

West African Kickoff

A kickoff always signals the start of a football game. This past week (2-9 September), we kicked off a new organization in Africa. The One Africa Team brought together two leaders from each of WELS' three partner church bodies in West Africa: Christ the King Lutheran Church of Nigeria (CKLCN), All Saints Lutheran Church of Nigeria (ASLCN), and the Lutheran Church of Cameroon (LCC). These six men sat together to solve some very sticky issues involving budgets, curricula, and staffing of their Seminary programs.



L-R: CKLCN Elder President Stephen Stephen, Elder Ephraim Adiauko, ASLCN Rev. President James Ogor, Rev. Johnson Wonah, LCC Rev President Mathias Abumbi and Rev. Vincent Ngalame

We set up a WhatsApp chat group to communicate throughout the week. It was useful for communication about what we had done in the Conference Room, meals, etc. We also came to understand that we could also use this forum for a monthly meeting. That meeting is currently scheduled for 8 am the first Thursday of each month. Regular communication will greatly assist us in making plans and holding one another accountable so that things get done.

Our biggest topic of conversation was to gain an understanding of the One Africa Team's vision for "Quarterly Ministry Plans." Much has changed since the days when missionaries resided in Nigeria and Cameroon. Due to security, WELS missionaries do not live in West Africa. In those days our partners were quite free to come and tell us, "We need ____ to carry out our ministry." Then the local missionary would see what he could do to provide it for them.



Now, our West African brothers are writing their own plans. They are very clear

about the programs that *they* are planning to implement. These plans include the purpose of the proposed program and who will be the participants and the teachers. Plans also include where the proposed program will take place, and benchmarks to gauge the program's effectiveness. The focus of ministry planning must remain on reaching people with the Gospel. However, detailed estimates of expenses and funding sources are important for successful planning. We now have a good understanding of what our partners need for the October-December quarter. With some minor adjustments, our partners will be ready to move forward with assistance from the One Africa Team.

We have opened a line of communication between the One Africa Team and the West African Leaders group. After the initial kickoff, the ball is now rolling.

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Please pray for those working in fields that are ripe for harvest. Share their story, engage with future news, and receive updates. Learn more about our mission fields in Africa and how the Holy Spirit is working faith in people's hearts at <https://wels.net/serving-others/missions/africa>