

The African

JANUARY - MARCH 2024



C

ITL's Message

1

Equipped to Equip Others

2

Age is but a number

3

O

Is there peace for me too?

4

**Amazing Grace, how sweet the
sound**

5

N

**Mobilising for Harare back to
God**

6

T

**Empowering a Generation,
Transforming Lives**

7

**Fellowship at Bongikosi,
Sweetwaters**

8

e

**The Journey of 1000 Miles
begins with...**

9

It is not witchcraft, it is TB

12

N

**Fired up Foxies in the standing
grain**

13

T

40 on 4 Training in Zambia

14

If you want ot go far, hold hands

15

S

**Muthoni's journey from Kibera's
Depths**

16

A harsh start to 2024

18

INTERNATIONAL TEAM LEADER'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends, Partners, Staff and Board Members,

As we draw towards the end of the first 2024 quarter, I wish to extend a big thank you to all of you for having continued to walk with us as intercessors, friends, and partners of AE. We started 2024 with the dark shadow of having lost two National Team Leaders for our work in Tanzania and Ethiopia. We continue to pray for peace for their (Melisachew and Mbaaga) immediate families and friends. We are grateful for our National Boards in both countries that have continued to extend encouragement to their families on behalf of all of us. Do join us in prayers as we search for National Team leaders to fill in the gaps left in Tanzania and Ethiopia by 1st June 2024.

During our International Staff Strategic planning meetings early in the year, I felt quickened to remind us of Jesus' manifesto at the start of our ministry which essentially is His charge to us. In Luke 4:18, Jesus read from the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

This was and is Jesus' manifesto – to proclaim the good news (the gospel) and to set captives free (the gospel in deeds). A manifesto is defined as a public declaration of goals, intentions and or motives issued by a government, sovereign or organization. Dictionaries define it further as the objectives that compel and push you forward. Jesus in this portion of scripture made it very clear as to his objectives and goals. This must remain our manifesto!

The first part of Jesus manifesto is to proclaim the good news; to speak the message of hope, and life to a hurting and dying world. The world remains desperately poor as far as it relates to God! It remains as lost and doomed as ever – without the knowledge of His saving grace through Jesus.

The second part Jesus' manifesto proclaims freedom to the prisoners. We that are in Jesus have experienced Jesus' freedom in one way or another – ranging from emotional healing, addictions and even like Mary Magdalene from demonic forces. Jesus' stated power in Luke 4:18 is present today as it ever was.



The third part of Jesus' manifesto is 'to Proclaim the year of the Lord's favor' (Luke 4.19 ESV). The year of the Lord's favor is also referred to (in scripture) as the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25.8-12). This is the 50th Sabbath year when ancestral land mortgaged out would be restored back to its owner, debts would be cancelled and slaves due to debts would be set free. The world has more slaves than any other time in man's history; 27 M according to the UN and nearly double that number according to the International Justice Mission (IJM). Jesus' declaration goes beyond the evil and savage acts of slavery. The principle is a fresh start! Jesus is essentially declaring He is here to hit 'The worldwide start button!' In spite of where we are – in Christ we can have a fresh start. We are to trust Him to walk with us in all situations spiritually (goodnews), in our bodies and emotions (setting captives free) and that we can count on Him as the Jubilee to walk with us through the economic challenges that are part of this life.

As we press beyond the first quarter of 2024, may we be reminded that Jesus' manifesto is our manifesto. His manifesto remains the church's manifesto (His organization) throughout all ages and every believer! All the things that were driving Jesus are and should be the same things driving us today. My prayer is that as African Enterprise, we shall be moved by the things that still move God, broken by the things that break His heart. Let us go forth and proclaim than ever before the good news to a continent and world that is lost, let us go forth and proclaim liberty and freedom to all and that He that gives a fresh start - the Jubilee through whom we become a new creation is here as He was when He declared His Luke 4.18-19 manifesto.

Yours in Christ
Stephen Mbogo



MALAWI

Equipped to Equip Others

The journey of holistically transforming the life of an individual can take a long time, and even much longer is the journey of transforming a community. Yet African Enterprise, through its social action arm, is committed to seeing the lives of as many individuals as possible in the cities of Africa transformed for the better!

One important measure of transformation is sustainability; the ability of the impacted individuals to exist and grow without depleting resources but also most importantly, being catalysts and contagious transformation agents themselves.

Mervis Makala, married with 2 children, is among the women who had undergone tailoring training at African Enterprise in 2013. She currently lives in a community about 45 kilometers west of Lilongwe City. Makala is a testament to the long-term impact that the tailoring school has on women. In her testimony, she said

“From the time I graduated from African Enterprise School of tailoring up to date, I have experienced a change in the finances of our family. Before I joined AE School of Tailoring, I was running a small business of baked items whose income was hand-to-mouth. But, after I got trained in sewing skills, I saw a change in my family’s life because of some income which was better off than the one I was getting from the baked items”.



She further explained how the business has opened doors for her within the community; “I have been recognized in my community such that a certain local organization hired me to train 20 women in tailoring and that is what I am currently doing, this experience of teaching others has made me appreciate what goes into training people, I am more grateful to God for my instructor, he did an amazing job. I also like the experience because I can see my class doing well and they are easily getting what I am teaching them. The local organisation pays me MK35,000. (\$25) a month as a token of appreciation with which I am boosting up my tailoring business. Also out of this business, I have managed to purchase land for house construction in the future and purchased 3 pigs and 2 goats. This livestock when they multiply, will increase my family’s income which will assist in doing some developments” She testified.

Mervis expressed her gratitude to African Enterprise for its transformational ministry which is empowering the vulnerable women whose families are benefiting from the programs.

“ I have managed to purchase land for house construction in the future and purchased 3 pigs and 2 goats. ”





AGE IS BUT A NUMBER!

Both young and old are taken in and equipped at African Enterprise Malawi's Transformation Centre. At 62 years of age, Maria Lwandwa is among the 20 women who are currently acquiring tailoring skills at AE Malawi's Transformation Centre. She has been living with her children and grandchildren where one of her sons has been the sole breadwinner. Maria heard about the center from her pastor at church,

"Before I joined the training, I had no economic activity. The only work I engaged in had everything to do with chores around the house. When my Church Pastor saw my economic and social status, he approached me and asked if I would be willing to undergo training in tailoring so that in the future, the skills would assist me in earning a living. When I heard this, I was so grateful to God who led him to identify me to be part of this training."

Maria is Charismatic by religion and comes from an area about 15 kilometers north of Lilongwe city. Maria's husband divorced her in 2007, she has been living with her five children and two grandchildren since then. This training will allow her to augment her son's efforts in supporting the family.

"During my early days of training, I have been able to learn how a sewing machine works, then how to operate it. Further than that, I have learned how to measure and cut fabric, how to make straight lines on a piece of paper, so that when we master it, we shall be working on a piece of cloth".

Maria is looking forward to learning more about tailoring and she has plans to search for a marketable place where she can have a shop for her tailoring business. In her explanation, she says will not only run a tailoring shop, but other small businesses as well whose capital shall be generated from the tailoring business. This will enable her to realize more revenue from the multiple streams of income.

Please continue to pray for the project so that it can be a tool for the realization of such dreams.



“
I was so grateful to God who led him to identify me to be part of this training
”



RWANDA

Is there peace for me too?

Young people the world over go through numerous challenges that cause them to feel like they are alone and in many cases, too far gone to have a chance at a good life. In Africa, this situation is very common due to the different hardships that young people go through, from poverty, unemployment, corruption, and mental health-related issues.

Daniel from Bugesera District is a member of a youth Self Help Group called ABAJUMUGAMBI which operates in Mwogo Sector in the CASE project, supported by Help a Child. He is the firstborn in a family of 4 siblings. When he completed Primary six, he was not able to continue with secondary school studies since his parents were not able to provide him with school materials. For that reason, he dropped out of school and stayed at home doing domestic activities.

African Evangelistic Enterprise Rwanda started a prayer group that regularly met near Daniel's home. Daniel attended the prayer meetings however he never paid much attention for he had lost all hope and he did not think that he could ever get peace from all his troubles.



“ I decided to come to stand in front of my colleagues to be prayed for and to surrender my life to Jesus. ”

“When an AEE staff visited our youth group, she preached to us the word of God and shared with us her testimonies. I became convinced, and when she called people for repentance, I decided to come to stand in front of my colleagues to be prayed for and to surrender my life to Jesus. She advised me to join the local church so that I could get more spiritual guidance as to strengthen my spiritual life. It is in that line that I choose ADVENTIST Church to be my church where I go to pray

As a young man, things have significantly changed personally in my life and for my family and my friends.

I thank AEE for their Evangelism approach that helped me to be converted which changed my life”

Young people like Daniel are looking for hope. Unfortunately, most of them seek this hope in all the wrong places. Please continue praying that God will use African Enterprise to be a light in the darkness for many destinies in Africa.





RWANDA



Amazing Grace, how Sweet the Sound ...

At just 18 years old, Oliver from Rusizi district encountered challenges early in life when his parents separated when he was only eight months old. Growing up in poverty with a single mother struggling to make ends meet, Oliver's education was cut short at Primary six due to financial constraints. Living in difficult circumstances, he lost hope and turned to negative coping mechanisms like drug abuse and theft. Despite his tumultuous past, Oliver grabbed an opportunity to join a vocational training program provided by Africa Evangelistic Enterprise, focusing on Domestic Electricity Trade. This choice became a pivotal moment as he not only developed his technical skills but also discovered spiritual enlightenment by embracing the gospel of Jesus during a visit by field staff. Reflecting on his transformation, Oliver expressed, "My past actions have faded, and now I help my family with household tasks and actively participate in church activities." With newfound faith and direction, he aims to uplift his family from poverty using his technical knowledge, relying on the Holy Spirit to shape his positive mindset and behaviors.



Oliver

Fabienne, a 31 years old woman living in Rusizi District, is a mother of 4 children. Fabienne started sexual activities at an early age when she was finishing primary education; she stated: "Immediately after finishing primary education (P6), my father died and our mother struggled much to take care of us. I started accepting men to give me money for sexual relations so that I can buy what I needed such as body lotions, clothes and shoes, and even providing some food for my brothers and sisters. I involved in all these practices because I was deceiving myself that I was mature enough to do sex". For Fabienne, what was a simple habit graduated into a profession altogether.

Fabienne got pregnant at 16 years old. She has 4 boys from 2 different fathers. Life became more difficult

when the boys' fathers did not take part in raising up the children. She continued the business of sexual practices to earn money for her children. One Day, Fabienne met AEE staff who preached to her and she got the good news of Jesus Christ. Fabienne said, "In August last year of 2023 I decided to give my life to Jesus Christ and He changed my mind and my life that I decided to leave sexual business. I prayed that God gives me what else to do for income generation, and He heard my prayers". She continued saying: "since I received Jesus Christ in my life, I have permanent peace for I am no longer under pressure of men, and I am satisfied of life I live today". Fabienne started a new business of selling fruit and vegetables, which supports her and her children. Fabienne has also got a fiancée and they have finished civil marriage and they are waiting religious marriage in the mid of this year.



Fabienne



ZIMBABWE

Mobilising for Harare back to God, a City Wide Mission!

Every year, African Enterprise holds a city-wide evangelistic mission in each of the national offices. In Zimbabwe, the mission for 2024 will be held in Harare, which is also the capital of the country. The mission has been named Harare Back to God!

The month of February 2024 marked a shift towards the planned Harare back to God mission. The Team Leader of AEE Zimbabwe traversed the length and breadth of Harare sharing the vision with prospective partners and church leaders. The mobilisation efforts took him to Mabelreign suburb on 8th February where all Methodist pastors in Harare West District were gathered for their Ministers' Fellowship at the District manse. We are praying for more churches to come on board for the mission so that there will be more laborers in the Lord's work for the Harare Back to God Mission.



Methodist Ministers in Harare West District listening to Rev Dr Mugwidi talking about Harare Mission



EFZ Harare Provincial AGM delegates listening

Commisioning of evangelists at Twinlakes Methodist Church

Sunday the 4th of February was all smiles in Norton following two sessions of stratified Evangelism training conducted by AEE Zim Team Leader Rev Dr Brian Mugwidi. **105** participants were trained late last year and a second session in January 2024. Participants were taught how to share the gospel and the importance of preservation. The participants felt equipped to move into the mission field and win souls for Christ. Confidence is the buzzword!





GHANA

Empowering a Generation, Transforming Lives

African Enterprise Ghana runs social action initiatives that aim to give holistic empowerment to people in the community. While every national office runs social action initiatives, Ghana has a unique computer training program alongside a tailoring program among others, that is used to empower individuals in the community. The following are some of the testimonies from the beneficiaries of the social action programs in Ghana

Portia Arhin

Portia Arhin's inspiring success story is a testament to the power of skills training and its transformative effects.

After successfully completing the computer training programme, Portia landed a job as a sales assistant at Awopa Mothercare and Trading. The skills she acquired during the training have been instrumental in securing this position, and she is grateful to African Enterprise for the opportunity to better her life.

Portia's journey is a shining example of how the AE Ghana Youth Empowerment Programme can uplift individuals and communities. She is among the many beneficiaries of the computer training programme who have gained valuable skills that have opened doors to employment opportunities.

The programme provides a comprehensive training curriculum that equips participants with the necessary skills to succeed in the workplace. Portia expressed her gratitude to the donors and God for providing her with the opportunity to participate in the programme. She is excited about her new job and the prospects it holds for her future.

Samuel Nyarko

Samuel Nyarko's achievement in securing a job as a sales assistant is a testament to the effectiveness of the programme.

According to Samuel, he is now able to earn a sustainable income at the end of each month, which gives him a sense of fulfilment and independence.

It's also noteworthy that Samuel's mother has expressed deep appreciation for the support AE Ghana has provided her son. This shows that the programme not only benefits the beneficiaries but also their families and the community as a whole.

Overall, we believe that the computer training programme is making a meaningful impact on people's lives, and we hope that more individuals and communities can benefit from such initiatives in the future.



“The program not only benefits the beneficiaries but also their families and the community as a whole”



SOUTH AFRICA

Fellowship at Bongikosi, Sweetwaters.

The year began with a delightful fellowship gathering at Bonginkosi in Sweetwaters, a township located on the Northwestern outskirts of Pietermaritzburg. Bonginkosi serves as our social action project, primarily focusing on providing food relief to the elderly and unemployed. It also aims to enhance food and clothing security through gardening and sewing by supplying seeds and materials.

Members of the Bonginkosi community eagerly awaited AE South Africa's arrival. There were so many people that some had to stand outside the main entrance.

Linda Grant, an AESA Board member collaborating closely with our Community worker Londeka Gasa, expressed gratitude to the community members for their exemplary patience and composure.

“ Promoting food security remains a key objective for us ”

Some of the Bonginkosi residents exhibited the beautiful creations they had crafted using the fabric and materials provided in previous months, and a kind elderly lady shared beans harvested from the seeds distributed earlier.

Promoting food security remains a key objective for us. Londeka is enthusiastic about offering training in areas like home-based care and housekeeping to the younger family members of the Bonginkosi residents, who are equally eager to participate.

Siyanda, our African Enterprise's Foxfire Coordinator shared a powerful message about how often we fool ourselves that we have time on earth (Luke 12:18-20).

Afterward, one of the elderly ladies, gogo Beauty Zuma, stood up to commend young Siyanda and reinforce his message by sharing her testimony about walking with Jesus and the importance of making the decision to accept Christ and let go 'of the old life.'

We were shocked and saddened to learn of gogo Beauty's passing only six (6) days after this recent engagement with her. It is somewhat prophetic then that she shared her testimony and echoed the message of the folly of thinking we have plenty of time; then almost immediately demonstrated this folly through her sudden death. Rest eternal grant unto gogo Beauty, O Lord!



gogo Beauty Zuma urging residents to accept Jesus and repent.





SOUTH AFRICA

The journey of 1000 miles begins with...1 Mile?

Well, that's not quite what the familiar Chinese proverb says; it is much more forgiving of effort suggesting 'with a single step'. However, we do have a 1 Mile swimmer!

AESA's Team Leader & CEO, Theuns Pauw, decided late last year that he would take on the challenge of swimming in the 2024 'Midmar Mile' in a campaign to raise funds for our 2024 Foxfire Youth Program. The Midmar Mile is the world's largest open water swimming event; it takes place annually at Midmar Dam, which is some 20kms up the road from AESA's office.



Theuns had previously fractured his forearm and his training could only begin three weeks prior to the day of the event. So it was on the Sunday morning of the 11th February that Theuns (still nursing a forearm on the mend and with minimal training) took to the open water braving its' chill, and navigating its chopiness and the thousands swimming around and about him, to successfully complete the 1.6km challenge. Well done, Theuns!

“If you want to raise money you've got to do extreme sports...right?”

The moral of the story: If you want to raise money you've got to do extreme sports... right?

That could work I suppose, but NO...the moral of this story is 'perseverance'! It's not so much about the success at the end, that of course is the desired outcome; rather it's about the journey. It's about negotiating the obstacles, overcoming the challenges, maintain focus on the goal. This experience mimics our life journey, the struggles, the effort, the setbacks.

We must persevere through it all holding fast to our faith; holding fast to our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.'



Theuns Pauw with his family



Vision

Transformed lives in Christ through an empowered church



Mission

To Evangelise the Cities of Africa through **WORD and **DEED** in partnership with the **CHURCH****

Follow



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AE Zambia

June 1-9, Kabwe Mission

AEE Rwanda

June 24-30, Kigali Leadership Mission

AEE Kenya

June 27-July 7, Kisumu Mission

AEE Tanzania

July 14-21, Dodoma Mission

AE South Africa

September 5-15, Johannesburg Mission

AEE DRC

September 14-21, Kinshasa West

AE Zimbabwe

September 20-29, Harare Mission

AEE Uganda

September 21-29, Soroti Mission

AE Ghana

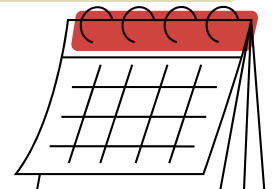
October 25-Nov 3, Tema Mission

AE South Sudan

October 27-Nov 3, Juba West

AE Ethiopia

December 24-29, Nefas Silk Mission





KENYA

IT'S TB, NOT WITCHCRAFT!

Despite being 100% curable, Tuberculosis continues to be one of the top 10 killer diseases in Kenya according to reports by AMREF and World Health Organisation.

Tuberculosis, (TB) is an infectious disease that most often affects the lungs. The disease is caused by Mycobacterium Tuberculosis. An estimated 128,000 people were infected with TB and an estimated 17,000 people died from the disease in 2022.

Linda, a volunteer at the Soweto Kayole PHC clinic which was established in 1996 by African Evangelistic Enterprise Kenya has had to face the locals in the community and break the stigma and misconceptions around TB.



“My name is Linda Kithuku, I have been a Kayole resident for decades. I currently volunteer at the Soweto Kayole PHC Clinic on weekdays while I am not at work.

I first visited the clinic in 2016. I had been sick for months and had visited various hospitals for therapy and medication, but for some reason, my condition worsened. I was also unemployed at the time, which had a negative impact on my life.

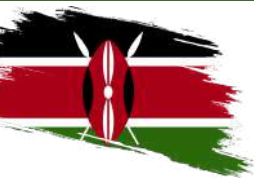
A lady friend of mine then recommended the facility and drove me there. They performed a series of tests and diagnosed me with tuberculosis (TB). They then gave me medication, fed me, and even paid me a visit at home. I was given medicine for the entire six months and was not charged a penny. I'm grateful to the team for everything they did for me”.

Today, Linda seeks out TB patients in Kayole and encourages them to visit Soweto clinic for treatment, medication, and counseling.

“Most individuals in my neighborhood feel that tuberculosis does not affect them. They walk around hospitals with many others, fearing that a spell has been placed on them, and instead go to churches for prayers or seek out witch doctors to break the so-called curse. I tell them it's tuberculosis and encourage them to go to the clinic. Most people who come do not finish their full six-month dosage, and after a few months, they stop and revert. The majority of people die from the disease. This is a big concern in our community.”

“**They walk around hospitals, fearing that a spell has been placed on them. They seek out witch doctors to break the so-called curse.**”





KENYA

Fired up Foxies in the Standing Grain

The Foxfires are the youthful arrows in the evangelism arsenal of African Enterprise. Every year, a group of 10-15 young people are recruited and trained holistically on how they can be contagious ministers of the gospel to their generation. The trainings range from life skills, the gospel, discipleship, and evangelism training to leadership training among others.

School ministry is an essential component of Foxfire training as it allows the team to serve the community while also putting what they've learned as theory into practice. While some find it difficult because it is their first experience others find it simple. Ann Wairimu from the AEE Kenya Foxfire team found it beautifully challenging.

"On Friday, February 16th, I remember the dates quite well since I was actually pulled out of my comfort zone. We held our first school ministry at St Hannah's. Despite the extensive training we had received in children's ministry, I still felt nervous and prayed to be in a class with one of my fellow Foxfires. However, we were each assigned different classes. I did not have anyone accompanying me. I expected the class to be loud, but it was fairly peaceful and engaged. The questions I received at the conclusion of class really challenged me; I was persuaded that these grade 6 students knew the Bible better than I did. I took it as a challenge to set aside time each day to go through the Bible in order to be ready to answer the questions as thoroughly as possible. I had a fantastic day and look forward to going back every Friday". Ann Wairimu, foxfire 2024.



"I've learned a lot from the intriguing themes we discussed throughout the training. Two sessions have had an impact on my life, one of which was the book of John. It talks about love, this being covered in the month of February was quite something for me because I have always connected February as the month of love, so it was really fitting. I was able to see God's love, which I pray I never take for granted. The second session was known as 'the elephant in the room.' One of the things we covered throughout this session was drugs and substance misuse, which was very profound. It was not a lecture, but rather a discussion in which we expressed our viewpoints on specific issues and reached an understanding of it. We opened up and some shared their experiences. We were reassured that it's possible to choose one's own path, regardless of past experiences and hurt. We have the opportunity to make a change, rather than repeating past habits".Joan Wanjiru, Foxfire 2024



ZAMBIA

40 on 4 Training in Zambia

The African Enterprise International Institute of Evangelism runs strategic trainings for church leaders through 4 books on effective evangelism. Bishop Gibson Mwile is one of the church leaders who have been impacted by the training.

Bishop Dr. Gibson Mwile serves as the Overseer of Jesus Assembly Ministries in the Matero Constituency and is also the Chairman of the Matero Constituency Pastors' Fellowship. When asked about his experience with the training, Bishop Mwile described it as insightful and pertinent. Since completing the training, Bishop Mwile has found the materials to be highly beneficial, not only for himself but also for his church. He has commenced training his leaders and youth within the local church using the 4 books on Evangelism from Africa Enterprise International. He has observed significant positive changes and enhancements in several church ministries due to these resources. He aims to share the 4 books with the four Pastors' Fellowships in Matero Constituency and he hopes to motivate all churches in the Matero Constituency to prioritize evangelism and discipleship.

He believes that the Church in Zambia has been overly focused on preaching the prosperity gospel, leading many to prioritize material wealth over spiritual growth. Bishop Mwile is determined to shift the focus towards the importance of Evangelism and Missions, intending to see local churches benefit from active evangelistic efforts on the ground.

“But I have resolved to focus on the primacy of Evangelism and Missions and I would like to see local churches benefiting from the evangelistic work on the ground,”

His vision is for the Church to concentrate on Evangelism, Missions, and Social Action, anticipating that this will eventually impact communities, leading to revival and transformation. He encouraged African Enterprise International to continue offering this training, not only to pastors but to all believers in the body of Christ. He expressed gratitude for being selected as one of the 40 leaders to partake in the evangelism training, acknowledging the honor and expressing his appreciation.



“...I would like to see local churches benefiting from the evangelistic work on the ground,”



ZAMBIA

If you want to go far, hold hands!

Rose Nyirongo and Anna Mwanza, graduates of the Women Empowerment Skills Training Program concluded in December 2023, are both from the Twikatane Community Transformation Group (CTG) in Kabanana. In the local Bemba language, "**Twikatane**" means '**Let's hold our hands together**', a sentiment Rose and Anna have embraced. Just a month after graduating, they decided to join forces and establish a shop in their community, embarking on a journey towards economic empowerment.

Initially met with skepticism and doubt among Kabanana residents and other areas in Lusaka, Rose and Anna's partnership is now a testament to the impact of African Enterprise and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They represent two of the twenty individuals who received sewing machines and tailoring skills, igniting progress within the Twikatane Community Group and transforming the lives of numerous women in Kabanana.

The successful execution of the Vocational Skills Training Project by African Enterprise Southern Africa Region (AESAR) through the Social Action Department has highlighted the social action component of African Enterprise to the Lusaka communities. With the inaugural cohort of the Women Empowerment Program graduating, the vision of African Enterprise International to evangelize African cities through both Word and Deed, in collaboration with the Church, is now coming to fruition. The impact of this initiative is beginning to be felt in Lusaka, with Rose and Anna embodying the essence of African Enterprise International's vision. They take every opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with their customers, reflecting their transformed lives and their growing influence within the community.

"Please convey our thank you to African Enterprise International and to the donors who made it possible for us to acquire this skill in Fashion and Design and empowered us with sewing machines. THANK YOU!" the said.



Rose Nyirongo



Anne Mwanza and Rose Nyirongo

Muthoni's Journey from Kibera's Depths

In the heart of Kibera, Nairobi, Africa's largest urban slum; under the hot glazing sun, a young woman named Muthoni stands at the road barrier fence that divides the bustling, congested heart of the slum from its quieter outskirts. She is a seventeen-year-old single mother, her eyes gleaming with hope that shines through the hardship. Lost in thought, she extends her hand toward the other side of the highway and softly speaks, "One day, I will cross this road and find a home on the other side. I was born on the challenging side of Kibera, and I refuse to be confined here forever. I want to break free for the sake of my children."

Muthoni's roots run deep in Kibera, where life unfolds within cramped shacks composed of mud walls and corrugated tin roofs. These 12x12-foot spaces are shared by up to eight people, and in this unforgiving environment, most residents earn less than \$2 a day. Unemployment looms large, and about 12% of the population battles HIV. Cases of assault and rape are tragically common. Education remains elusive for most children, and clean water is a distant luxury. Diseases born of poor hygiene are rampant, while access to basic services such as electricity, running water, and medical care feel like a distant dream.

*"One day, I will cross this road
and find a home on the other side"*

Muthoni's life took a harsh turn at a young age when she crossed paths with a man who promised to marry her and offer a better life. She moved into a modest shack with her then 20-year-old boyfriend, but the conditions bore a painful resemblance to her own childhood home. Tearfully, Muthoni recounts the torment of her husband's drunken abuse. "Sometimes we went to bed hungry because we couldn't afford food. I vividly remember a day when he came home drunk and erupted in anger when I asked for money to buy food. He yelled and beat me. I ran away and stayed at a friend's home for a while."

In Kibera, daily crime plagues the lives of many, a result of the staggering unemployment rate, which drives people to seek solace in drugs and alcohol, mirroring Muthoni's husband's struggles. Over time, Muthoni could no longer endure the torment of her relationship. She returned to her family, only to be met with rejection by her own father. "I began seeking casual work to survive, saving bit by bit until I could rent a small shack. Giving birth was an ordeal, and there were moments when I thought I might not survive. Being a single mother in Kibera is an immense challenge."

Single mothers like Muthoni face discrimination within their community, often trapped in the cycle of poverty and unexpected pregnancies. Women face marginalization, especially if they are unable to secure employment. Tearfully, Muthoni shares, "My father disowned me, and my mother couldn't offer support. People spread false stories about me, and I regret trusting my then husband. Now I have no choice but to care for my daughter, holding onto the hope that her future will be brighter." She takes on various casual jobs to provide for her now three-year-old daughter.

As much as reaching across the road seems farfetched for single mothers like Muthoni, it is still possible. This can be done through targeted education, exposure to technology, and the sharing of personal experiences. Single mothers in Kibera can then develop valuable skills and identify income-generating opportunities that align with market demands and their passions. Initiatives like CTGs present a promising avenue for these women to access the education they need, gain exposure to technology, and find strength in shared experiences. Additionally, the psychosocial support they can offer one another is invaluable, fostering a sense of community and resilience.

Despite the hardships, Muthoni persists, taking on various casual jobs to provide for her three-year-old daughter. As we navigate the dusty, stifling roads back to Muthoni's home, her unwavering hope is a testament to the resilience of her spirit. It serves as a reminder that even in the face of immense challenges, the desire for a better future can shine brightly, motivating individuals like Muthoni to continue striving for a brighter tomorrow.



A Harsh Start to 2024

The first month of 2024 brought sad news to the entire African Enterprise Partnership as we lost two team leaders to illness. Reverend Emmanuel Masanja Mbaaga who was serving as the Team Leader for African Evangelistic Enterprise Tanzania rested on 8th January 2024 after a long fight against cancer and an emergent heart problem. Reverend Emmanuel beefed up mission activities in Tanzania during his short spell as Team Leader and his passion for mentoring and taking care of children was without bounds as he opened up his own home to street children whom he brought up as his own.

Barely a day after the demise of Rev. Mbaaga, we were shocked by the departure into glory of Dr. Melisachew Mesfin who served as African Enterprise Ethiopia Team Leader. Dr. Melisachew succumbed to a sudden and critical illness that saw him seek medical treatment in India, where he died. Dr. Melisachew had served in AE for over 20 years and his commitment to growing the church of tomorrow today is evidenced by the legacy of discipleship that he left behind. The death of both team leaders was a heavy blow to the partnership, but even more to the close family and friends.

A virtual memorial service was arranged and tributes were shared about both servants of God.

We shall surely miss them!

Rev. Mbaaga was so selfless. Despite being unwell, last year, he joined us for the closing rally of AEE Tanzania mission. Spent quite some good time with him. I had no idea that was our last time together. Additionally, he opened his home for us(AE staff members) to visit and share devotion over dinner. Interestingly, we found out that he has adopted a couple of orphaned and vulnerable children especially boys - many referred to him as 'dad'. He truly evangelized in Word and Deed both at personal and corporate levels. The brevity of life! May the Lord teach us to number our days and gain a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12). A gallant soldier gone home. Comfort to the immediate family, Church, and AE

Janet Mwendwa, AEI Social Actions Director.

This has come as a terrific shock to us, and it must have been even more so for you (Mel's wife) . I must say I am personally feeling this loss very acutely as I dearly loved Mel, especially after getting to know him so well during our 3 week trip to India. He was one of the loveliest men in the whole AE ministry, and certainly one of the most competent. His loyalty to me was also something I greatly treasured, and I only wish I could have had more time with him. To be sure, we will all miss him greatly.

Micheal Cassidy, AE Founder



Rev. Emmanuel Mbaaga



Dr. Melisachew Mesfin

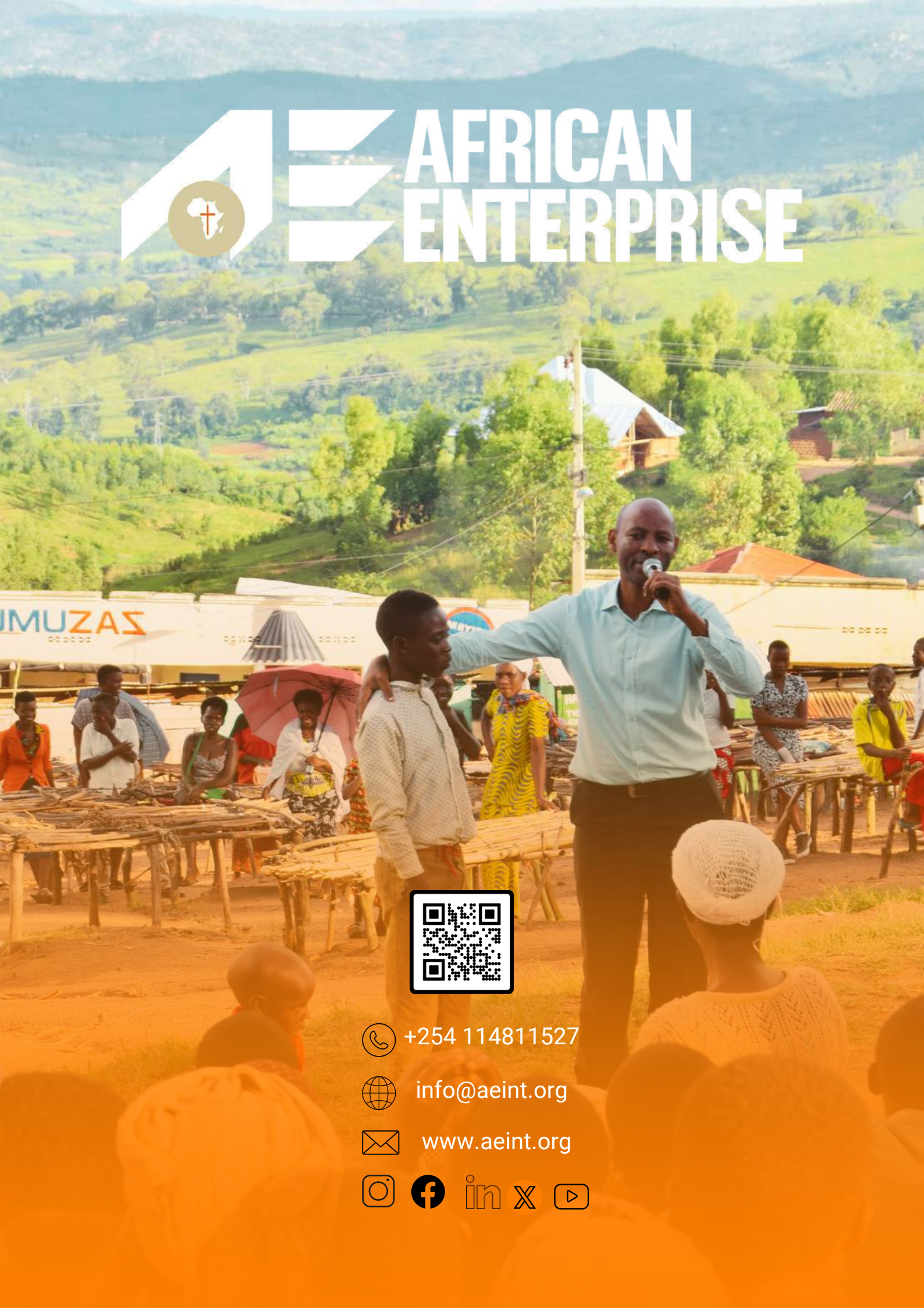
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