

AFRICAN FAITH COMMITMENTS FOR A LIVING PLANET

BUNYORO KITARA DIOCESE, CHURCH OF UGANDA

Long-term plan on the environment – summary

INTRODUCTION

Bunyoro-Kitara Diocese is a Church of Uganda diocese in the mid-western region of Uganda, covering the administrative districts of Hoima and Kibaale. The Anglican Diocese consists of six archdeaconries with 58 parishes with around 900,000 members and 600 grassroots churches. Around 98% of its members live by subsistence farming as their source of income.

The Diocese has 123 church-based schools (113 primaries, 10 secondary), two technical schools, one teacher training college and one diocesan training college. It also organises Women's and Men's Bible study groups, the Mothers' Union, youth groups, the Fathers' Union, Christian Women Fellowship and Christian Men Fellowship. The Diocese runs a large health centre and programmes for orphans and vulnerable children. It also has a microfinance project and a coffee plantation.

The Diocese's five-year development plan of 2002-2006, approved by the Diocesan Synod, emphasised the promotion of a sustainable environment in all its parishes and churches through livelihood support and environment programmes, including re-forestation, sustainable agriculture and the promotion of energy saving technologies. Under this plan, every parish must plant annually a woodlot of pines and every candidate for confirmation and baptism must plant pine trees. The Diocese also runs an extensive tree-planting programme. A total of 11,653 trees have already been planted, while rural parishes have planted 19,404 trees through a community outreach programme.

The Diocese's new Seven-Year Plan builds on this work and also on the pilot nursery bed scheme to engage the Mothers' Union in the Diocese to establish and manage nurseries. This follows ARC's support for a pilot nursery at Kigaya Archdeaconry in 2011 and further support for the development of three nursery beds at the Archdeaconries of Kagadi, Bulindi and Kakumiro. This will train 30 Mothers' Union members in nursery bed management. It is hoped to extend this scheme to 24 parishes in the Diocese.

THE SEVEN-YEAR PLAN

Working teams will be formed from diocesan councils, parish councils and churches:

Specific objectives

1. To implement community education on environmental conservation;
2. To restore and conserve forests, emphasising water-conserving trees;
3. To introduce and popularise energy saving technology, fuel efficient charcoal cookers and alternative sources of cooking energy to take the place of charcoal;
4. To popularise construction materials that are not made from wood;
5. To popularise the use of organic fertilizers, promoting compost and livestock manure in place of chemical fertilizer;
6. To popularise environmental conservation education in theological college, church schools and colleges as well as faith classes for the children prior to confirmation;
7. To establish an environment docket in the structure of the diocese to co-ordinate and

supervise conservation projects.

Key outcomes

1. Skills in tree planting and nursery management developed by Mothers' Unions members. MU nurseries developed in all dioceses;
2. Reforestation in formerly forest depleted areas ensured along with increased vegetation cover; five million trees planted over seven years at church and community levels;
3. Greater public awareness and action on climate change and environment conservation;
4. Waste management and disposal mechanisms adopted by households all over the Diocese;
5. At least 15,000 households adopt and use economic and energy saving charcoal stoves as main source of cooking.

Project activities

- Mothers' Union tree nursery pilot project followed by roll out into other dioceses and all parishes;
- Establish three tree nurseries;
- Formation of tree planting, climate change and environment preservation committees at parish level and diocesan level;
- Organise a Green Week annually throughout the schools of the Diocese and provide seedlings for planting and develop a liturgy on the environment;
- Preach Sunday sermons on the environment at the end of Green Week;
- Organise eight conferences on the environment for church leaders, civic leaders and head teachers and three trainers' workshops;
- Design, print and distribute materials on environmental protection to educate local communities;
- Organise radio debates/programmes;
- Organise an information day on climate change and environment preservation especially during the Green Week at least once a year;
- Promote the development and use of efficient cooking means such as biogas and solar;
- Promote the growing of wood for fuel instead of relying on forests;
- Develop networks and partnerships with government and NGOs in the tree planting and conservation sector;
- In partnership with forestry department personnel, identify variety of trees for different ecological zones and encourage planting of indigenous species;
- Promote the use of agroforestry and soil conservation practices amongst farmers and communities.

This plan has been endorsed by the Bishop of the Diocese, Bishop Nathan Kyamanywa

This plan was launched at ARC's Many Heavens, One Earth, Our Continent celebration held in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2012