

Conference declaration

We, the participants of the First African Christian Microenterprise Development (ACMED) conference, which was held at the Kenya College of Communication Technology in Nairobi from 3rd to 7th February 2003, hereby unanimously resolve to establish the ACMED Network as a vehicle for promoting enterprise development in Africa.

We recognize the:

- enormity of poverty in Africa;
- high levels of unemployment and limited employment opportunities in the formal /informal sector, extent of corruption and poor governance;
- immense richness and potentials in Africa that is not exploited;
- ravaging effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic across the African continent;
- immense potential employment opportunities that MED could offer to many unemployed and underemployed men, women and the youth in Africa;
- positive results and rich experiences of CMEDS and the transformation of many lives;
- lessons learned, experiences and information shared and challenges received at this conference;
- new critical role CMEDS could contribute to sustainable transformational development in the extension of God's kingdom.

We now resolve to:

1. be directed and motivated by the love of Christ to serve the poor and in so doing be always guided by the Christian faith and principles;
2. build on the vision and achievements of this conference through strategic planning, policy formulation, resource mobilization and sharing of expertise;
3. promote and facilitate training and institutional building among member organizations;
4. strengthen the network among CMEDs in Africa and beyond in order to enhance sharing of information, experiences, fellowship and creation of operational partnership;
5. encourage and promote the involvement of churches and Christian organizations in MED

as a witness to the gospel of Christ as well as a contribution to poverty reduction and wealth creation on the continent;

6. promote action research and dissemination of information on developmental issues with special focus on MED, poverty, HIV/AIDS, gender, and the environment;
7. promote professionalism, excellence and integrity in MED programmes among member organizations;
8. design policies and commit resources to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS;
9. disseminate relevant literature and information on CMED activities within the Christian community in Africa;
10. collaborate with member organizations in advocacy and lobbying of governments to introduce necessary legal and institutional reforms;
11. collaborate with the Christian Transformation Resource Centre (CTRC) and the global CMED Network.

Way forward

At the end of the conference, the participants endorsed the establishment of ACMED Network as an implementing mechanism for the promotion of CMED in Africa; and mandated the conference organizing committee as the interim committee of the Network until the next conference in 2004.

Common purpose

The participants resolved to form ACMED Network, to extend the kingdom of God through Christian microenterprise development, to see Africa living abundantly in transformed communities in which people enjoy abundance, justice, peace and live in communion with God and one another.

Mission

To promote wholistic transformation through CMED, and articulate and disseminate best practices in CMED.

Objectives

To create a forum for networking, exchanging of

ideas, lobbying and advocacy.

Structure

The interim committee will have powers to restructure itself and to adopt others as and when necessary. It is expected to present recommendations on structure and personnel for consideration at the next conference..

The interim committee will:

- form an interim functional secretariat;
- look at the vision, mission and structure of ACMED Network;
- create ownership among the network;
- register an organization and collect a one year subscription;
- identify contact persons from every region to sell the vision of ACMED.

Task

To plan for and bring to ACMED Conference 2004 recommendations for:

- organizational structure;
- constitution board, governance;
- business plan.

Support

- rely on existing organizations;
- need a virtual office;
- founding members will be contributing at least US\$ 500 each and registration fee will be decided at the next conference;
- respond fast to communications;
- committee has authority to co-opt persons as needed, including a representative of friends, of church leadership relevant to its purpose.

Building God’s Kingdom through Microenterprise Development:

A Christian vision for transformational development

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Introduction

The 1990s have been a time of reflection for many faith-based agencies (churches and Christian NGOs), as well as different secular groups (government, non-governmental and civil society organizations) involved in the business of providing international aid to promote development so as to reduce global poverty.

The period has also witnessed an increased

entry of faith-based organizations into the development arena and dialogue. Many are now providing various development services, tools and techniques for transformation development and poverty alleviation. They are also adopting kingdom of God values to impact the lives of the poor. And around the world both faith-based and secular development agencies are using micro-enterprise development (MED) programmes to help the poor create jobs and earn viable sustainable incomes.

The paper will first introduce the faith-based