

## PYGMY REPORT (2) - MAY 2022 (Way Alege)

For the first time since people were displaced six weeks ago, the World Food Program and partner organisations have started distributing food. Thousands of displaced people queued for maize flour, cooking oil and pea. Though it may take two to three days for the unfortunate to access these food stuff, some Pygmies were fortunate enough to benefit on the first two days, while others are still waiting for their turn. Though such type of food does not meet the feeding requirements of the Pygmies, there is no choice. Unfortunately, some heads of households have misplaced their tickets, making it impossible for them to access food. However, this assistance came when children were starving and breastfeeding women had exceeded to a point where some children were already suffering from severe malnutrition. We trying to provide them with a special diet of fresh milk, fish and vegetables to supplement what parents receive from humanitarian organisations.



The other major challenge is accessing fuel. In the forest, the Pygmies have access to free firewood. At the same time they supply it and the charcoal to other communities. But currently they are unable to get sufficient firewood to cook their meals and warm themselves. It is extremely difficult with the heavy rains which recently caused the death of an old Pygmy lady in one of camps that is not under out management. This incident shows how fuel is important for the Pygmies particularly in the rainy season.

### Health, Water and hygiene

Having the heavy rain, we discovered that water changes its colour which means that it is not safe for drinking. Although some humanitarian organizations have distributed disinfectant to purify water,



explanations about the utilisation of such is still not sufficient. Besides, the Pygmies from Ataloholu have been used to clean water from their own source that is approximately 45m away from their camps. Explanation for the use of disinfectant is essential. We have opted for the training of a few pygmies who understand; but the process is not easy.

The Pygmies are aware that the deterioration of their health is mainly due to lack of clean water. They tell stories about how they were subjected to drinking unclean water where they fled before we evacuated them to Komanda. This has impacted negatively on their health conditions. Despite the fact that some humanitarian organisations are helping in covering health costs, they have limited their interventions to under 5. However, with such limited interventions makes it difficult to cover all the health needs. Besides, it is very difficult to monitor whether the Pygmies understand the dose as prescribed. For the last four days we decided to monitor medicine intake and train teachers to follow up in our absence.



As far as hygiene is concerned, access to spacious land is going to increase better living conditions. When the Pygmies are squeezed on a small piece of land, they have difficulties in draining rain and used water. Apart from hygiene, the Pygmies have social ties that are based on their lineage. Settling them without respecting this anthropological factor leads to violence, even if they seem to come from the same descendent. Despite the suffering inflicted by the war, settling them according to their affinities is psychologically healing.



While a group is building huts, another group is digging a second pit latrine. We have realised that some parts of the property are rocky



making it harder to dig but the pygmies are happy to have more pit latrines so that their hygiene conditions are improved



## Shelter improvement

We had a nice time with the pygmies watching on Youtube, the construction of eco-domes The use of earth to get better shelter with minimum use of timber interested them. We have one roller of synthetic sacks



which we are going to use to teach the Pygmies how to improve their shelter. The presence of the roller and the purchase of the property where we can get better soil for the construction of eco-domes has motivated the Pygmies to dig and evacuate the soil using wheel-barrows.



We were supposed to immediately start the construction of eco-domes with our second son Shaddai, who has to go now to Kampala, Uganda for his medical check-up. It is exactly one year since he was involved in an accident. The device that was fixed in his arm was supposed to be removed. Therefore, he has to undergo another check-up and probably surgery. He has advised us to wait until he returns. Furthermore, Shaddai has to find out where we can buy more sack rollers. It is most likely that the stock we have may not be sufficient considering the number of households.

## Vegetable farming



The vegetable seedlings are not yet ready for transplantation. Meanwhile the Pygmies and teachers who have decided to team up with Shalom are moving manure to increase soil fertility. We are going to use cow manure instead of chemical fertiliser. From the amount we have received so far, we have acquired in total 4,500 square metres out of which 2,000 is being used to settle the Pygmies with pit latrines and few goats that were rescued. We are planning to set quick growing vegetables on the

same piece of property. Though the space might not be adequate with animals, there is no other choice for the moment. Meanwhile, the other 2500 square metres will be preserved to plant beans, soya beans, corn and cassava.



## Praises and prayer requests

- We praise God for his provision towards land acquisition and other needs
- We praise God for helping the Pygmies in this time of adjustment. Even though it is going to take a bit of time, we hope that they will make it.
- Pray for security at Ataloholu. Rumours are that the ADF rebels are still hiding in our forest reserve
- Pray for provision of clean water. We advocated in different offices, but there is little hope that we are going to get a positive answer
- Pray for safety for Shaddai's travel to Kampala and for the medical examination