

MISSION ECHO

UNITED EVANGELICAL MISSION AFRICA REGION

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BEING THE
SALT OF
THE WORLD

EDITORIAL

Dear readers and UEM member churches, this is to inform you that the Mission Echo is issued to introduce to you what the UEM Africa Regional office had achieved the past six months from January to June 2019. We thank the Almighty God for enabling us to produce this Mission Echo in order to share various activities and events in UEM and its member churches. The main event that took place in our Region was the Africa Regional Assembly (AFRA) which held from 3rd to 9th March 2019 and was hosted by Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN).

The main theme of the AFRA was entitled as: "Being the Salt of the World": Acting Together in Resisting Violence and Extremism towards Peace and Justice and Reconciliation as proposed by the UEM General Assembly in September 2018.

In addition to the event of AFRA, The UEM Africa have also been able to accomplish different activities in collaboration with UEM member churches such as: Workshop to Commercial Producers groups (CPGs) to Development and Agricultural officers, Meeting on Gender justice, Youth Leaders meeting for Africa network, clinical Pastoral Education for chaplains working in Hospitals and Prisons Ministry.



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MANGEONS BIO
-LET'S EAT ORGANIC!

YOUTH PRE-ASSEMBLY DOCUMENT FOR AFRA 2019



PRE-ASSEMBLY AFRA 2019 Participants from UEM AFRICA Church members

INTRODUCTION

In reference to the recommendations made by the AFRA 2017 held in Goma, DRC and recommendations of the youth innovative entrepreneurship workshop in Gaborone–Botswana,

We, the Youth leaders and delegates of the AFRA 2019 who attended the Youth–Pre Assembly in Windhoek, had opportunity to do an intensive dialogues, reflections, exchange of ideas as well as sharing the implementations of the AFRA 2017 in the aspect of youth entrepreneurship.

We, the Youth leaders have found that entrepreneurship has the potentiality to address and remedy socio-economic issues such as unemployment, poverty and the lack of self-sustaining young people. As a direct result of successful entrepreneurs the member churches and UEM as a whole will reap the rewards and benefit.

Reflections from the Learning's, Challenges and Recommendation of the Youth Pre-Assembly to the Afra 2019

1. UEM has done a great job to support, influence and advocate the issue of entrepreneurship as a global issue to be taught in our churches.
2. To start entrepreneurship is not about having money but we need to use the available resources and not depending on financial supports all the time.
3. Churches need to identify people who have existing skills and can be helpful in implementing entrepreneurship programs as a way of mobilize resources.
4. We learned that entrepreneurship can be taken as open subject to all church members and not only for youth.
5. Action has been taken in some churches with regards to youth entrepreneurship recommendations and still there's a need to increase more efforts on practical skills.
6. Some churches have been emphasizing youth works only on evangelism and have not included social and economic development.
7. Entrepreneurship is the key to solve youth and

church problems.

Challenges during the Implementation of Youth Recommendations

1. Lack of commitments and cooperation with regards to entrepreneurship to some churches in implementing the youth recommendations.
2. Lack of sufficient information to the grassroots youth leaders from the attendees of the UEM joint programs because of inconsistency of sending youth who are not youth leaders in their joint programs.
3. Insufficient resources for practical teaching entrepreneurship skills to the youth.

Recommendations to Youth Leaders

1. To design and implement youth entrepreneurship action plan. (Two years youth entrepreneurship action plan) by 2020.
2. To have at least one successful income generating activities/projects (church owned projects) by 2021.
3. To be innovative in supporting the prioritization of the youth entrepreneurship agenda.
4. To sensitize and give reports of all activities at all levels.

Recommendations to Church Leaders

1. To prioritize youth entrepreneurship agenda in church programs and enhancing practical teaching entrepreneurship skills.
2. To support youth to design entrepreneurship action plan (strategic plan) at least each church to have two years youth entrepreneurship action plan.
3. To finance youth income generating projects.

Each church at least to have a successful church owned youth projects by 2021.

4. To reinforce or improve effective communication within the church structures especially with regards to youth activities.
5. Part of youth activities funding/budget should be diverted for youth entrepreneurship activities.
6. In order to enhance youth exchange programs, church leaders need to at least open one placement each year.

Recommendation to the UEM

1. To continue mentoring, coaching and financing youth entrepreneurship projects and trainings as well as mobilizing resources and opportunities.
2. To support youth study tour programs and exchange programs among church members (learning and sharing from each other) and create link to other international partners for youth entrepreneurship programs.
3. To support youth in establishing and running Africa Youth Network aiming at linking church members and improving youth lives through discussing youth challenges, sharing opportunities and implementing projects and programs especially in entrepreneurship areas.
4. UEM to support the young people to acquire vocational and technical skills by giving them scholarship.

BEING THE SALT OF THE WORLD



Some AFRA 2019 Participants with Rev. Volker Dally, General Secretary of UEM



AFRA 2019 Participants working in small group with Uli Baeye

Photo: UEM Africa

Being the salt of the world means influence the world for good as salt has a positive influence on the flavor of the food. 'Being the salt of the world' was the motto of the last UEM General Assembly which proposed the theme of UEM entitled as: *"Being the Salt of the World": Acting Together in Resisting Violence and Extremism towards Peace and Justice and Reconciliation*

From 5th to 10th March 2019 the UEM Regional Assembly Africa (AFRA) met in Windhoek, Namibia where it was hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN). The General Assembly was preceded by Africa Regional Board meeting which held to discuss the AFRA Agenda before it is presented to the delegates from churches.

The ELCRN Deputy Bishop Pastor Paul Hatani Kristing and Acting General Secretary Pastor Wilfred Diergaardt welcomed the participants of the Africa Regional Assembly. In his words, the Deputy Bishop Kristing reminded the AFRA delegates that all UEM members Churches are determined to be the salt of the world and to give hope to people in needs through prayers, truth and solidarity.

"The being together of UEM members means to affirm the power of God to overcome violence and extremism together and to promote peace, justice and reconciliation in our world,"

During the sessions of the Africa Regional Assembly, reports, successes, challenges and future plans were discussed. Rev. Dr. Kabango thanked the ELCRN steering committee to have successfully organized the meeting and emphasized that some flexibility was accepted during the meeting.

The UEM United Action Campaign

In 2012 the African Churches started to contribute then they continued with specific target. In 2018, the goal was 201.980€ they have successfully given 171.559,70 with a difference of 30.420,30 €, due to the fact that some churches have contributed less than the target.

During the meeting, Rev. Dr. John Wesley informed that the ELCT-ECD have late contributed with around 6000€ which reduce the deficit. In addition, in some other churches, some congregations on grassroots are not contributing, which reduce the contribution of the entire church.

Furthermore, the idea of the annually increase of 10% of the church contribution was raised to be one of the reasons on not reaching the annual goal fixed for the church contributions.

Either it should be reduced or maintained. However, it was realized that the big issue is the mobilization of funds. Therefore, the training of Church treasurers which is planned by the UEM department of Administration and Finances will help to think on the best strategies of raising funds.

Summary report from the UEM-Africa Region

The report of joint programs was presented by Rev. Dr. Nagaju Muke and Zakaria Mnkai. The report was elaborated according to the five pillars of UEM: Evangelism, development, advocacy, partnership and diaconal.

Under the pillar of Partnership, a workshop for pastor's spouses was organized.

The aim was to identify and to address the challenges how the pastoral ministry affects the families of the pastor. An exchange of women and youth from one church to another was also facilitated. The volunteer program is also run as usual this year 2019 with some challenges. Among many decisions made during AFRA was about UEM member churches partnerships. It was agreed that each member church is encouraged to have a partnership committee and make sure that youth and women are involved as members in the partnership committees. Communication between partnership groups has to always be at the highest levels.

Challenges for South-South Volunteer Program

The program of South-South program is facing some challenges. First, the placement is not easy to find. Second, the living of the volunteer, for learning culture and to reduce the cost of the stay is challenging. Some volunteers are placed in single rooms instead of being integrated in a family life and therefore, avoid all risks of loneliness. In response to these challenges, the chairperson of ARB reminded the delegates of AFRA that the African spirit of solidarity should be revived and encourage congregants to host the volunteers. He also stated that the delegation of power by some of the church leaders is encouraged. Because sometime they are not aware of the problems faced by the volunteer.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN PHILIPPINE (UCCP) VISITS TANZANIA

Enjoy Partnership is the motto of developing a partnership between one church and another in the United Evangelical Mission member churches (UEM). In this regards, three delegates from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines to visit three UEM member churches in Tanzania in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania particularly Eastern and coastal diocese, Karagwe Diocese and North Western diocese. The purpose of their visit was to learn and share experiences on matters related to health support, especially HIV / AIDS supported by churches in collaboration with the Government. The visit was sponsored UEM so as to strengthen South-South Partnership among member churches in Asia and Africa Regions.

The delegates were led by Rev. Rannieh B. Mercado, UCCP Executive Secretary & Concurrently Coordinator of the UCCP Partnership-Ecumenical Relations Office, Dr. Susan S. Claro Hospital CE)-Administrator of UCCP Hospital in Cebu, the Visayas Community Medical Center (VCMC) that is an HIV-AIDS Treatment Hub and Rev. Candid "Jerlo" Jaropillo -- West Visayas Jurisdictional Ministries Coordinator and UCCP Pastor actively engaged in HIV-AIDS Training & Advocacy Work.

The Areas visited were and not limited to Voluntary counseling and Treatment centers (VCT) in Dar es Salaam, Nyakahanga Hospital of Karagwe Diocese and Ndolage Hospital owned by North Western Diocese. During their visit, they learned a lot, including - how the experts have managed to supervises and how to assess themselves, to monitor the treatment centers as well as the outreach services done by home-based care givers.



In his statement, the AIDS coordinator Diocese of Karagwe Mr. Venant Mugenyi, said that the project started in 1980s as diaconia ministry and after the AIDS outbreak in the 1990s then, the project changed the focus and put more emphasis on issues of decentralization and HIV infection by mobilizing, regulating and to educate community members in order to slow the transmission of infection.

The visitors praised the evangelical church in Tanzania and especially the East Diocese and Coast, Karagwe and North West Diocese as they assist the Government of the Republic of Tanzania to fight against the epidemic of HIV / AIDS. They also learnt a lot as far as VCT is concerned and the role of the church at large in Tanzania in addressing the issue of HIV/Aids.

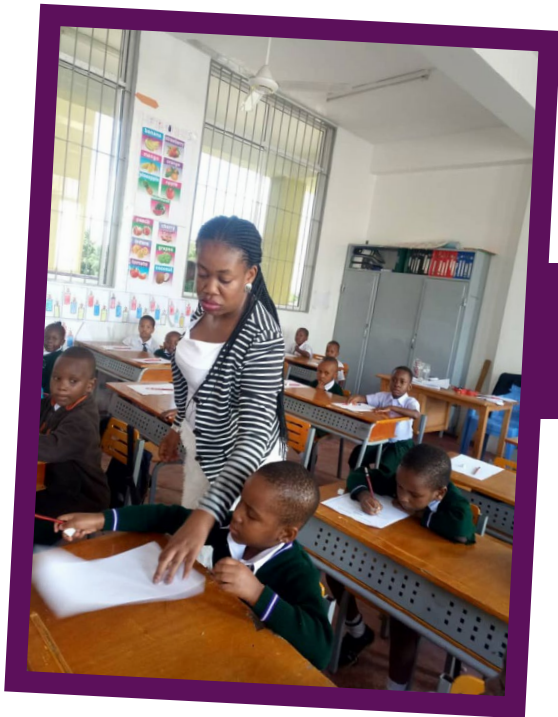
SOUTH-SOUTH VOLUNTEERS SHINE IN THEIR PLACEMENTS

The UEM Regional office continues to facilitate and support three Volunteers to work and enjoy their placement for another term that will end in October 2019 in ELCT-ECD, Tanzania and ELCRN, Namibia

Sandrine Kavira Maombi from CBCA– Democratic Republic of Congo serves in ELCT/ECD especially at Mtoni Diaconi Centre for the first three months and now is working at Jerusalemu Pre&Primary School.



Jennifer BIRISAMUS who is coming from ELCRN– Namibia serves in ELCT–ECD, especially at Jerusalemu Pre&Primary School.

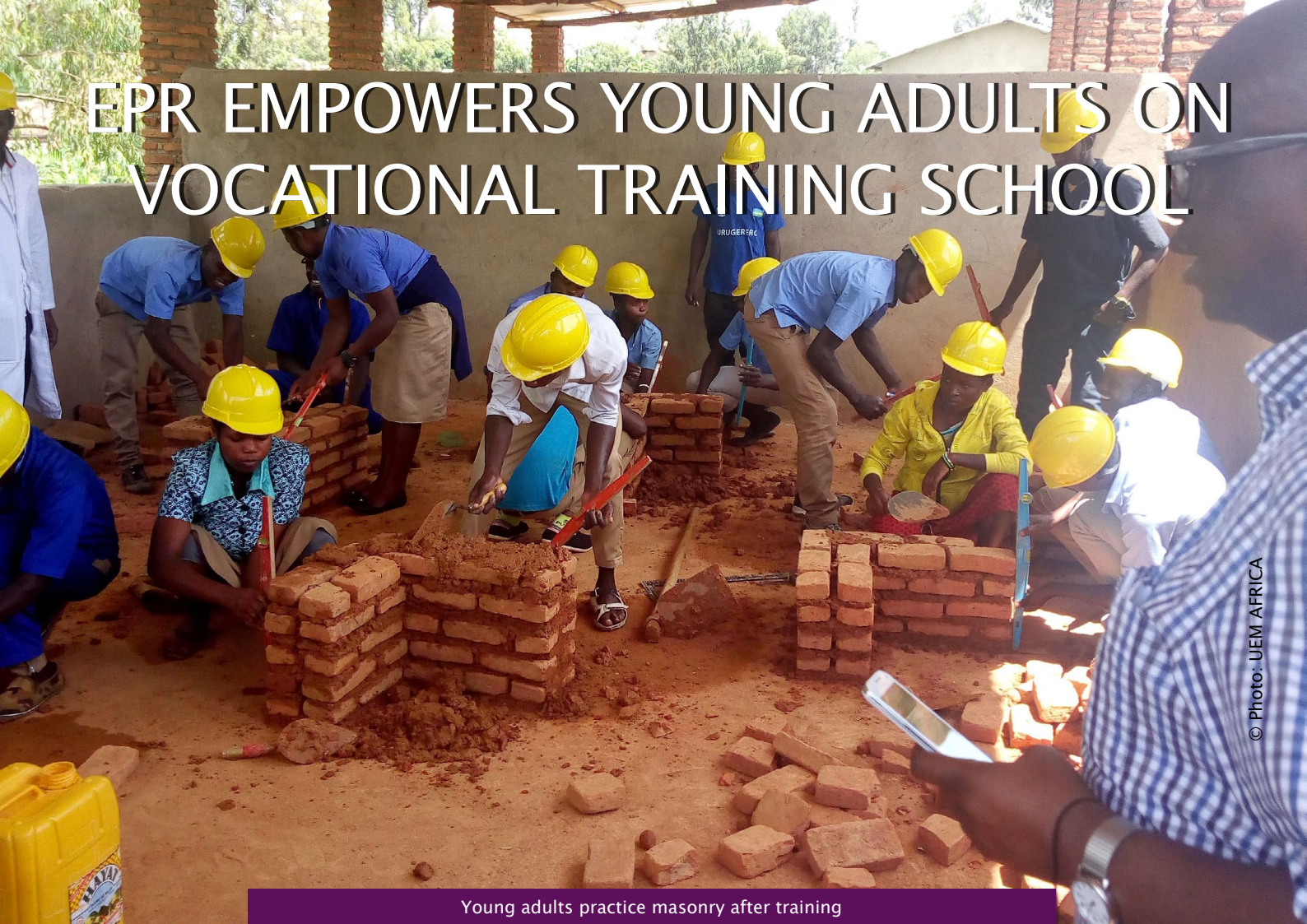


Jacqueline Aisaa Swai is from ELCT/ECD, Tanzania serves in ELCRN, Namibia at Head office assisting finance matters.



However, volunteers' placement still seems to be difficult. This is because South-South are not easily welcomed in African Churches. In their placements, they are supposed to stay with families. Unfortunately, they stay in a private accommodations, hence, learning local culture become difficult and allowance paid by UEM cannot cover the living costs

EPR EMPOWERS YOUNG ADULTS ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL



© Photo: UEM AFRICA

Young adults practice masonry after training

Nyamirama is a vocational training school established and managed by the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda (EPR) and funded by the United Evangelical Mission (UEM). The Vocational Training school offers a one-year course involves young girls and boys who did not get chance to progress with secondary school education after having finished primary school education. The school was established with the aim of empowering unemployed young adults for short-term training that will enable them to employ themselves or get employed easily. The courses offered by the school are Masons, Welding, tailoring and hair dressing.

On 27th April 2019, the UEM team from the headquarters visited the school and learned a lot from the training school. The visitors were led by Rev. Doctor John Wesley Kabango the Executive Secretary of Africa Department, Mr. Timo Pauler the Deputy General Secretary for UEM, Ms. Sabine Schneider the Project and Fundraising Officer from UEM Head Office and Mr. Zakaria Mnkai the Program Officer of

Africa regional office in Dar es Salaam Tanzania.

The UEM Guests congratulated the EPR church for the great efforts made to enable young people to gain knowledge and skills that will enable them to self-rebuild and to fight unemployment that burns young people in their church and Rwanda in general. When the young people were asked about their expectations after the training, they said they were expecting themselves to be self-reliant and also employed if the opportunity arose.

In addition to these achievements, the school also faces a number of challenges including the lack of safe equipment and tools that are very important in successful learning.

Last, the Executive Secretary of Africa Department Rev. Dr. Doctor John Wesley Kabango thanked the head of the school for the good work that is going on for the current and future youth life.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON GENDER JUSTICE



Workshop Participants with Rev. Dr Nagaju Muke, UEM Africa deputy executive secretary

It is still impossible to believe that churches and Christian organizations have accepted unbiblical gender relations as normal and were unable to sufficiently change the cultural patterns that are contrary to the Bible and deny women rights.

On the other hand, in some cases where cultural patterns have changed and became more biblically based, Christians have become resistant to adapt to changes in their cultural context.

We see Christians around the world struggling to move Christian communities – in particular churches and theological institutions – to dismantle patriarchy and sexism by mainstreaming gender discourse and justice in all theological disciplines and church ministries.

The rejection of the ordination of women in some denominations continues to be a major point of discussion and controversy within and among many churches.

In response to the issue of gender inequality, UEM Africa region conducted a meeting held from 11th to 15th February 2019 at Isano guest House of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda (EPR). Eighteen (18) Female pastors from member churches of UEM Africa met and discuss on the following topic:

- IN GOD'S IMAGE: A Biblical and Theological survey of the dignity of women and men
- GENDER AND EQUALITY: Men and Women in Church and Society

One of the leading questions was: *"What can we do for gender justice in the church and Society?"* A long the discussion, it was realized that though there is the significant development within the churches in

advancing the partnership of women and men, there is a notable increase of in the ordination of women and men and more and more women are becoming visible in the life of the church.

There is increase of awareness of the importance of the representation in all area of the life of church and in some denominations the criteria to ensure balance. Moreover women are getting opportunities of benefiting the scholarship from different organizations like UEM. Nevertheless the gap still wide and there is a long way to go to realize a just community. This why all participants suggested that:

- Dehumanizing structures that render women powerless should be addressed by churches in an open and frank dialogue in view of improving the position of women.
- Pastors should preach and teach gender topics from the pulpit. Bible should be read with just eyes and interpreted with Hermeneutical approach.
- Gender topics should be introduced into theological institution, Sunday school teaching, cell groups booklets etc. Resources of gender topic should be translated in the local languages in order to help the grassroots people.
- Formulate "Gender Policy" that will guide for gender balance in the churches according to each context. Regulations, laws and policies imposed on women such as denying theological studies and ordination to single women must be revised by the churches.

African Youth United in Mission (AYUM)



Youth leaders of UEM Africa Church members with Zakaria Mnkai, Program Officer

There is a proverb in Swahili that says that “Umoja ni Nguvu” this means “Unity is strength”. This remind us the power of unity and teach us that when people come together with same purpose, they reach their goals.

From 20th to 22st January 2019, thirteen (13) Youth Leaders from 13 UEM member churches met in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania to discuss how far they can go and how they can benefit from learning from each other in unity despite their diverse cultures. The meeting aimed at evaluating how far the recommendations of the AFRA 2017 especially those proposed by youth pre-assembly have been implemented. It also aimed at initiating the African Youth Network which will help youth to share their experiences and talents despite the distance that separate them.

The meeting was organized by UEM Africa regional office and invited participants from the following churches: CBCA, EPR, EAR, ELCT/KAD, ELCT/NWD, ELCT/ECD, ELCT/ NED, ELCB, ELCRN, ECC and RCSA. All participants had time to report and share experience related to youth income generating activities (Entrepreneurship projects) as done in their respective member churches.

In his words of introduction and opening the meeting, the UEM program officer in the regional office reminded the participants how far the implementation regarding the 2017 AFRA recommendations done by UEM.

He mentioned various supports given to member churches, trainings and workshops for youth in relation to entrepreneurship. At the end of the workshop, it was realized that there are successful stories of youth related to income generating activities implemented in their respective churches.

These include: dairy goats and cow production (multiplication method), fruit tree nursery project, poultry production project, vegetable and fruits production, embroidery project, fish and rabbit production project, soap making project.

Despite these remarkable achievements, some challenges were mentioned:

- Insufficient funds to establish youth projects
- Communication gap between youth in rural and urban areas
- Lack of awareness on life skills regarding entrepreneurship

In response to the above mentioned issues, the following recommendations were stated:

- UEM member churches continue to support and involve youth in income generating activities.
- The existing projects in member churches must be supervised and monitored to ensure they generate income to youth and church development.
- Youth leaders should share youth projects progress reports with UEM regional office.
- UEM continues to support youth small entrepreneurial projects.

As stated earlier in the objectives of the meeting, a network of the youth was needed. Therefore, youth leaders established a Youth network named as *African Youth United in Mission (AYUM)*.

This network will unite youth in Africa region and facilitate them to share talents, skills and resources. It will connect them together irrespective their distance and diversities in UEM member churches.

It will be led by a team of five youth leaders who will also work on the document that will explain how the network will work.

UEM PROJECT AND FUNDRAISING



Ms Sabine Schneider from UEM

From 1st of May to 3rd of May 2019 the Anglican Church of Rwanda (Shyogwe, Butare, Cyangungu and Kigeme Dioceses) was blessed to host a guest from the United Evangelical Mission (UEM), Ms Sabine Schneider who works in the department of Projects + Fundraising. Ms Schneider came to Rwanda alongside with Mr Timo Pauler (UEM Executive Secretary for Finances and Administration) to facilitate a Church Treasurers workshop at ISANO Guest House of EPR in Kigali, from 25th to 27th of April 2019.

After the workshop, Ms Schneider spent a few more days visiting UEM funded projects and institutions of UEM member Churches in Rwanda. In the last three days of her stay in this country, she visited projects and institutions of the Anglican Church of Rwanda in Butare and in Shyogwe dioceses.

On behalf of Church leaders, RDIS staff members and officials from Butare and Shyogwe dioceses were able to accompany her to Mubumbano TVET school in Butare diocese, Hanika Anglican Integrated Polytechnic (HAIP), ccc, Solar Home System project, Waste Management project, Pineapple factory, MYTEC – formerly Youth@Risk and workshop/shop of the Mothers Union in Shyogwe diocese. After the visits, Ms Schneider thanked the Church leaders for hosting her and for organising her visitation program, which she said; it was intensive and fascinating. Although this was her first visit to Africa and to Rwanda, she was glad to get the chance to learn a lot about the UEM member Churches, the people and the country at large.

06. A VISIT TO ELSIE'S RIVER

Uli Baege



© Photo: Uli Baege/UEM

Wiena Ryneveldt and Pat

Elsie's River, the congregation in the Cape Town suburb of the same name, is characterized by poverty, unemployment, and crime.

The Rhenish Church in South Africa (RCSA) is one of the most recent member churches of the United Evangelical Mission. Two thousand parishioners are spread over nine congregations in Cape Town and one congregation near Wupperthal. I am visiting Elsie's River, the church congregation in the suburb of the same name. Pastor Thomas J. Solomons works here, known to everyone as Tommy. Fifty thousand people live in this suburb of six square kilometres in the north of Cape Town, the city at the foot of the famous Table Mountain that draws many tourists every year. Four hundred Christians belong to the congregation. Almost one in every two of them, about 40 per cent, is over 60 years old and retired. Retirement here means a state pension of about a hundred euros a month, and often their children and grandchildren must live of this as well. Elsie's

River is not a posh district in Cape Town, where one might find large mansions with high walls and rich, usually white South Africans living behind them; this is a working-class district, where the houses crowd together. "Various gangs, like the Bad Boys or the Rebels, control the area here", reveals 78-year-old Wiena Ryneveldt. I pay her a visit with Pat, Pastor Solomons' wife. Tommy and Pat started doing work with the elderly members of their congregation more than thirteen years ago; the UEM has been supporting the Rhenish Elderly Empowerment Programme (REEP) for two years now. I wanted to know more about this programme.

I did not expect that the first thing I would hear about on a house visit was the high crime rate in the district. "The high youth unemployment in the Cape region – we're talking 52 per cent – veritably drives our children into the arms of these gangs. The kids have already fallen into them by age thirteen or fourteen.

The older ones deliberately use them as drug mules or pickpockets, knowing well that if they are caught, they won't face much punishment", Tommy Solomons explains. Members of families from the congregation are killed over and over again. "Our people live in the midst of rival gang areas. This is everyday life for them", Pat Solomons says. She does secretarial work for the congregation, much of it voluntary, as so many pastor's wives do. And what are the police doing? "Nothing." Quite the contrary: they're corrupt and a part of the problem.

We are at the home of Catherine Appolis. For 42 years, she has lived in the house that her father built and left to her. She grew up in Elsie's River and would never go anywhere else, even though "it's very dangerous here", she says. Catherine is divorced and has spent her career working in a fish factory. She has three children, nine grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. Her eldest son is dead; one of her grandsons was shot a stone's throw from her house. She is in charge of her three youngest grandchildren while her daughters are at work. She is a regular user of the offerings from REEP: "I love it", she asserts firmly. "The community there is a treasure. We're a family. We're dear to each other – I only find that in my church."

In a hall at the congregation house in Elsie's River, forty men and women have arrived for a classic pensioners' afternoon. They sit on chairs and wave their arms in the air, an exercise that a retired nurse does with them regularly. This kind of seated exercise is a perfect opportunity for older people to get moving. There is a lot of laughter and messing about. Afterwards, they have a meal together. The tables are already set – as in a restaurant – and delicious scents waft into the hall from the kitchen. The REEP cooking team has prepared a three-course dinner. The meal costs the equivalent of about one euro, an amount some still cannot afford. "The social aspect is definitely in the foreground. Some of our older people are housebound, so we organize transport for them. We want to offer a place where they can meet, exchange information, and eat good food, all at the same time", Pat Solomons says.

The varied offerings REEP puts on in Elsie's River include sport opportunities for pensioners, information on health and good nutrition, lunch and music events, and practical things such as how to use a cell phone and send a message through WhatsApp. "Recently we had a 1960s-style music evening. It was very well received", says Pat Solomons. "They came ready to party – they felt transported back in time to when they were teenagers and preteens. They did dances and sang songs from those days."

"We felt young again", recounts Ryne veldt, her eyes shining. Her daughter, Dona Stevens, sometimes accompanies her. She is considering volunteering. "The old people have many stories that they don't just tell you naturally. You have to have time for them; then they can teach you a lot."

Tommy Solomons has set up a visiting service in his congregation. Every Tuesday, he meets with Winnie Swartz in the congregation hall to plan the visits. The 67-year-old Swartz lives with her unemployed daughter and unemployed grandchildren, and is herself in need of support. But she wants to help: "They are always awaiting our visit. Just listening is already a great help. Their problems and concerns are usually within the family. They can leave them with us, and we take them to God. Through this work, I have grown quite a bit in my faith. Even though the Rhenish Church is small compared to others, there is a lot of love here!"

Elsie's River is not a good place to live. People are scared. "I've had a pistol aimed at me too. But I'm not afraid", says Pat Solomons. What keeps her going? "Our people. They live here – the church must stand by them. It is only because of them that we are here! I have learned so much from them already. REEP is for all the forgotten people. We do the work for those who believe that they don't really deserve anything, who have been there for others their whole lives and still are. For the unsung heroes of our society." The older people love Pat and her work. "Even though we have only four hundred members in our Elsie's River congregation", says Tommy Solomons, "we reach the whole district through our work. As a church, we are here for everyone."

Clinical Pastoral Education and Prison Ministry



Workshop participants With Pastor Muke

Empowering pastors who work in the hospitals and prisons has been a priority in UEM Africa region. This is due to the fact that there is an increasing number of people who find themselves marginalized, stigmatized and sometimes, they seem to be ignored by their societies due to their status. A follow up training on Clinical Pastoral Education and Prison Ministry has been organized and twelve participants from UEM member churches in Africa attended. The training held from 10th to 14th June 2019 at Ubumwe guest House in the EAR/ Kigeme.

The main speaker of the training was Bishop Nathan Amooti of EAR/ Cyangugu. He stressed his message on the topic *“Who is in prison and who is the prisoners”*. Through his presentation, he reminded the participants that the church should not be confused to the church buildings. He stated that some pastors consider people who come for Sunday services or who participate in church activities as the only church members ignoring those who are sick in hospitals and in those living prisons. For him, church is everywhere. So, the Good News should be preached to all people. In other words, the church is called to announce Good News to the poor in Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sins and hope to hopeless. The church has also a message to console the sick people

and prisoners and proclaim the healing and restoring the broken-hearted. Therefore, *“spiritual gospel”* and *“material gospel”* are needed for both sick people in the hospital and prisoners.

Participants also had time to share their experiences as chaplains and visited the hospital of Kigeme which belong to the Anglican Church. They appreciated the fellowship and welcoming spirits of Bishop Assiel Musabyimana of EAR/ Kigeme who stated that his diocese is proud to belong to UEM family and the support received from UEM is appreciated.

The following are recommendations that came out from participants:

- Churches are called to provide support for creating awareness and advocacy for chaplaincy and service providers as part of the diaconia/ social services of the churches.
- To strength South– South partnerships so that participants may share their experiences and skills.
- UEM facilitate chaplains to formulate guideline document that will help them in their work.

The next meeting should be done in Namibia or Botswana and the proposed topic is *“Reconciliation: Trauma healing”*.

YOUTH LEADERS FROM UEM MEMBER CHURCHES ENJOY THE BIGGEST CONCERT: Twen'zetu kwa Yesu



Youth leaders enjoying the concert

Every year ELCT/ECD under its Information and Communication department, prepares a huge concert for Youth named Twen'zetu kwa Yesu (Lets go to Jesus).

It is sixth year since Twen'zetu started and its third time the concert to took place at Uhuru Stadium, in Dar es Salaam, where approximately 25000 youths from difference dominions attended.

The concert contains many things based on Youths interests such as preaching, gospel music and dancing and other entertainments which youths like. For the first time UEM Africa sponsored youths from member regions to witness the concert which held in Dar es Salaam 22nd June 2019.

Marcel Sebahire from Shyogwe Anglican Diocesan in Rwanda who is also a Director of Education and Youth Chairperson in Rwanda, told the UEM Mission Echo that he learned so many things during the concert.

"The organizers have made a tremendous effort to mobilize such number of youths to attend, the preachers delivered a sermon which directly goes to youth," said Sebahire.

A youth from Rwanda added that he liked the ecumenism he observed in the concert where Anglican Bishop preached, Anglican and Seventh Day Adventists choirs also participated.

According to Sebahire the ecumenism was one of the reasons for a big number of youths who attended.

"I appreciated how the church ELCT/ECD supported their youth to organize a huge event like that, but also inviting other youth from foreign countries was a good lesson I learnt," said Sebahire.

Charles Daffa from North East Diocese said that the concert was well organized; singers and speakers did their job according to the need of youths.

"I finally learnt that the youth were blessed of that all-day long worship with very famous gospel singers," said Daffa.

UEM Programme Officer Africa Region, Zakaria Mnkai said that they sponsored youth to come to Twen'zetu concert to promote partnership among the youths in the region and to learn how their fellow youths do.

Other youths attended by UEM support were Paulin Mugisho from Community of Baptist Church in Central Africa DRC.

Epimu Epimaque of Presbyterian Church in Rwanda, Rev. Revocatus Leonard of ELCT Karagwe Diocese and Arone Twinomukama of ELCT North West Diocese.



A POTENTIAL THAT CHURCHES BRING TO AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS

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The unemployment rate among African's youth has a bad signal to the future generation of that second largest continent in the world.

According to International Labor Organization (ILO) reports, Africa's youth unemployment rate will exceed 30% in 2019. Young people will continue to be 3.5 times more likely than adults to be unemployed, has ILO announced.

ILO report states that most of the African youth lives in rural areas, where there are few job prospects and where agriculture remains an essential driver of economic development.

In helping to address this huge challenge, the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) encourages African communities from member Churches in horticultural crop produce of higher biomass, than field crops per unit areas resulting in efficient utilization of natural resources.

This method is thought to be highly remunerative for replacing subsistence farming and thus alleviate poverty levels in rained, dry land hilly arid and costal agro-systems.

It is believed that many individuals and families migrate from rural areas for economic reasons as they see no viable option for moving out of poverty within their own communities. UEM creates and promotes better living conditions and opportunities for all people and in which the African community takes the lead.

The UEM Africa Regional office planed a follow up workshop from the 27th – 31st May 2019. Twelve development and Agricultural Officers from African member Churches met for the purpose of sharing best practices and experiences on Commercial Producers Group (CPGs) in particular improved horticulture techniques.

The workshop was hosted by the community of Baptist Church in Central Africa (CBCA), in Goma, DRC. The session examined how to integrate CPGs

with the existing micro-credit services through Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA).

Through sharing of experiences, it was reported that youth and women CPGs have grown and increased their incomes as a result of UEM support in collaboration with churches' facilitators who were trained on the CPGs on various horticulture commercial production techniques.

Youth and women CPGs produce passion fruits, carrots, tomatoes, onions, water melon and seedlings for environmental conservation strategies.

Said Ramadhan shared his success story by saying: "I managed to pay school fees for my children with the money we got from tomato sales. Before engagement in tomato production, I was struggling to meet the deadlines at school and I was receiving reminder letters from school administration but now, I saw the way to reply to this need! I also bought 4 acres of land', one of the group members".

Apart from the success mentioned above there is a number of challenges identified by CPGs facilitators during the whole process of empowering youth and women groups. Among others, it was mentioned insufficient funds to empower more youth and women CPGs, diversification of needs and demands of the group member, limited extension services to CPGs from available extension officers and unstable cost of agricultural inputs.

The agriculture sector in Africa needs committed people but it continues to suffer from an image problem among them. Participants to the UEM workshop say there is a need for successful role models or references which attract people to agriculture and encourage them to stay in the sector. They also emphasize the need for appropriate and relevant training, knowledge-sharing and guidance to help communities to prepare better for opportunities in agriculture and agribusiness.

SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE UEM EXCHANGE PROGRAM 2019

In reference to the UEM Week, UEM Africa Region organized an exchange program for pastors. The 2019 UEM Week celebration started on 1st to 14th June 2018. This exchange program between member churches aimed to strengthen partnership, collaboration and gives an opportunity to share and provide necessary information on UEM. The exchange was done in the framework of the UEM theme suggested by the GA 2019: *"Being Salt of the World": Acting Together in Resisting Violence and Extremism towards Peace and Justice and Reconciliation*.

It is important to mention that all the member churches in Africa were invited to join the program but only 11 members were able to send and receive a pastor for the exchange.

These are the following:

1. Rev. Dominique Yoko Elongi from CDCC sent to EEC
2. Rev. Willy Ngomsi from ECC sent to CDCC
3. Rev. Jean Pierre Nkombi from CADELU sent to EAR/SHYOGWE
4. Rev. Canon Emmanuel Gasana from EAR/Shyogwe sent to ELCT /ECD
5. Rev. Monica Lugome from ELCT/ECD sent to EPR
6. Rev. Jan Beukes from ELCRN sent to RCSA
7. Rev. Tommy Solomons from RCSA sent to ELCRN
8. Rev. Joshua Mfizi from ELCT/NWD sent to CBCA
9. Rev. Begumisa Projectus Christopher from ELCT/KAD sent to EAR/CYANGUGU
10. Rev. Kasereka Tsongo Festo from CBCA sent to EAR/ Butare

Some of the pastors who participated in this exchange were impressed by the program and their reports show how fruitful the program is. They learnt a lot from the receiving churches.

Rev. Joshua Mfizi from ELCT/NWD who was sent to CBCA, stated that the two weeks for exchange was fruitful to him. For this reasons, he thank UEM to facilitate the program which helped him to initiate a partnership. In his words he said: *"We established and signed memorandum of understand of partnership between CBCA Ngangi Parish and ELCT NWD Ishozi Parish"*.



Pastor Joshua Mfizi received by CBCA Ngangi Parish

Rev. Monica enjoyed the visit of the two weeks in Remera aparish where she attend different church activities and visited many area in Kigali Presbytery. She was impressed and learnt a lot about Diaconia service in EPR. She visited CPAG the center for street children and the vocational training school for children with disabilities. The picture on the right show how she was using her skills of sign languages with deaf children. According to her, she learnt how the EPR is involved in helping people with disabilities. She also had time to attend the genocide remembrance event at Remera Rukoma. she was impressed by the involvement of EPR in the reconcilaition process.



Rev. Monica with Rev. Julius of EPR/Remera and the retired pastor Aaron



Monica is talking to deaf children using sign language



MANGEONS BIO -LET'S EAT ORGANIC!

Uli Baege

Organic products are very much in style, and not just in Germany, but also in Cameroon. The Centre Polyvalent de Formation (CPF) in Mbouo, in western Cameroon, has been organizing a monthly organic farmer's market since January 2018. The centre belongs to the Eglise Evangélique du Cameroun. The Centre director Daniel Martin Ngwanou explains the reasons behind the market: *"One of our offers is to provide courses for small farmers in the area on how to switch from conventional to organic farming and how this can improve their harvests. But the graduates of our courses have found it challenging to obtain market access. That's where CPF comes back in!"* Centre employees drive out to the farms once a month and collect the products, which include carrots, cabbage, fennel, bananas, and potatoes, as well as eggs, spices, honey, and organic chocolate.

Customers are reminded through a private WhatsApp group when the market is coming up again. *"And it's best to place an order directly when what's being offered has been posted on whatsapp"*, says Pascale, a market customer from the beginning. The group of sellers is still relatively small, so the goods sell out rather quickly. Many customers now want us to organize the market twice a month, but that would exceed our capacity." The market is still completely subsidized at the moment: the centre covers the transport costs for the goods and the sellers on market day. Depending on numbers, these costs can reach seven hundred euros. But why incur this expense? Why don't producers go to the "normal" markets in nearby cities like Bafoussam or Bagangté? *"We also care about calling attention to the overall concept. We don't want the organically produced goods to be overlooked in the market. Consumers should see a difference, including that they come to us at the centre. That's a bit of self-marketing. We want to show them all that we can do on our five-hectare site."* Obviously those in charge are aware that they can't finance the organic market this way forever, but it's important during the start-up phase. And the first potential imitators are already getting in on the act. A delegation travelled here from the nearby town of Bagangté, wanting to take a look at the concept and to bring the products from a five-member cooperative in Mbouo to market in future. In the long term, organizers are considering starting a shop online. Central warehouses would be set up to supply customers. CPF wants to take over this

aspect with a partner and build a bridge between the producers they have trained and their consumers.

"Market access is already difficult for me. Without the offering here at CPF, I would be one of many sellers on the conventional market. But this way it's something special, and the customers know that. They know that our products are healthier, taste better, last longer. I'm glad of this, and I am proud to contribute to a part of their health", says Makoge, whose farm is five hectares in size. He switched to organic land use after completing a course at CPF in 2016. He is already farming at least a part of it according to organic standards. CPF continues to assist him in the transition to a full organic operation. The farmers receive regular inspection visits to ensure that they do not resort to chemicals. They want to and have to follow the appropriate standards precisely because they are working to develop an organic brand. Blandine is here today for the first time. She has brought several pallets of eggs and is excited at how much she can sell today. Next door fresh mushrooms are being weighed, at a cost of about three euros a kilo. Their cultivation is a little more elaborate. But the rest of the products are priced as low as at the regional markets, again thanks to the CPF subsidies. *"Why do I shop here? The products are much, much better. They're tastier, healthier than conventionally produced goods. Fruits and vegetables also just smell quite different."* Carrots cabbage, celery, leeks, and peppers are on Pascale's shopping list. She and her husband David made a special trip from Bafoussam, ten kilometres away. Over a cup of fresh ginger tea, she chats with Josiane and Nadine, who confirm the benefits of the products: *"Oh yes, the taste is much better! It's strange that many farmers resort to all the chemicals because they believe that will make their vegetables better."* - *"The products here from the market really last much longer than the stuff from the normal market. I've noticed it. It's too bad that the organic market is only once a month."*

In any event, CPF will continue to expand its offers. As centre director Ngwanou puts it, *"We are eager to see whether we will succeed in creating a transition to organic farming. We have already proved it on a small scale, but there is still much to do."*

More information is available on the centre's website: <https://cpfmbouocmr.net/>



Delegates of UEM Africa Regional Board

