## Report back to Friends: Getting the Seminary into the Slums: Next Iteration

#### God is up to Something!! Training of Urban Poor Leadership Across Africa

Kibera, biggest slum in Africa!! A winding drive through overcrowded shacks built illegally on disputed land. Scattered within it, were the signs of the Kingdom in churches and NGO’s serving its resilient people. In the midst of the laughing, playing children, people striding, dressed well to impress, heading for destinations in the city, surviving and some thriving. We arrive at a Center for Urban Mission lead by Captain Simon Peter,and his team - engaging, training, organizing, serving many. They hosted us, with great alacrity, amazing food, and demonstration of deep experience in their incarnational engagement.

This July 14-18th, 40 leaders from multiple cities across Africa and India and local leaders, met in Kibera in Nairobi,.. It was here we started one of the first MA in Transformational Urban Leadership programs 20 years ago. 25 others dialed in to a hybrid consultation, from as far away as Paengaroa in New Zealand, Nagpur in India, Manila, Pasadena… We came to do three things:

### Envisioning Centers for Urban Mission

Nancy Njagi of Local Leaders, has had a vision for *Centers for Urban Mission* across Africa. A few weeks prior to meeting her earlier in the year, Viv Grigg, Director of William Carey International University’s Urban Leadership Insitute had a sense of the Lord speaking about forming  *Urban Leadership Institutes* in the slums, across each continent, separate but alongside (and accredited by) the Universities. We decided to gather some folks and to work together to consider Centers for Urban Missions across Africa, modelled after the CUM, which is at higher level of developed for such centers (6 on a 6 point scale).

* Synergy: God is not speaking to us alone. We connected with leaders of Urban Africa 2050 with a recognition that God was up to something, laying a vision for such centers in more than one network. Dr Stephan de Beer spoke to us of his experiences in moving urban missiology forward across Africa. Stephen Mbogo, head of African Enterprise also presented, as they connect with the city leaderships and urban poor leadership across the continent.
* Extent: We tossed it back and forth, looking to God in prayer for 25 in Africa, and two of our Indian leaders will seek 25 in India, in his timing, perhaps, 5, 7 or 10 years - and likely we were asking for too little. Viv will continue on to see this vision seeded across the other continents also.
* Benvictor is working on getting accreditation to launch programs at an Urban institute. The doors are wide open in the Cameroons. Ishaya Inuwa conceptualizes an Insitute in Nigeria.

### 10th Gathering of the Urban Poor Leaders Training Commission

But centers are based on content. Over the last two decades a cluster of activist-educators across the globe have pioneered these first phases of getting the *Seminary into the Slums*, with launches of the *MA in Transformational Urban Leadership* (MATUL) in 8 Seminaries or universities, of which several have survived. We spent a day extending this out to new locations, reviewing the core pedagogy, drawing in new potential host schools. The MATUL anchors the domain of *Urban Poor Missiology*, WCIU is part of this network and its partnership with Urban Leadership Foundation in their Urban Leadership Institute is an anchor point for the ***Urban Poor Leaders’ Training Commission*** globally, a professional society that connects the faculty of sister schools launching the MATUL.

We had presentations from leaders of several schools involved in the Commission, including from Dr Helena Mananu-Hooper at Good News in Accra; Dr Aaron Smith at Asian Theological Seminary in Manila; Benvictor working with a cluster in the Cameroon; Dr Hruda Lahora at MITS in Nagpur, India; Dr Viv Grigg with WCIU, Pasadena, USA. 30 copies of *Slumdwellers Theology:* *Pedagogy in the Slums* were distributed for training of faculty and in invitation for all faculty involved in the MATUL of partner schools to join the training in *Pedagogy for MATUL Admins and Faculty* at [www.learn.matul.org](http://www.learn.matul.org/)

Entrepreneur Alvin Mbola and Dr Diana Kimani extended the ideas of Graduate Certificates (Post Grad Diplomas In Africa) in Community Development, Urban Mission and particularly Social Entrepreneurship.

We had several Training Commission meetings.

* We reformed the leadership and expanded the participants in the commission
* The Acting Principal of Carlile College advised of his determination to restart a BTUL (the original MATUL was not sustained due to some accrediting decisions).
* Our next gathering will be hosted in Nagpur, India, first week of October 2025.
* We evaluated that if we were to start 25 Urban Poor Leadership Training processes (MATUL, CTUL, BTUL, Post-Grad Diplomas) in 25 cities across Africa, we would need to raise scholarships, because these are degrees for those working in the slums. 20 students in 25 MATUL programs (10 new per year) means we would need $7,250,000 in endowments. The yearly interest off that would cover the scholarships in an ongoing basis. That seemed not big enough for the Lord, creator of all things.
* WCIU is able to train a cluster of professors through its PhD in Development Studies (urban cluster). An essential step in expansion. Leaders from some universities are considering this.

### Expanding the Global Faith-Based Land Justice Network to East Africa

The reason for Kibera existing is an issue of land injustice, multiple claims to the land hence an informal settlement has emerged as there appear to be no solutions. 800,000 in pain because the politicians have failed to resolve decades of complex disputes. We sought to expand this network, built around one course in the MATUL of *Theology and Practice of Advocacy for Land Justice.* We brought the folks from last year’s Land Justice consultation in online.

Dr Alistair Rees, presented on the New Zealand land reconciliation process; Samson Bugama, one of our WCIU MATUL students, commissioner for Agriculture in Plateau State, Nigeria presented on creating just legal structures of foreign investors; Ishaya Inuwa, political leader in Nigeria, identified processes for developing global networks; Mineva Mbu described the inner struggles of politicians where there is no funding. Atty Dr Raineer Chu of Manila sent a video on the struggles for land in Manila. This was a serious step forward to the five years of slowly building this global network. An invitation was extended for East Africans to join this network..

CUM brought in local musicians, and a technical team to do recording. Patrick Freeman and a local Kibera technical team are working to get the proceedings online.

## Outcomes

So, all in all, we had a party, expanded 3 networks, and the infrastructure for the domain and delivery of Urban Poor Missiology, gained commitments for two more schools to deliver some of the MATUL, developed initial vision and strategies for 25 Centers for Urban Leadership in India and 25 in Africa, based on experiments across the globe.

The Lord was most gracious! The presence of the Holy Spirit was felt in the midst of the depth of relationships of the Center for Urban Mission

Viv Grigg, July 23, 2024

You can sign up for prayer for these works at: <https://www.urbanleaders.org/ConstantContact1.html>

[William Carey International University](http://www.wciu.edu/matul): MA in Transformational Urban Leadership

<https://www.facebook.com/CentreforUrbanMission/>

[Nancy Njagi, Local Leaders](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/nancy-njagi-95a39a7b_one-leader-at-a-time-towards-quality-leaders-activity-7213532558767099905-uHef/)