

SUMASESU



REPORT FOR A VISIT TO SIX PARISHES IN EASTERN CHURCH DISTRICT

2023

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Foreword:

Eastern Church District is among of six Districts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania-South Central Diocese. Apart from proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, it also play a role of facilitating its members in addressing socio-economic challenges. The latter is accomplished in collaboration with friends from overseas through provision of knowledge, skills and financial support for establishing income generating activities, construction and renovation of different infrastructures related to education, health and Church administration. Andrea and Michael from Hamburg-Germany are the coordinators and overseers of partnerships established between friends in Germany and different parishes from Eastern Church District of Lupila.

SUMASESU is a non-governmental organization primarily established to facilitate communities on acquisition of sustainable development through capacity building on issues allied to socio-economic development and environmental conservation. The organization is registered to operate in the whole mainland but currently it has focused its interventions in Njombe region.

Introduction:

Different discussions held at SUMASESU offices between Andrea, Michael, Leaders of Eastern Church districts and SUMASESU staff between 2022 & 2023 worked as an eye opener to realize the commonalities of interventions related to community development performed by the two institutions (SUMASESU & Eastern Church District) focusing communities of Makete district. The need for SUMASESU to learn more on projects performed by the supported parishes arose as a preliminary step towards exploring the areas that might need joint efforts in order to ensure improved results. SUMASESU staff in collaboration with the top leaders of the Eastern Church District planned and successfully undertook a three-day visit to six Church congregations of Nkwenzuru, Ipepo, Igolwa, Maliwa, Lupila and Ludilu as part of those having friendship with churches from Germany.

This report briefly covers the findings of interventions performed, achievement, challenges, lesson learned and proposed areas of cooperation with SUMASESU in the next three years (2024-27).

Parishes Visited

Nkwenzuru & Igolwa Parishes

The two parishes have a track history of implementing interventions related to conservation of water sources around the villages that were used to supply water for domestic consumption by community members of Igolwa and Nkwenzulu. This project did very well before the gravity water scheme from Ipuji forest was constructed as there was nowhere else one could get water except from these springs. As of now, nearly all sources around the villages are depleted through human activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, construction etc.

Avocado production is said to perform well in the congregation plots as well as those owned by individuals, although they haven't started to harvest for selling purposes yet. Housing construction/repair, chicken rearing and goat keeping are performed by selected poor families and orphans. All these agricultural and animal husbandry are executed on individual basis, there are no formal groups formed for this purpose and they are challenged by in-access to timely extension services, both agricultural and veterinary.

A number of orphans and marginalized children and youth have been supported to accomplish primary and secondary school education as well as pursuing higher learning in different professions.



Ipepo Secondary School

The school gets support from friends in Germany to renovate and construct different infrastructures including class rooms, conference halls and teachers' houses to mention a few. Furthermore; costs for books and meals are subsidized to orphans and those from poor family backgrounds. Under performance and drop-out are observed to some students from orphans and poor families due to some family challenges including conflicts between the parents and poor early childhood development. Most of them seem to have given up and can't envisage a promising future anymore.

Ipepo Parish

In Ipepo likewise; a gravity water scheme originating from Ipuji forest was constructed through support from friends in Germany, this supplies water for domestic use in Matundu and Ipepo sub-villages. Orphans, people with disabilities and poor families are supported through scholastic materials, food costs, and construction/renovation of houses. The primary school of Ipepo receives financial support for renovation of classrooms and installation of solar electric power, Ipepo dispensary receives beds and other medical facility equipment to mention a few. There is also avocado production owned by the congregation and some individual although this is not doing well because of water shortage for irrigation during dry seasons. It was spoken out that women in this village are the ones who mostly hang on daily bread winning for the family and very few men do the same, this was mentioned as one of the reasons for family conflicts. Ipepo

seem to be potential for Maize, wheat, sunflower and potatoes production though this is presently done for daily survival only. Community members perceive their land as a locked one, there is no reliable means for transporting their agricultural products to the market once they decide to engage into bulky production.



Maliwa Parish

Dairy production is exercised by 7 selected families who received the support of cows through friends from Germany with the main condition of passing on the first female calf to another person. This project seems to be doing well besides some drawbacks of not getting veterinary services on time, inadequate knowledge and skills on following up “heat” periods and shortage of pastures particularly during dry season, we also noted that there was no existence of group cohesion among the members who own cows as they only gather if one of them come across technical hitches but not for planning and exchange of lesson learned. Other domestic animals such as pigs and chickens are kept by some individuals for meat and eggs consumption though not to a large extent, avocado production is also practiced in this area same as in other Parishes. The climate of Maliwa is so favorable for sunflower production, several people from this village have tried to produce and bring the same to Njombe for pressing to get oil but transport costs and other travelling inconveniences have lessened the outgrowth to massive production.



Ludilu Parish

Tailoring and carpentry classes, cattle production, avocado and potatoes growing, soap manufacturing and mini-hydroelectricity plant are the main activities undertaken in this area.

- **Tailoring & Carpentry**; these classes are running at Nziulige sub-village and Lupila respectively for two years per intake by enrolling youths who did not manage to continue for secondary school education. Besides equipping the graduates with vocational skills, this program contributes into retaining young people in their home villages, hence reducing the rate of brain-drain from rural areas to urban. It was reported that most of the graduating youth are challenged by a lack of modern working equipment to meet the current market needs of the related products.

- **Cattle production;** Indigenous species of cows are kept by the Parish with the intention of getting milk and manure, until the time we visited they had 24 cows semi-zero grazed on a fenced farm of about 254 acres. This project is faced by some challenges including lack of a nearby tank for dipping against ticks and intrusion into the fenced land by other farmers.
- **Avocado production;** the parish owns about 4 acres of avocado and the individuals own different sizes of plots too which are already producing fruits. In general, avocados growing in this village is meant for cash earning and the recent data reveals that nearly 80% of sales of avocados in Lupila are from the Ludilu area.
- **Potatoes growing;** this crop also accounts for a substantial percentage of income for individuals of Ludilu and Ilungu Villages. Production of potatoes as a cash crop now is becoming common following the introduction of several species that take short time in maturing thus making it possible to produce twice in a year. Adequate rainfalls coming between October and April favor production of this crop during rainy season, while spring irrigation is applied between July and December using water flows from Ipuji forest.
- **Soap manufacturing;** A group of women from Nziulige and Ludilu organized themselves to engage into local manufacturing of soap after attending a few days of orientation from one of the Government officers. Currently, they produce only one type of soap (bar soap) for washing of which they get raw materials (palm oil and others) from Mbeya. The group members further stated that they sell their products around Lupila and their ability to produce hasn't met the market demand yet. Several challenges were mentioned including lack of appropriate packing materials, inadequate capital and limited skills to produce assorted types of this good.
- **Mini-hydroelectric plant;** this was meant to supply electricity for the habitats of Ludilu and Nziulige although the transformer for Ludilu is broken therefore only people from Nziulige get electricity from this plant. Besides the ready availability of electricity from this plant, it was realized that only a few people have installed the same in their homes, this may be due to ignorance or inadequate knowledge and skills on income activities that could need the use of electricity.



Lupila Parish

Like other Parishes, Lupila also implements projects funded by friends from Germany such as avocado production, a Centre for raising orphans/disadvantaged children by supporting the provision of education from kindergarten to higher learning education, clothing, accommodation and food as well. Parish helps women by lending money (Talanta) to be spent as a capital to generate income of each individual member. The group started with a capital of TZS 400,000 in the past 2 years, as we speak the capital has cumulated to TZS 4,000,000 despite the existence of challenges such as inadequate entrepreneurship knowledge and skills in designing and running a diverse of viable business ideas. All

projects are overseen by the Parish in order to economically empower congregation members and the surrounding community in general.



General recommendations

Maliwa Parish

- Involving experts such as livestock officers and other stakeholders to provide support for improved animal husbandry education and to closely manage the development of livestock project for sustainable production.
- Encourage cultivation of the sunflower crop which seems to be thriving in the area as it is one of the crops with a readily available market. The involvement of extension officers will contribute in ensuring appropriate techniques are applied so as to increase the productivity of this crop. After the production has increased in an estimated two years of production we propose establishment of oil pressing & filtering unit that will serve the producers from Nkwenzulu, Ipepo and Maliwa itself. The produced oil and sunflower cakes to be sold in Maliwa and outside of the village as one of the means to strengthen the economy of farmers.
- Increase the rate of keeping other domestic animals such as pigs and local chicken parallel to sunflower and maize production as this will ensure adequate availability of food for the animals.

Ludilu Parish

- Improve the project of soap manufacturing as this seem to have a potential market around Lupila, the group should be well managed, more skills provision, and linking them with the financial institution for soft loan acquisition.
- Youths who graduate from tailoring and carpentry classes should be supported with working tools on credit basis and a mechanism for paying back in 3 years to be established. This will motivate more enrolment and ensure more retention of young people in the village.
- As avocado production grows in this area and around, plans for establishing small byproducts processing should be encouraged. Byproducts could either be teal leaves, oil or powder from the nut.
- Community members from Ludilu and Nziulige should be encouraged to participate in ensuring Ipugi forest is conserved as this is the main source of water for irrigation and their hydro-electric plant.

Lupila Parish

- To strengthen a women's support group (*Talanta*) that provides loans to enable them execute different business/economic activities.
- Facilitating education on group management and preparation of necessary documents to enable them rise their capital through getting loans from other financial institutions.
- Provide entrepreneurship skills so that whoever borrows money can spend it appropriately hence achieve economic changes.

Ipepo Parish

- To provide education on childcare practices to parents and guardians to eradicate psychological effects for children in schools due to family conflicts and poor nutrition, the goal being to increase school performance, especially for children who are psychologically affected due to challenges at home.
- Facilitate formulation of economic groups through existing church platforms (women & Youth departments), provide them with entrepreneurship skills, and facilitate them to identify available economic opportunities, develop and implement viable business ideas.

Igolwa & Nkwenzulu Parishes

- Activities for conserving water sources surrounding the villages should be re-promoted as this will ensure increased amount of water from the conserved springs.
- Community members from Igolwa and Nkwenzulu should be encouraged to participate in ensuring Ipuji forest is conserved as this is the main source of water for their domestic use.
- Provision of entrepreneurship skills to the community members and making sure that extension services are readily available to farmers.

Proposed areas of cooperation in the next 3 years (2024-27)

1. Expedite formulation of formal groups that will engage in the implementation of development projects in the congregations, the groups will work as an entry point for management and monitoring of projects.
2. Facilitate groups on entrepreneurship skills, identification of existing economic opportunities, development of business ideas/plans and link them with financial institution for acquisition of soft loans.
3. Provision of Social behavioral change communication (SBCC), knowledge on Early Child Development (ECD) to community members.
4. Promote participatory conservation of Ipuji forest to communities surrounding the forest, (Igolwa, Ipepo, Ilungu, Nziulige and Ludilu) by providing education on the importance of conserving the environment hence ensured increase in the amount of water and maintained bio-diversity.
5. Facilitating establishment of economic activities in the forest of Ipuji as a collaborative way to sustainably conserve the forest. Proposed economic activities to be implemented are beekeeping, cultivation of passion fruits for juice production and tourism. (*See a separate report for Ipuji forest*).

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