

The Community Voice



UNITED RELIGIONS INITIATIVE-GREAT LAKES AFRICA

The Golden Women Matching for Peace



On April 29th, this year, Golden Women Vision Uganda (GWVU) CC in partnership with SAFE Alliance of Interfaith leaders organized an interfaith match for Peace and Justice in Gulu District, Northern Uganda. The Match's; **"Theme was advocating for peace in Northern Uganda"**.

"This match has really been an eye opener for people of Northern Uganda who had been suffering for over two decades with wars. In Northern Uganda, these days, the guns shot are silence but it doesn't mean that there is total peace in the region", **remarked Sylvia Acan, the Director of GWVU CC.**

The URI-GL Chairperson, Bishop Ocholla, noted that the Executive is the first lady in Gulu District who spearheaded the banning of Sacket Waragi in Gulu District because most men were spending all their earnings in Alcohol than supporting their families and there were high levels of violence, poverty, suicide and death among others. He in a special way, thanked the SAFE Alliance of Interfaith leaders for introducing this special program to Golden Women Vision in Uganda because will change people's lives and bring sustainable peace in Northern Uganda.

In a special we wish to thank Safe Alliance of Interfaith leaders for extending their supportive hand towards the people of this part of the world to harness peaceful ways of living with each other. In a special way, thanks go to the URI Global Support Office for providing a networking environment and thank you URI – GL office for connecting us with URI North America RC and Safe Alliance of Interfaith leaders for the grant opportunity to organize this great event. **Sylvia Acan's appreciative note.**

Stepping Up Creative Industries: Prometra Uganda CC Features at the National Cultural Day



- It was a day themed around, **“Creative Industries: The Opportunity for peace and employment creation”**, not as a mere statement but a step towards awakening the love for identity for all Ugandans to be proud of their cultural diversity, taking stock of how far they have come in this journey, and exposing it to the greater world in all means at their disposal.
- **Prometra Uganda CC**, being a master in the field have already tapped into cultural diversity, by promoting traditional medicine in healing the lives of the grassroots people and providing them with alternatives to primary health care right from their home settings, in their small gardens. Clad in their traditional attires, the trainees and alumni at Prometra showcased their works to the world, rich in natural endowment but also a clear demonstration of tapping from culture to create employment opportunities to the so many people, who would have otherwise had nothing to sustain them. Uganda celebrates 51 indigenous groups all of which have a rich culture to merit from. URI is proud to be a universal demonstration of the power of religious and cultural diversity, stretching to all the corners of the Earth.

Sharing is Dialogue: REC CC-Uganda shows us How

Dialogue is done in many ways. Each and every one of us contributes to building blocks in society as individuals, through dialogue, sharing, laughter, seeking advise, being there for each other, name it, as that bonds the society. This only happens when we nurture it. We don't have to look at religious or cultural background, we instead look at **HUMANITY**.

This informed Restoring and Empowering Communities CC (REC) drive to reach out to community members within their neighborhood with food stuff and personal sharing on issues that affect them as human beings. Coming during this Ramathan season, was symbolic enough, for all the community members reached to embrace each other's faith belief as a powerful tool to building bridges and relate and work together harmoniously. **Sharing by REC CC Director, Nageeba Hassan Tegulwa**





URI's Interfaith Mediation and Reconciliation Dialogue in Uganda

URI-Great Lakes organized mediation and reconciliatory dialogue among the Salaf and Sunni Muslim leaders during this month of June in Uganda, Mayuge district. This was as a result of the peace building Interventions in Eastern Uganda (Mayuge, Bugiri and Namayingo districts), URI's was entrusted with a mediator role by the leaders of the different Muslim sects to mediate as a neutral partner. The dialogue was aimed at addressing religious based differences between the Muslim sects in these districts which have been persistent for such a long time. Accusations of framing each other before security organs concerning the support of extremist tendencies, alienation of the Salaf by the Sunni over development programmes, among other challenges were common scenarios. This lack of trust though comes with an array of religious mistrust as was indicated in the dialogue. To crown it all, as a symbol of reconciliation, each of the leaders took with him/her an Eid Al Fitr package as a courteous gesture from URI, the gifts were strategically exchanged across the sects, for instance, with someone from the Salaf sect, exchanging with a member of the Sunni sect. This is all thanks to the support of the United Religions Initiative (URI) Global Support Office and also Global Centre on Cooperative Security (USA) together with Wasafiri Consulting the East African Regional CVE Research Hub.



URI-GL Scores Strides in the CVE space



GLOBAL CENTER
Rehabilitating and Reintegrating Violent Extremist Offenders and Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Lessons from Civil Society Actors
Tuesday 27 March 2018
Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations



We have made enormous developments in the CVE space, by taking humble yet strategic attempts in navigating the Countering Violent Extremism space at the local and international level. URI's mandate by default provides us with great opportunity to share what we know, because ours is "promoting enduring daily cooperation to end religiously motivated violence". We have made efforts to share this soft approach of interfaith dialogue to the various CVE players, and its being considered by many as an alternative strategy as opposed to the militaristic one which has so far proven to be counterproductive as seen from the scale of attacks that we witness on the global media. One of our encounters has been at a CSO conference organized by the Global Centre on Cooperative Security in Newyork, where our approach was appreciated. The wealth of actions from our CC groups have made a difference.

DRC: Fire Women Association CC in a Humanitarian Drive



The Fire Women Association CC in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), made a courteous drive to reach out to orphans and women affected by trauma of the civil war in this part of the world. They gave donations but also trained the school teachers on the reconstruction of children affected by conflict based trauma. We salute our members in Fire Ministries for this humanitarian cause.

Welcoming our Kenya CCs to the URI-Great Lakes Family



During this period, we had special connections with our Cooperation Circles based in Kenya. It was a move to officially welcome the CC members to the Great Lakes chapter of URI. The URI Africa Director, Amb. Mussie Hailu, URI Africa Trustee, Rattan Chana together with the URI Great Lakes Regional Coordinator, Despina Namwembe spearheaded the entire process.

With great enthusiasm, the CC members in Kenya had a deepened conversation about having a fruitful partnership including among others exploring ways of supporting initiatives of individual CCs as well as the CC fraternity as a whole, encouraging exchange learning programs, as well as strategic staffing in that part to increase CC vigilance and oversight.

In total, we have about 26 groups in Kenya, some active and others facing operational challenges, all of which needs to be addressed to ensure them experiencing relevance of the network.

Our special welcome to all our Kenya CC family. Welcome Aboard URI-Great Lakes

We also wish to thank our outgoing sister Nyambura Mundia who has done incredible work in the country as a CC contact. Nyambura was seen off at this event in Nairobi in April.

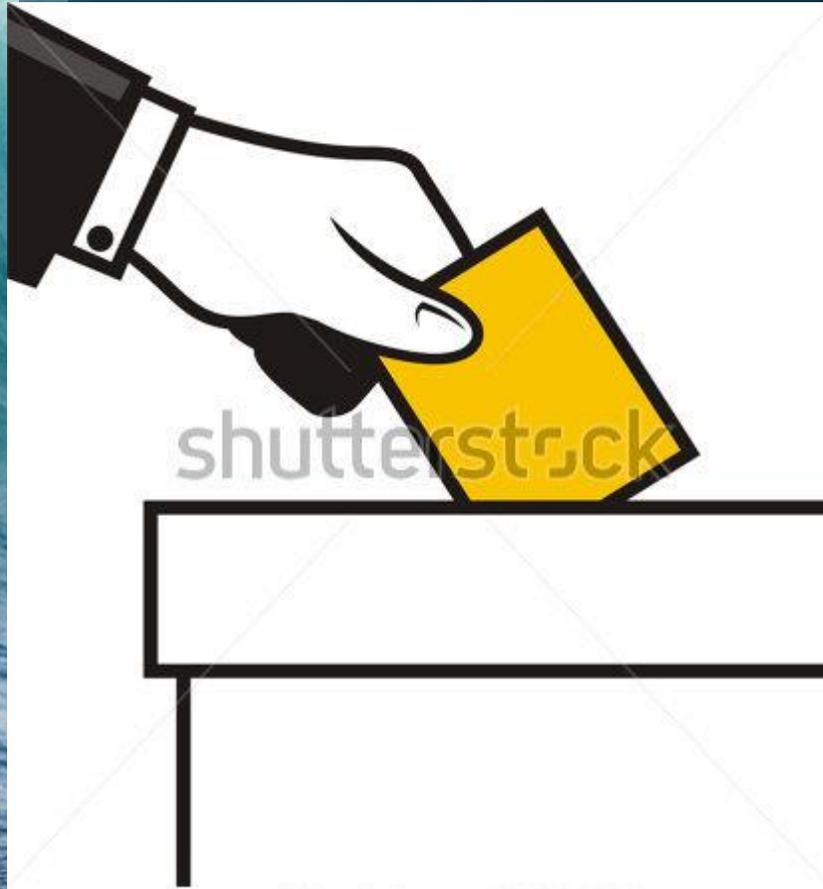


IYPA CC Fighting Plastic Pollution



On the 5th of June, **Interfaith Youth Partnership (IYPA) CC in Uganda** together with their friends, Kwagalana Development group joined the rest of the world to celebrate the World Environment Day. The event was thematized around Environment and Sanitation, "Stop Plastic Pollution", as a campaign to sensitize the public on the health and environmental risks associated with the increasing plastic pollution mostly in all urban and slum areas in Uganda. All the members in this community of Nansana who participated in this campaign received fruit tree seedlings as a mitigative measure to conserve the environment. Environmental Conservation is a crucial thematic area of URI and we therefore salute all of our members who take practical actions to salvage the Earth and all of us the people that live in it. We salute IYPA CC for this noble cause

URI EXERCISES GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY



After the conclusion of the Trustee voting process, like elsewhere in the Global URI network, the Great Lakes family wishes to congratulate Fr. John Ngoma from Malawi - South African Region, Hon. Elisha Buba – West African Region and Bishop M. Ochola from the Great Lakes Region of Africa.

We also wish to thank all those who participated in this process and to let you know that we acknowledge and appreciate your passion for doing this work. We shall continue to source for your skills in various ways of leadership for the region and beyond as we continue to grow as an institution.

Thank you so much!!!!