

The NetACT story's first episode: It took place at Karen, in Nairobi at NEGST (Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology). It was organized by the USA based Overseas Council in collaboration with ACTEA (Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa).

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MINUTES OF THE CONSTITUTING MEETING OF NETACT

At the ACTEA-Consultation, Niarobi, Kenya. 3 February 2000

1 OPENING

JH (Jurgens Hendriks) open with prayer, welcome everybody present and outline the purpose of the meeting: A network is developing between the Faculty of Theology at Stellenbosch and the Reformed Colleges and Schools in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. During his sabbatical in 1999 JH was asked to present a module in Congregational Studies at these institutions. Notes were prepared for the course. These notes were basically a summary and adaptation of Ammerman et al's 1998 Abingdon publication *Studying Congregations*. JH got permission from the authors to rework and adapt their work for the publication of an independent publication on *Congregational Studies in Africa*. This endeavour is a registered research project that he is conducting under the auspices of the University of Stellenbosch.

JH made the following suggestion that was unanimously accepted: that we form a Network for African Congregational Studies (NetACT). The meeting decided to start working with those schools that are using the 1999 manuscript on *Congregational Studies* and ask those teaching Practical Theology / Congregational Studies (CS) to form a team to rework the notes in order to produce a book that can be used in our institutions and elsewhere in Africa. **The publication should address the realities and challenges of congregations in Africa.** JH would be the editor and those partaking would be contributors. JH reports that the Project Team for Congregational Studies in the USA, through Prof. Jackson Carroll of Duke University, was informed of these plans and pledged their support.

JH suggest that we envision the publication of handbooks as a beginning of the network's endeavours and that we allow things to develop and see ourselves as a research-oriented network that may initiate other research projects that deems necessary. The group also decides that we start our work with Reformed institutions but that we will not set denominational limitations for NetACT.

2 REPRESENTATIVES

Prof. Jurgens Hendriks (JH) from Stellenbosch; dr. Dolb Makwanandi (Principal Zomba Theological School, Malawi); Rev DT Banda (Acting Principal in 2001 for Justo Mwale Theological College, Lusaka); Rev Evert van der Ham (Director Reformed Institute for Theological Training, Eldoret Kenya). RITT wants to join NetACT. JH will be lecturing on Congregational Studies at RITT on February 7 and 8.

The following institutions were not present but have indicated their support of the venture: Hefsiba Theological School, Vila Ulongue Mozambique; Murray Theological School, Morgenster Zimbabwe; NIFCOTT Malawi. They will receive the minutes of the meeting and they are requested to name those who lecture in CS and who want to be contributors to the project.