

Great Learnings in Diakonia

The DWF Moshi Assembly was the highlight event for this group of 5 DUCCs and 2 spouses of DUCCs. (Eric & Margaret, Sharilyn & Ed, Linda, Lori and Jen). The educational trip lasted between two to four weeks. We also enjoyed traveling along with four others, for a short time. Readers will learn there were other groups that also travelled to Africa pre and post the Assembly.

For the first 6 days we were guided by Mable Sichali, Diaconal Minister in the United Church of Zambia and national staff to the UCZ.



1 Mable Sichali on left with gardener

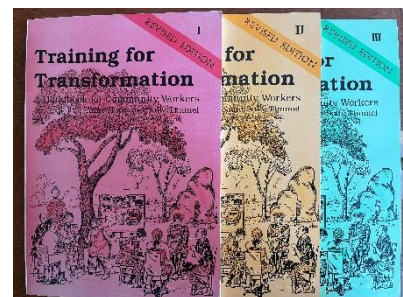
Every day, we saw 1 or 2 projects, of diaconal ministers working with organized groups of lay people (mostly women) who have been trained using a model called, [Training for Transformation](#). The projects spanned the gamut of foci - food security, climate change, home construction, gender justice, development of a conference/retreat centre, and forming financial co-operatives (i.e., credit unions). The participants were mainly members of the UCZ, but not exclusively, for there were also participants from other faith

traditions. We learned many compelling things about diakonia that could be applied to our situations here in Canada.

The second week of our trip, we travelled to South Africa - Cape Town and Johannesburg. The primary theme of this portion of our trip was learning about post-apartheid South Africa. In Cape Town we visited the museum created by the Leah and Desmond Tutu Legacy Foundation, where we learned of the roles and work of this couple as they supported each other during the repressive period of apartheid and then through the Truth and Reconciliation process. It was also instructive to see the role the churches played in standing up against evil structures and for human rights. In Johannesburg, we learned more about the political struggles against apartheid and the role Nelson Mandela played, by visiting Mandela's home and the Apartheid Museum.

There is a direct link between the first and second week and it is the [Training for Transformation](#).

This training program started in South Africa during the apartheid years as a way of empowering the local people and has now spread to many countries in Africa. That link flowed into the DWF Moshi Assembly when representatives from other African countries learned about [Training for](#)



[Transformation](#) and followed up to become part of the network of people who have been trained and now train others. What a wonderful model of diakonia. This program could be valuable for our diaconal training at the Centre for Christian Studies and help connect us with colleagues and innovative ministries around the world.