

# MISSION ECHO

UNITED EVANGELICAL MISSION AFRICA REGION

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United in Mission – 1996-2021

# EDITORIAL

**D**ear readers and UEM member churches, this is to inform you that the Mission Echo is

issued to introduce what so far have been implemented in past six months from January to June 2021.

During this period of six months, we have continued to experience the same challenges of covid 19 and therefore sometimes we obliged to work from home and most of activities were conducted virtually due to lock down where by many things planned to be done physically were stopped due to ongoing spread of Covid 19. We are thankful to Almighty God for enabling everything we planned to be done virtually during the first semester was conducted successful. The following are some of the activities we did in the first semester, to mention just a few;- creating awareness to the community about the potentiality of special intellect and develop strategy of identifying and protecting them, develop training on the issue of early pregnancy and care strategies, Follow up



meeting to Sunday school coordinators etc. Thank you very much and stay blessed.

By Zakaria Mnkai

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# Youth call for talent nurturing and employment in the Church

By Africa Team



Offering opportunities to share and develop their talents. This was aired by the youth from the UEM African member churches during a virtual meeting that was held on March 30, 2021. During their discussion the youth stated that one of the main reasons contributing to weakening youth and exposing them to manipulation of mind is the lack or very limited economical income. They said this may be attributed to unemployment, limited job opportunities, and/or sometimes poor economic initiatives for the youth groups. During their discussion the youth pleaded that by giving more support to the youth would be an assurance for the current and future sustainability of the church. They also mentioned that in many churches, youths are not given enough chances and facilities to employ themselves, which on the other hand may help in generating more income for the church. Another challenge is that the group is somehow forgotten as there are inadequate resources allocated

to the youths for capacity building and talent development projects.

Statistically youth is usually the biggest demographic in society as well as in the church. Economically they are the new power, a strong, active and productive generation. Sociologically, youth can be represented in all kinds of demonstrations (religious, social and political).

However, on the psychological perspective, youth are vulnerable and exposed to many kinds of manipulations, one being in the philosophical and spiritual sector.

A lot of religious leaders have discovered that if they gain youth on their side, they can utilize their energy for their own benefits, therefore they plant different kinds of ideologies that feed their cause and push the youth to do their bidding.

In this regard, populism ideologies from some politicians as well as misleading theologies are some of the dangers against which youth have to fight.

# When the pygmy produces for himself

By Oscar Pekombe



Where the pygmies live with the Bantu, it is established that the pygmies work on behalf of the Bantu. Investigations revealed that pygmies continue to live in day to day and cannot wait for the harvest, even for 3-month crops such as corn, peanuts, sweet potatoes and locally popular vegetables. Safari Kanyena Désiré took a big risk to affirm to the German partners of the ecclesial posts of Longa - Ingende and Dianga, that he could try something. Today it has been made possible. Thanks to the supervision of the Co - Worker Safari and his collaborator Director of ECC / 10-CDCC Community Development Office, Elima lamb. Indeed, after some hesitation startup, the program



that was launched in the Longa - Ingende and Dianga substations in the month of August 2020 has just borne fruit. First it's Pétrus Ngondji, a pygmy who has just finished studies in development in Mbandaka and who is doing his internship at the Community Development Office of the CDCC went to encourage his peers to work for themselves. Hectares of cornfields and cassava were produced at Itotela in the ecclesial post of Dianga, the maize harvest is already done. The pygmies have finally waited until harvest. Meanwhile, the fields that started late continue to grow and there is hope that tons of corn will emerge from the fields of the pygmies.

# United Evangelical Mission provides support for youths' commercial groups in Tanzania

By Oscar Pekombe



**T**he United Evangelical Mission (UEM) through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal Diocese has shown efforts to help self-reliant skills to youths by supporting groups of young adults deal with fruits and vegetable production.

Total of 38 youths in Rufiji from two commercial producer groups has been formed, one comprising 17 females while the other is formed by 21 male young adults who have completed secondary education specifically from three Secondary schools namely Ikwiriri, Kamoyo and Umwe (IKAU) but did not get the chance for high school education.

The church was also able to support another group called the Rufiji Agricultural Business Group (KIBIRU) from the Ikwiriri ward.

Both of these groups were established by the ECD in collaboration with the local government authority for the purpose of motivating and capacitating young graduates of secondary, college and university for self-reliant attitude in particular to engage into agriculture commercial products rather than waiting for a formal employment.

According to the UEM Africa Regional Programme Officer Mr. Zakaria Mnkai who has a direct link to the groups, the organization has been supporting youth groups in form of capacity building and enabling

resources for the production activities.

He said he has been monitoring UEM support to the groups and communicate with them through shared slogan of Shamba Langu (My farm).

UEM is now supported the groups in water borehole project with tanks costs €4700, while stakeholders called for establishment of irrigation facilities that would support sustainability of their projects.

One of the beneficiaries and IKAU's group member Ms. Mary Daniel said currently their weekly harvest is up to 1, 200 kilograms of tomato which generate over Sh787, 500 equivalent to (Euro 292) in total.

***"We plan to increase the weekly produce up to 1, 500 kilograms that would raise our sale revenue to at least Sh945, 000 (Euro 350),"*** she said.

The church's regional office confidently believe that after the completion of the special project, the group would be able to up their yield to 3, 000 kilograms per week.

***"We hope that the sustainability strategy that developed by Project manager in collaboration with Rufiji district council officials and other development partners will help the young adults to increase self-employment to many youth who are jobless in many communities,"*** issued church statement read impart.

# UEM: There is a need to develop strategy to deal with early pregnancies'

By Africa Team



**R**egional office for the **United Evangelical Mission (UEM)** have met with stakeholders including church members and youth groups to discuss the child pregnancy and develop care strategy that will help churches to deal with affected young girls. The meeting which was conducted for four days from Feb 21 to Feb 25, 2021 was participated by 26 people (10 males and 16 females) from four Tanzania churches namely ELCT-ECD, ELCT-KAD, ELCT-NED and ELCT-NWD in the country's capital of Dodoma. The aim of that meeting according to the **UEM** were to share experience from churches on identifying root causes of early child pregnant in Africa community, and sharing experience on how to deal with early pregnancy and care for those affected by child abuse actions.

*"In addition to that, it also aimed at formulate strategies that will help **UEM** Africa Region member churches to deal with early pregnancy, develop and contextualize action plan that would help church to practice various strategies at a particular period,"*

**UEM** said in a statement.

This meeting was a result of an earlier online workshop that involved midwives, head of schools, diaconal coordinators, and head of Christian nurturing who discussed on early pregnancies for young girls.

**UEM** said through that virtual meeting they learned that there are socio-economic, and cultural reasons that driven to early child pregnancy in Africa member churches, such as poverty, orphanage, extended family, long distance to schools and occasional assistance from men and motorcycle drivers, lack of sexual health education, mindset of marriage obligation, and high rate of divorce in some socio-economic context such as the fisheries communities.

*"The online experience sharing has brought a need of arranging for a physical workshop for Tanzanian member churches to see how they can formulate care strategies of handling this challenge,"* the church stated.

# Organic cotton project cherishes in the Lake Zone regions

By Africa Team



The evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania North Western Diocese (ELCT-NWD) in collaboration with **United Evangelical Mission (UEM)** runs a project which focuses on production of organic cotton for the sake of reducing the use of poisonous pesticide and protecting the environment.

The Project is run in Busega district in the Lake Zone's Simiyu region where cotton is largely grown, as the church plans to extend the same project to Misenyi District in the Kagera Region and Geita.

On April 12<sup>rd</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 2021, Bishop Dr. Abednego Keshomshahara and the General Secretary of ELCT-NWD, Rev- Elmerck Kigembe paid a monitoring visit in Busega, for follow up on the construction and installation of Biogas system in some households in Busega communities.

They also visited the farmers and also attained the audience of Busega District Commissioner and the District executive Director (DED).

***“We are so grateful for the wonderful project implementation, farmers and technicians are working so delightfully to make sure the project is completed successful, we are thankful to UEM for the grant and supporting this great project,”*** said Bishop Dr. Keshomshahara.

During their visit they learnt the status on the biogas installations, where reports were that installation to 10 households was at 90 percent while in other three households they have reached 40 percent completion.



# The Boat Which serves between three rivers

By Oscar Pekombe



**T**he ambulance boat's radius of action covers the Ubangi Rivers and Ngiri, but also the Congo River. The 54th trip was made on the axis of the Mbandaka River to Lobengo. The patients having learned that the boat was traveling on the river even came from the Ngiri, notably from Bosobele and on the river, the sick of Makanza upstream Lobengo and those of Lolanga downstream are mobilized to meet the boat. What is curious in this movement of sick people is that in Lolanga there is a General Referral Hospital and health centers locally.

The same as in Makanza. In Bosobele there is a Referral Health Center which receives patients transferred from health centers around. Yet the sick flocked to the Ambulance Boat simply because of the quality of care provided and at the cost within the reach of the beneficiary population.

The boat crew as usual, consulted and cared for 974 people. 92 surgeries were performed while 1,434 people were made aware of family planning and 104 people voluntarily accepted the HIV test. Fortunately, there have been no positive cases, which is an encouraging sign in the fight against HIV /AIDS.

Among the most current, Dr Yoursen Bosolo informs that malaria comes in first followed by typhoid by fever and diarrhea caused by river water consumption very polluted. Moreover the parasites in particular verminosis are frequent in the population with particular emphasis in children.

For the residents of the Congo River, Ubangi rivers and Ngiri, the ambulance boat is a welcome visitor insofar as it gives quality care at a cost that they find affordable.

# Baptist Church calls for UEM to join prayers for Beni City, North Kivu in DRC

By Rev. Dr John Wesley



The Baptist Church in Central Africa has written a letter to the UEM International Communion seeking prayers for God's intervention in the escalating social situation in South Kivu Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has resulted in killing and displacement of more than 40,000 people.

***"Tensions in the territories of UVIRA, FIZI and MWENGA in South Kivu have increased in recent days between the different ethnic groups living in this part which has experienced increasing insecurity for more than two decades"*** writes the Church President, Rev Dr Ngayihembako Samuel in a letter he wrote in April 29, 2021.

An estimated 122 armed groups of varying sizes act in mineral-rich eastern DRC, many being a negative effect of regional wars in the 1990s.

Since many years local churches in the region reported massacres of innocent civilians which were never ending. At different times in the past, UEM and member churches contributed to emergency appeals sent by the Baptist Church in Central Africa.

There is still a persisting appeal pointing out to the killing of innocent people in both regions of North and South Kivu of the DRC.

Mr David Fechner, UEM Peace worker of a church Network for Peace in the Great Lakes region (APRED) sends a cry of alarm to UEM as shared by a member of peace theatre group.

He wrote: ***"It is with bitterness and sadness that I inform you on the precarious situation which has worsened so much as human clashes took place last week in South Kivu"***.

The UEM Advocacy Officer in Africa Region, the Rev Dr Kahongya Kambale observes: ***"The insecurity situation and its negative consequences in all sectors of life in the East of the DRC continue to be very worrying. Recent developments in the north as well as the South tend to turn these conflicts into an inter-ethnic war which risks turning into a genocide"***.

The Director of Cabinet of the Church of Christ (ECC) in Congo, the Rev Moses Gbema confirms the situation inviting the UEM International Communion to pray for the DRC, saying: ***"Please pray for restoration of security and peace by putting an end to the abject massacres and the forced displacement of which the population in the East of the country is a victim"***.

As their parents and the entire community, tired of war, insecurity and massive killings of innocent people, on the April 23, 2021 several dozen of pupils/students had been camping outside the Beni town hall day and night for several days since last week. They demand the departure of the UN peacekeeping force MONUSCO.

The categories of those who demonstrate include minors between the ages of 7 years to 11 years old. They strongly cry for the attention of the international community to be aware of killings taking place in Beni.

An 11 year girl says, ***"We appeal to the President of the DRC, Mr. Felix Tshisekedi to personally come to Beni to put an end to the killings. Like other children, we wanted peace and be able to receive education in our schools. We are asking the President to come and see the misery we are living in our area"***.

In a reply to the general appeal, the DRC President ensured the population that the DRC authorities are in negotiation with the government of Kenya for military assistance.

During his interview at the local radio in Beni the President said, ***"Soon Kenyan military troops are arriving in Beni to jointly work with the DRC army to fight those causing insecurity. Our response will be ruthless"***,

# SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS IS A PLACE OF KNOWLEDGE



It was a great day when 16 participants from UEM member churches met online for a seminar that inspired Sunday School Coordinators from UEM member churches in Africa and gave their contributions as well as recounting the successes stories based from previous seminars. In previous sessions, it was agreed that Sunday school children should be given priority and the learning environment should be improved, as well as the availability of the best learning tools, including videos, pictures, drawings and even realistic cinemas.

The good news presented by the participants is that, Sunday school children have been taught the important issues of knowing Christ through pictures, videos, cinemas and even drawings to illustrate the realities of what is being taught. In some churches Sunday school children have been given various seminars on their growth as well as the effects which would be during their teenager period. So the training helped the children to care for themselves and to serve God happily. Participants also reported that, in some churches, children had the opportunity to play various sports such as football, netball, volleyball etc.

What was well described as a success was a very important factor in using participatory methods in teaching Sunday school children and giving them the opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues that

affect their lives in a biblical context. However, in addition to the identified successes, there are also a number of reported challenges that in one way or another greatly affected Sunday school teaching. The biggest thing was the presence of Covid 19 pandemic which has occurred all over the world and affected every country as well as the presence of lock down everywhere. Many children stayed home without going to church and lacked the knowledge and education of God. During this difficult period, some churches were able to continue Sunday school classes by following procedures to protect themselves from the spread of the Corona virus.

Other challenges mentioned are the lack of teaching materials for Sunday school children, especially teaching materials such as videos, pictures etc. Also many Sunday school teachers are not paid anything they just volunteer. That, in turn, diminishes the motivation for serving God with joy.

At the end of the conference, Sunday School coordinators made recommendations to the Church, and for UEM as well not limited to the following: in order to motivate and work with the heart and the churches to appreciate and give priority to Sunday school classrooms, finally pastors should have time to teach Sunday school classes to see the development of children in their churches.

# The Impact of United Evangelical Mission (UEM) Budget Support to Churches in Africa

By Rev. Dr John Wesley

**T**he UEM has worked in a special way to support members to maintain their mission in the African society and play their role in improving people's lives.

One of the UEM support involve a 25 years long assistance to the The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Botswana (ELCB).

The ELCB has 22,000 members and 31 local pastors. The church has three church circuits, each led by a Dean and 43 congregations. For the ELCB congregations, financial self-reliance is very important and all efforts are produced to ensure sustainable development.

In last 25 years, the following major areas have been supported by UEM: Theological education implemented in the ELCB training Centre, Woodpecker Seminary, Youth Programmes and Christian Education, Administration Diaconia (incl. Kang and Sehitwa HIV/AIDS programs) and due to Covid-19 in 2020 a new supported project of *"Care and Share Support"*.

There have been other community supported areas by the UEM project committee: in Evangelization, education, health, reconciliation, social work, etc. I will focus on the following two impressive projects which are mobilizing the youth for church activities: Youth Programmes, Christian Education and their impact.

Through UEM support, the church is seen as fulfilling her mission to lead young people to become fully involved in the church life.

## Youth Programmes

The department organized a mini Bible School. For example in 2020, about 25 youth attended the first group of mini-bible school which was for one week and the second which happened virtually had more 120 participants. The Collaborations between the youth department and the Music department was witnessed when the Music department visited some youth choirs, mobilizing them for the music festival which as one of the major church fundraising activities.

## Christian Education

Each year it is organized a bible short course for out of school youth of ages from 18- 25. About 200

youths from all the circuits attended this course; 120 were females and 80 were males. The course outline was mainly on the Bible teachings (knowing God, Jesus' life), Evangelism, Christian relationships, environment stewardship and prayer.

Also there has been a Sunday School Teachers workshop in Woodpecker. Participants were drawn from Congregations in all the Circuits. About 220 Sunday School Teachers (130 women and 90 men attended. The main objective was to empower the Sunday school Teachers on teaching programs/ activities and curriculum for each year and beyond. The learners also shared work experiences with suggestions/recommendations and possible solutions for future.

There has also been collaboration with the ELCB Music Department which ran a music workshop, which attracted 20 participants (4 women, 16 men) from the three Lutheran Churches in Botswana, i.e. ELCB, ELCSA-Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa - Botswana Diocese, LCSA - Lutheran Church in Southern Africa.

The meetings are an effort which aims to unite these different denominations. It is believed that this activity is vitally important for the growth of Christianity and the Christian church to be united in Southern Africa.

The ELCB Bishop Mothusi J. Letlhage writes: *"We thank UEM for always strengthening our spiritual uplifting and capacitating our people through our programs. The number of people in our churches is increasing as many now, especially the youth are being enlightened"*.

Some of the lessons learnt include music/singing, drama and sports activities which are mainly done during youth camps as part of learning, recreational and team building activities. It is realized that there is a need for an open Evangelism which can have impact in drawing people to church, especially youth. Unfortunately since April 2020 due to the Covid-19 and related hygienic restrictions, there is a huge decrease in the number of youth members taking part in Youth activities. The numbers of people allowed in meetings, trainings and church services is generally reduced.

# UEM strengthen partnerships during 25th Mission week anniversary

By Africa Team



The **United Evangelical Mission** inaugurate mission work week by implementing an exchange program for maintaining friendships between one church and another.

This year the **UEM's** Africa Regional office supported an exchange Programme between four dioceses of Evangelical Lutheran church in Tanzania (ELCT), namely ELCT-North Eastern diocese, ELCT-Karagwe Diocese, ELCT-North Western Diocese and ELCT-Eastern and Coastal Diocese.

The Deans (Assistant Bishops) of these four dioceses exchanged from their churches to other Diocese for **UEM** exchange program done in June 2021 to develop and strengthen the brotherhood in the churches in particular the south-south partnership in the UEM week which began on June 1, 2021.

The main purpose of the exchange was to inform the community about **UEM** and its activities and areas that are conducted in collaboration with member churches, working in five key areas of Diakonia, Advocacy, Evangelism, Development and Partnership.

Dean Rev. Michael Kanju went to ELCT-KAD and carried out various missionary activities and especially to encourage the ELCT-KAD community to remember the **UEM** journey since 1996 by describing all the good things that have been done in the last 25 years.

In addition, Dean Rev. Yared Wakami from ELCT-KAD visited ELCT-NED and made a visit for the above mentioned purpose as well as to perform various tasks assigned to him by the Church such as on June 12, 2021 participating laying down foundation stone at Maweni Sub-parish of Kange and installation of District Pastor of the Coastal District.

During the visit, the Dean Rev. Michael Kanju led the Monthly closing service in June 2021 at Lukajange Cathedral. His sermon at the service was from *Revelation 21: 4*, in emphasis on the word of God, Pastor Michael Kanju said that ***in our daily lives there are all kinds of anxieties, tears of all kinds, pain and diseases, and difficult living conditions. This is the state of life that people go through at different times.***

***The Lord Jesus promises that He will wipe away these tears and they will be gone. These are words to show that Jesus is in our lives and if we hold on to Him He will overcome all difficulties, as He removes pain, tears, anxiety and He will not leave us.***

The service brought together all staff from the head office, Staff from Tegemeo Primary School as well as students from Tegemeo Primary School which is owned by the ELCT Diocese of Karagwe.

# The Irente becoming a hope and Blessings place for children in need

By Africa Team



Irente is an institutions area owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania North Eastern Diocese. The area has three institutions that all provide specialized services to children with special needs.

These institutions are Irente Rainbow school which provides care for children with mental health problems and those who are slow learners, Irente children home where orphans from day one onwards are cared for until they grow up or find relatives to take them and Irente school for the blind where children are completely blind and children with low visually impaired.

The existing Irente institutions were established with the aim of helping the community members raise and care for children who need special care and needs in their Socio-economic development and education. Historically, ELCT-NED is the diocese of Diaconia that's why the diocese has several centres where social services is provided including and not limited to Health services, education and social welfare.

## **Irente Rainbow School**

The school has 52 children of which 35 are girls and 17 boys, among whom are children with mental health problems and children who are learning slowly. The center was established in 2005 by ELCT-NED with the

support of UEM to enable the service to continue as intended.

Irente rainbow teaches children with mental health problems in various aspects of life so that they can go one step further which will help children to change their behaviour and performance in their daily lives. In addition, they learn the art of making various things such as craftsmanship, making baskets, table mates, necklaces and carpet.

## **Irente School for blind**

The school was established in the 1960's with the aim of helping blind girls who missed the opportunity to study during that period. However it later changed its focus and added boys to a mixed school for the visually impaired and low vision impaired.

The Irente School for the Blind was established by ELCT-NED and supported by various local and national development stakeholders as well as the government of the United Republic of Tanzania through the Local Government. ELCT-NED is responsible for developing existing buildings and ensuring that existing ones are maintained, recruiting some staff as well as the administration of the center, and Local Government which is represented by Lushoto District Council provides food service to all students as well as paying



salaries of some teachers.

The center has made a significant mark of success including finding teachers who studied in this school for the blind such as Mr. Nehemia Alfani, Mr. Tumaini Ngeresa and Mrs. Victoria other Retired teachers are Mrs. Paulina Mwinjuma, Mrs. Enighenja Hemed, Mr. Fi and Mr. Godfrey Salary.

In addition to these achievements, the school has also introduced an inclusive program that enrolls students who have no visual impairment and poor vision for 10% of all students each year.

In addition to these successes, the school also has a number of challenges, including a lack of sources of income that enable me to increase the income that will help pay the salaries of Church-employed teachers as well as dilapidated infrastructure and other factors.

### **Irente children home**

The home is for children who have been separated or abandoned by their parents due to various reasons including parents dying after childbirth, being dumped on the street or in the toilet by parents after birth and due to chronic parental diseases such as mental health problem.

Irente Orphanage centre was established more than 60 years ago by ELCT-NED to care for children who have been separated from their parents in one way or another. The center currently has 15 children who are being cared for and two adults who are continuing their studies and remain at the center.

Irente children home is also focuses on a good education for girls where they are taught how to care for and raise children who have been separated or abandoned by their parents. The home is the only place in Tanzania that provides quality training for girls that prepares them to work in various orphanages. Unfortunately, the school is no longer working due to various challenges including being fulfilling the requirements given by National Council of technical education (NACTE) to register as a collage that looks line other Institutions that provide equal skills in the country. Other challenges at the moment are Lack of funds to run the center, salaries for staff and girls to volunteer especially care for orphans due to the excellent nursing school closed.

The leadership of the **UEM** Africa Reginal office involved the Deputy Executive Secretary Africa Rev. Dr. Ernest Kadiva, Program Office Mr. Zakaria Mnkai with Justice Officer, and advocacy Rev. Dr. Kahongya Kambale visited the existing institutions in Irente from May 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>st</sup>, 2021 and witnessed many good things happening in the existing institutions in Irente and thanked God for the great service provided by ELCT-NED to ensure that children with special needs are given priority.

# Youth in ECD join effort to save environment through planting trees

By Africa Team



Youth from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania Eastern and Coastal diocese join efforts for environmental conservation by targeting to raise Sh 30 million for a forestation program.

The campaign titled 'Bishop and Youth Committee to raise fund for tree planting' was formed by the Diocesan Youth Committee after ECD Bishop Dr Alex Gehaz Malasusa gave 800 acreage lands located in Southern Part of Tanzania (Ruvuma Region-Madaba area) to the youth of the church.

The campaign was inaugurated by the Diocesan Youth Officer Rev, Oscar Mlyuka on December 29, 2020 during the Sunday service at the Ubungo Parish as a way of raising awareness to the congregants and asking their support.

Total of 43 youth committees participated during the inauguration consisting of 18 females and 25 male.

Going with the slogan *"My tree my mark, let's take care of environmental change"*, the committee already visited 98 Parishes and sub parishes for the sake of raising awareness and mobilization of funds in terms of fundraising.

Currently youth are clearing the land for tree plantation to at least 400 acres out of the total 800 and the tree planting is expected to start in spring season (March-May 2021).

Moreover, the church youth are still looking for partners to support this noble project for all 800 acreage land.



# Shaping youth future through vocational education

By Rev. Dr John Wesley



**A**nglican Church in Rwanda has shown efforts to help youth shape their future by equipping them with education and vocational training.

Through focusing on the three main pillars, namely: Evangelism, Education and Healthcare the church has created programs to help the young adult groups in Rwanda.

One of the notable education institutions endorsed by the church is the Shyogwe Technical and Vocational Education School.

The school was established in 2020 and has courses such as tailoring, carpentry, masonry, welding, hair dressing, and culinary art.

Shyogwe TVET School has 160 students which are 36 boys and 124 girls. There is hope that the number of students will considerably increase and help the school to progressively sustain itself as the Covid-19 pandemic slows down.

The history of the school started in 2005 when it was established as the Youth at Risk Project of Shyogwe Diocese of the Anglican Church of Rwanda offering short-term vocational training of vulnerable young people including orphans, street children and others

from poorest families who could not afford secondary school education.

Youth at Risk Project was founded by the Mothers' Union which is the Women Department of Shyogwe Diocese and aimed at giving to the young girls and boys and train them in different skills such as tailoring and knitting and embroidery, carpentry, welding and masonry to help them to get easily jobs so that they can financially support themselves.

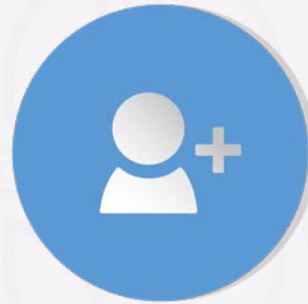
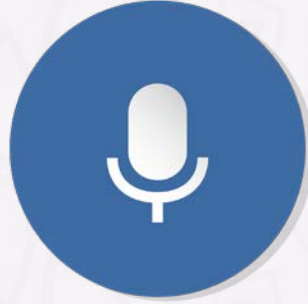
From that project, it was later changed in title in 2008 and became Muhanga Youth Technology Centre (MYTEC) after the workshops of Carpentry and Welding significantly developed in terms of equipment.

Muhanga Youth Technology Centre developed again in terms of infrastructures and was given by the Government accreditation to offer the Secondary School Certificate in 2020, and that was when it started to be known as the Shyogwe Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) School.

The Shyogwe Anglican Diocese says the aim is now to keep modernizing and equipping this school to empower its students so that they become well-equipped to shape their bright future.

# Members of the ARB and UEM discuss how to promote partnership

By Rev. Dr John Wesley



The Africa Regional Board of the **United Evangelical Mission** had conducted an important meeting to discuss among other things how the church can identify and promote partnership between the members.

Hosted virtually via zoom by Africa department Wuppertal here in the Dar es Salaam, the meeting participants were graced by the General Secretary Volker Dally, then received the ongoing report of the Africa department.

Before the sessions started on the first day, all board members participated at **UEM's** international weekly morning devotion, which was held virtually. The Biblical input was given by Board member Rev. Dr Pascal Bataringaya, the president of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda.

The participant discussed a paper on partnership, which was recently edited by the **UEM** Management Team in the framework of 25 years of **UEM** as an international communion. In four groups they gave

their comments and recommendations.

The main objective of the paper is for partnership groups to discuss and share on Challenges and Opportunities for Internationalization and Equal Partnerships between German and African and Asian members, church districts and institutions.

Another important point of sharing was the contribution of the African member churches to the **UEM** funds through the **UEM** United Action Campaign and costs related to hosting national or international **UEM** events. Strategies of fundraising for these purposes were discussed.

ARB member Jane Ewoule from the Evangelical Church in Cameroon said: *“We need to join efforts to build UEM financially.”*

And Rev. John Wesley Kabango, the executive secretary Africa added: *“It is a matter of dignity so that African churches lose the image of always being poor.”*

# Gender and Children Desk of ELCT-NED met to discuss strategic plans

By Rev. Happiness Urio



Gender and Children Desk of the North Eastern Diocese shared strategic plans and recommendations including to educate people/society about gender desk in order to help both men and women to rear children and families and to prepare projects which could help men and women economically.

This was discussed among other things during the general assembly on January 28 to 30, 2021 which was held at Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU). The meeting was opened by the Bishop Dr. Msafiri Mbilu who was accompanied by three heads of the Districts; Rev Thadeus Ketto, Rev. Frank Mtangi and Rev. Issai Mweta.

This desk is composed by parishes of the diocese which make total of sixty (60) which divided into four districts. It conducts activities through these four Districts of the Diocese. The main task of the desk is to educate and to help both women and men spiritually, economically and socially.

It also has the role of supervising the unity works of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania like World Prayer, Sunday school etc.

During the general assembly in January, the members of the meeting were including; chairperson of gender and children desk and parish workers/ women evangelists from each parish of the Diocese. Men were invited as representatives from each District.

The aim of the meeting was to hold election of gender and children desk leaders in different positions at the level of the Diocese for next four years.

Some of the challenges faced during the preparation of that meeting was lack of money, attributed by the lack of permanent source of income. Another challenge was poor understanding of gender issues to some members of the meeting.

However, the meeting was conducted successfully. People enjoyed to have a moment of time together and shared different views concerning leadership and gender.

Gender and children desk had their Gender and children desk have the responsibility of working hand in hand with the church leaders in order to accomplish their task. And the Bishop Elect Dr. Msafiri Mbilu promised to do so specifically in Projects plan.

# UEM members CADELU and CDCC working together to fight Covid-19 in the city of Kinshasa

By Rev. Dr John Wesley



delivery system to help the poorest and most marginalized people as they face the rising tide of infections.

Despite access restrictions, **UEM** members are working around the clock with local communities in 15 African churches to deliver much needed assistance to curb the spread of the virus and help protect communities from its economic impact.

In Kinshasa, the project was one of the goals of the approach of GLEP -Global Learning in Ecumenical Perspective. In the context of the common threat of Covid-19, a project was designed and presented to **UEM** for a grant.

Its implementation was made by a joint team of 6 people from CDCC and CADELU in Kinshasa.

One of the beneficiaries of this project include Mapamboli Primary school whose construction was endorsed by **UEM**.

From 2017, **UEM** supported CADELU church for the construction of the school in Kinshasa. Located in the place called B.A.T, Mapamboli Primary school was opened in 2019 with the governmental disposition of "free education at primary school".

The Mapamboli Primary school was designed for 240 pupils but it has seen its figures climbing up to 609 children.

UEM Co-worker Mr. Safari Kanyena writes: "Mapamboli was a true response to the educational challenges but now, the quality can be questioned due to overcrowded classrooms". And one could also think

of the challenge when it comes to "social distancing" during the Covid-19

However, according to Mr Safari Kanyena, the impact of this project will be fruitful and some of the impacts have also been observed, as follows.

Its sustainability: in terms of "learning", CADELU and CDCC learnt together and each from another. An excellent experience: They globally learnt from Medias, looked for solutions to their problems out of their frontiers, and did not focus their interest on religion but on humanity.

Such an experience, if broadened and repeated is worthy for developing the vision of togetherness and valuing the humanity learning values of togetherness, wholeness and not the selfishness, because they shared experiences; and the relationships created in the joint work will long-last even when Covid-19 will be eradicate.

CADELU and CDCC showed a real capacity to work together on the field: In this project, we reached the step of an integrative management in which the lay people and other members according to their competencies and qualities were involved in the management process.

The resources of this project were managed at the grassroots' church level at 93.4 percent whereas the church General secretary managed 6.6 percent. This experience was a practical school of integrative management.

The relevance to the five components of UEM's

corporate identity which are holistic evangelism, feeding people and involving in their health solutions, Advocacy as it was seen in the interventions in favour of the voiceless; Diakonia: the help was a comfort for some hospitalized poor people and the aged who were feeling abandoned by the church. They renewed their relation with the church.

Development: learning together, sensitizing the church against the disease, investing in human health in terms of prevention... are good actions of human development. And lastly Partnership: it developed local and outside cooperation. CADELU and CDCC strengthened their working relations at the grassroots level.

Moreover, Mr Kanyena said one of the achievements include Gender impact of this project: as it got the help, men and women had the same chance of being selected. A question was however raised as to why no woman was selected in the 6-people of the joint coordination committee. The two churches confessed that this was a mistake which will never be repeated. *"In short, this project has been a very good experience of UEM communion in the field because it brought churches together in order to perform the common mission and fight against the common threat of covid-19,"* said UEM Co-worker Mr Safari Kanyena

## New Bishop in ELCT-NED was consecrated and installed for a mission work

By Africa Team



On Sunday 9 May the Deputy executive secretary Rev. Dr. Ernest Kadiva, the JPIC officer Rev Dr. Kahongya, and the Programme officer Mr. Zakaria Mnkai attended the consecration and installation service of Bishop Dr. Msafiri Joseph Mbilu as a new bishop of North Eastern Diocese. The service was led by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) presiding Bishop Dr. Fredrick Shoo and other 19 Bishop from other ELCT Dioceses.

The official guest was the Prime Minister of the Republic of Tanzania Kassim Majaliwa represented

the President of the Republic of united of Tanzania her excellence Madame Samia Hassan Suluhu. UEM as it was for other international guests was given the opportunity to present the greetings and the Deputy executive secretary read the greetings of the UEM Secretary General Rev Volker Martin Dally. The greetings were received with great gratitude and appreciation by Presiding Bishop of ELCT and Bishop Dr. Msafiri Mbilu.

# AFRICA CELEBRATES 25 YEARS



On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021 UEM and African leaders join the online 25<sup>th</sup> UEM anniversary celebrations. The 2019 Africa Regional Assembly resolved that the UEM 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021 will be celebrated in each UEM African member after the official launching. The official launching took place on Tuesday June 1, 2021 and had to be done online due to COVID-19. The event was hosted by the ELCT, Eastern and Costal Diocese and brought together the top UEM leaders at different levels. The launching liturgy was led by Bishop Dr Alex Gehaz Malasusa, biblical reflection by Bishop Dr Msafiri Mbilu, songs were performed by talented youth choirs of the Evangelical Church in Botswana, the ELCT-Eastern and Costal Diocese in Tanzania and the CADELU church in the DRC.

The launching was preceded by preparations including video recording of various African leaders on the testimonies they have between their churches and UEM over a period of 25 years. Their testimony showed great achievements of UEM in the last 25 years based on its five areas of work (Evangelism, Advocacy, Development, Partnership and Diaconia). It is noticed how UEM African members are committed to ownership, positive transformation, solidarity and fighting any feelings of fatalism.

In the launching event the UEM Moderator, Rev Dr Wilhelm Simarmata, African Council, Board members, the General Secretary, Rev Volker Martin Dally, members of the Management Team and Co-workers shared reports and testimonies on the UEM growth in the last 25 years. African members shared joyfully on the UEM support and achievements to date. One of UEM distinctive is putting members at the centre of all implemented work. God calls each one to help release people from poverty, regardless of their faith or background, UEM's role is seen as enabling the church to live out this calling. The event is a chance to reflect on UEM history and bring members to

reflect on their organization's success along the way. Celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> UEM anniversary enabled members to realize the opportunities and strengths they have within UEM in dealing with the greatest enemies of mankind which are ignorance, disease, poverty, oppression, discrimination, and exclusion. UEM members understand these enemies as the result of people's broken relationships – with God, with one another and with the environment.

Guided by holistic mission approach, participants see themselves as called to help restore these relationships by responding holistically to people's needs – economic, emotional, spiritual and physical.

Reported colourful celebrations on the UEM week and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by UEM African members.

#### **Karagwe Diocese (KAD) celebrates the UEM 25th anniversary.**

Melina Manase, the Karagwe Diocese Co-worker shared that on June 6<sup>th</sup> 2021, the Diocese and congregants celebrated UEM week and 25 years anniversary under the leadership of Bishop Dr Bagonza Benson who explained the historical birth of UEM and her five working areas.

KAD Church leaders organized the event at Katinkimo mission congregation, Rukole Parish to celebrate this International Communion of Protestant churches in Europe, Africa and Asia. Hundreds of congregants from various Parishes of the Diocese attended the event, which also included fundraising for building the new church at Katinkimo congregation. Bishop Dr. Benson K. Bagonza described the growth, development and significance of UEM since when it was launched 1966 till now. He underlined that over 110 years ago missionaries came to Karagwe, built churches, schools, health centers and preached the Good News of Jesus Christ. Believers were found and faith was built within them. The celebration continued by the visitation of Dean Michael Kanju of NED who visited KAD from June 24-30, 2021 in particular to strengthen partnership between NED and KAD.

#### **The CADELU church celebrates with competition of choirs**

President Rev Bokombe Denis traveled 4 days from Basankusu, West Congo to Kinshasa to join members of Limete parish to celebrate the UEM week and 25 years of UEM. It was organized on Thursday 3 June

# “UNITED IN MISSION”

2021 a worship service on the occasion of the two events. The worship service was led by the parish pastor assisted by the elders. It was attended by more than 200 parishioners. He presented a history of the UEM, describing how the UEM went from the Rhenish mission society to be communion of churches in 3 continents. The activities and achievements of the UEM and the common challenges ahead were presented by President Bokombe. The celebration ended with a competition of parish choirs.

## Churches in Rwanda

Anglican Church of Rwanda with the UEM Scholarship Alumni association celebrated with financial contributions to UEM: On June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, during the Sunday Service, a letter sent by the Bishop Dr. Jered Kalimba, the representative of Anglican Bishops in the UEM was read in all open parishes to transmit the same message regarding the celebration of UEM anniversary. As mentioned in his letter, the parishes interceded for all UEM member churches in Germany, Africa and Asia, for bilateral and trilateral partnerships, and gave a special offering to support UEM programs. Former UEM scholarship holders from the dioceses of Butare, Cyangugu, Kigeme and Shyogwe met in one parish to celebrate with the congregants the UEM week and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. They presented greetings from their home dioceses, expressed their gratitude to UEM and the Anglican Church for the scholarship provided, and agreed to collect between themselves a financial contribution to UEM before the end of 2021. So far an estimated 600 Euros are reported to have been collected as a donation to UEM.

The Presbyterian church of Rwanda (EPR) in intercessions prayers: The President, the Rev Dr Bataringaya Pascal wrote that all parishes of the EPR celebrated the UEM anniversary 25 years. Even though not allowed to gather during the week, church members have kept praying for UEM, individually and in family and cell groups prayers. Parishes which are permitted to have gatherings incorporated the UEM celebration in their Sunday services. In the parishes whose temples are still closed due to Covid 19, the leaders used the familiar ways of worshiping together to inform the participants on the week of UEM and pray for the UEM family. The celebrations had the following parts: Presentation of UEM, the realization of UEM in the Church development work in Rwanda within 25 years.

## Celebrations in South African and Tanzania

The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA): Organized a worship service following the

suggested liturgy by the Africa Region. The worship service was joined by members of the General Synod Executive (GSE) who thanked God for the URCSA being a UEM member.

The ELCT- KAD, NED, NWD and ECD: During the UEM Week, member churches in Tanzania have put up plans and schedules for the UEM United Action Campaign and church leaders exchanged physical visits to UEM member churches. The four Deans from these UEM member churches planned to use the 2nd week of June to visit each other as a way of strengthening partnership and stand for UEM United Action during this particular period of the UEM week and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

NED marked the celebration of the 25th anniversary of UEM with the opening of a house of worship in Maweni Sub-parish at Tanga on June 12, 2021 and the installation of Coast District Pastor on June 13, 2021. All events were led by Bishop Dr Joseph Mbilu and attended by Dean Wakami from KAD and Deputy Executive Africa Region Pastor Kadiva who was given the opportunity to give UEM greetings especially to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Bishop Mbilu highlighted the great contribution of UEM to NED and how UEM still continues to fund development work in NED. He appealed to all congregations to continue to strengthen ties with UEM and its partners. NED contributed Tshs 1,266,500 as a mark for UEM common work.

## Democratic Republic of Congo

The Baptist Church in Central Africa- CBCA: The President, Rev Dr Ngayihembako Samuel reported that *“June is dedicated to Mission work”*. Especially at the occasion of the UEM anniversary, during June 2021, all Superintendents implemented a month exchange visits, learning from one another on the church activities, particularly on the work supported by UEM.

Church leaders shared that putting together UEM 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary events has been an exciting task, but it is with creativity and planning that African members celebrated their special milestone and it was fun and thanksgiving for all who were involved. After all, as it was noticed UEM milestone is a result of years of members’ dedication and hard work. It is time to take a step back and celebrate what each member has achieved and positively decide on the way forward.

*Rev Dr Kadiva Ernest and Rev Dr John Wesley Kabango (UEM Africa Department)*

25 YEARS

United in Mission – 1996-2021

Diversity **is**  
**our** strength