

Report from a Uganda Vision Conference

By Brian Fikkert

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Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

I am currently flying back from Uganda, where Russ Mask and I have just attended a Vision Conference sponsored by the Ugandan affiliate of the Discipling the Nations Alliance (DNA). Formerly called Samaritan Strategy, DNA is spearheaded by Darrow Miller and Bob Moffit.

Nobody has asked me to write to you, and I do not know if you are considering any grants to DNA or not. I am simply writing to tell you that we were extremely impressed with what we saw of DNA's training, and I think they are doing things that are very consistent with your mission.

Neither Darrow nor Bob were at this conference. All of the training was done by Ugandans to an audience of approximately 125 pastors, bishops, relief and development workers, and ministry leaders. The conference was targeted at Ugandans, but there were a few attendees from several surrounding nations including Sudan, Burundi, and Kenya. The socioeconomic and educational backgrounds of the attendees varied widely, ranging from well-educated pastors of mega-churches, to leading bishops in the Anglican Church, to poorly-educated pastors living on a pittance and working in very remote areas. There were only 6 non-Africans in attendance.

As you probably already know, the main themes of the conference were as follows: 1) The African worldview is the main impediment to the continent's development and must be replaced with a biblical worldview that embraces the lordship of Christ over every inch of creation; 2) The church is God's central agent for the transformation of society and must communicate Christ's comprehensive healing through holistic ministry to people's felt needs; 3) African resources—both financial and human—are sufficient to bring development to Africa.

Both Russ and I found this to be one of the most exciting conferences we have ever attended, and the potential impact of this training is enormous. There were several

things that really stood out to us. First, the Ugandan trainers really understood the central DNA messages very well and were able to contextualize them to the African situation. Second, the attendees really seemed to be deeply moved and found the training to be revolutionary and life-changing. They were able to critique faulty aspects in both the animistic worldview and in the dualistic message that characterized much of the historic missions movement. Third, the attendees saw this material as very practical. That is not a small accomplishment given the fairly abstract, theological and philosophical nature of the material. It is not that easy to explain to a poorly-educated pastor how thinking like Francis Schaeffer will enable him to get clean water in his village, but the DNA training is getting it done! Fourth, the demonstrated impact of the Vision Conferences is huge. Attendees from past Vision Conferences explained what had happened to their churches as a result of the DNA training, and it was truly inspiring. Churches had taken on numerous holistic ministry projects that had given their church very visible kingdom witness in their communities and that resulted in some phenomenal increases in attendance. Overall, the entire experience was truly inspiring, and I felt personally challenged to re-examine my own worldview and Christian walk.

Sincerely in Christ,

Brian Fikkert
President

BRIAN FIKKERT is President of the Chalmers Center for Economic Development

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