

## **Interview with Mrs. Anna Tenga Mzinga – Financial Advisor of UEM**

**(on January 21, 2026)**

*How the churches in Germany and in Africa and Asia contribute to UEM?*

This is really an important subject that the UEM communion of churches really needs to address by looking at the context of where we are and where we're coming from. Especially from my position as their financial advisor for UEM I have really been able to see how churches in different parts from the South but also from Europe particularly Germany, are actually contributing. And it's an appreciation that currently a bigger portion of the UEM budget is funded by churches in Germany. But also we have seen churches from Africa and Asia starting to really look at that with the intention to also raise more resources to support the UEM budget. Particularly I understand that it might be not only money, we have seen that Asia and Africa have been able to really manage quite a big part of the budget that goes to the annual general meeting for UEM.

But also they have given big valuable pieces of land, for example ECD but also in Sumatra a big portion of land and very valuable one where UEM have been able to start planning but also have put their offices. But coming from the South and looking at how the church is growing I would think that this is also an area where we also need to be more intentional on how we're going to fund the projects on the sustainability and to continue the good work within the UEM mission, because the churches are somehow growing in the South part while they are shrinking on the other part.

I was here in Germany attending the synod of EKIR and I could see really the fear of how churches are losing people, but also their income is going down and the struggle on how they can remain sustainable. So, from the South this is an area that we really need to look at how we can come in and be able to complement and share the resources as well with our colleagues while they have for some time helped this service under UEM.

I believe that churches from the South will have the potential of coming in and filling the gap. There is a cut on what we get now from what we used to receive and I would really call the churches from the South to look at this cut and see how they can complement. For example, we can have a campaign, a one-month-campaign within our church for UEM work. I'm sure that will be able to raise quite a lot and it can fill the gap that we are experiencing. We can have a special Sunday service where we dedicate all the offerings for the UEM work and if that is done once or twice a year across and faithfully, I'm sure, that can really be something to cover or whatever comes up that we're having. But in terms of service from my perspective we also need to look at the support of calamities and also at the challenges for example with refugees that is happening for example in Congo and other areas which are among the recipients of the

support from UEM and how can we also put our heart into the ecumenical work that is done by UEM and be able to support it with the resources that God has blessed us, That would be quite important and not only once or twice but having a framework on how this can be continually build. I was very impressed that the EKIR church for example has a budget, they know exactly what they're going to give for a year and the year after and this enables UEM to be able to plan even for the future. So, I think that is also an area where we need to grow from Africa in Asia on how we can commit resources and the reliability that UEM can actually look and plan for that to support the work. Thank you!

### **How the churches in Germany, Africa, and Asia contribute to UEM**

This is a very important subject that the UEM communion of churches really needs to address by looking at the context of where we are and where we are coming from. Especially from my position as financial advisor for UEM, I have been able to see how churches in different parts of the Global South, as well as from Europe, particularly Germany, are contributing.

It is worth appreciating that a larger portion of the UEM budget is currently funded by churches in Germany. At the same time, we have seen churches from Africa and Asia beginning to reflect on this situation with the intention of raising more resources to support the UEM budget. I understand that this contribution is not only about money. We have seen that churches in Asia and Africa have been able to manage a significant part of the budget related to the UEM General Assembly.

In addition, they have contributed very valuable pieces of land, for example given by the ECD, but also in Sumatra, where a large and very valuable portion of land has been provided. On this land, UEM has been able to plan and establish its offices. Looking from the perspective of the Global South and considering how the church is growing there, I believe this is an area where we need to be more intentional about how we fund projects sustainably and continue the good work of the UEM mission. This is particularly important because churches in the South are growing, while churches in other regions are shrinking.

While I was in Germany attending the synod of EKIR, I clearly saw the fear caused by churches losing members, their income declining, and the struggle to remain sustainable. From the perspective of the South, this is an area where we need to consider how we can step in, complement existing efforts, and share resources with our colleagues who have supported UEM's work for many years.

I believe that churches from the South have the potential to help fill this gap. There has been a reduction in what we receive now compared to what we used to receive, and I would strongly encourage churches in the South to reflect on this cut and consider how they can help compensate for it. For example, we could organize a one-month

campaign within our churches for UEM work. I am confident that this could raise significant funds and help fill the gap we are currently experiencing.

We could also have a special Sunday service during which all offerings are dedicated to UEM's work. If this were done once or twice a year, consistently and faithfully across churches, it could meaningfully help cover emerging needs. From my perspective, we also need to consider support for calamities and challenges such as the refugee situations in places like Congo and other regions that receive support from UEM. We should put our hearts into the ecumenical work carried out by UEM and support it with the resources God has blessed us with.

This should not be a one-time or occasional effort but rather supported by a framework that allows for continuous contributions. I was very impressed, for example, that the EKIR church has a clear budget and knows exactly how much it will contribute each year and even in the years ahead. This enables UEM to plan reliably for the future.

I believe this is an area where we, in Africa and Asia, still need to grow - particularly in committing our resources in a reliable way that allows UEM to plan and sustain its work effectively. Thank you!