



*Monthly e-newsletter*

**CHURCH ARMY AFRICA**

**CENTRE FOR URBAN MISSION**

**January 2017**

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## GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR, C.U.M

As 2016 came to an end, the team at Centre for Urban Mission had a fellowship meeting where among other issues, took time to review the year that was. What stood out was that God had been gracious to each one of us within the team. Each person around the table had a scenario or illustration of how they survived the difficult working environment in Nairobi's informal settlements. One of us shared how as he was going to make a follow up visit in one of our evening study programmes, he almost got robbed.

Amazingly, when he surrendered his phone to the young boys who wanted to rob him, they apparently stepped back and run away. Of course, the field officer was quick to share with the boys that crime especially in the slum will only led to their destruction and maybe death through mob justice. Centre for Urban Mission monitors the running of 9 evening study programmes; Schools of Hope (SoH) and our staff visit each of these SoH at least twice every month. The Centre also conducts evening training sessions with pastors and children workers within slum communities.

The likelihood of encountering thugs in the slums during the evenings is very high and yet we are happy to report that none of our staff and guests were robbed or injured during their course of work. Another staff shared how as he was walking along the streets of Nairobi, a street boy threatened to inject him with a poisonous substance for accidentally bumping onto him.



Again, it is just amazing how this staff talked himself out of this situation after he calmed the street boy down. Through our interactions with vulnerable persons in the various slum communities, God again has protected us. We have visited hospitals and homes of persons with infectious ailments such as drug resistant tuberculosis and none of us have been infected. The stories of how God continues to protect us are endless and I am sure you have gotten the point; I also don't want to shock you any further.

So, let me stop there for now because it is evident that God has been gracious to the staff at the Centre and we are confident that He will continue taking care of each one of us. It is also clear to us that our care for the poor and the needy in our society is not in vain-it touches the heart of God. We will strive to keep you informed about our plans and the impact that our involvement is having on communities and individual so that you can keep us in your thoughts and prayers.

Thank you!



## CHILD AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROJECT



This was the first time that the Child and Family support project organized a holiday camp for the children. Planning was done by and carried out by the Project Officer along with the pastors and volunteers. The Camp was held with children from True Vine Church on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> with Redemption Living Ministries. The total number of children that attend the camp was 240. The camp would start at 9 a.m although some of the children came as early as 7:30 am and ended at 2 pm after lunch.

The team planned to have it run for two days each for both churches. The objectives of this activity were:

- a. To have activities that would keep the children occupied during the school holiday
- b. While occupied, learn life lessons that they could apply in their lives
- c. Encourage those who did not know the Lord to do so and help them in doing this.

We shared lessons from the book of Genesis (the story of Joseph) and the book of Esther. The highlight or the take home we wanted for these children was for them to learn that regardless of where they may find themselves in life at the present moment, God loves them and can do great things in their lives if they would let Him, just as He did for Joseph and Esther.

### Outcomes of the Holiday Camp

- a. The pastors saw the value of having activities and ministry that is focused on children. The children came in their numbers and were attentive to what was being taught.
- b. The church leadership also had never had any activities other than Sunday school on Sundays that focused only on children and promised to continue having camps on their own even after the project exits.

### Challenges encountered

- a. The churches being in informal settlements are small and cramming over a hundred children in them was difficult but we made due with what we had. At Redemption Living Ministries, the teenager's class was held outdoors as there was no room for them in the church but we were blessed with fare weather.
- b. Sanitation was an issue in one of the churches which shares toilets with the neighborhood but the volunteers ensured that they were cleaned and available for the children when the need arose.
- c. The team providing meals for the children came from an estate away from Mukuru and getting the food especially to Redemption Living Ministries was difficult as there is only a footpath leading up to the church. This was countered by carrying the food in buckets and having young men help with hauling the food to the church premise in exchange for a meal.
- d. The churches also ensured that there was enough clean drinking water for the children and also some for washing up after visiting the bathrooms.



## Samaritan Strategy Impact Story- January 2017

The Samaritan Strategy Programme has been able to awaken the church on the need to serve holistically both those that are in the fellowship as well as those that are not part. For a long time the church has been concerned with preparing people for the “next life” and very little for “now life”. The programme has encouraged the church to be willing to minister to the people in all areas of need, i.e. spiritually, physically, socially and with wisdom as the integrating factor.

The following impact story is written to describe the change that is beginning to happen following the training do in Kisumu town, western part of Kenya at the shore of Lake Victoria. The programme conducted training in Migosi – Kondele slums in June. Participants were drawn from members of ten different denominations. One of the churches represented was Christ’s Church in Africa (CCA) popularly known as “Jo-Hera” – the people of love.

### A little history of the church

This church was founded in 1950’s. It begun during the East African revival. Those in the E.A. revival taught that there was no heaven for someone who was polygamous. They preached that the second wives and their sons could not make a decision to follow Christ as they were already sinners.

Jo-Hera opposed this and continued teaching that God is love (Hera is love in vernacular) and that whoever repents of his/her sin would be accepted by God.

This did not sit well with the Anglican Church as they were told to either desist from preaching about love (hera) or else risk being excommunicated. Since they could not stop preaching about God who loves everyone without any boundaries, they were excommunicated in 1956.

Father Ambrose works in this church. He identified a need among the widows that were in his church. During the training of church leaders conducted in June, he decided that he would organize economic empowerment training for the widows as his seed ministry. The widows were apparently involved in a savings group but without proper training. Father Ambrose organized a two-day training programme where thirty widows were in attendance.

One of the problems identified during the training was lack of proper saving records. The treasurer did not know the amount of money that she herself had saved let alone the total savings of the group. Through this training the members agreed to elect younger widows who knew how to read and write to be the ones helping with minutes of the meeting and the keeping of savings records. They also agreed to come up with a constitution that would help them register a self-help group. The widows since the inception of the group referred to themselves as the CCA Widows' Programme. The word used for widows is "mond liete" in the local language; this can loosely be translated as "the wives of the graves".

This is tag that the ladies carried with them, but after the training the widows changed their name to "mond ruodhi" loosely translated as the 'royal wives'. This change was because of their understanding that their former name solicited sympathy from people and it made them think low of themselves. The new name portrays that they belong to the LORD, this brought immediate transformation for these ladies. In the closing ceremony at the end of the training, the ladies corrected their Archbishop when he called them "mond liete" and they responded by mentioning their new identity and new outlook to life – "mond ruodhi"- Royal Wives!



Caption; The women in a training session - Samaritan Strategy

## SHEPHERD'S INSTITUTE (SI) IMPACT STORY – JANUARY 2017

### MICHAEL KIHARA



Michael kihara is one of our students in the shepherd institute training in Kayole informal settlement in Nairobi. He is in his late middle age and joined our program last year for the pastoral and church leaders training. He is a lay leader in his church and leads a cell group within his church; New Hope Church Kayole.

Michael works as a cobbler in the slum around Kayole and he is a primary school dropout. This means that his literacy levels are low and his work makes him even more vulnerable. This is because he earns around one dollar or less in a day and this is barely enough to feed him and his family.

Because of his literacy levels and his low paying job, he came to the training with a very low self-esteem. Dirt and shaggy dressing characterize his kind of trade. This is because customers who take their shoes for repair are mostly on their way to work and hence their shoes are either muddy or dusty because of the environment they live, walk and work in. Majority of the people in Nairobi who visit cobblers would be repairing the only shoe they have and may not have the resources to dispose of the shoe and purchase another one. His job makes him vulnerable to different infections because of the dirt associated with shoes considering that at times people walk/step on raw sewer especially during rainy seasons in Nairobi.

Though he was appointed as a leader of a cell group in his church he served with fear due to his low self-esteem. He shared with the programme staff that every time he was put on the program to preach or teach the word of God in the fellowship, he would find an excuse and miss to attend the fellowship.

After he joined the pastoral training, he received some knowledge and skills on how to prepare a sermon (homiletics & hermeneutics). He came up and asked the facilitators to help him develop a sermon outline to help him preach in the cell group (house church) meeting and he was assisted to do so. From that time, he has been preaching the word of God without fear and SI are proud to share that he has been transformed and he is impacting change in his house fellowship meeting by sharing the word of God truthfully and without fear. His outlook has also changed.

He dresses smartly when he is attending the weekly class for training and when he is going to work with a clean spare pair of clothes for his work. Due to this he attracts respect and warm welcome from his peers in class, in their church as well as the whole community in general. Michael is also a member of Tena group mentoring class where he is a mentee in a pastoral mentorship program. The training, mentoring and his new skills and outlook have helped him regain his self-esteem.

In future SI would like to connect Michael into a business training and mentorship program where he can be helped to improve his business with availability of more capital. The training will be of help to him because he will be empowered with management skills that will help him run his business in a better way. If his business is better managed, he will be able to improve his livelihood as well as raise the standard of living for his family since he will be in a better position to provide for his family.

## SCHOOLS OF HOPE

The setting up of Mukuru SoH that picked up so fast even before the resources were provided and progressed further impressively well after the reading materials. The facility was launched in May with 30 students, in August it had risen to 60 and closed the year with a total number of 137 students. The church hall has a capacity of 80 students per sitting and the supervisor had to stop recruiting more students due to limited space. Though the youngest but one of the most lively and busiest libraries. We thank God it did not struggle to pick up.

The year 2016 saw one of the best conducted national exams in the history of Kenyan education as far as exams irregularity is concerned. Unlike the previous years, this year reported least cases of exam irregularity owing to the reforms in the education ministry. Most students failed to meet their expectations due to what critics are calling; lack of examination moderation. It reported one of the worst performance witnessed in the Kenyan history but not to one Pauline Awuor. A thirteen-year-old girl from St. Jerome SoH who topped her constituency by scoring 423 marks out of the possible 500. When Pauline was asked to share her feelings about her performance, she only had God, her family and the SoH to thank for helping her realize her academic dreams.

### PHOTO GALLERY



## Prayer Items

- 1) Please pray for a peaceful and fair general elections in Kenya on the 8th of August 2017. Communities that are mostly affected due to political instability are the informal settlements.
- 2) Please pray for safety and good health for the staff as they go about the informal settlements carrying out their duties
- 3) Please pray that the Centre attracts supporting partners who will help to grow its vision. Please commit all our fundraising efforts to God.



The ministry of Centre for Urban Mission is made possible through the giving of our partners and supporters.

If you would like to give towards any of these projects kindly contact our administrator on [urbanmission@churcharmyafrica.net](mailto:urbanmission@churcharmyafrica.net).

Your giving can be received through our partner charity, Anglican Missioners of Africa Development and Education Trust (AMADET) in the UK or directly through our bank account

**Bank: - Kenya Commercial Bank Limited,**

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**PO Box 60857-00200**

**Nairobi, Kenya.**

**Account Name: Centre for Urban Mission**

**Swift Code: KCBL KENX**

**Bank Code: 01137**

**Account Number:**

**(KES):117430937, (USD):1170430961;**

**(GBP):1170431070**