

## **Byumba Local Vision Conference**

Report from Jacob Ndabaramiye, Trainer for the Great Lakes Region

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The town of Byumba actually called Gicumbi is located in the North of Rwanda. With Ruhengeri and Gisenyi they board the West of Uganda. They are the highest region of Rwanda with high mountains including the mountains of Muhabura, Karisimbi, Nyiragongo etc...The three form the volcanic region of Rwanda. The three regions of Rwanda have a lot of things in common including Culture and Idols. The Region was in the past and even now days for some people submissive to a predominant god called Nyabingi.

Many people in Byumba continue to give sacrifices and to worship Nyabingi after 100 years of Christianity (Nyabingi is the progenitive goddess and goddess of harvest and land). Those people expect blessings for themselves, their children, lands and wealth from Nyabingi. Some people in the region confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior but yet they also belong to Nyabingi. Participants to Vision Conference, especially the natives of Byumba confirmed that there are people who have been devoted as sacrifices to Nyabingi. Those people for the most have become mentally and physically handicapped.

However, the region is the most fertile land of Rwanda. People grow beans, potatoes, corn, sorghum and bananas. Because of the wealth of the Region people practice polygamy probably for them to increase their income.

### **The impact of the Culture in the Church of the Region**

According to the witness of people who attended the Conference, it isn't easy for some Pastors to preach against polygamy because most ladies in the Church are either second or third wife of a man.

### **Social Impact of the Culture**

Because of men's favoritism, children who are discriminated live in very hard situation in which result hatred, murder, sorcery. It was very hard to move from ABC'S of Culture, the web of Lies to another lesson because people were saying: *"This is the lesson we need here, let us have more time to talk..."*

### **Vision Conference Participants**



Jacob (left) and Christopher (right) teaching during the VC

27 participants from 12 different local churches and 12 different denominations attended the Vision Conference. 9 Pastors came to Conference and the rest were Church lay leaders in their respective local churches.

The denominations represented in the Vision Conference included Pentecostal Church, Free Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, Association des Eglises Inkuru Nziza au Rwanda, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Nazarene Church, Baptist Church, Global Salvation Church, Assemblies of God, Communauté des Eglises Libres de Pentecote en Afrique and PEFA.

### **Testimony from Rev. Mugigi after the Vision Conference.**



At the end of sessions, Pastor Mugigi Pascal, the Pastor of Nazarene Church of Byumba came with testimony. Pascal has done his seminary in Kenya. He is bachelor's degree in Theology from Destiny Bible College in Kenya. He was very grateful for the Conference and said the following: ***"I'm Pastor for 10 years in this Region. I also attended many training events but I hadn't seen a very adequate training like this. The training has challenged the Church of Byumba in general in different aspects. People and the Church in Byumba need to be trained on these materials because we really need transformation on all the four dimensions of life. We haven't been yet transformed spiritually even though we are proud in that area, forget about the rest. Christians of the region have adopted a kind of syncretism. We need this Conference for us to become real Christians. The Conference materials have given us a vision for the Church and the Region."***

### **Seed Project planning**

The following are Seed Projects planned to be carried out as result of the Vision Conference.

1. Pay Local mutual health insurance for 4 vulnerable families
2. Help a widow to cultivate her garden
3. Support a lady, Uwamariya Mukankusi suffering from AIDS. She just returned from Tanzania where she was living as refugee for years. Two local churches working closer to her home will help her with different items including food, clothes and medicine.
4. Visit sick people and provide with sugar, soaps, flour of sorghum for porridge and clothing.