

WORLD FEDERATION OF METHODIST AND UNITING CHURCH WOMEN

WEST AFRICA AREA - HALF YEAR REPORT FOR 2020

Thanks be to God for the brave women who worked hard for the empowerment and justice for women all over the world. Women in West Africa Area of the World Federation can now boast of good education, entrepreneurial skills, leadership skills, resources to support themselves and their families and other capacities. Many women in this part of the world are bread winners and care takers of their families because they might have lost their husbands or the men have lost their jobs. West Africa Area of the World Federation has both English and French speaking countries that are made up of Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra-Leone, The Gambia, Benin, Cote D'Ivoire, Togo and Senegal which is yet to be accepted as an affiliate member country at the next World Assembly. However, a woman representative from Senegal attended the Area Seminars in The Gambia in 2013 and Ghana in 2018.

What does God our Creator say about women? How can we draw our identity and worth from what God says and not the lies of our culture and traditions? God tells us that He made women and designed us in His image. He gave us the will, emotions, relational skills and decision making abilities. God also added leadership abilities and intuition that enable us to make the right decisions at the right time.

Celebration of World Day of Prayer : This ecumenical event was observed by Methodist Women from Nigeria and Ghana 1ST March, 2019 and 2020. The Methodist Church Nigeria and Ghana women participated fully. The National President of Women's fellowship Nneoma Florence Uche, led Bible Study and the intercessory prayer for the National leadership of Nigeria. In Ghana, Rev Jemima Amanor, the West Africa Area President gave the message on the theme: 'Rise! Take your Mat and Walk,' with Bible passage from John 5: 2 – 9. Women from various denominations came together and prayed for the world and declared, "Let's work together to improve the lives of women and their families, one gift and one prayer at a time."

World Federation Day celebration took place in October 2019 in both Ghana and Nigeria. Members used the material written by Europe: Britain and Ireland Area on the topic: Gender Equality. There were in-depth discussion on violence against women in West Africa. It came to light that fathers were abusing their girls sexually. This became pronounced in 2020 with the onset of the Corona virus disease and everyone was locked down in their homes. Some fathers did not care of the presence of their wives and went ahead and abused their girls. In Ghana the Ministry for Gender and Children Protection has taken it up and culprits are punished when the girls report them. However, most times the girls are ashamed and afraid to voice out the abuse so the men go unpunished. Female Genital Mutilation has been abolished in West Africa and it's punishable by law. So much awareness has been created so the practise is minimized.

Projects of Women in Methodist Church Nigeria : The aim for Women's Work is to help the weak, the poor and to support Church growth. I quote from a report from Nigeria Unit. "*We therefore resolved to reach out to the unreached through care and love gesture during our National programs and festive period at the National level through "You are my neighbour Methodist Outreach" in collaboration with the "Filling the Jar Women Assembly" NGO platforms. This assembly is for prayer, intensive study of God's Word, fellowship, seminar and workshop. It is geared towards soul enriching, soul winning, life transformation, advocacy against social ills,*

praying against incessant killings, giving voice and hope to the voiceless and hopeless, teaching against rape and challenges in marriages and standing in the gap to save our nation, Nigeria. We fill the empty Jar of financial and economic bankruptcy through skill acquisition and material empowerment, we also intend to give scholarship to orphans. “



Bible exhortation and prayer over bottles of water were used to fill the pot in the picture. The women were encouraged to fetch water from the pot and drink expecting healing and miracle from the Lord. They shared testimonies from drinking the water from the pot. This is one woman’s testimony. “I was privileged to attend Filling the Jar assembly in Port Harcourt. It was life changing experience for me, we prayed and God answered. I told God as we were drawing water from the jar that He should fill my womb with His blessing and to the glory of God I conceived in 2019 after 16 years of waiting on the Lord for the fruit of the womb and on the 23rd of April I gave birth to bouncing baby boy. Praise God.”



The woman with her baby.

Another miracle: Twenty (20 years of Chest pain and Ulcer was healed during the Filling the Jar assembly at Makurdi, Benue State.

43rd Biennial women fellowship conference was held at Hoare’s Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba Nigeria between Thursdays 1st – Monday 5th August, 2019, with theme. “OBEDIENCE TO GOD, BLESSING FOR ALL” Deut. 28: 1-3. Federation members from Benin, Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone participated in the conference. Some of the topics discussed include : The Effects of Drug Abuse and Remedy, The Role of mothers in Rescuing the next generation, Health talk on Cervical Cancer, Road Talk/Evangelism.

CORONA VIRUS Disease and its effect on the Nations:

In Nigeria the women reached out to the vulnerable citizens during this Covid-19 lockdown and provided them with food items to help ease the difficulties brought by the disease on families. Ghanaian women made donations in food, essential items and personal preventive items (PPAs) to the underprivileged who were struggling during the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The occurrence of the disease was gradually rising and measures were put in place by the government to reduce the spread. The measures include compulsory wearing of masks by everyone. The moment you leave your house you have to be in mask. Handwashing with soap and water, social distancing and use of sanitizers at every gathering. These measures helped to reduce the incidence of the disease. Churches and businesses were gradually opened and now we are able to have full church service whilst applying the above protocols.

Capacity building workshop for Women Leaders in Ghana:

The workshop took place on the 13th to 16th February 2020 at the Freeman Guest House, Kumasi with the theme, 'Discipleship: Teaching Everyone to live like Jesus Christ.' There were thirty (30) participants from all the Dioceses within Methodist Church Ghana.

The facilitators for the workshop were members of the Great Commission Movement of Ghana. Participants were taken through the use of a Picture Booklet in doing one-on-one evangelism. They practised with each other and given the opportunity to give their lives to Christ. Then they were taught how to use two videos titled 'Magdalena' and 'Walking with Jesus' to be used to disciple members who have given themselves to Jesus Christ. Participants were put into groups and made to respond to questions based on the videos. They were encouraged to go back and take the members of the Church at the Circuit and Society levels through the same process to ensure that, the members can also do one-on-one evangelism. Participants were excited with the materials and felt equipped to carry out evangelism and discipleship with the members of the Church. They also received a video each on Human Trafficking, to be used in educating the members of the Church on the dangers of trafficking and being coerced to travel for greener pastures.

Economic Empowerment for Women in Ghana

St Peter Society at Mile 7, New Achimota Circuit of Northern Accra Diocese organized skills training for seventy-five (75) women from the Church and one (1) woman from the Presbyterian Church. Participants were empowered with the following skills: Yogurt production, Tie and Dye clothes production, Bathing Gel production, Satellite TV installation and on Entrepreneurship guidance. The Diocese has provided some capital for the needy women among the participants to start earning income. The Lord has been faithful with the women. His grace has been sufficient for us. Thanks be to His Name.