

When the genocide regimes were executing the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the Anglican Church of Rwanda (EAR) remained focused on its mission for humanity. Its places of worship doubled as refuge camps, offering solace and hope to people in a nation utterly eaten up by genocide ideology and hate politics.

The Church's unwavering presence during the genocide and its aftermath underscores its enduring commitment to respecting the inherent dignity of the Rwandan people. Through a variety of programs, the Anglican Church of Rwanda plays a crucial role in the nation's development.



In the wake of the genocide, the Church dedicated significant efforts to relief and rebuilding, contributing to national healing through trauma counseling, family reunification, and reconciliation initiatives.

Archbishop Laurent Mbanda, the head of the Anglican Church of Rwanda recounts the profound impact of the genocide on the Church's leadership. Thousands of Christians were killed, and many others were forced to flee the country.

As Rwandans returned to their homeland, the Christian community, guided by faith and collaborative leadership, united to rebuild both the Church and the nation.

Since 1992, when the Anglican Church of Rwanda became an independent communion in Rwanda, it established three fundamental pillars to fulfill its mission. This approach prioritizes evangelism while emphasizing holistic development through education, healthcare and economic initiatives.

One of the key shifts is that the Church now sees evangelism and development as inseparable, working alongside the government to better serve Rwandan communities.

Upon assuming leadership of the Anglican Church of Rwanda in 2018, Archbishop Laurent Mbanda introduced a strategic direction grounded in five key pillars: equipping leaders, evangelism, early childhood education, financial literacy & accountability and sustainability.



The first strategic plan, "Equipping Leaders," focuses on ensuring strong future

leadership for the Church. This vision materialized with the establishment of the East African Christian College (EACC) in Masaka, a new institution dedicated to training future leaders. The EACC received government approval in December 2020 and welcomed its first students in March 2021. By May this year, the college had celebrated its second graduation ceremony and has over 1,000 students in different faculties.

Archbishop Mbanda advocates for a broader evangelism inspired by Jesus' integration of social action with spiritual teachings. This holistic approach aims to uplift the whole person—mind, body, and spirit—beyond just spiritual salvation. The Church fulfills this mission through schools and social programs alongside its religious teachings.

To strengthen access to higher learning, the Church operates additional institutions like Muhabura Integrated Polytechnic College in Shyira Diocese and Hanika Anglican Integrated Polytechnic in Shyogwe Diocese.

Recognizing the importance of a robust healthcare system, the Church has also built health facilities in nearly all dioceses, including Gahini, Shyira, and Kigeme, as well as a clinic in Shyogwe Diocese.

Additionally, the Church actively supports the government's ambitious "4x4" reform program. Their nursing program, funded through scholarships from the Ministry of Health and Education, as well as partnerships with other organizations, directly contributes to the goal of quadrupling the number of healthcare workers by 2028, ensuring that Rwandans have access to quality medical care.

Under the third strategy, the Church demonstrates its commitment to future generations through Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers. Supporting over 614 ECD centers nationwide, the Church addresses stunting and malnutrition in young children, promoting healthy development and laying a strong foundation for the future.

Recognizing the critical role of youth in national development, Archbishop Mbanda emphasizes the need for ongoing investment in their well-being and growth.

Archbishop Mbanda's leadership is enriched by his extensive experience, having worked for 27 years with NGOs across 30 countries. This experience directly informs his fourth strategy, which focuses on financial literacy, management, and

accountability. Having witnessed the importance of responsible stewardship firsthand, he sees an opportunity to address financial literacy issues by empowering people with the skills needed to engage in profitable economic activities.

“When you go to Bible school, nobody teaches you about money and business management! Sometimes we mix what is ours and what is for the Church,” he notes. Consequently, the Church is incorporating training and education programs on financial literacy and management into its activities, both within the Church and in the broader community, to ensure proper resource management and being good stewards.

Building a health nation

The final strategy aims to empower people towards self-sufficiency. EAR is committed to fostering this approach, a philosophy already taking root within its leadership, with bishops and pastors embracing its importance.

Archbishop Mbanda envisions a ripple effect where healthy Christians contribute to healthy parishes, which in turn strengthen healthy dioceses, ultimately leading to a healthy nation. This focus on self-sufficiency and community development benefits not only the Church but also the nation.



Trinity complex owned by the Anglican Church of Rwanda in Kibagabaga

EAR has emerged as a leading partner in realizing the country’s vision through significant investments in real estate development across diocese. These income-generating ventures serve multiple purposes: providing financial resources for the Church, supporting its mission, and serving the people.

In the past five years, EAR has undergone a remarkable transformation, surpassing the pace of change witnessed since its establishment in 1965. The Church leadership attributes this progress to trust, networks, past experience, and divine blessing.

The Prelate embodies the spirit of a unified Rwanda—a nation offering shelter, fostering religious freedom, and upholding respect for elders. His unwavering commitment to peace is deeply rooted in his experience during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. He believes selfless leadership and patriotism are the springboards for Rwanda’s miraculous progress. This dedication has opened doors

for him as for many on the world stage, where his story inspires others to “come and see, and go tell the story!”