



Central Rift Valley Conference headquarters, Nakuru, Kenya.

Photo courtesy of Central Rift Valley Conference archives.

Central Rift Valley Conference

LAZARUS LESARON LELENGUIYA

Lazarus Lesaron Lelenguiya (Pastor Lazarus Lesaron Lelenguiya, BA (UEAB), MA BTS (Candidate) AUA) was the executive secretary, Seventh-day Adventist Church Central Rift Valley Conference, East Kenya Union Conference.

The Central Rift Valley Conference is an administrative unit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kenya. It operates under the [East Kenya Union Conference](#), which is part of the [East-Central Africa Division](#) of the denomination. The conference headquarters is located in Nakuru, Kenya.

Territory: Baringo, Laikipia, Nakuru, Narok, a larger portion of Nyandarua, and Samburu, Counties.

Statistics (June 30, 2024): Churches, 432; membership, 49,847; population, 5,420,613

Background

At the start of the year 1990, the clergy and the laity in the Adventist Church in the Nakuru Region was interested in discussing the need for the organization of a new Conference from the current Central Kenya Conference. This was to assist the Church in bringing Mission services, Christian spiritual growth, and leadership services closer to the western segment of the vast Central Kenya Conference region. The proposed Conference was to be located in the town of Nakuru and would be given the name "Nakuru Conference." Several delegates in the Central Kenya Conference sessions of December 1999, December 2005, and December 2010 appealed for the organization of a new Conference in that larger Nakuru region.¹

From 1990 to 1996, pastors and elders found it difficult to secure a piece of land in the Nakuru region to construct the future proposed Conference within Nakuru town. The Church consulted some senior government officials, who took them to President Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi to request for a piece of land so they could construct the future Conference offices. The delegation was led by Pastor Duncan Wanderi. After presenting their request, the idea pleased the president, so he decided to grant a piece of land within Nakuru town to the Seventh-day Adventist Church for this intended project.² This gave the Church a new dynamic power and great motivation to set up the Conference, and plans were laid down for the future Conference.

Consultations were made by the regional leaders with the Central Kenya Conference Administration where the Nakuru region belonged to in terms of Church missions and leadership roles as well as in locality. The Conference approved the matter in their Administrative and Executive committees and came up with financial and structural plans for the future Conference office building. They went further and worked out for the legal matters in the structural plans.³ This action gave the local churches the impetus to partner with the Conference for the construction of the future Conference office.

Construction of the Conference Offices

The construction of the Conference office was an idea which had already been conceived from the onset of 1989 and 1990. The Central Kenya Conference approval led to promotions for the local churches to make their contributions for the building of the office.⁴ A great success was achieved in collection of funds to construct the proposed Conference office because local churches conceived it positively.

By the end of 1994, sufficient funds had been raised, so the construction work began, led by the Nakuru regional leadership development committee in supervision by the Central Kenya Conference. The construction work took longer than anticipated before completion, so by 2006, only the ground floor was finished. After

seven years, the first floor was completed by the new Central Rift Valley Conference in the year 2013 and was occupied towards the end of 2013.⁵

The Establishment of the Central Rift Valley Conference

The organizational plans of the new Conference arose again from the then-East Africa Union Mission, which later became the Kenya Union Mission (and is currently the East Kenya Union Conference) sometime around 2012. Pastor Dr. Samuel Makori, who was the Union executive secretary, became the Commission's chairman for the organization of the Central Rift Valley Conference.⁶ The new Conference became a reality after consultations with the stake holders. The organization of the new Conference was to involve three entities. These were the Central Kenya Conference, South Kenya Conference, and the then-Western Kenya Conference (Currently Greater Rift Valley Conference).⁷ By December 2012, the proposed Central Rift Valley Conference leadership was put into place, and they began the promotional activities towards the inauguration of the new Conference.

The Central Rift Valley Conference was an amalgamation of four Field stations from three major Conferences, namely the Nakuru and Laikipia/Samburu stations from Central Kenya Conference, the Southern Station from the Western Kenya Conference, and the Narok Station from the South Kenya Conference. It was officially organized on November 24, 2013, by the East-Central Africa Division President Pastor Dr. Blasious Ruguri.⁸ The event took place at Shiners Boys High School in Nakuru City, and the Conference thus began its official operations.

According to the Central Rift Valley Conference Official reports book of September 2015, the Conference began with 432 Churches and a membership of 42,096.⁹ As of this writing, the number of churches are 586 with a membership of 62,664 and from 2013 to the first quarter of 2020, there had been an increase of 154 churches (35.6 percent) and 20,568 members (48.8 percent).¹⁰ The five year projection was to increase up to 768 churches and up to 88,000 members.

The Inaugural and Recent Leadership

According to the 2013 December End-Year Executive Committee Minutes, Pr. Reuben Korir became the first president of Central Rift Valley Conference while Pr. Geoffrey Waweru became the first executive secretary and Elder Tom Makori Onkware became the first treasurer. The inaugural departmental directors were Pr. Nathan Oirere (Stewardship), Pr. Stanley Ole Enko (Ministerial Secretary), and Pr. Samuel Mwaniki (Youth). Others included Pr. John Chepkwony (Publishing), Grace Nyangena (Women Ministries), Tom Akech (Health Ministries), and Joyce Cheruiyot (Education).¹¹

Starting 2018, the officers of the Central Rift Valley Conference included Pastor Reuben Korir (president), Pastor Lazarus Lesaron Lelenguiya (executive secretary), and Tom Makori Onkware (treasurer).¹²

SOURCES

Annual Reports Book (2015), The CRVC Session reports, Sept, 10 and 11th 2015. Central Rift Valley Conference, Office of Secretariat. Nakuru, Kenya, Campus Business Center Ltd, 2015.

Annual Statistical Reports 2020. Seventh-day Adventist Church Central Rift Valley Conference, Office of Secretariat, Records and Archives. Nakuru, Kenya: Seventh-day Adventist Church, Central Rift Valley Conference, 2020.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. Various years. <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/>.

NOTES

1. Pastor Joshua Njuguna, who was by then the larger Nakuru Field Station leader from 1997 to 1999 and who led and participated in several promotions to build the future Conference, interview by author over the phone, Nairobi, January 7, 2020.
2. Elder Charles O. Moguku, 1st church elder, Nakuru West, who was one of the elders during the process of acquiring land for the future Church project, interview by the author, Nakuru, January 21, 2020.
3. Elder Charles O. Moguku, 1st church elder, Nakuru West, who was one of the elders during the process of acquiring land for the future Church project, interview by the author, Nakuru, January 21, 2020.
4. Dr. Alfred G. Marundu, who was the executive secretary in Central Kenya Conference and the custodian of Church records as the process was ongoing, interview by the author, Nakuru, March 9, 2020.
5. Pastor Duncun Wanderi, who was the Field Station leader from 1990 to 1996 when a piece of land was acquired for the construction of the future Conference, interview by the author, Nakuru, February 12, 2020.
6. Pastor Reuben Korir, the first Central Rift Valley Conference president to-date, and Tom Makori Onkware, the first Central Rift Valley Conference treasurer to-date, interview by the author, Nakuru at the CRVC Office, February 12, 2020.
7. Pastor Evans Ooga, who was then the Nakuru Station pastors representative and sat at the Central Kenya Conference Executive Committee meetings as the deliberations went on between Kenya Union Mission for the organization of the new Conference, interview by the author, Nakuru at the CRVC Office, February 13, 2020.

8. Pastor Dr. Samuel Makori, who was the executive secretary of the East Africa Union/Kenya Union Mission and the chairman of the Commission that carried the responsibility for the process of organizing the Central Rift Valley Conference in 2012, interview by the author, Nakuru, March 10, 2020.
 9. Pastor Paul Muasya, then-president of East Africa Union/Kenya Union Mission before it changed its status into East Kenya Union Conference. He is currently the East and Central Africa Division General Field Secretary, interview by the author, Nairobi, March 24, 2020.
 10. *Annual Reports Book (2015), The CRVC Session reports, Sept. 10 and 11th 2015*. Central Rift Valley Conference, Office of Secretariat (Nakuru, Kenya, Campus Business Center Ltd, 2015), 42, 43.
 11. Annual Statistical Reports of Seventh-day Adventist Church Central Rift Valley Conference, Office of Secretariat, Records and Achieves (Nakuru, Kenya: Seventh-day Adventist Church, Central Rift Valley Conference, 2020), 3.
 12. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Yearbook* (2018), 48.
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