

# First African Christian Microenterprise Development Conference:

## Editorial introduction

Makonen Getu

*Makonen Getu is International Programme Director of the Christian Transformation Resource Centre*

**Keywords:** CMED, ACMED

David Bussau, the founder of Opportunity International Australia, one of the founding directors of OCMS and a prominent leader in the

CMED industry, took the initiative of organizing the first ever CMED global conference in 1999. The second one was organized in 2001. Both were held in Jomtien, Thailand. The overall purpose of the two global conferences was to bring

### Executive Summary (continued)

**Auditing and Monitoring of MED Programmes: Experiences from a rural microfinance institution** ... .. 173  
*John Kayizzi*

There are certain checks and procedures which need to be put in place when running an MED programme. These will eliminate fraud and the temptation to fraud.

**Social Accounting for Christian Social Organizations** ... .. 176  
*Chris Sugden*

Just as an organization has to produce financial accounts, so a social organization, like an MED, needs to produce social accounts. These present measurable data to be examined by the stakeholders and assessed by those responsible for the governance of the organization.

**CMED, Kingdom Building and the Local Church: The case of Sinapi Aba Trust in Ghana** ... .. 178  
*Makonen Getu and Ken Appenteng Mensah*

The Sinapi Aba Trust in Northern Ghana has been putting Christian microenterprise development into practice. They have seen the local church benefiting both financially and in terms of commitment and fellowship, which in turn brings more people into the kingdom.

**Some Keys to Effective CMED Partnerships** 184  
*Dave Larson*

CMED partnerships can be seen in terms of a parallel to a marriage partnership. They involve dating, assessing compatibility, an understanding of one another's values and pressures.

### REVIEWS

**Christianity and the Religions: from Confrontation to Dialogue** ... .. 186  
*Jacques Dupuis, S.J.*

**The Indian Church in Context: Her Emergence, Growth and Mission** ... .. 187  
*Mark T.B. Laing (ed.)*

**Christianity Connected: Hindus, Muslims and the World in the letters of Max Warren and Roger Hooker** ... .. 188  
*Graham Kings*

**Mission Reader: Historical Models for Wholistic Mission in the Indian Context** ... .. 189  
*Samuel Jayakumar*

**RECENT THESES** ... .. 191

### Front cover

Participants at the First Africa Christian Microenterprise Development Conference in Nairobi, 3rd to 7th February 2003

CMED practitioners, Christian relief and development organizations, mission organizations, local churches and Christian learning institutions from all over the world for mutual learning and networking so as to find common ways of implementing MED programmes in such a way that professional excellence and biblical transformation would be attained simultaneously.

The first CMED global conference mobilized about 350 participants from over 100 different organizations. The conference brought out three categories of CMED players with different levels of needs described as follows:

**Searchers:** This included organizations that were interested in implementing MED activities as part of their ministry. They wanted to be involved in MED but had little or no knowledge of MED practices.

**Beginners:** This included organizations that had formulated some type of MED programmes and have begun implementing them. They were involved but lacked all the necessary exposure, competence and experience of best practice MED.

**Practitioners:** This included organizations which had been implementing MED programmes for a lengthy period of time. They had evolved their own methodologies, systems and governance structures. However, with the changing industry trends and donor requirements, they were faced with new challenges that were critical to the maintenance of their original mission. This was particularly so in the area of promoting wholistic transformational development.

David saw the need for a well-organized response in order for CMED to remain in effective and wholistic transformational business. Soon after the 1st CMED conference he articulated and conceptualized the direction of CMED and founded the CTRC in response to the needs expressed by the various CMED players briefly outlined above. Currently the CTRC serves the CMED Network through the formation of regional networks and the production of the CMED newsletter.

The birth of the CTRC and the CMED Network is a major achievement in the CMED movement. Unlike the MED movement led by the Microcredit Summit Secretariat run by RESULTS, which has been supported by various national, regional and global movements, CMED had remained without its own network and service secretariat until the

emergence of the CTRC and the two CMED global conferences, which have lately been followed by regional conferences. Apart from conferences within their own respective constituencies, CMED networks had remained without any level of direct intra-constituency collaboration and networking. The emergence of the CTRC and its continued effort seems to have brought that to an end.

The second CMED conference, usually known as CMED II, mobilized about 500 delegates from over 150 different Christian organizations. After discussing in regional plenaries, the delegates resolved to organize conferences and establish formal CMED networks in their respective regions. The Africa Christian Microenterprise Development (ACMED) initiative was born out of the resolution the African delegates made at CMED II. An interim committee of five was formed to lead the planning process.

With financial support from CTRC, the interim committee held its first planning meeting in October 2001 in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting was attended by 14 delegates who represented different organizations based in Africa. It was then decided to hold the Africa CMED conference in September 2002, which was later on postponed to February 2003 due to financial constraints.

The first CMED conference in Africa was held on 3-7 February 2003 in Nairobi, Kenya. The theme for this historic conference was 'Building God's kingdom through microenterprise development'. The purpose of the conference was to define the vision for ACMED organizations in terms of how they can effectively contribute towards wealth creation and poverty reduction in Africa through the promotion of microenterprise development.

The conference brought together 114 delegates from 50 different organizations based inside and outside Africa. The participants were drawn from Christian microenterprise development institutions, Christian development organizations, mission organizations and churches involved or planning to be involved in CMED. They met to deliberate and to define the vision of ACMED organizations in terms of how they could effectively contribute towards wealth creation, poverty reduction and kingdom building.

The ACMED Network was formally launched at the conference following the unanimous resolution to provide effective leadership to the

ACMED movement throughout the continent. The timing of forming the ACMED Network could not have been more appropriate. Although best practice microenterprise development was started in the 1970s as a means of poverty alleviation and development in Asia and Latin America, its emergence and spread in Africa occurred in early 1990s in general and after mid-1990s in particular. Since that time donors, governments, NGOs, including churches, as well as commercial banks have resorted to implementing microenterprise/microfinance programmes as part of their anti-poverty efforts. In terms of technical tools and standards relevant for designing, governing, managing and evaluating such programmes most practitioners in Africa, particularly Christian development organizations, mission organizations and churches, are poorly equipped and face performance problems.

The ACMED Network is expected to equip Christian MED organizations in Africa so that they realize their immense potential in creating wealth and building sustainable communities based on biblical principles of spiritual transformation; peace and justice; and social and economic transformation.

This issue of *Transformation* contains some of the papers presented and discussed at the ACMED conference. Some of the papers have been revised and fully written out and some appear in PowerPoint (bullet point) forms just as they were presented at the conference. As such this volume is a documentation of conference proceedings.

The papers are presented on the basis of thematic order. By dealing with the definition of the concepts of transformational development and CMED, on the one hand, and by outlining the NEPAD and global millennium goals on the other, Stephen Mugabi's paper sets the overall conceptual and contextual framework. The papers by Daniel Bitrus and Makonen Getu discuss the biblical perspective of wealth creation through business/enterprise development and the characteristics of what constitute transformational business people. The next four sets of papers by Mutava Musyimi, Sammy Mwangi and Sarone Ole Sena, Thithi Watene and Makonen Getu deal with the harnessing and development of local

resources on the one hand and the role of international partnerships, on the other. The first two emphasize the role of people-centred and participatory approaches to development. Thithi's paper calls for Christian enterprise development organizations to design and implement anti-poverty programmes in such a way that Africa's local resources could be effectively utilized for enhancing its development. Makonen's paper provides an account of the services and products CTDC makes available in equipping CMED organizations in developing effective networks and in implementing transformational CMED programmes. The next four papers address the criteria and technicalities of implementing microenterprise development programmes. Theresa Moyo's paper argues that such factors as conducive policy environment, clarity of vision and mission, capacity for efficiency and increase in outreach, governance, management, quality of products and services are critical for the success of CMED programmes. By defining the concept of CMED and its distinctives, the paper by Rose Wanjohi and Alex Kakuru provides the challenges faced and the strategies for transformation. John Kayizzi's paper addresses the issue of fraud in relation to how, when and why it happens and how it can be monitored and prevented. Chris Sugden's paper spells out the difference between social accounting and project evaluation and emphasizes the critical importance of producing measurable data by CMED institutions for scrutiny by the stakeholders so as to ensure that their work is contributing to the transformation of their clients. The paper by Makonen Getu and Ken Appenteng-Mensah addresses the correlation between CMED, kingdom building the local church both at theoretical and practical levels. The first part of the paper argues that CMED is theoretically capable of strengthening the local church through both direct and indirect means and finishes by giving practical evidence with reference to the work of Sinapi Aba Trust in Northern Ghana. The last paper by David Larson presents and discusses some of the key factors for developing and maintaining international CMED partnerships and the challenges involved therewith. The documentation of the proceedings is concluded by the declaration that the conference passed unanimously.