

PYGMY REPORT - AUGUST 2024 (Way Alege)

Holidays are over!



Time for fun is over! The two months, since July 2nd when School classes were officially closed and teachers went for a short break, have passed so quickly. It was a time of fun for the Pygmy children who are getting more adjusted to the new environment outside the forest although still attracted by their

original settlement. When possible, we attempt to initiate a few activities back at **Ataloholu** village, but it is not yet secure as ADF rebels' incursions are still frequent in our area. This makes our plans uncertain.

Opening school year with blessings and new challenges

Despite the fact that the school year ended on July 2nd 2024, spiritual activities could not stop.



This is the case with **Robert Mokili** who could not take a break because of his ministry at the hospital, at the nearby Pygmy camps and sometimes at the main Brethren church in Komanda. As a result, approximately 350 people listened to the gospel (individually or in a group), 19 responded to the call among whom were 5 Pygmies. At present, 10 people come regularly for prayers and Bible study with some staff.

As far as the spiritual growth of staff is concerned, the Bunia Brethren church is sending to us this month, French Emmaus Bible courses. We are happy that one pastor from Bunia will be guiding how to use them.



The above mentioned blessings have brought along other challenges since we resumed classes on 2nd September 2024. Following the evangelism carried out in other Pygmy camps around Komanda, 18 children have voluntarily moved to live with our teachers.

This is an important move since Pygmies rarely allow their children to live with other people, even with others with whom they have no biological ties. Staff will need a lot of wisdom to handle the two groups of children from different clans.



Following their decision, the number of children enrolled at school has increased to **32 Pygmies** plus 29 non Pygmies. As registration goes on this first week, the head teacher spends hours of group orientation to facilitate the integration of the two groups of the Pygmies. This is

another opportunity to impact them with care and the Word of God hoping that they will become change agents in their respective communities in the future. However, this social and spiritual integration cannot be effective without meeting their basic needs (feeding, clothing and accommodation).

Legal documents requirements



In our July report, we asked you to pray for the legal papers needed by our association. Before the papers could be issued, the Provincial Division of Justice had to send an

inspector on the field to assess our activities, talk to the different people including health workers at the hospitals. **Shalom** and **Robert** (in photo left and right) toured the site with the inspector before making a report that was sent to the Ministry of Justice to Kinshasa for examination before legal documents are issued. Having paid the fees, we hope that we will be legally registered as Community Development Association in the area.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the government for classrooms buildings



Owing to the fact that we have not yet fulfilled all the legal requirements, contrary to what was promised, we are not eligible to benefit from classrooms buildings as per the last report. This is a major setback for us

because of theft that is occurring at the school these days. Thieves keep on demolishing some areas of the mud walls of classrooms, office and houses, taking away books, teaching materials and money belonging to some of the staff members. Mud walls are normally easily washed down by heavy rains and winds especially as the buildings are at the top and slope of a hill. Staff members are saddened by such actions that never existed in the last two years since moving to the area.

Praises and prayer requests



- We **praise the Lord** for the presence of **Esther** among the team members. In our July report, we announced that Esther volunteered to work with us. We are grateful for her love for Jesus, her caring heart and her sense of stewardship. Since she joined the team, we have received good testimonies both from staff members and the Pygmies and praise God for the impact she is having on the lives of the community members.



- We **praise God** for the beautiful land he has provided for us at **Komanda**. Our site is known as the best transit site for the Pygmies in case of insecurity. However, many people envy our land and want to



become our neighbours and keep on making attempts to buy off the strategic areas of already demarcated land for the school. Having not yet completed the payment, they tend to lure the land owner with better prices.

- **Pray** that we meet the cost, especially of the area where the school and children's gardens are implemented.
- **Pray** for the **spiritual and social integration** of these little souls who have decided to live with the staff members. May their presence be a blessing for the ministry.
- **Pray** for **Lilian**, our nursery and Sunday school teacher. She has not been feeling well in the last two three months. She has resumed teaching while still weak.



- **Pray for Azonye.** (on right) A tumour has been recently discovered in her mouth. Nurses and doctors are working on how to help the child. She is unlikely to attend classes this year.

