

## Comprehensive Report on Samaritan Strategy, Vision Conference held in Makamba from 7<sup>th</sup> September to 11<sup>th</sup> September 2010.



### Introduction:

The Vision Conference was organized by **Rema Ministries** in conjunction with CMS Africa. The conference went on well as planned and was successful. We are grateful to the Almighty God that this conference on Samaritan Strategy took place in Makamba where Rema Ministries had been holding seminars with part of the group. The Vision Conference was a fulfillment of our dream. Indeed, Rema Ministries dreams of a transformed society starting from individuals, then spreading to the families, neighbors, church, society and the whole country. We thought in all endeavor to reach out to the churches and teach

pastors to have a transformed society through making disciples of Jesus Christ, teaching them to observe all that Jesus Christ taught and recommended to be practiced in marketplace and in daily life all the way through from Monday to Sunday.

**Participants:** 52 people from 19 different church denominations namely: EUSEBU, United Methodist church, MINEVAM, Free Methodist Church, Eglise Vivante, Christian Mission Fellowship, Pentecostal Assemblies of God, Burundi Assemblies of God, Miracle Centre Church, Swedish Pentecostal Church, FECABU, Horeb Church, Rama Holy Temple, Word of Life Church, Guerrison des Ames, Gospel Church, Baptist Church, and Anglican Church operating in the province of Makamba took part in that VC. The office of the Province of the **Anglican Church**, the dioceses of Ngozi, Muyinga, Matana and Makamba sent their representatives. All these participants came from 5 different provinces of the country namely: Bururi, Bujumbura, Makamba, Muyinga and Ngozi.

4 Rema Ministries officers participated in the conference and were at the same time fully involved in the organization and the well being of participants.

**Facilitators:** Two trainers/ facilitators were sent by CMS Africa: Mrs Carole Ruoro from Kenya and Jacob Ndabaramiye from Rwanda.

**Activities:** The Vision Conference was honored by the presence of Rt Rev Martin Blaise Nyaboho, the bishop of Makamba Diocese (see picture on right) who came to officially open the conference. He took the participants to the Gospel of Luke Chap. 10 from verses 25-37 the story about the Good Samaritan. He challenged the participants that sowing a seed should not concern only the people from our respective denominations, our friends, rather that we should be concerned by the interests of our neighbors. He went on to define who our neighbors could be, that they are those in need of our intervention. He also urged all the participants not to take this



conference for granted, but to put into practice all they will learn from it. If not, it would be a loss of time and resources.



**Teachings:** The teachings were systematically delivered to the participants who were very eager to learn. Those teachings acted as an eye opener. In fact, the participants were amazed to realize that all that was said and taught was in line with the Bible, yet some of those pastors had never thought of reading some parts of the scriptures hence telling their congregants half the story of the Bible. They discovered that if the Lord has to bless he has to start from what they have like in the story of the feeding of 5000 people. From there, Kingdom Maths was developed and the

participants were amazed that the Bible contains almost all the subjects when one reads it with the right spectacles. Moreover, in the topic of the ABCs culture, the facilitators clearly showed how the culture may hinder the development of a country and how Satan may take advantage of the culture of a country and take it in hostage. The examples of USA, Brazil and Rwanda were taken as a proof to support what was being said. These teachings aim at transforming the whole church and spread to the whole community and hence to the whole country.

### **Testimonies:**

Participants in the VC were so much excited by the training, because the Samaritan Strategy conference was special in its nature especially in the transforming story, and as it is presenting the biblical worldview and tools for holistic ministry.

#### **Participants testify:**

**Rev. Nahigombeye Theophile from Minevam Church**

#### ***What a complementary seminar!***

*I would like to start by saying that in due course and at the right time God comes and does his work. I am grateful for this seminar which acted as a knitting thread to patch together the pieces Rema Ministries had been passing to us so that I may reach at a level where I can see our planet earth as God sees it. I have understood that it is my responsibility to take part in this work to restoring it to its original beauty because when God created it He posed and said it was good. Moreover, I was challenged to rethink about the love that I show to others because before I used to start from my relatives, friends and my own church denomination and end there. If I made efforts to mobilize the congregants with regard to sowing a seed I would privilege members of my denomination. Praise God that the veil has been removed from my eyes; I have understood that my neighbor is anybody in need regardless of their ethnic, religious and denominational background. Now I am pleading with God that, henceforth in my leadership, He may give me grace to use Godly glasses and biblical worldview.*

**Rev. Ntibategera Amon from Baptist Church**

#### ***I am going to make a difference***

*I have been in the ministry for the last 20 years leading churches and among the main challenges I encountered was to meet with other church leaders and do something together. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to Rema Ministries for inviting us together with other denominations. This was like a dream to me and I was wondering how on earth I could sit together with somebody who is not from my denomination and work together with them! This seminar has helped me to change the way I used to think and act. Before this seminar the glasses I used to look with were my*

*denominational glasses. I was egocentric. Now, I vowed to go beyond my comfort zone and start using biblical glasses and surely this will have an impact on my society and as I have changed, this change will spread to the surrounding provide I start to love and see them according to God's glasses.*

*I have understood that in the seed project I may use the little resources I have without relying to others and sow the seed in order to help somebody who is in need. This would make them think why I should be interested in assisting them while I am not in their denomination. My prayer is that I may make a difference in my lifetime. Although it had not been easy for us to understand how we may work together as people from different denominations, when we came together and discussed, we realize that it is possible to work together.*

**Rev. Ntambaga Onesiphore from Anglican Church**

***Let me not only be a Good Samaritan but also take action as he did.***

*From the very beginning of this workshop I kept asking myself why I was selected to be part of the team who attended the seminar.*

*I am grateful to the Lord who has used Rema Ministries and CMS to organize and plan for this workshop whose aim was to stir, and sharpen our mind and challenge the way we used to do mission and what we understood to serve the Lord is. This workshop will act as a source of the change of the society. I believe that the change is going to be holistic and complete. There have been so many rotten things and traditions, cultures which have handicapped our churches here in Burundi. We as pastors have not been in a position to teach the whole truth of the Bible to our congregants, if we had, our followers would have changed and become true disciples of Jesus Christ. Tribal divisions, clashes, denomination divisions, egocentrism, selfishness and would not have been a hindrance to enlarging and building the kingdom of God, having our role model Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18-19). I better understood that I should not only be a Good Samaritan but also act as he did, and hence be a role model to the whole congregation I have been entrusted with. Were we to put into practice what we have learned and been taught, I am sure we will witness a deep change in our homes, families, churches, society, neighborhood and the country at large.*

### **Pledged Seed projects by 12 groups:**

After a long consultation among the participants who were living in somewhat the same area, were encouraged to form working groups whereby they were to discuss and think what a kind of a seed project they can do together in their area regardless of their church denominations. 12 groups were put in place. They pledged to have some seed projects together.

These seed projects ranged from building houses for widows, taking food to hospitals, putting up roofs on houses for the widows and people with disability, visiting people who are in prisons, paying school fees and uniforms for orphans. We are looking forward to getting reports and we shall continue from there, by encouraging them to be faithful to the deadline they have suggested to do the seed project, monitoring and follow up.



### **Our comments**

We wish that all the participants understand well these teachings and be in a position to translate them into practice. This would require another upgrading seminar.

For a Burundian to master anything, it requires that the same things are repeated a number of times, using even medias such as radio, sketches, TV, songs, dramas, and any other available means.

We would also suggest that there be included teachings about tolerance, unity, and working together in order to spread and enlarge the kingdom of God since we after all serve the same Master and have been called by the same Lord. This is due to the divisions and hatred based on ethnic which characterized the history of Burundi. Unfortunately, these flows and whims did not spare the church.

The time for teachings was limited due to events that were beyond our control.

People were much bigger in number than expected and this proves to us how these teachings are so important to Burundians that it opens our eyes to things that were hidden from our perception.

We are grateful to the Lord because all went well, nobody felt seek or encountered any major challenge that would have threatened the workshop or raised any concern to us.

## **Conclusion**

We would like to thank CMS that sponsored the Vision Conference. Our heartfelt thanks go to the trainers who, enthusiastically, facilitated the workshop. We also thank the participants who were keen and eager to learn.

We are being called by different church leaders who heard about this Vision Conference. They are asking us to hold such seminars in different parts of the country. So far, two denominations from 2 different provinces have already called upon us.

As we said earlier, our wish/motivation has always been to see church leaders from different denominations coming together in love and unity to challenge the Sunday Christianity which leaves out the other days as if they were left to the Devil. We are against this dichotomy and we would like to see a paradigm shift whereby a disciple is a disciple regardless of the days. We would like to see Christians becoming true disciples of Jesus Christ and not a laughing stock to the surroundings. The local church should be the model to look at when it comes to seeking solutions to problems of the country.

## **Other related pictures**

Jacob and Carole Ruoro facilitating the Makamba Vision Conference



Pastor Janvier makes a point in the conference Presentation from groups workshop

