Greetings of Peace from FECCLAHA Secretariat.

COVID-19 pandemic has been declared a global health challenge. Its spread across the globe has not only resulted in over 2.5 million people contracting the virus with more than 180,000 reported deaths; but also posed a major Public Health challenge that is threatening to overwhelm our health systems world over.

The current reality is causing fear and uncertainty of the future among the citizens; but there is hope! We have a blessed assurance that our Almighty God will save us. We are being called to remain hopeful and to hold on to God’s promise of redemption, mercy, and love (Isaiah 63:9. The pandemic will surely come to an end.

We, however, do have a part to play in containing the spread of the disease in our community, countries, and in the region. We are urging all our members and their constituencies to follow and encourage those in their households and places of work to adhere to the simple guidelines set by our health experts: washing hands with soap and water, social distancing at all times, staying home, and wearing face masks when in public places.

Further, as people of faith, we are also calling you (church leaders, women, youth and men) to pray without ceasing. We have outlined a list of prayer issues in this newsletter that you and your team could pray about.

We in FECCLAHA Secretariat, in line with the Government’s directives, are working from home. The travel restrictions within the country and across the region have affected some of our planned initiatives, but the staff remains accessible and continue to undertake their duties and responsibilities. We look forward to continue engaging and planning with you during this period.

We pray for your safety and urge you to pray without cease.

MS. JEANNETTE UWIZEYE
Executive Director
In the midst of this global challenge, we are called to pray.

Please let us pray for:

**End of Domestic and Sexual Violence and protection of the vulnerable in our community:**
Sadly, our homes are not always safe places for some women and girls. With the restrictions on movements/social distancing/gathering directives, many women and young girls and other vulnerable groups are exposed to domestic and sexual violence.

Let us pray that we will speak out against such vices and call out perpetrators of this evil act in our homes and communities.

**Healing and strength for our brothers and sisters who have contracted the virus:**
Across the globe over 2 Million people have contracted and are fighting the virus in various isolation centres and the number is steadily growing.

As we continue to encourage our family members and those around us to follow all government directives seeking to stop the spread of the virus, let us that the focus of our leaders worldwide will be on reducing the spread of the virus as well us providing the best health care to those who have contracted the virus; and divert from the politicization of the fight against COVID-19.

**Protection of our Health workers and experts:**
Health workers are a key pillar to the success in the fight against this virus. Tragically, the health care systems in most of our countries are evidently stretched leaving our health workers exposed. Let us pray that there will be adequate equipment and technology needed in the fight against this vice.

**Access to basic needs by citizens:**
A significant population in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa belongs to the informal sector of our economies.

While important and necessary the stringent measures and directives put in place to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus are, they have extensively affected many sources of livelihoods for families in the region.

Let us pray that our faith communities will step up and mobilize local resources to support their community members. Let us pray for a heart of compassion and sharing among our community members as well as stir afresh the spirit of volunteerism among the youth and other community members.

Let us all stand together in unity and prayer.
ECCLAHA participated in the commemoration of the International Women’s Day 2020 held in Nairobi, Kenya upon invitation by its partner; the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC).

The celebration, held on the 6th of March, a day which coincided with the World Day of Prayer, brought together faith actors such as Side by Side Faith Gender Justice Movement, AACC member churches, National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCK), Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM), Christian Aid, World Council of Churches (WCC), and ACT Alliance as well as civil society organizations including National Gender Equality Commission (NGEC), The African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) and Men for the Equality of Women and Men amongst others.

The International Women’s Day celebration traces back to the early 1900s, a period marked with great unrest and critical debates amongst women, all spurred by oppression and inequality against women globally. The pursuit for equality and change continued until 1911, when the day was marked formally.

To date, March 8th, the International Women’s Day is marked globally with the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women being the core of the celebrations.

This year’s theme; Each for Equal, acknowledged that an equal world is an enabled world and highlighted the role of both men and women towards the realization of an equal world.

This aimed at celebrating the achievements of an African woman, acknowledging and highlighting the milestones achieved by African women in various fronts, recognizing men as allies in the realization of equality as well as strengthening relationships between faith actors.

Emphasis was laid on the participation of women in peace building, ending Gender Based Violence (GBV) through the adoption of strategies to end GBV, and the involvement of faith leaders/perspectives in the implementation of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment strategy within the African Union Agenda 2063.
FECLAHA in partnership with TAABCO Research and Development Consultant, the World Council of Churches (WCC), Bread for the World, South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) and the National Council of Churches of Burundi (CNEB) participated in two Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (PJP) experience sharing workshops held in Lukenya-Kenya and Bujumbura-Burundi in February and March, 2020 respectively.

Also in attendance were members of the WCC Central Committee, the Executive Committee as well as representatives of international and local ecumenical partners; young women with leadership potential and working in conflict contexts and regional experts.

The workshops provided spaces for sharing experiences and lessons learnt as regards trauma on women in contexts of conflict. This is in line with WCC methodology on the Joint Ecumenical PJP which focuses on; listening to the voices of women, and consequently highlighting the impact of war and trauma on them, the good practices in the region and the coping mechanisms by the women leaders and to empower young women leaders with a view to jointly analyse and propose programmatic response.

Additionally, these workshops provided a global platform for Women leaders to exchange and learn from one another. The findings from these workshops will contribute towards formulation of a message for WCC Central Committee and General Assembly.

FECLAHA shared its experience as regards the Regional Faith Women Mediators Network (REFWOMEN) and its engagements with Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) through the use of Tamar Campaign.

FECLAHA is putting in place plans to follow up on the discussions held during the PJP as well as establishing points of engagements in collaboration with other partners.
FECLALHA participated in the meeting on the Ecumenical Network of South Sudan (ENSS) that took place on 21\textsuperscript{st} and 22\textsuperscript{nd} January, 2020 in Kit, South Sudan.

Also present were ecumenical partners from the African, European, and Northern America Hubs; as well as members of the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC). Among the ecumenical partners present were; All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), World Council of Churches (WCC), Act-Alliance, Bread for World, Miseror, Kairos Canada, Tear-fund, and Arigatou International.

The meeting sought to update the ecumenical partners on the current context of South Sudan; as well as to strategize on strengthening national, regional and international peace advocacy ahead of the Revitalized – Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) in the country.

Discussions also emerged on the current situation in the country; the growing number of refugees and the growing level of insecurity, food insecurity, growing tensions due to the unresolved issue on the number of states in the country, as well as the extreme poverty in the country.

Others included the possible scenarios ahead of the R-TGoNU at the end of February, 2020 and a progress report by the SSCC on the implementation of the Action Plan for Peace (APP) and an advocacy engagements plan for the year 2020.

The SSCC partners and HUBs committed to continue accompanying and supporting the SSCC in their initiatives on peace and implementation of the Action Plan for Peace (APP). The meeting also agreed on the focal persons of the various Hubs and within SSCC.

Pursuant to the October 2019 resolution during the FECLALHA Regional Ecumenical Forum , South Sudan remains a focus area. FECLALHA therefore continues to plan and engage with SSCC in supporting peace building and conflict transformation initiatives in the country. These initiatives include support through FECLALHA/RPP Regional Faith Women Mediators’ Network (REFWOMEN).
FECLLAHA has completed the compilation of its 2019 Annual Report. The report outlines the achievements and good practices learnt and documented during the year.


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**News and Other Events**

**FECLLAHA Annual Report 2019**

FECLLAHA has completed the compilation of its 2019 Annual Report. The report outlines the achievements and good practices learnt and documented during the year.


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**Regional Peace Programme Partners 'Planning Meeting**

FECLLAHA participated in two Regional Peace Programme (RPP) Partners’ meeting that were held in January and March, 2020 in Nairobi– Kenya.

Also in attendance were programme staff of RPP Partners: All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Africa Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL-RfP), Arigatou International, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), the International Centre for Peace, Human Rights and Development in Africa (IPHRD-Africa) and Hekima Institution of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR).

The aim of this partners’ meeting was to among others; reviewing the achievements from the previous RPP Strategy (2016-2019), consolidating and aligning annual work plans for the year 2020 as well as discussing key RPP joint program actions.

The Programme is implemented through a nested partnership between NCA and six faith-based organisations namely: FECLLAHA, AACC, ACRL- RfP, Arigatou International, HIPSIR and IPHRD-Africa.

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**Child Safeguarding and Protection Workshop**

Two members of staff from FECLLAHA, Mr. Nicholas Amito and Mr. David Omondi, participated in the child safeguarding and protection workshop held on February 29th 2020 at Tangaza University College, Nairobi-Kenya.

The workshop was convened by DKA Austria, and targeted DKA partner organizations.

This aimed at enabling individual organizations to develop and strengthen their child safeguarding policies as well as promoting safe working practices in their respective organizations.

Mr. Nicholas Amito (Center) during the Child safeguarding and protection workshop held on 29th February 2020 at the Tangaza University College.
(1.) A section of the participants during the first RPP partner’s annual reflections and planning meeting held in January, 2020 Nairobi Kenya.

(2.) Participants of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace workshop held in Nairobi- Kenya from 26th to 29th February, 2020.

(3.) Group photo: Participants of the Child safeguarding and protection workshop held on 29th February, 2020 at the Tangaza University College.

(4.) During the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Workshop held on 3rd March, 2020 Bujumbura, Burundi.

(5.) In a group discussion during the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Experience sharing Workshop on 3rd March, 2020 Bujumbura, Burundi.

(6) Participants of the second RPP partner’s meeting held at the Norwegian Church Aid Board Room in March 11th 2020 Nairobi Kenya.
OUR CORE STATEMENT

Core Values:

- Human Dignity
  - Gen. 1:26
- Compassion
  - Micah 6:8
- Peace
  - Matthew 5:5-8
- Justice
  - Isaiah 1:16-18
- Integrity
  - Proverbs 11:3
- Ecumenism
  - John 17:21

Mission:

To promote ecumenical solidarity for justice, peace, healing and conflict transformation and reconciliation in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa through advocacy, networking and partnership, capacity building, research and documentation within the framework of holistic Christian Ministry.

Vision:

Together for justice, sustainable peace and development

Publications

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Together for Justice, Sustainable Peace and Development
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