

EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION NEWS AND INSPIRATION

CONNECT



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**HEALTHY MEMBERS CREATE
HEALTHY CHURCHES** pg. 2

WHAT MATTERS MOST! pg. 3

HEALTHY MEMBERS CREATE HEALTHY CHURCHES



I remember attending a pastor's meeting once where a guest speaker made this statement: "Healthy pastors create healthy churches and healthy churches grow." That statement stuck with me, and I have always remembered that my health can affect the health of those around me.

In fact, I would like to take that statement further to say that "healthy members create healthy churches and healthy churches grow." When thinking about being healthy, we have to think holistically. In addition to caring for our bodies and eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, grains, and nuts, we must also take time out to exercise. Be that as it may, exercise and proper diet is not enough.

A healthy, balanced life must include adequate rest and quality time with our family and friends. Also, we must care for our emotional health by not harboring hatred or hostility in our hearts and learning how to deal with anger in healthy ways.

Communicating with grace and learning how to deal with our disappointments, doubts and fears are all strategies we can learn to help us stay healthy. God is concerned about our health. 3 John 2:1 says this, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

As you read through this issue of CONNECT, commit today to start taking the necessary steps to ensure that you are living a whole life, and that you are healthy. Make sure that you eat right, exercise and are loving and kind to others, and guard your emotional health. Because in doing so you are helping to share the Adventist message of hope and wholeness. Remember, Healthy Members, create Healthy Churches and Healthy Churches grow!

Philip Baptiste
CONNECT Editor

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

3 John 2:1

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WHAT MATTERS MOST!

What is your most valued personal possession? What is the one thing that you would not want to lose, break, or give up? We all have things that are valuable to us. For some, it's their mobile phones. I've seen people so out of sorts because they have lost their phones or cracked the screens. For others, it's their bicycle, motorbike, "boda-boda", car, or a favorite piece of furniture.

While many think of their most valued possession in terms of material things, the Bible reminds us that our most valuable possession is our bodies. 1 Corinthians 6:19 says, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

In other words, your body is your most valuable possession; and it's not even yours. It's God's. You were bought with a price. The Bible admonishes, "Therefore glorify God in your body and spirit which are God's." Our bodies are God's most precious and valuable possessions. That's how each of us should value it too.

We have to take care of our bodies because our bodies belong to God. Our bodies are on loan to us from the Creator. Are we living in such a way that we are glorifying God in our bodies? Are we exercising, eating healthy, and avoiding abusive substances? Are we living a pure and holy life?



Are our physical and spiritual health living testimonies that bring glory and honor to God? Sometimes we don't always feel as though we are glorifying God in our bodies. Maybe we feel overweight or perhaps feel we aren't eating a healthy balanced diet. Maybe there are secret addictive habits in our lives that rob God of the glory He wants to get from our spirit and our bodies.

Here's the good news. Today can be the beginning of the best days of the rest of our lives, once we choose to start glorifying God in our bodies and spirits which are His.

If a friend of yours loaned you his very nice car for the weekend, wouldn't you take care of it and not drive it in an irresponsible, reckless manner? Let's remember that our bodies are not ours. We must each treat our body with utmost care because it belongs to Him.

Ellen White gives us this reminder: "Make the most of the capabilities and talents lent to us by God. All who are weakening and destroying the physical, mental, and moral powers by sinful eating, and violation of the laws of health in any respect, will have to render an account to God for all the good they might have done had they observed the laws of health" (In Heavenly Places, p. 192).

Here's the point: we can't treat our body just anyhow because it does not belong to us. We can't live our life just anyway we want because it is not our own. Our body is God's gift to us. What we do with it and how we live it is a gift we give back to God. So what kind of gift are we giving Him today?

The Bible counsels us in Romans 12:1, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye

present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Our bodies are gifts that God wants us to give to Him. So how are we treating our bodies? Have we presented our bodies fully and completely to Him?

So today, let's start to implement the principles and suggestions that have been given in this issue so that we can glorify God in our spirit and body which belong to God! Then we will be doing what matters most!

Dr. Blasious Ruguri is President of the East-Central Africa Division.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH & TMI

Total Member Involvement is a full-scale, world-church evangelistic thrust that involves every member, every church, every administrative entity, every type of public outreach ministry, personal and institutional outreach. (www.tmi.adventist.org)

Total Member Involvement should not be an event, but a lifestyle that can be implemented at every level in every church, conference, field, union, institution or division as a whole.

Comprehensive Health Ministry

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been promoting

health and wellness for the last 150 years. Adventists believe that health is a gift from God and that we are stewards of the health of our bodies and minds.

Ellen White shares, “The gospel ministry is needed to give permanence and stability to the medical missionary work; and the ministry needs the medical missionary work to demonstrate the practical working of the gospel. Neither part of the work is complete without the other” (Counsels on Health, p. 514).

Comprehensive Health Ministry (CHM) is a term used to contain in a more modern language the meaning of “medical missionary work,” a

phrase which Ellen White used to urge the church to engage in holistic caring and healing.

CHM is inclusive. It involves the effort of health workers, pastors, teachers, administrators, and every church member in order for the mission to succeed. The chief objective of CHM is to focus on Jesus as our “role model” and to strive to follow His method, mission, and ministry.

In Matthew 4:23, we read the summary of Christ’s ministry when he was on this earth. “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.”

Ellen White talks about Christ’s example and method of ministry: “Christ, the great medical missionary, is our example... He healed the sick and preached the gospel. In His service, healing and teaching were linked closely together. Today they are not to be separated” (Testimonies Volume 9, pp. 170, 171).

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’ (Ministry of Healing, p. 143).

For practical purposes, TMI

is also TCI (Total Church Involvement) and TMI is TPI (Total Pastor Involvement). In other words, for the synergy to take place, all the churches in the conference/fields and unions must be involved, and all the pastors must be involved. TMI is also TMPI or Total Medical professionals Involvement.

Total Medical professionals Involvement (TMPI) in the TMI Rwanda was a success. The TMI evangelistic campaign in Rwanda was conducted from May 13 to 28, 2016 in 2,300 sites. There were more than 100,000 baptized souls. The work of the gospel ministry and the medical missionary are indeed one.

Fesaha Tsegaye is the Health Ministries Director of the East-Central Africa Division.



REST FOR THE SOUL

We usually think of stress as being caused by negative pressures or unhappy events of life. Those are easily recognized. However, sometimes we do not realize that even “good pressures” and working for a good cause, such as in service to God, may result in the unhealthy effects of long standing stress.

The key is to evaluate how balanced our life is. If we are not getting proper rest, our body may experience profound physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual damage. We must be reminded that as health ministers in God’s service, it is our duty to “put our glass down” for a while and rest. What does it mean to put the glass down?

A lecturer who once raised a glass of water and asked, “How heavy is this glass of water?” Answers called out ranged from 20g to 500g. He replied, “The absolute weight doesn’t matter. It depends on how long you try to hold it. If I hold it for a minute, that’s not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I’ll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you’ll have to call an ambulance. In each case, it’s the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes.”

He continued, “And that’s the way it is with managing the stress and responsibilities in our life. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won’t

be able to carry on.” As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. And when you are refreshed, you can carry on your responsibilities in a more effective way.

This healthy concept was best exemplified by Christ himself. He had a perfect sense of when to serve and minister to others, and when to stop and rest. In Mark, chapter 1:35-38 we read about the instance when the crowd was looking for Jesus, seeking to be healed and to listen to His words. But after a long and full day ministering to their needs, Jesus woke up early the next day to rest and commune with God.

When the disciples found Him praying and resting

under a tree, they told Him, “Master, the multitude is looking for you...”. Instead of stopping and going to attend to the needs of the crowd Jesus decided to leave and go to another town. You may ask, “how could He leave behind that needy multitude?” Jesus knew His mission, and in His daily devotions the Holy Spirit revealed to Him when to say “yes” and when to say “no”. He had wisdom from above to know when to “put the glass down” for a while.

Sometimes it’s easy to be so fully engaged in ministry that we forget to rest our mind, body, and soul. As I travel around the world I have seen many dedicated leaders who find little time for rest. Some even feel guilty when they rest.

We must remember God

God never asked us to sacrifice our health and our families as we serve.



never asked us to sacrifice our health and our families as we serve. We must choose to set time aside for rest, to enjoy His presence alone daily, and make time for loved ones and even hobbies. That is an essential part of our ministry and living a healthy life. May we each seek His wisdom, and plan ahead to put our work down as needed, seeking rest in His presence. We can pick it up tomorrow, or a few days later, re-energized to best fulfill His plan for us.

Katia Reinert, PhD, RN, FNPBC, is Associate Director of Health Ministries of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST AND NUTRITION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church encourages a balanced vegetarian diet. “The diet God ordained in the Garden of Eden—the vegetarian diet—is the ideal, but sometimes we cannot have the ideal. In those circumstances, in any given situation or locale, those who wish to stay in optimum health will eat the best food that they can obtain.” — Seventh-day Adventists Believe, p. 286.

There are different types of vegetarian diets including total (animal free), ovo-lacto (the most widely followed in the SDA church), and pesco (vegetarian with a little fish added). For those who live where there is an abundance of fortified food products, a healthy totally vegetarian diet may be the ideal with the following considerations:

Choose ample whole grains, vegetables, legumes, fruits, nuts, seeds and berries.

Avoid replacing animal foods with refined, sweet, fatty commercial products—even if these are from plant sources.

Take a supplement of vitamin B12 regularly (remember, deficiency symptoms may take 4-6 years to appear).

Obtain adequate sunlight, and emphasize high-calcium vegetables, and/or supplement your diet with calcium and Vitamin D.

Consider the use of ground flax and or chia seeds or supplements high in omega-3 fatty acids, especially during reproductive years.

Assure adequate dietary zinc, especially for young and adolescent boys.

The General Conference Nutrition Council is a global committee of nutrition professionals who are available to respond to the nutrition questions you or your constituents may have. We are currently updating our Fact Sheets and soon we will have many topics available on the healthministries.com website.



One diet does not necessarily fit all.

Please remember: one diet does not necessarily fit all. The Seventh-day Adventist church promotes the avoidance of flesh foods wherever possible. The best diet will vary depending on many factors including geographic location, economics, specific health/medical conditions, knowledge, and food availability. We are a global church, and as such leave the decisions of the specific diet to the choice of each member.

Let us heed the words of Paul: “...those who don’t eat certain foods must not condemn those who do...let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up. Don’t tear apart the work of God over what you eat...” (Romans 14:1-3).

Fred Hardinge, DrPH, RD, FAND, is Associate Director of Health Ministries of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



ECD YOUTH—“A SERMON INDEED!”

THOUSANDS IMPACT THEIR COMMUNITIES AS ECD YOUTH ANSWER THE CALL TO "BE THE SERMON"



feet; distributed literature; served cooked meals to the street children and donated blood.

The primary focus for this year's Global Youth Day was blood donation.

Thousands of young people volunteered to give

blood. In some places, there were so many volunteers that the centers did not have enough storage facilities to keep the donated blood. Testimonies from blood bank officers confirmed that when they screened the blood of Adventist youth, there were found clean and useful. The donated blood was able to save many lives.

The Global Youth Day was not only a youth event in ECD. Even elderly mothers, fathers church elders, pastors, Conference and Union Presidents donated blood and served the community. Division President Pastor Blasious Ruguri came out to support the young people in Tanzania. He gave them a word of encouragement through live broadcast via Hope Channel International.

On March 18, 2017, thousands of young people across the East-Central Africa Division (ECD) gathered together in their own communities to serve other people and “Be the Sermon” through simple acts of kindness.

The event was organized by the General Conference Youth Ministries Department. It was the 5th Annual Global Youth Day. The youth of ECD were fully involved in all the previous Global Youth Days but organizers reported a record turn out this year.

The young people visited children in orphanages; encouraged and prayed for sick people in the hospitals; visited inmates in prisons and gave them hope and inspiring messages; distributed food and water to families that were suffering from the drought; removed jiggers from people's

Young people expressed that they were excited to have had the opportunity to join the global family of youth with one common goal of impacting their communities with the good news of Jesus.



President Kenneth Maena (WKUC) donating blood in Kisumu.

Magulilo Mwakalonge is the Youth Ministries Director for the East-Central Africa Division.



Youth serving their communities on Global Youth Day.



A young woman donates blood on Global Youth Day.





Off loading close to 10,000 kgs of maize, beans, and porridge flour.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN BURUNDI DISTRIBUTE FOOD WITH A DASH OF HOPE

On March 10, 2017, the young people of Burundi Union supported the Union's initiative by distributing food to 260 families of Bubanza Province, Bujumbura City, who suffered from starvation because of the long drought.

The Burundi Union President, Dr. Joseph Ndikubwayo, led the Church leaders and young people in this community service. Dr. Ndikubwayo thanked the Seventh-day Adventists members of Burundi who contributed their time and resources to address the problem. They were able to distribute 3,120 kgs of beans, 5,200 kgs of maize and 1,040 kgs of porridge flour.

Before the food was distributed, ECD Youth Director, Pastor Magulilo Mwakalonge preached the message of John 3:16, encouraging people to overcome selfishness and share what they have to save other people's lives. He urged people to prepare to go to heaven where there will be no famine.

A representative of the Governor of Bubanza thanked the church for the help given. He said:

“I would also encourage the spirit of sharing what you have and a commitment to feed the children first to save them from severe malnutrition.”

ECD Communication Staff



Pastor Mwakalonge preaching a message of hope before the distribution of food.



Dr. Joseph Ndikubwayo (right), the President of Burundi Union, and Pastor Paul Irakoze (left) Executive Secretary, help a woman carry a sack of food on her head.

ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY INAUGURATED IN WEST CONGO



Pastor Ruguri, ECD President, cuts the ribbon during the opening ceremony of the University.

Tuesday, January 25, 2017, 11:30 am will forever be imprinted on the minds of Adventists in the West Congo Region. For the first time in history, the West Congo Union Mission/DRC has opened a university which will train God's ministers to spread the gospel. The Adventist University of West Congo is located in Kinshasa, the capital city of the country.

In his inaugural remarks, ECD president Pastor Blasious Ruguri borrowed from the book of Genesis 1:1-4. He declared before the DRC Minister of Higher Education and Universities Mr. Steve Mbikany, that as God dissipated darkness on the first day of creation, so has the Adventist Church determined to do away with darkness in Kinshasa. The Minister of Higher Education and Universities congratulated the Adventist church on the achievement and encouraged them to strive for quality and higher standards so that they can quickly acquire government accreditation.

On behalf of the West Congo Union Mission leaders, the President, pastor Ambroise Fumakwa Mfumu and the pioneering Vice Chancellor Professor Tshisimbi stated that the University is God's wonder. "Currently," said the vice chancellor, "the Adventist Church in West Congo has a notorious lack of trained pastors. The presence of this University gives the opportunity to train those pastors who are significantly lacking in the Church."

Pastor Noah K. Musema, ECD Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Director, emphasized that there could be no better investment than the education of children if one is to prepare the future of the nation and the church. He, however, aptly quoted Rabelais by saying that, "Science without conscience is the ruin of the soul," and urged the leaders to train citizens for this life and the life to come.

Pastor Adrien Vyambwera, West Congo Union Mission Education Director, expressed his satisfaction for God's providence as he unfolded the history of this youngest University in the Division. He revealed that it had been the desire of the church to have a higher learning institution in their country since the time it was known as Zaire. Unfortunately then, the government did not allow it. For that reason, the handful of pastors from the region would go to Lukanga in North East Congo, Rwanda and Nigeria. Only a few could afford to travel those long distances and pay for further studies and training.

With the coming of the University, the doors of opportunity are now open to hundreds of potential ministerial students in the region. A new page has been written in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in West Congo Union Mission.

Prince Bahati is the Communication Director of the East-Central Africa Division.

ADVENTIST CHURCH IN ETHIOPIA INAUGURATES NEW FIELDS FOR MISSION

The Adventist church in Ethiopia recently celebrated its growing membership with the inauguration of two brand new fields along with the reorganization of the South Ethiopia Field.

The West Ethiopia Field gave birth to the West Central Ethiopia Field, while the South Ethiopia Field simultaneously gave birth to the South Central Ethiopia field which also officially opened a brand new field office complex.

The 3-day celebration which took place in three locations across the nation was marked by singing, dancing and the presence of government officials along with the three executive officers from the East-Central Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Elder Blasious Ruguri, ECD President said “We are so excited to see how God is moving in the country of Ethiopia. The incredible growth and organization of these new fields is a demonstration and testimony of the faithfulness of our church members and their incredible commitment to evangelism and Total Member Involvement.”

The division president was accompanied by Elder Alain Coralie, ECD Executive Secretary and Elder Jerome Habimana, ECD Treasurer. The three leaders were overjoyed to see the excitement in the people as they officially organized the new territories and reorganized field, and prayerfully dedicated the regions for mission.

Residents of the cities where the new fields were organized thronged the streets together with Pathfinders, church members and civic leaders to welcome the establishment of the new Adventist church’s field headquarters in their region.

Philip Baptiste is the Editor for Connect and Special Assistant to the President of the East-Central Africa Division



FREE HEALTH SERVICES OFFERED TO THOUSANDS IN KENYA

Thousands of residents in West Kenya took advantage of free medical services which included dental care, and eye care, and other health care services during a 2-week Adventist “mega-clinic” on March 3-18, 2017.

Adventists medical professionals in Kenya provided free medical services within these two weeks to thousands of people all across the country. The two-week initiative was part of the Adventist church’s Total Member Involvement (TMI) evangelism, and community outreach campaigns.

Dr. Tsegaye Fesaha, ECD Health Ministries Director, shared that the goal of the medical camp was to empower “Total Medical Personnel Involvement.” He coordinated six medical sites. Each site treated over 200 individuals daily. People flocked to the sites to get free health care services for HIV/AIDS, high blood pressure, diabetes and other illnesses.

Shouting for joy after treatment, Paul Oganga, a motorcycle taxman in the city said that the free medical service was God’s favor for him. Another man was overwhelmed and was rejoicing after he tested. “I am sixty, and I did not know



my HIV status. I am going home to tell my wife and my children that we need to change our behavior and I will join the Adventist church because I want to listen to God’s word”.

During the free medical camps, the local government was very supportive. Besides allowing Adventists medical professionals who work in the public hospitals to volunteer with the TMI event for two weeks, they provided a large mobile van clinic with comprehensive health services free of charge.

Daniel Tirop, the West Kenya Union Conference Adventist Health Ministries Director, said that they were grateful for the government’s support for it helped pave the way for evangelism. He also mentioned that they knew that many people would make decisions for Christ as a result of the TMI Medical Camp.

There were six medical camps in West Kenya, with three in the densely populated cities in Kisumu. Residents were overjoyed with the free health services because for the last three months, public health care practitioners had been on strike over salaries.

The Total Member Involvement campaigns in Kenya culminated with a nationwide baptism which took place on Sabbath, 18th March 2017.

Prince Bahati is the Communications Director of the East-Central Africa Division



ADVENTIST EDUCATION TRAINING GOES GLOBAL WITH PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE

Rwanda hosts the first of several regional events planned around the world



What do you do when a training event you recently offered gets very positive feedback? Judging by the Education Department of the General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, you recharge and do it again, this time even better and in a global setting.

On February 15-19, 2017, 239 Seventh-day Adventist educators from across the African continent and adjacent Indian Ocean islands, met in Kigali, Rwanda for the first of four planned worldwide regional conferences on Seventh-day Adventist Education. The participants, who came from the three regions—or divisions—of the world church in Africa, represent 45 percent of the 8,208 Seventh-day Adventist schools around the world, 39

percent of its 102,779 teachers, and 52 percent of its nearly 2 million students.

The event marked the first phase of the implementation of a decision made at the well-received Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Conference on Seventh-day Adventist Education at the world church headquarters last October. At that conference, hosted during Annual Council 2016—a major annual business meeting of the world church—it was agreed to extend the same kind of training and discussion then offered to the members of the Executive Board of the world church to other church educational leaders and educators on the ground and around the world.

“Annual Council 2016 voted to authorize the Education

Department, in collaboration with the various world divisions—or regions—to develop a guiding philosophy and a worldwide, regionally responsive plan for Seventh-day Adventist education,” said Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, education director of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, when explaining the rationale for these regional events.

The topics mentioned in the objectives discussed included; establishing measurable goals to increase the number of schools and Adventist students, retention and academic excellence, developing educational resources for alternative models of education, and identifying innovations which may serve to enhance the affordability and sustainability of Seventh-day Adventist schools.

Similar conferences are planned for other regions in the next few months, as the Education Department tries to cover every major division, or region, of the world church.

“At these conferences, participants will formulate educational plans that incorporate local, national and regional priorities and objectives,” said Beardsley. “It is also expected that they make recommendations to Annual

Council in October 2017 on how to achieve higher visibility for education globally”.

Besides small group discussions and plenary sessions, participants of the Rwanda conference enjoyed devotional messages by church leaders, moments of worship on Friday evening and Saturday, and even a visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial Center on Saturday afternoon.

Most participants were not shy at expressing their appreciation for the event.

“The conference provided me with many ideas to enhance my leadership,” said one of the participants. “I would like this conference to take place more often, and to consider including school board chairs, treasurers, and even pastors.”

Next LEAD regional conference is slated to take place from May 30-June 4, 2017 in Slovenia.

Marcos Paseggi, senior correspondent, Adventist Review

YOUTH HELP REFUGEE FOR GLOBAL YOUTH DAY



Simon and his newfound Adventist friends.

Seventh-day Adventist Youth construct a latrine for a needy South Sudanese refugee in Bidi Bidi Refugee Camp.

Simon 'Boyong' comes from Kajo-Keji County in Central Equatorial state, in the Republic of South Sudan. Kajo Keji County is among the recently deserted places within the country, due to the ongoing conflicts. Its population has become displaced, while others have moved to Uganda as refugees.

Simon left his home one day to visit some of his relatives around Kajo-Keji, only to return and find his entire family missing. They had escaped to Uganda, after their neighbor's wife had been brutally killed. On October 2016, he decided to follow his family after knowing that they were in Uganda. However, upon reaching the border, he was taken to a different refugee settlement called Swinga in Bidi Bidi Zone 2. His family was in Zone 1 block three, quit a distance from where he was. Simon later came to where his family had been settled.

After establishing the whereabouts of his family, he decided to go back to Kajo-Keji to pick up some of the remaining items that had been left behind. On his return, he rode on a lorry loaded with many people. Upon reaching Swinga, the nearby settlement close to where his family lived, the lorry experienced break failure, and was out of control.

Simon shouted, "Something bad is going to happen!" He saw an oncoming vehicle almost being knocked over by their truck.

He did not realize that he had fallen over and his foot had been run over by the tire of their truck. Suddenly, blood oozed out of his nostrils, mouth, and ears. He lost consciousness. Nobody in the vehicle knew him or any of his relatives. The driver decided to take him to a nearby health facility, the Arua hospital, where he regained consciousness.

Though he got the supposed treatment, his foot remained swollen with one ankle bone protruding. He still experiences pain and has a hard time moving. As a result, he is not able to help his family in constructing shelters, including the simple pit latrines.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church youth attending the Youth week of prayer in Bidi Bidi block three settlement scheduled visits to the community around to pray with them, to see and listen to their needs, and also to invite the people for the Week of Prayer. While conducting this exercise, they landed on Simon's situation. They discovered that there were no latrines around Simon's house. They saw his wife struggling to put mud on the hut they had just erected. The youth, led by

the Lainya district pastor, Alijo Noel, decided to help sink a pit latrine for Simon's family. Simon initially thought that one of the UN organizations had sent the youth for their help. However, the leaders clarified that they were from a nearby Adventist Church and had been touched by their situation and decided to act on it.

The youth expressed the following sentiment: "We are driven by God's love to sympathize with every child of God, regardless of religious affiliation." The family thanked God repeatedly for bringing the youth to their support.

John Taban is the Communication Director of the South Sudan Attached Territory. Taban was in Uganda visiting Bidi Bidi South Sudanese refugee camp while conducting the Global Youth Week of Prayer with several young people from his region.



Adventist youth help make a sinking latrine for Simon and his family.

VEGETABLE EVANGELISM TRAINING EQUIPS FOR MINISTRY



Women in rural communities from across East-Central Africa are now experts in the art of vegetable farming and evangelism after attending a recent one-week training event at Northern Tanzania Union Conference headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania. Organized by ADRA Africa in partnership with the East-Central Africa Division Women's Ministry Department, the event was unique in that it equipped

women with essential skills for self-sufficiency and poverty eradication in their rural communities.

ECD Women's Ministries Director, Debbie Maloba, explained that "by producing and selling vegetables, women can get money and return tithe and offerings, thus contributing to the financial growth of the church and the community."

Dr. Zivayi Nengomasha, Program and Planning Director of ADRA-Africa, expressed: "Doing vegetable evangelism is a good way of changing lives for both nonbelievers and church members as a whole since many people lack the knowledge of how to eat healthily and take care of their bodies."

Borrowing from the Ministry of Healing, pages 142 and 143, ADRA Africa Executive Director, Dr. Tayo Odeyemi, counseled that church members need to develop diverse skills to minister to the various practical needs of the communities to which they belong.

In his explanation, Dr. Tayo said: "Vegetable Evangelism teaches good stewardship to children and parents, and

empowers healthy relationships in the community, therefore opening hearts to further invitations for the gospel."

Church leaders shared that the current situation in the region is alarming. According to the latest statistics from the World Food Program of the UN, Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest prevalence of hunger. One out of every three people is either malnourished or undernourished.

Women who attended the Vegetable Evangelism Training in Arusha are poised to share and implement the skills in their respective territories and help make a huge difference.

Prince Bahati is Communication Director of the East-Central Africa Division, and Gideon Msambwa is Communication Director of the Northern Tanzania Union Conference

15,291 BAPTIZED IN TANZANIA NET MEETINGS

During a three-week satellite evangelistic effort that was held in Mwanza region of the Northern Tanzania Union Conference, 15,291 people were baptized, far exceeding the goal, which was initially 10,000 baptisms.

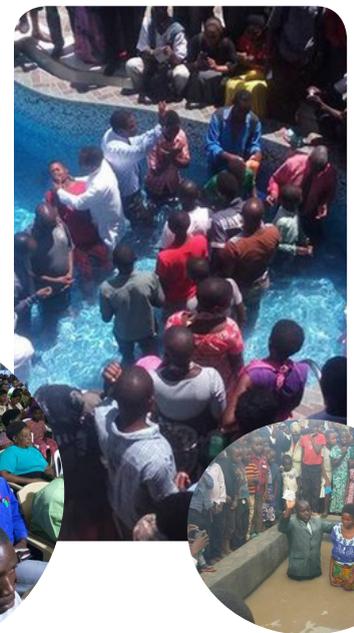
Mwanza Net Event 2017, themed "Ushindi hatimaye" or "Victory at last," was broadcasted live on church-owned television in over 800 sites.

NTUC's Treasurer, Elder Dickson Matiko, speaking on behalf of the Union President, Dr. Godwin Lekundayo, acknowledged that the use of media in evangelism was a blessing to the church, and commended Hope Channel and Morning Star Television for being dynamic and effective tools for Sharing the Hope.

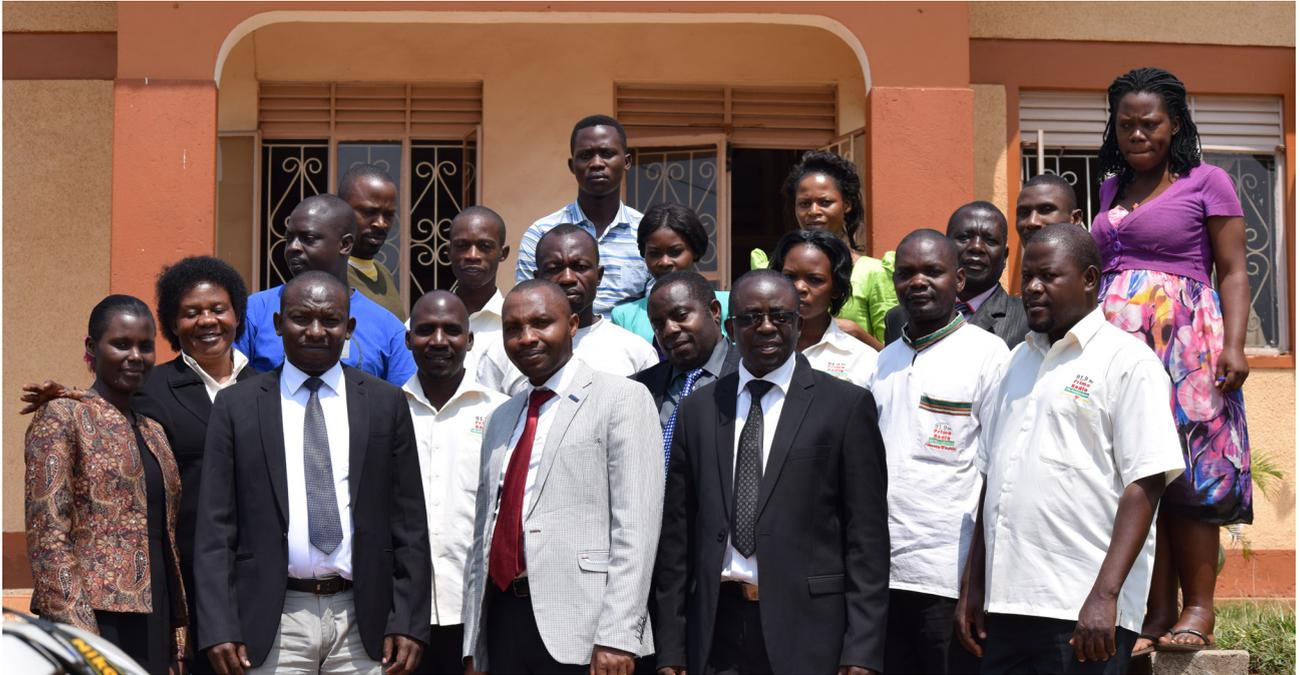
Organizers credit the event's overwhelming success to the engagement of the Association of Tanzanian Adventist Professionals and Entrepreneurs (ATAPE), who funded the project.

Among the key highlights was the baptism of several bishops from the local Pentecostal Churches.

The first Net event "Thawabu ya Uadilifu" was held in 2014, while the second, "Uhuru Hatimaye" was done" in 2016.



COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT VISIT TO UGANDA ENERGIZES FM RADIO STATIONS FOR MISSION



The ECD Communication Department recently dedicated the week of January 29 to February 5, 2017, to visiting the Uganda Union FM radio stations. The purpose of the tour was to revive the media for mission. In the meetings, radio managers, pastors, and presenters were very glad to be reminded of their role as radio evangelists. In his presentations, ECD Communication Director Prince Bahati unfolded the guidelines each FM station in the division must follow.

Participants learned that first and foremost, an FM station in the Seventh-day Adventist church is a tool for evangelism. Its editorial line must enshrine the fundamental beliefs of the church. Employees must therefore understand that

they are evangelists. Bahati also reminded them that their service to the community should be distinct and free from politics because Adventists media are and will remain apolitical.

The visit also aimed at helping the FM radios to establish boards, which are the quintessential custodians of the mission implementation. As it is in any church institution, the guidelines made it clear that the presidents of Union/fields or conferences should chair the boards.

As a result of the visit, Radio Ebenezer FM in Mbale and Maranatha FM in Jinja are now official church entities, and plans are underway to establish brand new boards. Ogwal Osoro, Communication

Director in Uganda Union Mission stated: “These FM stations are now tools in the hands of the church; it owns them, and will use them in evangelism.”

In Jinja, the ECD Communication Director participated in the groundbreaking of Maranatha FM new studios, which will meet government requirement. In Ruwenzori Field, new studios for Light FM are almost complete along with other offices in the Field’s Kasese Center of Influence. The Prime Radio FM station in Uganda is playing an active role in evangelism and image change in the country. In January 2017, Prime radio baptized over 1,000 people as a result of their evangelistic efforts.

Uganda Union Mission has 4 FM stations, but the country is too vast to have total media coverage at this time. In some regions such as the north, churches are buying spaces from private radios to spread the Adventist message. Church leaders are soliciting prayers for the Uganda radio ministry as they strive to share the hope with the people of Uganda.

Philip Baptiste is the Editor of Connect and Special Assistant to the President of the East-Central Africa Division



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