

ACEMU

A Consortium of Evangelical Missions in Uganda

Ugandan Christians are well aware that Christian mission is too big a task for any single mission entity – whether church or para-church.

Upon this fact and after years of a burning desire and scrutiny, *A Consortium of Evangelical Missions in Uganda* (ACEMU) was eventually launched on 4th March 2017 at the Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI) Conference Hall.

The Saturday morning occasion brought together 160 mission-minded participants including church and para-church leaders, denominational leaders, heads of Christian training institutions, University Chaplains, Christian business professionals and Student leaders from various tertiary schools.



Committing the launching occasion to God for his presence and guidance,

Rev. Rodgers Atwebembeire led the assembly with the opening prayer. Rev. Atwebembeire is the East Africa Director of *Africa Center For Apologetics Research* (ACFAR) and the lead elder of New City Community Church, a congregation within the Presbyterian denomination in Uganda.



For a long time, Ugandan Christians have expressed a need for a networking platform to encourage and enable evangelical mission entities to effectively connect, communicate and collaborate in their various mission aspects for efficiency and quality ministry output.

A realization of ACEMU at this time is promising in helping the church to realize complementary efforts through believers can broadly act in synergy to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to the joy of all God's people.



Pastor John A. Ekudu brought the morning devotion from Acts 1:8, pointing the assembly to the Great Commission in a fresh way. Pastor Ekudu is President of the Baptist Union of Uganda (BUU) and overseer of Entebbe Baptist Church.

ACEMU's overall aim is to facilitate a sustainable common front for the evangelical Christians in Uganda to carry the missionary task within the country, and to the rest of the world.



As a forum, ACEMU will serve to bring missions' awareness, support the coordination among mission entities, serve as missions' workforce developer and above all engender research in order to establish the strength, weaknesses, opportunities of Christian work as well as threats to the church as the sole agent of the life-giving Gospel message.



Rev. Canon Dr. Rebecca Nyegenye extrapolated the vision, mission, objectives and operational principles of ACEMU. Dr. Nyegenye is an Anglican priest and the Chaplain of Uganda Christian University. She has served ACEMU team as leader of the promoters and advisers for the last three months of planning this missions movement.

Life on the Mission Field

The launching of ACEMU found great imagination of life on the mission field through the testimony of **Canon Isaac Anguyo**. Born as a Moslem, Isaac converted to Christianity in 1966 at the age of 19, and began mission among among his own people, the Aringa in 1986. Facing an Islamic community at 80%, Isaac founded "Here Is Life" Ministry through which the Gospel has reached his much of his region. The joy of giving away life in sacrifice demonstrated in Isaac's life on mission became an appropriate message for the convocation which had gathered for that end purpose.



Key-Note Address & The Act of Launching

The key-note speech of the **Honorable Dr. James Nsaba Buturo** pointed the convocation to the needs of the church, the needs of our nation, challenges we must face in mission and the counting the cost for reform and renewal. Dr. Buturo is Member of Parliament and a prominent Christian in the market place through a consistent testimony in word and deed.

He served as Uganda Government minister for Ethic and Integrity some years back and he is known for his efforts to restore morals and preserve godly ethics.

Dr. Buturo concluded his wonderful address by leading the convocation in the "act of launching ACEMU" in a great affirmation from the assembly.

What next for ACEMU? **Dr. Julius Twongyeirwe** took to the podium, to share the immediate requirements and long term arrangements that need attention for the operationalization of ACEMU. Among these are resources, governing structures, systems, accountability, staffing and the guiding philosophy, shared by all stakeholders.





The global trend points to a unique role for Africa.

The rate at which the global church is multiplying demands that accelerate the process of equipping pastoral leadership for the many congregations that are assembling on a daily basis, in order to keep up with the evangelistic and church planting outcome.

This is especially true within Africa where global estimates tell us that over three million pastoral leaders lack basic biblical training and ministry skills.

If there are 50,000 baptized believers added to the body of Christ daily, and if 50 represents an average church size, then 1,000 new pastors are needed daily. So then, “How may we quicken the pace of pastoral training . . . while increasing quality everywhere?”

In the past 2000 years, Christians in the Global South (Africa and Asia) had been in the majority until AD 923 when Europeans became the majority until 1981. In a repeating trend, there are more Christians in the Global South today than the Global North, and for the first time in 1000 years.



Pastor Freddie Sekyewa of Celebrate Hope Ministries led the convocation in the closing, dedicatory prayer. Pastor Sekyewa serves within the Pentecostal denomination, preaching the Gospel through economic empowerment of communities, especially in the agricultural sector.



All through the program, **Dr. Dennis Kilama** guided the flow of items in a very sober manner, bringing the full meaning of the very purpose for the convocation.

Dr. Kilama is pastor of Lugogo Baptist Church and Deputy Vice Chancellor of Africa Renewal University. Dr. Kilama is also one of the main Promoters of ACEMU.



There has been a shift in demographics by continent from 1910 to 2010. While 66% of all Christians lived in Europe in 1910, by 2010 only 25.6% lived there. By contrast, less than 2% of all Christians lived in Africa in 1910, skyrocketing in 100 years to almost 22% by 2010.

The Global North (defined as Europe and Northern America) contained over 80% of all Christians in 1910, falling in 100 years to under 40% by 2010. At the current rate, Africans could number half of all global Christians by 2100.



There has been dramatic increase of Christians in Africa from 11.7 million (9.4%) in 1910 to 495 million (48%) by 2010. This represents a 100-year growth rate of 3.82% per year, almost twice that of the population as a whole (2.14%).

If by 2050 there will be 300 million new Christians on the continent, and if 'the doctrines, the liturgy, the ethical codes, the social applications of the faith will be marked by an African ethos, and if new agendas for theology appear in Africa as the anvil for future Christianity',

then, as "men of Issachar, (who) understood the times and knew what Israel should do" (1 Chron. 12:12) we ought to be strategic in turning this potential of "Christianity by numbers" into "Christianity by godly influence" for the sake of Christ's Name and God's glory in the world.



Africa's greatest opportunity in our times is also Africa's greatest challenge as side of the same coin. The growth trend in the number of Christians (quantitative growth) in our times is an unmatched opportunity by the rate of conversion to Christianity - and opportunity mismatched in 'teaching them to obey' for qualitative growth, making African Christianity a brand so fragile for propagation.



Mrs. Maguerette Tandekwire

The paradox is that while the church is growing the fastest in Africa, there is also the least opportunity for sound biblical instruction. Due to this phenomenon, the church in Africa is said to be one mile long and one inch deep, to demonstrate that the church shallowly thrives on converts rather than true biblical disciples.

Participating members responded to the launching of ACEMU with great anticipation. One after the other, they echoed how the handling of the Christian mission should be more effective and increasingly collaborative.



"Years ago, when Britain was poorer than what Uganda is today, believers in that part of the world sent out missionaries to the world. There is no doubt that Ugandan Christians can now reach the world for Christ."



Mrs. Caroline Turyatamba

"I look forward to consultations in the wider Body of Christ through this forum. Talking back and forth with each other will surely upgrade our mission effort", remarked Caroline.



"I have always made it my habit to wake up early and share the Gospel with my fellow students, but I never knew that many more as are gathered here share this mind with me", remarked a young female university student.

The ACEMU launching Magazine was published in good time as a take-home for participants. The *REFOMER* will be published twice a year.

