

Soccer Tournaments



Imagine the roar of hundreds of village spectators, pushed in so close that they perfectly mark the outline of the entire soccer field.

The field, a sandy pitch with gnarled hardwood tree trunks dug-in for goal posts on either end. The colourful dresses of the local women and the painted buses they arrived in contrasted against the wild african landscape and the team player jerseys.

The night before a family of elephants had walked across this field, their large footprints have all but disappeared in the feverish activity of the match. It's known internationally as 'the beautiful game', and nowhere is this more apparent than in the rural soccer games played in an isolated corner of Africa, a place the rest of the world has not heard of; the Rufiji District of Tanzania.

More accurately, it's the villages dotted along the ancient Rufiji River where East Africa River Mission has established its outpost. The soccer games are part of a larger tournament that the mission has organized. The soccer jerseys, given to the invited local teams,

bear the emblem of Baker & Sons Safari Company, the partner of EastARM and 'public face' of the mission in the villages.

The first Rufiji Soccer Tournament of this kind was organized in 2019, and it was such a success that we're bringing it back for 2020, with the aim of making this a regular annual project of EastARM. The tournament includes many gatherings and player meals, where Christian testimony and prayers are shared freely. It incorporates the small local church community and a number of villages, depending on which villages are added in upcoming tournaments to the original 2019 roster: Ngorongo Village, Nyaminywili Village, and two teams from Mloka Village.

CONNECT WITH the annual EastARM Rufiji Soccer Tournaments, opportunities include:

- > Organizing as a family or mission team to come to Tanzania and help facilitate a tournament
- > Individual Sponsoring of players in an upcoming tournament, which covers the players' jerseys, meals, and transportation to games
- > Corporate Sponsorship of an entire village team or tournament, where corporate logos can be added to the jerseys



Visit EastARM.net/SOCCER to see results of past tournaments, reports of upcoming tournaments and details on being connected.