

## PYGMY REPORT - December, 2025

(Way Alege)

### Passing the Baton to the next generation

Throughout our ministry among the Pygmies in the last twenty years, one of the main concerns is how to engage local churches into the mission. You certainly prayed for the vision sharing session that was supposed to take place at Bakoko Brethren Assembly to share what God is doing among the Pygmies. It was on December 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 2025 that approximately 100 Christians of the Brethren Assembly of Bakoko



were informed about our mission among the vulnerable people. The first session which lasted two hours was a ground breaking step that led the local church to understand that each member of the church who has received Jesus is indebted to pass the Good News on to others according to 2 Timothy 2: 1-2 *You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Chris Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also*

*be qualified to teach others.*

It was with this perspective that the first Brethren missionaries implemented 100 years ago, the main mission stations in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Among the six mission stations, 5 are strategically located in the Ituri forest where Pygmies are located. However, the urge for the local church to transmit the teachings to the Pygmies has been less evident until recently after Pastor Timothé Lombu of Bakoko Brethren church was inspired through his field trip to Komanda in October. After his visit he suggested that his local church of Bakoko should be informed about what God is doing among the Pygmies. Now, following on from the sessions in December, there is one more session remaining during which the individual call for the mission will be made so that willing members should be engaged to pray for the Ministry.

## Papa, the socialisation pivot



Certainly, you have read about **Papa** in our previous reports. This young Pygmy, (*on left in photo with hands on head while watching a film*) is one of the young Pygmies whose life is positively impacting many others. As reported previously, Papa received Jesus as the result of care offered to him by Shalom at the hospital after Papa was involved in a road accident. This incident became a life changing event that led to his salvation.

We do not know the exact age of Papa. But he could be around 15. At this age, it is rare for a Pygmy youth to avoid alcohol or marijuana under the influence of his peers. But as far as Papa is concerned, his lifestyle is different and surprises everybody in the camp. Having lost his father when still a toddler, Papa's mother got married to his uncle (levirate marriage). He has other brothers and sisters. Through socialization, Papa is influencing other Pygmy children's lives. He enjoys youth camps when he comes for Christmas and holidays to Bunia. This Season, he came along with his young sister Bega and three other children. It was a perfect moment of socialization and friendship building with our other children who live with us and in the neighbourhoods. Our prayer is that Papa will become a pivotal person who will transmit changes to others.

## Seeking alternative food security



Due to the recurrent insecurity in Ataloholu and Kangakolo, Ugandan People's Defence Forces (UPDF) decided to gazette the whole area where our farms are, for patrol. So far no entry is allowed especially to our sites where our properties, especially at Kangakolo, are used by the army as a shelter to host a number of soldiers. According to them, the main reason is that it is the corridor for the Alliance Democratic Forces (ADF). That is why

the Pygmies who were looking after our property under their own initiative have to move.

That is another reason why Shalom decided to move to a village that is approximately 15 kilometres from Komanda to Bunia so as to create awareness about our ministry and the need to reinforce food security as we are the first victims.

We are grateful that Shalom was able to negotiate for two hectares of land on which vegetables will be planted especially to improve the health of children and women. Normally, we offer two supplementary meals to children or sometimes to sick Pygmies. Since we adopted this strategy, we have seen positive changes in health among children aged between 0 and 5.



Contrary to different myths about death, many parents have now come to understand that the main cause of child death among the Pygmies is malnutrition, malaria and tuberculosis which are all curable. The only difficulty as mentioned in other reports is that the Pygmies are incited by cash distribution by the humanitarians, to seek for quick means of survival instead of investing in farming as it was in Ataloholu and Kangakolo. Only a few understand that they have to work. For

them, there is no need to make them work and wait for the product, if money can be given to them to solve their problems.

### **Christmas festivals**



The 2025 Christmas festivals are always enjoyable when the Pygmy women and children participate in cooking the meal. The past Christmas festivals were very simple as the main menu composed of cassava leaves and rice. Children actively participated in helping their mothers wash the rice.





Contrary to individualistic habits of the Pygmy children who sometimes refuse to share meals with others, the Pygmy children who are living with us love sharing their meal together even though girls are not willing to sit in the same group with boys. The main reason is that the boys always take advantage over girls who rarely get equal share.

### **Praise and prayer requests**

- We praise God for the tranquillity in and around Komanda so far. Rumours of another attack were common making other parents to move out. Most of the activities were paralysed including school, but God saw us through in 2025;
- We praise God for the general security in the Ituri province. Despite a few cases of resistance, many war lords are becoming more moderate than before.
- We praise God for His faithfulness, protection, provision and enabling and know we can trust Him as we move into another year.

### **Pray for:**

- The next session of call for missions at Bakoko church that could take place in **February**;
- Our new **farming project** so that it will lead to sustainable food security;
- **Sylvia and Way.** Way wrote : *In the month of December we lost 5 people who are dear to us. My sister-in-law who was the wife to my late brother, my uncle, my elder brother (on 14<sup>th</sup> December), Sylvia's worker who used to sell at her snack garden, and then Sylvia's niece on 31<sup>st</sup> December;*
- The **security of the Komanda property** which needs more **fencing** to prevent intruders coming to steal from the staff;
- **Shalom** who was diagnosed with kidney stones. These days pain is a bit severe and he has to go and visit an urologist. Shalom needs more prayers as his plans for getting married in 2025 are postponed now to 2026.