



## **AFRICAN CHRISTIAN ASSET PROGRAMME ACAP**

### **COMMUNIQUE OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE WORKSHOP** **AACC CONFERENCE CENTER, NAIROBI, 2-4 MARCH 2016**

#### **1. Preamble**

We participants gathered here at All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Nairobi, Kenya, representing Churches and church-related organizations from 10 countries namely Cameroon, Democratic Republic Congo(DRC) , Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe appreciate the importance of exercising proper stewardship over assets entrusted to us. We recognize that today, Churches and church-related institutions such as schools, hospitals, seminaries, universities and agencies own and manage large amount of assets (real estate, land, forests, water resources, works of art and financial investments) and that it is our God given responsibility to care for proper acquisition, use and disposal of these assets.

We gathered under the auspices and the support of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Bread for the World and Globethics.net Foundation which is a global network on ethics with three regional programmes in Africa (East Africa with an office in Nairobi, Kenya, Francophone Africa based in Cotonou, Benin and Southern Africa based in Pretoria, South Africa) and with over 20 National Contacts in the continent.

We appreciate the efforts of churches and church related organizations in improving assets management. We recognise that throughout history, many churches have continued with difficulties to depend on their own assets rather than external donations that have remained unsustainable. The last three decades of gradual decrease in funding from donors have opened our eyes to new possibilities for becoming self-sustaining through creative use of Assets entrusted to us by God.

Today, we believe that the efficient, effective and ethical management of entrusted assets and resources is not only a moral duty, but also an economic imperative to guarantee the long-term sustainability of these services.

#### **2. We are full of hope and express our concerns**

2.1 We heard manifold success stories of participants and their institutions of improved and successful management of assets which led to an increase of income and sustainability.

2.2 We thank God for all faithful people and their courage as change agents and good stewards of assets which are God's property to care for.

2.3 We struggle with governance, leadership and accountability in the management of our assets and resources in religious institutions are common practice, in the continent of Africa. We remain deeply concerned at the growing debt portfolio in many of our countries. Indeed debt is not life in dignity. The campaign for debt cancelation for two decades does not seem to have yielded any significant benefits to our communities

2.4 We are deeply concerned at how senseless wars and conflicts have destroyed the fabric of our society and led to destruction of some of our valuable assets

2.5 We have indeed been slow in making decisions concerning acquisition and use of assets and we have not been able to think about time in an ethical and theological manner

2.6 We are aware that we have not always exercised efficient and effective stewardship over use of assets entrusted to us.

2.7 We have often underinsured a number of our major assets against fire, theft and loss

2.8 We remain concerned about the fact that many of our institutions still don't have asset registers of their properties to effectively control and monitor their use.

2.9 We are concerned that some are still holding onto assets even where it is clear that they could have been disposed of and proceeds from sale better invested.

### **3. As we return to our churches, we commit ourselves to:**

3.1 Recommending to our churches to consider developing a theological curriculum in our educational institutions that addresses effective stewardship over assets;

3.2 Sensitizing our communities about the importance of stewardship over resources entrusted to us by God;

3.3 Putting in place a robust management and leadership structure that cares for our resources

3.4 Caring for resources will include taking stock of the land bank, providing budgetary provision for preventive maintenance possible risk of litigation, registration of documents and seeking to work with reliable investors;

3.4 Ensuring that for leasehold assets we shall try to seek for better returns by making creative use of existing land-operating leases;

3.5 Establishing the culture of utilizing professionals to assist us manage our assets.

3.6 Ensuring that we verify the reasonableness of returns on investment of our assets by being in touch with likeminded organizations

3.7 Maintaining an Assets Register and that is regularly up dated. All assets will be tagged for proper identification;

3.8 Putting in place a basic insurance cover to assist many churches secure their assets against loss and theft.

We pray that God will give us the strength, will and energy to put into practice what we have learnt during these three days.

#### **4. We ask our development partners**

4.1 To stand with us in the process of implementing the commitments;

4.2 To support us in coordination between us, in expertise and identifying experts, in putting in place mechanisms of asset management;

4.3 To accompany us in the effective acquisition, use and management of assets in keeping with our core mission.

#### **5. Coordination and Next Steps**

5.1 We ask Globethics.net in collaboration with AACC to take the coordination role in strengthening the Assets Management.

5.2 We ask Bread for the World (BfDW) and other Partners to support this process.

5.3 We plan to meet within one year and report back on our progress and discerning the way forward. Next meeting is planned for March 1 to 3, 2017 at AACC Conference Centre.

#### For coordination contacts:

- AACC: Dr. Bright Mawudor, Deputy General Secretary, Nairobi/Kenya [mawudor@aacc-ceta.org](mailto:mawudor@aacc-ceta.org)
- Globethics.net: Prof. Dr. Christoph Stückelberger, Executive Director and Founder, Geneva/Switzerland, [stueckelberger@globethics.net](mailto:stueckelberger@globethics.net)