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Adventist University of Goma

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The Adventist University of Goma (Universite Adventiste de Goma or UAGO) is located in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), in the province of North-Kivu. The "Universite Adventiste de Goma [UAGO]" began in 1999. The University was founded by some lay church members of the Central Kivu Field. In October 06, 2013, the founders gave the management of the University to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Language of instruction is

French.¹

Introduction

The Adventist University of Goma (Universite Adventiste de Goma or UAGO), located in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), in the province of North-Kivu, was founded by thirty-two lay members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church² with the support of the Central Kivu Association executive committee at the time, consisting of Bangamwabo Mutabazi, president; Mvukiyehe Munyakaragwe, secretary; and Syakola, treasurer.³ Despite the constraints and difficulties encountered in its early days, the university purchased land and constructed buildings, offices, computer laboratory, library, and other facilities, opening its doors in the 1999-2000 academic year.⁴

The UAGO was established in response to need of both the local Adventist conferences and the community for senior staff with graduate training in education and management. The university was authorized to operate by the Ministry of Higher and University Education departmental decree number JUR/CABCD/023/99 of October 18, 1999. It was permitted to conduct schools for theology, economics and management, psychology and educational sciences, agricultural sciences and environment, tropical medicine, and languages. However, due to limited resources it opened with programs in economics, management, psychology, and education only. The first principal and academic general secretary was Niyonsenga Mbizi Eliel. Other administrators included Kayumba Mugoyi Osée, administrative secretary and dean of the faculty of psychology of educational sciences; Ndikumwami Birinda Justin, budget administrator and dean of the faculty of economics; and Hakizimana Mapendo Josias, secretary-cashier. Josias was also a student and the first beneficiary of a UAGO scholarship.⁵

Legal Status

After numerous visits from the Ministry of Higher and University Education to ensure the programs' viability, the graduate curricula for the school of psychology and education sciences and the school of economics were approved by the departmental decree number DEVN/CABCD/O94/2002. Ministerial decree number 196/MINESU/CAB/SSM/AB/2006, approved on June 02, 2006, granted final operating authorization and temporary approval to use the name Adventist University of Goma as a private educational institution. This process culminated on June 12, 2006, with presidential decree number 06/0106, article 2 of which conferred legal standing on the Adventist University of Goma.⁶

Mission

The founders of the Adventist University of Goma envisioned that the institution would prepare educators and administrators for service in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and that it would also train pastors for effective ministry in the various departments of the Adventist Church. They intended that it would produce graduates who are adapted for the future and able to transform their communities. The current mission statement reflects this vision.

Provide a holistic education that empowers students to acquire relevant knowledge and practical skills based on the Biblical worldview to meet local and international needs.⁷

The University's vision is to "promote science that harmonizes with faith and results in progress that honors God and focuses on the well-being of humanity."⁸

Scientific Research

The Adventist University of Goma offers education that combines practice with theory by applying cutting-edge scientific knowledge and methods. Thus, in the context of promoting research, UAGO had already produced more than four issues in its journal entitled *University Research Notebooks* as of 2020 with plans to publish more scientific articles in the future.

Academic and Professional Courses

The Democratic Republic of the Congo prescribes a significant portion of the curriculum for academic and professional courses at the Adventist University of Goma; however, the university has been able to include additional information in its disciplines which reflect its Adventist denominational affiliation.

As of the 2020, the university was comprised of five organized and functional schools covering theology, economics and information technology management, psychology and educational sciences, community development, and political, administrative and social sciences. Plans were underway to open programs in medicine and agronomic sciences.

Requirements for Student Admission

UAGO follows guidelines from the DRC's Ministry of Higher and University Education enroll all students who want to study without any distinction or discrimination in regard to race, ethnicity, gender, or religion⁹

Enrollment Statistics

Under the management of lay members, the Adventist University of Goma grew from fifty-two students during its first year, 1999-2000, to 320 students in 2015.¹⁰ This growth was interrupted by unrest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2002-2003, which created volatile circumstances for enrollment and the availability of staff. Thus, no statistics were officially reported that year.¹¹

Academic Years	Total	Boys	Girls	SDA
1999-2000	52	41	11	25
2000-2001	72	58	14	40
2001-2002	109	94	15	56
2002-2003	Harmonization of elastic years			
2003-2004	116	102	14	63
2004-2005	169	153	16	79
2005-2006	206	169	37	139
2006-2007	308	260	48	196
2007-2008	313	250	63	208
2008-2009	338	274	64	289
2009-2010	383	291	92	240
2010-2011	387	295	92	252
2011-2012	469	345	124	269
2012-2013	408	295	113	219

2013-2014	378	284	94	200
2014-2015	320	213	107	163

As evidenced by the accompanying statistical table, the majority of UAGO students are non-Adventists. The quality of teaching at university has earned it a reputation for discipline as well as moral and spiritual education.

Current Administrative Organization

Although the Adventist University of Goma began as the effort of a small group of individuals, by 2013 these lay members desired to relinquish management. They voted on October 6, 2013, to turn the university over to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. On October 31 of the same year, the East-Central African Division appointed a survey commission to determine the feasibility of maintaining the university. As a result, the North East Congo Union Mission took over the management of the institution on June 1, 2015,¹² with Paluku Mwendambio, principal; Niyonsenga Mbizi Eliel, academic general secretary; and Munyandekwe Rugina Jehovanis, budget administrator.

The University's Impact on the Community and the Church

The Goma community has embraced the university with appreciation. As the numbers reveal, the majority of the students are non-Adventists. This is an indication of the confidence parents have in the church-related schools. In addition to the university's many graduates, the institution organized an evangelistic campaign which resulted in a church which now has a membership of more than 300 members.

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