



ECD

Consolidating With Strength and Hope Despite the Challenges

BY HUDSON KIBUKA

Despite the challenges faced in the East-Central Africa Division (ECD) territory such as scarcity of resources and recent wars in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and northern Uganda, the Lord has ensured the success of several new education endeavors, and the development of most of the institutions. The ECD, comprising the countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, operates one college and five universities as well as several secondary and primary schools. This report highlights some of the quinquennium's major programs and developments.

Education Planning and Advisory

The June 2006 education advisory, attended by all ECD union education directors and division university representatives, set the pace for the quinquennium. Among the facilitators was the church's world education leader, C. Garland Dulan. The ECD strategic plan for education was launched to guide all the activities in this period. Major emphasis was placed on the role and involvement of the education department in evangelism and nurture, human resource development and leadership training, collaboration, and improvement of educational quality.

Board Members' Seminar and Guidebook

In the area of leadership training, one of the highlights of the period

was the 2007 seminar for board members in Nairobi, which educated attendees about their roles and functions, and related issues. All six ECD higher education institutions were represented, along with union officers and education directors. As a result, a board members' guidebook has been published.

Higher Education Consultation Meetings

Another main goal of the quinquennium was to enhance collaboration and cooperation among institutions. To help achieve this, ECD conducted meetings for all of its colleges and universities in 2007, 2009, and 2010. As the institution leaders visit with their colleagues, they come to better appreciate them and learn from them. These meetings also explore ways the institutions can share personnel through an exchange program. All of the schools have now adopted somewhat similar academic calendars, which will facilitate the exchange of professors. The University of Eastern Africa, Baraton (UEAB) in Kenya has already provided this service to other universities.

ECD Teachers' Convention

The ECD teachers' convention in August 2008 was the first since the ECD was organized in 2002. More than 650 participants from all the unions and universities in the division converged at the University of Eastern Africa, Baraton (UEAB) from August 27 to 30. Facilitators included General Conference Education Director C. Garland Dulan and Associate Director John Fowler, North American Division Vice President for Education Larry Blackmer, the ECD president, and other facilitators whose topics ranged from philosophy of Adventist education to managing personal finances to HIV/AIDS and drug abuse. The breakout groups provided additional

time for fruitful discussions. The convention was officially opened by the Kenya Minister of Education Honorable Professor Sam Onger, who mentioned in his speech that his school experience at Bugema Missionary College (now Bugema University) shaped the way he does his work. He urged teachers to remember that their work is very important

in shaping the society of tomorrow.

This convention fulfilled several of the major goals for the period, including collaboration, training, and learning through travel.

Integration of Faith and Learning Seminar; and Faith, Creation, and Science Conference

In order to strengthen the faith of students and teachers, the ECD con-

tinues to support integration of faith and learning seminars internationally as well as locally. In November 2009, the ECD hosted a Faith, Creation, and Science Conference in collaboration with the Geoscience Research Institute (GRI). Church leaders and pastors, university science and religion teachers, as well as some invited creationists participated in reviewing issues that challenge the church's belief in a seven-day creation. The meeting reaffirmed participants' faith in the biblical creation story. The facilitators were Jim Gibson, GRI director; and Ben Clausen, a scientist-researcher at GRI.

ECD University Student Leaders' Evangelistic Meetings

In September 2009, the ECD Education Department participated in the special year of evangelism by immersing its university student leaders and deans in a two-week evangelistic campaign in northern Uganda, a territory that is recovering from the devastation caused by two decades of war. To stimulate interest in evangelism and provide an opportunity for fellowship, the department decided to provide 35 students with leadership training and the opportunity to discuss how to collaborate with one another. The students also performed community service work in the city and prayed about the many kinds of prayer requests and challenges. The Lord provided answers in miraculous ways. The evangelistic campaign, which resulted in 147 baptisms, was conducted at three sites in the city of Lira. One of the main speakers was a female UEAB student, Elizabeth A. Ouma.

Inter-University Council

In recognition of the contribution of Adventist tertiary institutions, the Inter-University Council of East Africa, an inter-governmental academic body that oversees all universities in the region, has invited the Adventist universities in the territory



Above: Participants in a Higher Education Consultation Meeting



Left: Dr. Ben Clausen explains features of rock formation during a field trip.

to be members and to participate fully in its activities. The University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, the largest and oldest private university in the region with a strong science base, was featured prominently in a recent Kenya Ministry of Education newsletter, the first time a private university had been recognized in the region.

Djibouti Language School

Djibouti is one of the unentered territories in ECD and a difficult one to enter in a conventional way. Education being the right hand of the gospel, it was decided to find a volunteer English language teacher, since most people in this French-speaking territory bordered by Anglophone countries want to learn English. Amita Kamsuon is currently teaching nearly 20 students on the Adventist Church’s dental clinic property. One student has indicated a desire to study theology, and plans are being made to help him realize his dream.

Other Schools in Hardship Areas

Other schools have been or are being established in places such as

Moyale, in Northern Kenya, and Aru in the Northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Moyale is an arid area in northern Kenya bordering Ethiopia and Somalia that has no Christians. The Central Kenya Conference, with support from ECD, has established a school that is greatly appreciated by the community. In Aru, an area inhabited by the naked tribe of DRC, where there were very few schools, money was raised to establish a technical school that would provide young people with job skills. In 2009, its first year, the school enrolled more than 70 students. Many people are waiting for the dormitories to open so they can come to the school.

Evaluations and Accreditations

As an indicator of improvement in the quality of ECD insti-

tutions, a number of secondary and tertiary schools have become eligible for accreditation. All of our six colleges and universities hold current denominational accreditation, and all have government accreditation. The first Ph.D. program at an African Adventist university was approved and launched at UEAB in 2008. The university already offered several advanced degrees in collaboration with the University of Kwa-



Djibouti Language School session



Advent Hill School primary students perform at the ceremonies marking the opening of their school in 2008.



New academic building at Adventist University of Central Africa



Week of Prayer baptism at Rwankeri Secondary School, 2008

Extraordinary Tithe Plans

As a result of the “extraordinary tithe” funds received from the General Conference, more than 100 persons in DRC and Burundi are receiving training in ministry through extension programs close to their workplace, in Kinshasa, Kananga, Lubumbashi, and Bujumbura. Upgrading would have been nearly impossible if the recipients had been required to make long, grueling trips to university campuses far from their homes. Up to now, these countries and territories have had very few trained pastors. The students are expected to complete their studies in 2012.



TMK Air Commuter chief pilot Ted Hoareu

Baptisms and Weeks of Prayer

ECD schools reported 7,862 baptisms in 2005, 5,146 in 2006, 9,747 in 2007, 5,481 in 2008, and 10,812 in 2009. The number of baptisms for 2009 was higher, as all schools were involved in the special year of evangelism.

Several students were baptized as the result of weeks of prayer conducted by the ECD director of education. The University of Eastern Africa, Baraton continues to conduct outreach programs in neighboring secondary schools, resulting in about 700 baptisms each year.

A DRC Pilot Testimony

People sometimes ask, “Is Adventist education still worth it?” or say that it is “too expensive.” The following story shows that it still is worth the price and will remain as long as we continue to fulfill the gospel commission.

A pilot of a small plane who flies within and between the DRC and Uganda was about to take off one

morning in 2008 with several University of Lukanga board members when he spotted a mechanical problem on board. After explaining the reason for the short delay, he asked, “Are you pastors? You look like pastors.” The division president responded in the affirmative. When the pilot asked where the group was going, the division president told him that they were going to Lukanga. The pilot smiled, explained that he had attended the secondary school in Lukanga before going to the U.S.A. for flight training, and had learned how to pray and to study the Bible while studying there. He then showed them his Bible, which he said he has always carried with him and studied often with his children when he was at home. Although not an Adventist, he said he behaves like one and has been telling his co-pilots and friends about the good lifestyle he learned at Lukanga, including the dangers of smoking. He spoke of several teachers and pastors who had shaped his life.

Thus, a seed that was sown by teachers at Lukanga is still growing. Because of the time students spend with teachers, they learn a lot of things that make an impression for a long time.

As we look at the way the Lord has led in the past, we continue to praise Him for His guidance and blessings, and look to the future with hope. ✍

Zulu Natal in South Africa. The Adventist University of Central Africa in Rwanda moved to a new location in Kigale, Rwanda, in 2008 after the former campus was destroyed in 1994.

Sponsorship and Upgrading

In order to develop leaders and human resources, the division has provided more than 250 bursaries. Many recipients are already serving at various levels of the church, including administration. This includes more than 60 graduates sponsored for M.A. degrees in theology and leadership at the Adventist University of Africa.



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