

Caring for Creation International Workshop 2 – Tanzania

Narrative report



Compiled by

Jacqueline Nampijja

March 2020

Summary

Caring for creation international workshop which took place at Landmark Mbezi Beach Resort and Conference Centre in Dar-es-salaam Tanzania was attended by 29 local participants and two international facilitators from Ecological Christian Organization Uganda. The workshop was a complementary activity that built on previous workshops that are geared towards creating awareness and empowering religious leaders about caring for creation. Objectives of the workshop were:

- To enable participants appreciate climate change and environmental degradation and how much human beings have contributed to the problem
- To train leaders in creation care so that they can train others in their local congregations, fellowships and meetings.

And the topics were:

- Context for caring for creation
- Concepts and principles of caring for creation
- Why care for creation

These were presented through the Bible studies series and two will do booklet.

The workshop was a success because by end of the workshop participants had learnt what caring for creation is, they had discovered that God loves all of his creation and cares for it deeply, they acknowledged that humans have acted very selfishly in their interaction with the environment that it is also currently acting up against us and finally after repenting, they acknowledged that its only through prayer and reliance on God can we restore and replenish the earth.



1.0 Introduction

In a bid to concretize and reinforce caring for creation concepts and principles among international participants, ECO supported by Nola Stewart organized and implemented the second Caring for Creation international workshop in Dar-es-Salaam Tanzania which took place on 19th February 2020 at Landmark Mbezi Beach Resort and Conference Centre. Caring for Creation is ECO's program that engages and empowers religious leaders, communities and faith based institutions towards environmental stewardship.

We planned to use Landmark Hotel because it offered affordable prices for both our accommodation and the workshop. It was also accessible and convenient for the participants.

We worked together with the hotel staff to provide the most comfortable and friendly sitting arrangement that would allow for easy group formation, discussion and also build cohesion between the participants. So the hall was organized in round tables that comfortably accommodated 6 to 8 participants.

The workshop received the attendance of only 29 participants because 2 participants that is; Clara and Revocatus got sick the evening before the workshop and could not attend. Three of the ten participants we trained last year were able to attend and these were Rev. Erisa Mrutu, Hope Ndorero and Agatha Lema.

Of the 29 participants, 5 were female and 24 were male. The audience was made up mainly clergy men. Various churches around Dar-es-Salaam which included the Baptist church, the Anglican church, the Lutheran church, the Methodist church, PEFA(Pentecostal Evangelical Fellowship of Africa) church, KKKT(Kanisa la Kiinjili la Kiluteri Tanzania), the Catholic church, the Adventist church, TAG, including Christian radio stations. The audience was vibrant and eager to learn but also eager to start small intervention projects towards caring for creation.

1.01 Program objectives

The objectives of the Caring for Creation program are

1. To inform educate and engage religious leaders with knowledge about caring for creation
2. To inspire action among religious leaders towards caring for creation

1.02 Workshop objectives

Building on towards achieving the program objectives, we set out this year to achieve the following

- To enable participants appreciate climate change and environmental degradation and how much human beings have contributed to the problem
- To train leaders in creation care so that they can train others in their local congregations, fellowships and meetings.

1.03 Topics of discussion

The topics for the workshop were selected in relation to the objectives set. These topics were

- Context for caring for creation
- Concepts and principles of caring for creation
- Why care for creation

They were selected to help the participants appreciate the current state of the earth and also appreciate the fact that the extent of the damage is mainly due to human activities and over population; and to also appreciate how urgent it is for religious leaders and Christian institutions to rise in action towards caring for creation.

The theme of the workshop was Ps 65:5-13 “God Made the earth for all His creation”. It served to reinforce the concepts and principles of caring for creation. The psalm provides a reminder that God created everything and has power and control over all creation. The psalm also brings out the truth that all of creation is alive and healthy because of God.

1.04 Materials used

The materials used are a collection created by Nola Stewart which provide a biblical exploration of how earth was created, what man’s role is in creation, how far he has fallen from his call and how gracious God is to forgive us and restore the earth to its original glory if only we will work with Him and not against Him. The materials included;

- Bible study series
- Human and Nature
- Old and new covenant
- Two will do
- His epic message(Video)
- Genesis 1 flash cards

1.05 Participant’s expectations

- They were interested to learn what caring for creation, what it is, and what it means.
- They were very interested to know what the bible has to say about caring for creation.
- They were eager to learn and understand how they can incorporate caring for creation into their work and their programs as churches
- They also wanted to know how to translate the caring for creation lessons into deliverable and tangible activities that they would use to measure their progress and intervention.

1.1 Workshop proceedings

1.11 Arrival

Participants started arriving for the workshop at 8am. On arrival, they were registered, given nametags for easy identification and copies of booklets to be used during the discussion. Majority of the participants arrived in time allowing the workshop to start on schedule. Beginning on time allowed both facilitators and participants enough time to share content for the workshop and receive and answer questions which made the sessions exciting, lively and very participatory.



1.12 Welcome

Isaac welcomed the participants and appreciated them for honoring the invitation to the workshop. He shared a brief overview of our work at ECO, what caring for creation is and our role as human beings in relation to environment. He went ahead to give them a simple definition of caring for creation and the environment where he stated that environment is everything and everything is the environment and therefore caring for creation means protecting, preserving and utilizing sustainably everything in our wide universe.

He then introduced Jacqueline Nampijja the Caring for Creation Liaison Officer to the participants. He explained that her role involves organizing, coordinating and implementing the caring for creation activities in the different countries around East Africa.

During this session Isaac also led participants through the introductions. Then they were given an opportunity to share their expectations which exhibited their anticipation to learn and share the lessons with their churches and communities.



He introduced our brothers that did a great job of mobilizing participants for the workshop Vitus Tondelo and Boniventure Mchomvu. They were a great resource in mobilizing participants for the workshop. With their help we were able to reach many churches which enabled us to have the 29 participants.

1.13 Prayer

Because of language barrier, we had the devotion in Swahili to allow all members to be well engaged and involved at the beginning. We had a few worship songs led by Hyasinta Chata one of the participants there after the opening prayer was said by Pr. Chacha Mwita



1.14 Let us praise the Creator

In this session we had a brief overview of the current state of affairs of the environment globally. We had time to discuss about the endangered species and man's involvement in rendering a lot of these species endangered or extinct. Then we watched a short video called "His epic message will make you want to save the world".



For Genesis 1, we tasked the participants to organize the creation story cards in order of Creation. Then we read the creation story to allow everyone to correct their arrangement. We had 6 groups and 3 out of the 6 got it correct. The other 3 groups got to correct their display after the story was read. The participants were then tasked to work in their groups to analyze meaning of Gen 1:28 to Adam and then what it means to us today.



The session ended with an illustration of RADA where we emphasized man's role as the center of strength among God's creation. We further discussed that God created us in His image and prescribed how we ought to live on earth and also how we are to relate with all his other creation. And therefore if he passionately expressed that all he created was good, then we ought to respect, relate lovingly and caringly towards all his creation.



The engaging exercise through Genesis 1 was highly appreciated by the participants. They were very excited because working through the story using the cards allowed them to re-live and experience creation. They were impressed by how God systematically formed every creature ensuring that whatever he created was well provided for in the previous creation, that is to say, before he created the plants He created the lands and seas, the media in which plant life would thrive. It was with amazement as we discussed through the Genesis 1 that they realized that God put everything necessary for perfect human survival before He created man. They also acknowledged that the blessing to multiply and occupy was given to all God's creatures including the microbes, living things in water and on land of which man is among. We were all in agreement that the words of Genesis 1:28 do not mean the same for us today as for man then. He commanded them to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth because it was empty. He also asked them to replenish in that they would work hard to replace what we had utilized. And to subdue was meant for him to keep all creation in order and in line under the authority and power of God.

By end of the session, participants had clearly understood that God created everything and he created it and saw that it was good, thus everything that was created is valuable and is of great importance in ensuring a healthy and vibrant environment.

They also acknowledged that we have abused God's blessing with our greed, indifference and selfishness which have rendered the earth in the dire state of over-utilization of resources mainly due to human population explosion

Participants acknowledged that all human beings throughout the generations have continuously destroyed the environment and that man is the only one that can restore what has been destroyed as the center of strength among God's creatures.

1.15 Tea

We refreshed with tea and a snack in a short break of twenty minutes. Then members converged for the next session. To regain participant's attention and focus we had a simple exercise before the session began.



1.16 By power of the son

The session began with a short prayer from one of the participants. We then read through Matt Ps 104:25-30. We also had a slide projection of different animals in their habitats.

During this session we talked about our responsibility towards creation. We referred to Genesis 2:15 which tells us to take care and tender the earth. It's a call and responsibility from God to man about how man should relate with the earth.



Then we paused a question for the participants to discuss what they think would happen if species were taken out of their habitats and placed in other habitats. The discussion went on for 10 minutes where

participants agreed that it would be a catastrophe which would include species mutating, inadequate resources and emergence of new diseases and dangerous animals.

Then we looked at Matthew 21:33-40 and Isaiah 5:8-10 all participants were in agreement that we have sinned against God who entrusted the earth into our care but instead because of our pride, greed and selfishness we have abused and destroyed the earth to the extent of causing self-annihilation.

Session was concluded with the story in the bible study booklet about the bullock driver who learnt to treat his animals better after he became a Christian.

From this session, participants were very convinced that we humans are responsible for increasing loss of biodiversity and increasing loss of natural space. They were convinced that the damage can be reduced if all humans work together to conserve, preserve and restore the earth. They also were in agreement that all resources needed are within their reach.

1.17 Two will do booklet

Participants were guided through making the two will do booklet and thereafter they were taken through the booklet.

As Isaac presented the two will do booklet we emphasized to them that this was one of the ways to prevent further damage to the environment. Isaac stressed that though the church and African tradition promote large family sizes, the earth can no longer contain us. He emphasized that every person born into this world comes with spelt out need for resources from the environment which resources we are using beyond the earth's ability to replace. He pointed out that we need to start advocating for small size families in the church as a conservation strategy to reduce the high demand for resources human populations are exerting on the environment.



Despite the fact that large families are a treasure in all African communities, the participants came to a conclusion that population explosion is one of present day challenges to our cause-creation care. That is, population explosion of human beings has led to shrinkage of biodiversity including plants and animals. They agreed that it is currently very important for couples to carefully consider the size of their families and reproduce responsibly in regard to all of creation. We all agreed that leaders in different spheres of influence should advance the agenda of reducing family sizes/having smaller families as a means of conserving the environment.

1.18 Lunch

After the sessions, we were blessed to share in a delicious meal prepared by the hotel. The participants kept on discussing about the things we had shared with them throughout the morning. They appreciated the information they had received and were all eager to do something to care for creation.

1.19 Regeneration of the earth through the Holy Spirit

We began the session with hymn and prayer from Fr. Mapendo a parish priest from the catholic church of Dar-es-salaam.

We then asked participants to cite things they use daily that did not have their origin in nature. Through the discussion, they realized that all things come from the environment. From the basic needs of life that is water, food, air to the most luxurious things of the world the computers, all modes of transport and even the sky scrapers.

We then read from Isaiah 45:18, Psalm 32:1-5 and Psalm 51:10-15 to call participants to the realization that though we have fallen very far from the Lord, He is still gracious and looking for people who are willing to work with Him through His spirit to restore the earth.



The participants were amazed at the extent of damage man has caused creation. They agreed that we human beings have abused our God given role as stewards and have instead greedily occupied the land and advanced our methods of living with no regard or consideration of the other species that were created by God. They agreed that it is now time for us all to turn back to God in repentance and seek His forgiveness. Also seek his wisdom and counsel on possible solutions for restoring and replenishing the earth.

1.20 Poster making

Participants were then taken through the poster making session. We presented to them the two poster sheets for study 1 and guided them on what to draw. The exercise was carried out with a lot of excitement and the participants got an opportunity to hand their drawings on the wall.



By the end of the sessions, all participants had actively participated in the painting activity and the hall was filled with colorful pictures of their understanding of what the world would be if we took our position as the Centre of strength of all God's creation.

1.21 Discussion

The discussion session was led by Isaac. He encouraged the participants to engage in simple initiatives that can promote caring for creation. He encouraged them to start where they are and build the small initiatives and grow them slowly. Several participants shared some activities they can engage in to kick start their action towards caring for creation such as advancing the conservation through small families strategy, fuel conservation which in turn would conserve the forests using energy saving stoves, bible study groups to discuss booklet with their church members and other leaders, to mention but a few.



We agreed to start a Google mailing list to keep track with each other, share experiences and support one another.

During the discussion we had a cup of tea and snack which were served by the hotel

1.22 Closing

Closing remarks were given by Vitus Tondelo who appreciated members for gracing the workshop with their presence and also appreciated ECO for this project that engages religious leaders about caring for

creation. He appreciated ECO for the information they had shared with them and for challenging them to care for creation as they carry out their duties as clergymen.



2.0 Evaluation through the objectives

We achieved the objectives we set for the workshop. Our objectives were

- To enable participants appreciate climate change and environmental degradation and how much human beings have contributed to the problem
- To train leaders in creation care so that they can train others in their local congregations, fellowships and meetings.

By the end of the workshop, every participant was convinced that God created the universe for all his creation and that God made us and put us in position of a custodian/steward and not an owner of the earth. They were also aware of the critical environmental problems that are prevailing and our contribution in current state of the environment.

Also majority were eager to start small projects towards caring for creation like encouraging their congregations to have smaller families, recycling waste, renewable energy to mention but a few.

3.0 Achievements

We were blessed to have a representative from different denominations including Adventists and Catholics and all participants appreciated the information shared with them that challenged them to consider creation as they go about their roles and responsibilities in their different areas of influence, i.e. home, workplace and community at large.

We received the attendance of 28 local participants who were very active throughout the workshop and eager to take action towards caring for creation in Dar-es-salaam and Tanzania at large.

As planned, the workshop started on time and all activities were carried out as per schedule which enabled the workshop to close at 4:30pm.

4.0 Challenges

Communication was quite difficult because cost of calls across to Tanzania is very expensive so to reach participants was very difficult though we finally got a solution and managed to mobilize all 30 participants

Two of the participants that had confirmed were taken ill and failed to attend the workshop as they had earlier promised to do.

Tanzania is mainly a Swahili speaking community and they rarely use English in their communication so we had some challenges in communication due to language barrier.

5.0 Recommendations

We received several recommendations from the participants which included

1. Engage churches more frequently by planning simple fellowships where more information can be shared among different denominations in their meetings or fellowships
2. Design a strategy that allows participants to stay engaged and encourage each other to advance the agenda further with actions and initiatives that address caring for creation challenges.

6.0 Conclusions

ECO is on track in implementing Caring for Creation activities. The Care for Creation workshop International Tanzania which took place on 19th February 2020 was a success. We had 31 participant, 6 female and 25 male. The participants appreciated the ECO team for conducting a very interactive, precise and elaborate training that enlightened them about their responsibility and mandate towards God's creation. All activities were implemented within the scheduled time.

The logistical requirements necessary for effective implementation of the workshop were availed. Isaac and Jacqueline travelled safely and received a warm welcome and comfortable stay in Dar-es-salaam.

The workshop would not have been a success without Nola Stewart who supports the program, ED ECO Isaac Kabongo and the entire ECO staff team who continually support and encourage the CLO towards excellence. Appreciation is extended to all (Nola Stewart and ECO staff) for their unrelenting support towards Caring for Creation.

Appendix 1: Workshop Program

“CARING FOR THE CREATION” INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

Date: 19th Feb 2020

Venue: Landmark Mbezi Beach Resort and Conference Centre, Dar-es-salaam Tanzania

Program:

8:30 am Arrival and registration. Nametags

8.50 am Meet and Greet. Welcome by ECO. Role of CCLO explained briefly.

9.00 am Prayer to open Workshop (*Church Leader*)

9.05 am Singing of favorite hymns (*Song leader*)

9.15 am **Study 1** “Let Us Praise the Creator” (1 hour)

10.15 am MORNING TEA (20 min)

10.35 am Prayer to commence next session (*Church Leader*)

10.40 am **Study 2** "By the power of the Son" (1 hour)

11.40 am Singing of local hymns (*Song leader*)

11.50 am Making the “Two Will Do” pocket book (40 min)

12.30 pm GRACE for Lunch (*ECO leader*)

12.35 pm LUNCH (45 min)

1.20 pm **Study 3** " Regeneration of the Earth through the Holy Spirit" (1 hour)

2.20 pm ACTIVITY - Making both Posters for Study No. 1 (1 hr 40 min)

4.00 pm Discussion & Working Afternoon Tea: Using CC Studies in the local Church

4.20 pm Close in prayer (*ECO Leader*)

CARING FOR GOD'S CREATION

INVITATION TO C4GC INT'L
WORKSHOP 2 TANZANIA

DATE: 19th Feb 2020

VENUE : The LandMark Mbezi Beach
Resort & Conference Centre

THEME:

God made the Earth for all his Creation

Ps 65:5-13

Dear Sir / Madam,

Greetings from ECO

Ecological Christian Organization (ECO) is an indigenous, Non-Governmental Organization that works towards realization of sustained livelihoods for marginalized, under-served and vulnerable groups in Uganda. Since its inception in 2005, the organization has implemented a number of projects successfully. The current initiatives are focusing on natural resource governance, climate change and livelihoods, and ecosystem management and restoration.

Caring for God's creation project is one of ECO's natural resource governance projects that attracts faith and /or religious leaders and members to learn and dialogue about faith, sustainable development and environment stewardship and thereafter enlist the participation of the Christian communities in natural resource governance through formation of representative groups that champion interventions geared towards creation

care. These groups advocate and campaign for natural resource preservation and conservation by promoting the use of ecologically friendly technologies and changed lifestyles.

This program is funded by Ms. Nola Stewart a teacher and christian from Australia who is very passionate about creation care. She has been working with ECO since its inception and has supported several workshops in this regard.

The program engages, challenges and empowers individuals, communities and Faith Based institutions and/ or organisations about environmental stewardship and equips them with knowledge and skills critical for action towards addressing the imminent environmental and climate issues. As a way of concretizing the basic concepts of caring for God's creation, ECO intends to carry out a second caring for creation international workshop in Tanzania on the 19th of February at The LandMark Mbezi Beach Resort & Conference Centre from 8am to 5pm . The workshop will build on concepts shared in previous workshops to reinforce the criticality of caring for God's creation in our day and time. With earth suffering from a lot of unhealthy impacts from human activities, we ought to rethink our interaction with the environment because a healthy environment denotes a healthy people.

The Topics of discussion will be,

1. Context of Caring for creation in the church.
2. Principles of Caring for creation.
3. Rationale for Caring for creation.

We are privileged to invite you for this Workshop .

Note 1: Please carry your Bible along

Note 2: If you have attended these Workshop before, please carry the Bible study series along too.

Yours faithfully

Nampijja Jacqueline

Caring for Creation Liaison Officer

Ecological Christian Organisation (ECO)

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Appendix III: Attendance list



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ATTENDANCE LIST FORM

ACTIVITY: Caring for Creation Workshop 2 - Tanzania

Venue: Landmark Hotel

Date: 17/02/2020

No.	Name	Title	Organisation	Tel. Contact/email address	Signature
1.	FR. JOSEPH KATUMU	PRIEST	ANGELICAN CHURCH	0713 752893 josephkatumu@gmail.com	
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3.	BENEDICT AUGUSTINO	RADIO PRESENTER	RADIO TUMOSINI	0712 286564	
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8.	Paul Mwendo	Pastor	KLPT	0787 181822	
9.	SYLVESTER NABALEGA	CHURCH MEMBER	Pugu Parish RC	nabalegas@yahoo.com 0713 094095	
10.	ISAAC KABWALO	ED	ECO	0777228034	



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ATTENDANCE LIST FORM

ACTIVITY: Caring for Creation Workshop 2 - Tanzania

Venue: Landmark Hotel

Date: 19th/02/2020

No.	Name	Title	Organisation	Tel. Contact/email address	Signature
1	Frederick Ganyaga	ADMIN/Worship leader	OBCI	0768 588 598	
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ATTENDANCE LIST FORM

ACTIVITY: Caring for creation workshop 2 - Tanzania
Venue: Landmark Hotel Date: 19th Feb 2020

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