

# MISSION ECHO

UNITED EVANGELICAL MISSION AFRICA REGION

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**OUR DIVERSITY  
IS OUR  
STRENGTH**

## EDITORIAL



Dear readers and UEM member churches, this is to inform you that the **Mission Echo** is issued to introduce to you what we did in past six months from July to December 2019. First of all, I would like to thank God for this chance to highlight few things we accomplished during this particular period. During this period of six months, we have been able to accomplish different activities in collaboration with member churches and other few events prevailed in churches as follows: International Peace conference conducted which in Zanzibar, afforestation and Reforestation for Land restoration, Parents of Children with disabilities especially Mental Health problem, Pentecostalism as a challenge to traditional churches, etc. Finally, the Regional office wishes you all compliments of New Year 2020, May the Mighty God Bless you all when reading this Newsletter of July–December 2019.

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## CONTENT



**UEM IN COLLABORATION WITH ELCT-ECD IN CHARITY MOVE TO SUPPORT FAMILIES WITH DISABLED KIDS**



**ALL IS SET FOR KEY GLOBAL INTERRELIGIOUS PEACE CONFERENCE**



**ROLE OF CHURCH IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION ELABORATED**



**EXPLORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**



**UEM ORGANIZES PASTORS' WORKSHOP TO ADDRESS RISING 'PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT' IN AFRICA**



**NEW FACES AT NAMIBIA, KIGALI TOP CHURCH BRASS**



**OUR DIVERSITY IS OUR STRENGTH**



**CHILDREN OF PASTORS**



**YOUNG ADULTS BENEFIT FROM VOLUNTEER EXCHANGE PROGRAMME**



**SAVE ENVIRONMENT SAVE OUR FUTURE**



**FELLOWSHIP, THROUGH AND THROUGH**



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## UEM IN COLLABORATION WITH ELCT-ECD IN CHARITY MOVE TO SUPPORT FAMILIES WITH DISABLED KIDS

The United Evangelical Mission (UEM) Regional office of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT) in collaboration with its Eastern and Coastal Diocese (ECD) has embarked on a program to support families with disabled children to foster caring and creating a favorable atmosphere for their welfare.

The first workshop under the program was held in Zanzibar whereby groups from different religions met and discussed peace building with the major goal being to bring together families of children with disabilities especially those with mental retardation so that they can share ideas on how to foster caring of disabled children and create favorable atmosphere for their wellbeing.

Speaking when he opened the workshop, the District Pastor Rev. Shukuru Maloda hailed the facilitators for choosing Zanzibar to host the workshop and encouraged the participants to ask more questions and share what they know on the challenges they face in bringing up physically impaired children.

During the workshop the facilitators took participants into terminologies and concepts used in the program. According to the facilitators, *Disability* was (the result of impairment), *Handicap* loss that results in failure to do something) *Special need Children* are children who have disability or a combination of disabilities that makes learning or other activities difficult. *Special-needs children* include those who have:

While *Mental Retardation* was a situation which

causes them to develop more slowly than other children including mastering of Speech and Language Impairment, such as a problem expressing themselves or understanding others.

Others includes , such as vision problem, cerebral palsy, or other conditions. Learning Disabilities, which distort messages from their senses.

At the end of the workshop participants learnt that there is no age limit for Mental retarded children to be at school, primary school level

They also noted some challenges that they face such as there is no any plan for their future after finishing the school, limited contact with other family members and the Government and that they are excluded from society due to their circumstances, education, treatment and social activities.

During the workshop participants also agreed to create a network among Parents and encourage to join Association of Parents with children with disability, Introduce exchange opportunities to facilitate mutual learning among special needs teachers and Develop programs which will empower youth with mental disability with relation to Zanzibar.

Other resolutions includes to organize another facilitators trip to evaluate the implementation of our commitments after one years, to organize another workshop for the next coming years and do an assessment to find the number of children that will help us do other training.



# ALL IS SET FOR KEY GLOBAL INTERRELIGIOUS PEACE CONFERENCE



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**M**ore than 70 –representatives are expected to attend the Second interreligious peace conference of the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) expected to take place in Z a n z i b a r . Speaking at a press conference on 14 September in Stone Town, the clergymen stressed the importance of networking and cooperation between local interfaith peace initiatives from their point of view. The conference was prepared by the Lutheran Church in Tanzania, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches as well as representatives of the Muslim community, who have been working closely together for many years in the interreligious cooperation project “Zanzic”.

They thanked UEM that, after the first interreligious peace conference which took place in Germany in 2017, the peace initiative is now being continued on the African continent in a place where Islamic and Christian cultures have left their mark for centuries. Jochen Motte, member of the UEM board and responsible for the program, emphasized for the UEM church communion.

“Joining forces against extremism and violence is an urgent task. This is especially true against the background of the attacks on a mosque in New

Zealand in March of this year with 51 dead and in April on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka with more than 259 murdered.”

Rev. Lusungu Mbilinyi, tutor of UEM in Wuppertal, who himself worked for many years as a pastor in Zanzibar, and Rev. Dr Kambale Kahongya, head of the department “Justice, Peace and Intergrate “ in the regional office of UEM in Dar–es–Salaam, Tanzania, expected from this conference, that the actors for peace and against extremism and violence from the churches and Muslim communities in Africa are strengthened in their work and the participants from other regions are inspired by meetings and impulses from the experiences in interreligious peace work on Zanzibar.

The participants of the conference were set a common sign for a peaceful coexistence of religions and against violence and extremism in a public event on 23 September 2019 at Donge Garden/Darajari in Stone Town.

As cooperation partners, the Evangelical Church of Westphalia, the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland and Justitia et Pax are involved in the peace conference.



# ROLE OF CHURCH IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION ELABORATED

© Photo: Zakaria M./ UEM

*The United Evangelical Movement (UEM) is leading a campaign to offer training on Reforestation and afforestation for land restoration in churches and worship places.*

The main objective was to share experience and learn from each other on matter related to environment conservation.

The workshop was hosted by the Evangelical Church in Tanzania North Eastern Diocese (ELCT-NED) in Lushoto, Tanga and it involved participants from member churches namely: ELCT-NED, ELCT-NWD, ELCT-KAD, ELCT-ECD, EPR, CBCA, CDCC, CADELU, URCSA, EEC and EAR.

The presentations during the workshop revealed a lot of experience and inputs from participants who indicated the real situation in their churches and countries.

It was learnt that Environmental conservation awareness proves important for several reasons; it fosters a sense of connection to the natural world,

promotes sustainable development and encourages conservation of irreplaceable natural resources and vulnerable plant and animal species.

It was also realized that there are challenges that resulted by environment degradation in Africa such as, insufficient knowledge on environmental conservation to society, population growth which cause pressure on natural resources. Others includes persistence of tradition agricultural practices, the society is ready to plant trees only for timber not for conserving the environment and that most of societies invading water sources due to urbanization.

The participants recommended that all trained participants should practice the lesson learn in their member churches as well as establish a units (JPIC) for environmental protection. Churches should value and maintained trained and experiences persons on Environmental conservation matters and UEM should make follow up to the trained person to get feedback on what they trained.

# EXPLORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



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Rwandan government official urges participants of Rwanda–Germany Christmas gala. Participants of the German Christmas Market have been urged to explore business opportunities brought by the gathering which has now evolved to become a good opportunity for partners of German Development Cooperation to meet, exchange ideas and to market their products.

The call was made by hon. Michel Sebera the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Rwanda when he opened the 2019 event. The event which took place from 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at the SOS Hermann–Gmeiner Primary School, Kacyiru in Kigali Rwanda, brought together various participants.

As it was planned, the event was inaugurated by two guests of honour; the Ambassador of Germany to Rwanda Dr Thomas Kurz.

In his remarks the ambassador said; **“Entrepreneurship development is a major focus of German Development Cooperation in Rwanda. Entrepreneurship is one of the most important factors for countries and**

**societies in bringing about economic development while protecting the environment,”**

The envoy continued by elaborating the importance of Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in development and ended his opening remarks by wishing all visitors to enjoy the food, mulled-wine and various products that were presented by Rwandan partners.

As such, both Rural Development Inter-diocese Service (RDIS) organization and APRED–RGL organization as important partners of the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) were well represented at this annual event in Kigali, not only to promote our projects and products, but also to promote the good and long-term collaboration between UEM and its member Churches in Rwanda, namely, the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda (EPR) and four dioceses of the Anglican Church of Rwanda (EAR): Butare, Cyangugu, Kigeme and Shyogwe.

At the same time, RDIS organization and APRED–RGL organization are supported by United Evangelical Mission (UEM) and Bread for the World/EED.

# UEM ORGANIZES PASTORS' WORKSHOP TO ADDRESS RISING 'PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT' IN AFRICA



The Regional office of the United Evangelical Movement (UEM) has organized a workshop for pastors focusing on how to address the challenges caused by the rising Pentecostal Movement which is posing a challenge to traditional churches in Africa. The main objective was to share experience and learn from each other on matters related to prosperity Gospel, healing and deliverance in relation to Pentecostal movement.

The workshop was hosted by the Evangelical Church of Cameroun (EEC) in Doula and it involved pastors from UEM member churches namely: ELCT-NED, ELCT-NWD, ELCT-KAD, ELCT-ECD, EPR, CBCA, CDCC, CADELU, ELCB, EEC and EAR.

During presentations, different pastors revealed a lot of inputs from participant who indicated the situation in their churches and countries. It was also realized that there are challenges that resulted by the presence Pentecostal movement in Africa especially, misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Pentecost churches on the matters related to Eucharist, prayers, prosperity gospels and deliverance

adding that Pentecost churches preachers emphasize on the promises of good life on earth ignoring the aspect of life to come.

"They insist on miracles and not of the Word of God, they condemn and judge the way of Protestant churches do baptism, they claim to own the Holy Spirit and believe that they are born again Christians," said one of the participants who was not identified.

The participants came up with the solution on how they can address these underlined issues. The resolutions includes Pastors being close to their believers and assist them in case of illness, joy, sorrow and all other circumstances. The pastors should also share the information to other colleagues' pastors and learn from each other. Pastors must create a space for bible studies and prayers within families. In the case of big churches parishes, they should organize the communities into small groups of fellowships known as cell groups and train church elders to guide and lead those groups.

# NEW FACES AT NAMIBIA, KIGALI TOP CHURCH BRASS



Pastors Sageus Keib and Karemera Francis have been elected as Bishops for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCRN) and Cyangugu Diocese of the Anglican Church in Rwanda respectively, it has been announced.

In a press release ELCRN said during the recent ordinary synod meeting held in August members elected bishop Keib as the new church leader for Namibia.

The election were held for the first time after an amendment of the church's constitution which allowed the members for the first time to directly elect the candidates for the office of Bishop and deputy Bishop.

The motto of the synod, which is the highest decision-making body of the church was "Being the salt of the earth, together for reconciliation, unity and peace" and was held under the leadership of the former Bishop Ernest Gamxamub. In addition to structural issues, the agenda also included the counting of the ballot papers and the appointment of a new bishop of the ELCRN and his deputy. The new church leadership were introduced on Sunday, 3 November 2019 in Okahandja.



Pastor Karemera Francis

In another development Bishop Nathan Amooti of the Anglican Church in Rwanda, Diocese of Cyangugu has been transferred to be the Bishop of the Diocese of Kigali, while his successor in Cyangugu is Bishop-Elect Karemera Francis whose consecration is scheduled on the 15th of September 2019. Prior to his new position, he was General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Rwanda. UEM wishes both Bishops God's blessings in their new leadership positions.

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# OUR DIVERSITY IS OUR STRENGTH

From 23<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2019 the UEM Africa regional office conducted a midterm workshop to current and former South-South and South – North volunteers. The workshop was hosted by the Anglican Church of Rwanda (EAR) Cyanguu Diocese. 12 former and 3 current volunteers attended the workshop which aimed at sharing experiences and learning from each other.

The sharing of experiences from volunteers had shown that they gained a lot skills during their volunteer period in the different UEM member churches. Mr. Fiston Ngesera Mumbere who is from the Community of Baptiste Church in Central Africa (CBCA) reported that: *“when I began my volunteer term, I was not even able to write a book regarding Sunday school lessons, but with the experience I gained from the Theology Institution where I worked in CBCA, I was able to publish 6 books namely “opportunities for the mission and hope for the church”; “life skills for our children and youth of ours schools today”; “Interaction with the word of God”; “a foundation for disciples training”; “Life skills for the training of disciples of Jesus Christ today among children”; and “Live the glory of god through my feelings and my emotions”.* To him this is a great success during his mission in Cameroun and he proud of being one of the volunteers who sent to different countries to do a mission work at different periods.

The workshop also intended to introduce to the

network of African Youth United in Mission (**AYUM**) to those youth volunteers alumni. Lastly, participants suggested few recommendations to all stakeholders on how to improve communication and make UEM be owned by every young adult from member churches.

- Church leaders should make use of former volunteers in youth program.
- UEM should consider former volunteers on available vacancies and scholarship for further studies.
- All volunteers are automatically considered as being members of AYUM.
- All volunteers are requested to prepare small projects for self-reliance activities when they finish their volunteer contracts and UEM is requested to support it financially if possible.
- UEM should be in contact with the hosting family to make sure that volunteers are well care as expected.

Apart from the successful stories shared, participants also mentioned some challenges, such as other Volunteers are not recognized by their churches and not used as they expected. Another issue is that, during their stay in the receiving churches, they expected that the sending churches would make a follow up on their progress but the whole year of their stay there is no communication and even no follow up done by their home churches.



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## CHILDREN OF PASTORS IN ELCT–ECD RECEIVED A FRUITFUL VISIT FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN PASTORS CHILDREN FAMILY (PPCF)

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# YOUNG ADULTS BENEFIT FROM VOLUNTEER EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

*Four young adults from UEM Africa Region member churches were the beneficiaries of the South-South Volunteer exchange Programme in 2019.*

The delegates of young adults comprised of three women and one male were sent to share knowledge, skills and values to their fellow Christians in African member churches. UEM Africa Region strengthens South-South partnership program by sending Youth from Members Churches to share knowledge, skills and values they have to their fellow Christians in African member churches. The program tries to create strong ties among the volunteers, churches and the local community to build lifetime relationships.



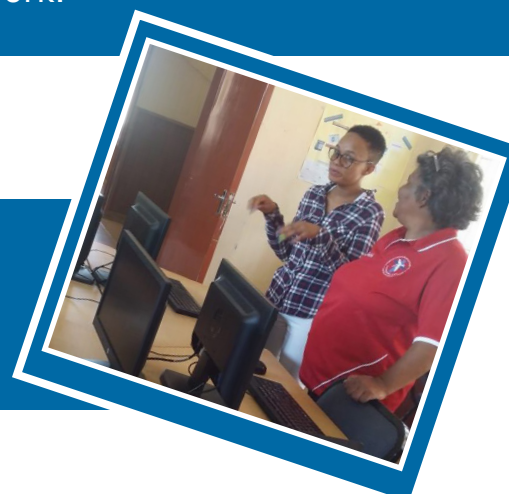
**VERONICA AMOSI LIANA** is from ELCT/ECD Tanzania and she serves at CBCA, Goma Vile Parish in DR Congo. Ms Liana who is a diligent, committed, dedicated and team prayer, is a degree holder of Art with education.

**JONATHAN MBULA KASEREKA** is from Community of Baptiste Church in Central Africa DR Congo serves in Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania –North Western Diocese Tanzania at Cathedral as theologian. He is a holder of bachelor degree in Theology, working as deacon assisting the Cathedral chaplain to prepare daily work, assisting Human right desk and other related matters.



**EVER ARON MTAKI** is from ELCT-ECD, Tanzania serving in CBCA, DR Congo at Bathesda Hospital as social worker. She has been working in hospitals before joining UEM as volunteer. Ms Mtaki is a holder of first degree in Social Work.

**ANGELINA KGOMOTSO DIWANGA** is from Evangelical Lutheran Church of Botswana sent to evangelical Lutheran in the Republic of Namibia at AIDS centre as a home based care and counsellor to people live with HIV and AIDS.



# SAVE ENVIRONMENT



# SAVE OUR FUTURE

On 30<sup>th</sup> November to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019, Karagwe Diocese joined other UEM member churches to implement youth climate Action Day in Murongo District that has 4 parishes. In these special two days for Youth Climate Action in Karagwe, about 320 young people attended the event which was conducted in order to set goals and strategies of keeping and preserving environment in the area around river Kagera.

During the event, knowledge on environment protection was imparted to young adults where by the facilitators aimed at imparting knowledge on the causes, impacts of climate change in the area around river Kagera. The seminar also covered the impacts of land degradation and how human activities, behaviors like local agricultural practices, dumping of plastics in the river cause land and river pollution and ways to combat these problems including climate change.

Also during the training youth were taught a good ways of planting trees for land restoration and they were very happy to do things practically than theory they used to learn from different sources. In this part at least 500 seedling of trees were planted by youth in the area.

After the effective seminar, every participant was eager to be an ambassador of change. Youth formed environmental clubs that will be active in acting against environmental degradation in Karagwe community.

The question remained that, most youth were concerned with the problem of so many plastic wastes around their community and yet no any recycling program around. They requested more seminars on climate change to the entire community as they noted that every one, knowingly or unknowingly, is participating to destroy the planet in one way or another.

# FELLOWSHIP, THROUGH AND THROUGH



The Christian Youth Ministry (CYM) of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA) comprises of many young members who come together to form a fellowship. The ministry itself is based on the word of God and all that He stands for. Moreover, it is a network for young Christians to offer social and emotional support to one another.

The year 2019 was a busy one for CYM as a Ministry. It was business as usual with a strong motivation to leave a mark in society through the many outreach programs rolled out as well as spiritual revivals. As the year comes to an end, the energy is drained and major projects are wrapped up to allow for the students (the majority of our members) an opportunity to focus on studies and exams.

In December every year, as part of a reflection on the year and team building exercises CYM hosts a closing camp for members according to specific geographic demarcations. These camps are encouraged as it creates a platform to build internal cohesion and allow to renew pledges to care for and support one another. A team building expert is sourced to facilitate some activities to enhance our awareness of self and others, and to appreciate and to complement each other's strengths. Moreover, time is taken to reflect on the year, where we could exert more effort and how to treat matters better.



UEM volunteers at EAR CYANGUGU Diocese Cathedral/Rwanda



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