

October 2011

Hello to all our faith partners in Africa!

We are very pleased to welcome a new faith partner – the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya – to the 27 faith groups that have committed to drawing up long-plans of action on the environment. Rev William Kebeney of the Full Gospel Churches contacted us last month after he and 30 pastors had done some training with Craig Sorley of Care of Creation Kenya, who gave such an inspiring presentation to us all in Nairobi. Welcome, Rev Kebeney and the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya!

Seven Year Plan update

We know that many of you are busy working on your draft plans which are due to be sent to us by December 2011; some of you have already sent us your plans and we have greatly enjoyed reading them. We look forward to meeting you all again at the meeting to showcase those plans. We have a date for that meeting – **May 15, 16, 17**. Please keep that date in your diary!

UMYA plants 7,000 trees

The Uganda Muslim Youth Assembly (UMYA) has been planting more trees – lots more trees. This summer, during Ramadan, UMYA distributed more than 7,000 assorted fruit trees, 2,000 more than the original 5,000 seedlings planned. They included “mangoes, jackfruit, avocado, oranges, guava, spices, and other trees that support agroforestry,” said Imam Ibban Iddih Kasozi.



UMYA, in collaboration with Uganda Women Vision, also organised a “very successful Iftar programme for over 50 Muslim sister professionals and about 250 muslim female students in higher institutions of learning”, he said. Iftar is the evening meal when Muslims break their fast during the month of Ramadan.



“The function started at 1pm at Bweyogerere Uganda Muslim Women Vision Centre with a seminar where several topical issues were discussed. The programme ended at 8:30pm after Iftar and Salat Ishai [the night prayer]. The programme included planting of trees and distribution of tree seedlings,” said Imam Kasozi.

Eco clubs in Ghana

Congratulations to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church which is making fantastic progress in its plans for eco clubs in religious schools in Ghana. The EPC intends to form eco clubs in all of its schools. Reverend Winfred Hayford Azornu, acting general manager of the Church's education unit, said children could become crusaders for environmental protection.

Activities to be undertaken by the eco clubs include:
:: growing and protecting trees
:: learning simple farming techniques
:: practicing sanitation and cleanliness
:: educating people to understand issues around climate change using the local languages.

Prizes will be awarded to the schools with the best-performing eco-clubs.



The EPC recently completed a two-day training workshop for selected teachers on eco clubs and the various dimensions of environmental education: agriculture, health, energy, water and biodiversity.

In August, the EPC's 3rd General Assembly formally adopted a policy on environment and climate change, demonstrating "absolute commitment to all efforts in that direction", says the EPC's Charles Akboklu. The photograph above is of a meeting between the EPC and chiefs and elders of the Adaklu-Waya community to negotiate for the release of land for tree planting.

Rwanda mobilises its parishes

To encourage the parishes to get involved in environmental action, the Protestant Council of Rwanda (CPR) has launched a vigorous plan of activities, including a National Award for the three best performing parishes each year. The winning parishes will receive 1,500,000 Rwf (around \$2,500) each.

The council's General Secretary Tharcisse Gatwa says: "Protestant churches in general and the parishes in particular have not yet sufficiently felt and understand the importance of dealing with the environment crisis as connected to the issue of climate change. CPR would then like, through this programme, involve parishes with the objective of strengthening their commitment in the process of lasting development."



Activities will include:

- :: Organising 15 seminars per year for church environmental activists
- :: Establishing 15 tree nurseries, including fruit trees, for 105 sectors of Rwanda;
- :: Planting one million trees per year;
- :: Organising 10 radio broadcasts on the environment;
- :: Developing an environmental charter for parishes.

Second National Greening Friday

Hajjat Aphwa Sebyala sent us some lovely pictures of the second National Greening Friday in Uganda during Ramadan this August. "It was a good success with main activities taking place at the National Mosque, headquarters of Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC), and also at the Makerere University Business School," she told us.

"In total we planted and gave out 5,000 tree seedlings with the bulk of it donated to us by the National Forestry Authority of Uganda. We hosted very high profile dignitaries from religious

and academic leaders, environmentalists and political leaders led by the Second Deputy Prime Minister of Uganda.”

The photographs below show (from left to right) the Second Deputy Prime Minister talking in the mosque, planting a tree, helped by Hajjat and Muguluma Hamed of Hear Uganda; and the Uganda Director of Sharia and Chief Imam speaking in the National Mosque.



Final 1,500 tree seedlings delivered

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church delivered the last 1,500 seedlings to the Adaklu community, having already planted 1,040 the previous week. The seedlings comprised 1,000 ofram trees, a local hardwood which will be ready between 15 to 20 years’ time, and 500 teak trees.

“A total area of about 3 acres have now been fully planted with 2,540 seedlings. We are taking advantage of the last rains which is a big risk but we are confident to have about 70% survival rate,” says Charles Agboklu.

“We planted late because funds did not arrive at the time we needed it in June-July. We are very satisfied with work so far in this community. We hope to have very good results next year.”

These pictures show some of the women fire volunteers trained by the EPC earlier this year helping to store the seedlings in the area cleared for planting.



10 things preachers should say on the environment

One of the most lively discussions we had in Nairobi was when we asked you all to gather in groups and come up with 10 things preachers should say on the environment. We were really impressed with the variety of points you came up with – and there were so many that we can’t include them all here at once. So we’ll feature more of these points in future newsletters.

These are the points that Shafkat Pervais Sohal, John Nyota and Muguluma Hamed came up with on their table:

- Grow more trees to reduce global warming - the Earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.

- Grow fruit trees to combat hunger and malnutrition.
- For every one tree you cut, grow 10 in its place.
- Stop cutting trees to avoid soil erosion.
- Keep beehives so that you get honey, which has healing elements in it.
- Lack of trees means lack of rain.
- Do not mistreat your animals; they are part of God's creation.
- Prepare enough food for consumption and do not be wasteful.
- Do not kill for sport or fun.

Do you have any news to share with us?

If so, please let us know – and don't forget to include any photographs. We'd also love to hear your feedback on this newsletter, and any examples of good practices/guidelines you can share with us. Email alisonh@arcworld.org or susie.weldon@arcworld.org.

In the next newsletter:

- More of your 10 preacher's environmental points.
- Top tips for ensuring your trees survive
- News of your plans and activities

With all good wishes,

The team at ARC!

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