



UEM Leadership Training 2019 on Gender Justice September 22 – 29, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Gender Justice: A Call to Collective Action

We, representatives of UEM member churches to this year's Leadership Training on Gender Justice, acknowledge the presence of gender inequities and violence unfolding within our families, churches, and communities. This includes among others, domestic and sexual abuse, women trafficking, patriarchy, discrimination against women theologians in pastoral ministry, and exclusion of non-heterosexual and transgender people. This creates hostilities and affects human relationships, tearing communities apart in the process. It is in this context where we reflect on the meaning of gender justice as our pastoral and prophetic calling to collective action.

Gender justice values human dignity, which is inherent in every person. All human beings, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, abilities, gender and sexual orientation¹ – are celebrated as one in Christ and objects of God's redeeming, sustaining, and reconciling love (Galatians 3:28, Colossians 2:2, John 17:21). It calls us to end inequities and violence among and between human beings within family, church, and community settings, and extend God's grace for everyone to reach their individual and collective goals and aspirations toward the restoration of broken relationships and transformation of an unjust and wounded society (Amos 5:24, Isaiah 58:6, Revelation 21:1-4, Psalm 85:10) – UEM Leadership Training 2019.

To promote and advance gender justice among UEM member churches, the following are mechanisms that must be set in place, which include:

¹ This document acknowledges that some participants were hesitant to mention the term, 'sexual orientation,' in the gender justice statement for cultural (taboo), theological, and personal reasons. However, there was a consensus on the importance and need for UEM member churches to begin open communication and discussion on the subject matter.

1. UEM member churches must establish, if not, revisit existing gender justice policy and program/organizational structures to ensure gender equity.
2. UEM member churches must encourage and move forward in a purposeful way the ordination of women theologians toward gender equal representation. The same applies to women participation in policy making bodies and in the implementation of church ministry.
3. In the field of education,
 - a. UEM member churches must integrate the theme of gender justice into formal and informal education, and learning programmes, such as seminary curriculum, Sunday School (SS), Bible Study (BS), confirmation classes, pre-marriage and marriage counseling and parenting seminars, including church-related conferences and trainings – as part of education campaign and awareness raising on the subject matter.
 - b. On this regard, UEM member churches should spearhead in developing gender justice modules, including Sunday School (SS), Bible Study (BS), and preaching materials/curriculum that target diverse participants. This includes inviting resource persons and facilitators to help train church leaders and SS/BS teachers on gender justice.
4. UEM member churches are encouraged to establish and update their gender monitoring mechanism toward inclusion and full participation of church members in the life and ministry of the church. This includes having a gender justice attitude in hiring church personnel.

Recommendations to UEM member churches

1. UEM member churches to develop teaching and training materials, modules, and methodologies on gender justice issues: Sunday School (SS) and Bible Study (BS) materials, confirmation, adult and sex education.
2. UEM member churches to create safe spaces for meaningful dialogues and conversations around gender issues.
3. UEM member churches to have a benchmark where they share initiatives and ideas about gender justice.

Recommendations to UEM

In light of the above church undertakings toward gender justice, we recommend the following:

1. UEM to organize and conduct trainings, workshops, and fora on gender justice designed for trainers, church leaders, and Sunday School/Bible Study teachers, young people, including men and women.
2. UEM to support human resource-wise and financially, the development of gender justice curriculum and modules, as well as teaching and study materials that are contextual - reflective of where such materials will be applied and utilized.
3. UEM to help member churches in monitoring gender justice policy and its implementation toward gender equity on local church/local conference level.
4. UEM to integrate the theme of gender justice in its cultural exchange programs or partnership initiatives that bring together representatives of various UEM member churches to different countries around the world as part of experiential learning.
5. UEM to help provide member churches with financial assistance in the planning and implementation of gender justice-related programs and initiatives.

The following member churches of UEM were represented in the Leadership Training 2019

Banua Niha Keriso Protestan
Communauté Baptiste au Centre de l'Afrique
Evangelische Kirche von Westfalen
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Botswana
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania - North Eastern Diocese
Eglise Presbyterienne au Rwanda
Evangelisch-reformierte Kirche
Gereja Batak Karo Protestan
Gereja Kalimantan Evangelis
Gereja Kristen Jawa Tengah Utara
Huria Kristen Batak Protestan
United Church of Christ in the Philippines
Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa