



MAWASILIANO – COMMUNICATION TIPS & BEST PRACTICES

Clear communication is key to maintaining and sustaining our relationships with our companions in Iringa. Think of it as a long-distance form of being present with and for one another. Remember that just as eager as you are to hear from your global friends, they too are eager to hear from you. *Tupo Pamoja*. We are together.

INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

Friends and companions talk. We share stories about life in our part of the world – big news and day to day affairs. We celebrate milestones and mourn losses together. We find ways to pray with and for one another, often without ceasing. Through these everyday exchanges, life is lived together. Thanks to expanded cellular data networks and the availability of smartphones in even the most rural of places, staying in touch has never been easier.

Recommended Channels and Platforms:

- **WhatsApp** is the preferred messaging service for our companions who have smartphones. Great for 1:1 communication and group chats. Able to share words, pictures, and videos.
 - **Facebook & Instagram** are the preferred social media channels for sharing words, pictures, and videos in a more public manner.
- that while (almost) everyone has a phone number, not everyone has an email account they regularly check or have easy access to.

When to Use and What to Consider:

- Use these channels if the purpose is primarily information sharing or relationship building.
- The BKB offices in Iringa can bridge initial conversations and help get you in touch with your companions directly.
- Be mindful of private vs. public messages and your different cultural contexts.
- How might you invite your companions to pray with you and your community?

FORMAL COMMUNICATION

Partnership Committees work on projects and live into covenant relationships with one another. We discuss dreams and expectations and devise plans to move from Point A to Point B. We guide shared activities, deal with misunderstandings, and make commitments to one another – often involving time and money. We function best in structured settings that are open, transparent, and include the BKB Offices in the mix.

Recommended Channels and Platforms:

- **Zoom** has proven itself to be a reliable platform for real-time communication with companions in Iringa. Meetings are hosted in Iringa by a BKB Representative with a translator present.
- **Email** is the preferred format for documenting conversations, tracking commitments, and verifying requests by our offices in Iringa.

When to Use and What to Consider

- Use these channels (and cc BKB) if the topic is money/projects/commitments.
- The BKB Offices in Iringa will help bridge communication and/or host meetings – especially if your companions have limited email or internet access where they are.
- Zoom meetings require careful coordination, including determining who to invite, scheduling across time zones, hosting assignments, and travel to the zoom site.
- Those with partners outside of Iringa Town will need to factor in an allowance of up to \$50/person to offset travel and lodging costs your companions are likely to bear.

Contact Us in St Paul begakwabega@spas-elca.org and in Iringa begakwabega@yahoo.com