

Seeking National Restoration in West Africa

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Today I would like to present the activities of the West Africa region. I would like to share West Africa's status, our strategies, our activities from 2015 to 2016 and their results. I would like to explain, too, what we plan to do from 2017 to 2020; that is, how we are going to achieve national restoration. In particular, True Mother has designated Cote d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of Congo special strategic nations. In light of that, how can we actually realize a nation of Cheon Il Guk?

First, West Africa church region comprises twenty-five nations. At the end of 2014, 11,782 members participated in Sunday service; in 2015, 14,556 did and by the end of 2016, the number was about 19,000. These numbers do not show much of an increase, but the number of churches has changed greatly. When I first came in 2014, the region had 235 churches, but after a Chung Pyung forty-day workshop for all national leaders of Africa and their spouses, that number doubled to 486. We currently have 965. Donations have also increased. What we received in donations from all twenty-five nations in our region in 2014 increased by 48 percent in 2015 and that amount increased by 35 percent the following year. Up until now, many other nations have supported Africa. Africa has many resources, including diamonds, oil and gold. My goal is for Africa to become self-sustaining. In order to become self-sustaining, I have been emphasizing the importance of donations more than I had in other regions, so that we can show the world that we can live well on our own resources.

My first goal upon arriving in West Africa was leadership training. I focused on teaching leaders so we can create a witnessing environment and expand it. Next, I focused on how we can become a self-sustaining church. I calculated that we need a thousand members to become autonomous. We can achieve that if a thousand members give donations. If each person gave \$10, we would have enough money to sustain a church. In Africa, at least, that is sufficient.



Attracting new members

My next focus was how to achieve national restoration in a special strategic nation. To do that, we need people power. With this in mind, I have been teaching African members that we can achieve national restoration with ten thousand families.

In 2015, between March and April, True Parents gave the great grace to all national leader couples in Africa of going through a forty-day workshop in Chung Pyung, Korea together. This workshop brought about great change. For forty years, Africa has been growing, but not once have we brought all the

national leader couples to Korea for a workshop. This workshop made a deep impression on them. Around fifty people came from West Africa's twenty-five nations, during which we received deep love and grace.

On that foundation, for five days, April 3–8, 2016, we held a West Africa Regional Leadership Assembly, in which national leaders, heads of witnessing departments, family departments, youth departments, WFWP and UPF all came together. The leaders came from their countries by car through many different countries and met for five days.

Much grace pervaded the workshop. I have participated in many meetings with national leaders; but having all the executives of different departments at meetings was special. We were able to bring about great change through this meeting. Around 120 people from twenty-three nations produced noticeable results. We plan to have a leadership assembly in West Africa and Central Africa again. When West Africa did this, leaders experienced some difficulties driving for days and crossing many borders, having meetings for a few days and then driving back to their countries. This year we plan to have a West African Leadership Assembly with around a hundred people from seventeen nations and a separate Central African Leadership Assembly for eighty people from eight nations.

We set the seven-day Divine Principle workshop as the basic standard for educating and enlightening people about True Parents in West Africa. We are responsible to guide members to attend a seven-day workshop. Getting the African people to experience a seven-day workshop is our responsibility. They have to listen to the entire Divine Principle from the beginning to the end. If afterward they do not attend our church, that is their own responsibility, but those seven days are our responsibility. If they work or otherwise cannot attend a workshop, they have to listen to forty Divine Principle lectures. We have around seventy lectures, but we compressed them into forty. I created a standard three-hundred-slide presentation and a booklet, a hundred and fifty pages long, from that. Any nation can use it in the field. We are also creating a standard seven-day workshop curriculum. In West Africa, each family must donate \$10 a month. This is very important. I tell members, If you keep receiving financial support, you are living as a servant. Don't you want to be an owner? True Parents have said we must become true owners. To become an owner you have to donate.



Our reputation

Our witnessing environment for heavenly tribal messiah activities is very good. No negative impressions about our church or negative groups exist. When we introduce our church and True Parents, people accept the information well. If any member makes just a little effort, he or she can recruit twelve families within a year. This is a good point about Africa.

On the foundation of these twelve families, members strive to reach thirty-six. They then teach those thirty-six to reach twelve couples each. When they have that, the number recruited becomes four hundred and thirty two. Through this process, the members naturally become heavenly tribal messiahs. We are creating an environment for them to continuously witness. At this time, we have not had many couples who have completed their Heavenly tribal messiah mission, but from next year we expect many will complete their mission.

Our witnessing success level

What is the standard of the twenty-five West African nations today? In some nations, Cape Verde and Gambia, we still have not spread True Parents' teachings. We send missionaries to those nations but the environment has been difficult and they keep coming back. From this year, we hope to have at least fifty members in these nations.

Next, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Gulf of Guinea and Sao Tome, have a bit fewer than a hundred members each. Our goal is to increase this to four hundred. Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Ghana, Mali, Togo, Niger, Chad, the Central African Republic and Gabon have about four hundred members. We are considering how we can help the churches in these nations grow to become self-sustaining churches of five hundred to a thousand people.

In some nations, we have close to a thousand members. Nigeria, Cameroon, Congo and Burkina Faso have around five hundred members each. We hope to increase that number to more than a thousand people this year. Once they reach around five thousand members, we hope to develop nations as West African strategic nations. True Parents selected the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cote d'Ivoire as special strategic nations.

Angola has more than a thousand members. Benin has more than a thousand five hundred members; our goal is to exceed five thousand. Burkina Faso and Nigeria have almost a thousand members so our goal is exceed a thousand. Last year, we surpassed a thousand members in Angola, so in 2017 we are aiming for five thousand members. Cameroon and Congo Brazzaville have around six hundred members. Our goal there is a thousand members and for the churches to self-sustainability.



National Headquarters Church in Senegal

Improvement year-by-year

Even though West Africa has many members, we could not call any place there a church building, a place where True Parents picture is and where members can meet for Sunday services. On my tour of the nations and churches in West Africa, I emphasized to the members that they have to build churches. I gave them a goal: No matter what nation or what church you are from, if you have more than five hundred members, let's work to build a church.

They are working hard. For example, in Benin, they erected a building ten years ago, but only the chapel is sturdy. Everywhere else, rain leaks in. Members cannot receive beneficence there, but through True Parents' grace, we are now fixing the building. It has become almost like a hotel after improvements throughout the building. Now, a hundred and fifty or more people could sleep there.

In Cote d'Ivoire, there is this church building. European second-generation members desired to help West Africa, pooled their resources and donated \$8,000 as seed money to build a church, but it was uncompleted a decade later. We repaired the building this year. During a second-generation workshop, we repaired and painted a rundown building. We are creating a nice, clean environment. In Senegal, national messiahs sent many donations resulting in the first floor of a church building. Through True Mother's grace, we were able to finish the building. In Congo Brazzaville, we are building a church. We planned to make a three-story building, but a lack of funds meant it is just two stories.

We have a good education system, but lack buildings. It's a big problem. We have to build churches in Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon, DR Congo and Angola. We must absolutely build these churches.

In Cote d'Ivoire in 2014 there were around 1,500 people but last year around three thousand members went to Sunday service. Donations also increased from \$54,000 in 2014 to around \$200,000 in 2016. The number of churches in Cote d'Ivoire increased from ten to forty-three in two years. Change has been occurring.

In DR Congo, we went from 7,710 people to twelve thousand people. Donations increased almost doubled from \$62,000 to \$123,000. We went from a hundred churches to 143. The nation is large. Kinshasa alone has twenty-five churches.

In Burkina Faso, UPF launched IAPP and people from twenty-four of our nations participated. The one nation that did not had their national elections that month. Four hundred people attended the launch.

True Mother bequeathed gifts of the clothes she had worn, so each year we give award the most successful witnessing members. Every three months, the church with the most new members received a computer, projector, and in the case of DR Congo, a generator. We are working to develop and cause change in the churches.

National restoration

I think often of what it would take to bring about national restoration. In order to restore a nation we must have legislators who know True Parents. At least half of the legislators must know True Parents in order to achieve national restoration. Hence, our members must become legislators. Honestly, we had no one would could seek office as legislators and no funds. Nevertheless, some older members felt inspired to campaign and two won elections. In some places, our members supported people they knew to have integrity, people they did not see in a political light.

In Democratic Republic of Congo, we are working hard to establish Cheon Il Guk. Around seven million people are members of Kimbanguism, new religious movement professed by the Church of Jesus Christ on earth by his special envoy Simon Kimbangu. DR Congo has a branch that separated from them called the Nktwala Church. The head of that church came to New York, bowed to True Father, and participated in a forty-day workshop. He has around three hundred thousand followers.

I visited their church on my church tour. Just like us, they bowed to True Parents and recited the Family Pledge in Korean from beginning to end. They sing our holy songs. We have to educate them so we can register them as members. To do this, we must create a place to educate them. We are in the process of remodeling a training center in DR Congo. So now we can have a continuous education system. We will continuously have seven-day and twenty-one-day workshops and once a year hold forty-day workshops so we can restore two nations in West Africa.