
- Pray for **Way** who travels February 14-12 to Adi , approximately 300 kms north of Bunia, an African Inland Mission station where his wife grew up, and invited to **speak in a conference** held to celebrate the 100 years of the planting of the mission station.