

# **NetACT Board meeting held at Chilema Ecumenical Lay Training Centre near Zomba, Malawi**

**12-14 July 2004**

## **Welcoming**

The chairman constitutes the meeting with a prayer. The vice-chairman introduces visitors from local host churches. Father Malanda, vicar general of the Anglican Diocese of Upper Shire, welcomes all the delegates at the meeting on behalf of the bishop/archbishop and the Chilema Ecumenical Lay Training Centre. Dr Felix Chingota, the moderator of the CCAP General Assembly, also welcomes the gathering. Even the deputy director of the centre, Rev Mbewe extends a word of welcome. He explains that three churches, namely the CCAP Blantyre Synod, the Diocese of the Upper Shire of the Anglican Church and the Churches of Christ jointly run the centre. The vice-chairman also introduces Dr Timothy Nyasulu, New Testament lecturer at Zomba Theological College (ZTC), and Mr Katsala, student representative of ZTC, who will be available for errands during the meeting. The chairman responds by saying how much we appreciate being in this particular environment. He also explains to the visitors and other newcomers what NetACT stands for. He asks them to take our greetings to the various churches.

## **Present**

Dr Amon Kasambala (Chairman; Children without Borders Trust)  
Dr Saindi Chipangwi (Vice-chairman; Zomba Theological College)  
Prof Jurgens Hendriks (Executive Director, Stellenbosch University)  
Mr Pieter van Santen (Project Manager, NetACT office)  
Mr Ron Hartgerink (Member of EC; Hartgerink Trust)  
Dr Hennie van Deventer (Secretary; Nifcott)  
Dr DT Banda (Justo Mwale Theological College)  
Mr McLeod Munthali (African Bible College)  
Rev Rangarirai Rutoro (Murray Theological College)  
Rev Fernando Cuboia (Hefsiba)  
Rev Campos Afonso (Instituto Biblico de Kinkuni)  
Rev Samuel Ngigii (RITT) – arrived late due to flight connections  
Rev Amorim Silambo (Hefsiba; interpreter)  
Rev Zach Pienaar (Namibia Research Institute)  
Rev Victor Chilenje (Justo Mwale Theological College – observer)  
Father Christopher Mwawa (Zomba Theological College – observer)

## **Agenda**

The provisional agenda, which was sent to the institutions in advance, is amended after some proposals from the executive committee (EC) and then adopted.

## **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous Board meeting in Stellenbosch in August 2003 are accepted and approved. The minutes of the Executive Committee (EC) will be approved by the committee itself, but all issues due to be discussed by the Board will be included in the Annual report of the NetACT office. The Board decides that all the minutes, including those of the Executive Committee, should be sent to all institutions in the appropriate email format or by ordinary mail or fax. The PM informs the meeting that the EC meetings over the past year took place by way of telephone conferences, saving NetACT a lot of money.

## **Nominations for Executive Committee Vacancies**

The chairman informs the meeting that his term of office is expiring and nominations will be done in the course of the day. The election of the new chairman will be done tomorrow. The official delegates of all the institutions are introduced as possible candidates. Dr Kasambala indicates that he will be willing to

continue serving on the Board if co-opted, but that he will not be available for the position of chairman. Dr Chiphangwi also informs the Board that, though he will be eligible, he might retire in the coming year, which will necessitate another election. Since Dr Steve Spencer of the African Bible College is not present, and is only represented by the Mr Munthali, they will not qualify for nomination.

## **Board Members**

- a) Dr Evert van der Ham informed the executive director (ED) that he would no longer be able to continue serving as member of the NetACT Board. The Board decides with a unanimous vote to accept the resignation.
- b) Dr Amon Kasambala is no longer an official delegate of an institution. Dr DT Banda replaced him as the official delegate of Justo Mwale Theological College. The ED proposes that Dr Kasambala be co-opted as member of the Board for the sake of continuity and in the light of the valuable contribution he has been making to the establishment and promotion of NetACT. The Board accepts the proposal without any counter vote.

## **Congratulations on doctorate**

The vice-chairman, Dr Saindi Chiphangwi, congratulates Dr Kasambala on his achievement in acquiring a doctorate at the Stellenbosch University.

## **NetACT office**

- a) The Board takes note of the new equipment that has been acquired for the office since the previous meeting. It is obvious that the office is functioning efficiently. The communication with the member institutions of NetACT has definitely improved.
- b) Answering a question about the workload in the office, the ED indicates that they can still manage, provided that there will be more delegation of responsibilities to other members of the Board. This might involve the creation of desks for issues like Curriculum Development and the HIV/AIDS challenge. It is clear, though, that the desk coordinators will also require some additional resources. Using the staff and facilities of other institutions will demand some incentives, and possibly reimbursement of expenses. The picture may however change if NetACT would be awarded the funds for the AIDS project. Then the whole working plan would have to be reconsidered.
- c) The Board expresses its appreciation for the work done by the PM, and also agrees that his salary will be increased with approximately the inflation rate.

## **NetACT House**

- a) The ED reports that the house is functioning very well since the Onwuntas were appointed as caretakers. They handle all the reservations and are responsible for the finances. The house has even made a considerable profit in the previous financial year.
- b) The Board approves the rule that, apart from the caretaker, no other student will be allowed to stay in the house longer than 4 months. It will not be the responsibility of NetACT or the Onwuntas to arrange alternative accommodation for such students.
- c) The PM reports that some people have booked a place, and eventually failed to use the place for a variety of reasons. The Board suggests that if people reserve a place, and fail to use it, without notifying the caretaker in due time, there should be some kind of penalty.
- d) Some members of the Board express concern about the fact that the house seems to be fully under the control of the Stellenbosch University. The question is whether NetACT's ownership of the house is still intact. The ED reminds the Board of the fact that the house was donated by the Hartgerink Trust to the SU under specific conditions. The agreement signed by the SU and NetACT representatives, which is on file in the NetACT office, specifies that the house will be available to students from NetACT and that NetACT has final jurisdiction on the use and administration of the house. NetACT can however also use the admin and other services of the SU for this purpose. Obviously, then, there is no doubt about the ownership of the house.

## Computers and Communication

The ED reports that the NetACT office has been experiencing some difficulties in communicating with some of the institutions. Institutions respond in the following way:

- a) Murray Theological College (MTC) can only receive email through Rev Henry Murray's system, working with a cell phone. Even sending faxes works out very expensive for the college. The Board agrees that a cell phone and the software for email could be provided to the college, with the condition that it will be under the control of the NetACT Board representative of MTC.
- b) Zomba Theological College (ZTC) often experiences problems with their computer hardware and the email server. They definitely need technical support.
- c) Hefsiba reports that they have started to use the cell phone provided by NetACT, even for email. They still have problems with maintenance of computer equipment.
- d) It is reported to the Board that Mr Johann Lemmer visited a number of the institutions, but that there were many problems. The Board decides that they will not make use of the services of Mr Lemmer again. However, it is clear that the need for technicians to service the computers and train people is a very urgent. It is suggested that the NetACT office should identify volunteers from churches who can visit the various institutions to offer help in this regard. At the same time it is quite obvious that it would be necessary to identify local resources to provide similar kind of services. NetACT could assist in giving some incentive for local contractors to be employed by the institutions.
- e) The Board agrees that NetACT could offer to assist institutions in acquiring new hardware on the basis of matching contributions (a Rand for a Rand, or a dollar for a dollar). Therefore the Board also determines that the available funds in the NetACT computer account should not be transferred to other accounts too quickly.

## Lecturer exchange

- a) The exchange of lecturers is indeed one of the most important services to be rendered by NetACT. The Board again agrees to budget for sponsoring the travelling costs for at least one short-term lecturer to visit each of the institutions. This may assist institutions that have a staff shortage and may also help to upgrade the standard of teaching.
- b) Priority should be given to lecturers from NetACT institutions, but if expertise is needed in an area which these institutions cannot provide, the Board agrees to sponsor even lecturers from non-affiliated institutions.
- c) The Board also takes note of lecturers that have been provided by local congregations in South Africa to teach at NetACT institutions (like Nifcott) on a short-term basis. It seems likely that there might be many more such lecturers available, who are well-qualified, and who can serve the institutions at minimal costs because their own congregations sponsor them.

## Curriculum Development

- a) Dr Chipangwi reports. After consulting with Prof Bosman of SU, they propose a bottom-up approach to curriculum development. It implies that an evaluation of every institution's curriculum should be done in conjunction with that institution. The institution should then set its own goals. NetACT is willing to provide networking assistance. ACTEA accreditation of all institutions will remain the goal.
- b) The Board requests the ED to have a discussion with Prof Carl (Faculty of Education, SU) and Prof Bosman (Faculty of Theology, SU), proposing that they recruit a student to do a D Phil study on contextualised curriculum development in NetACT institutions. Dr Chipangwi will remain responsible for the project, and will guide the student and oversee the work. There is even a suggestion that NetACT should create a "desk" for this responsibility. Because of the urgency and importance of the work, the Board decides to budget R40 000 to get the project started.

## Scholarships

- a) Ariko Ekitala and Samuel Ngigii were awarded the NetACT scholarship for this year. They haven't yet started their studies, due to circumstances at RITT. Rev Ngigii announces that he has been given study leave for this semester and will commence his studies very soon. Ariko Ekitala will then follow

in January 2005. The Board accepts the explanation, but decides that NetACT will require a commitment from the institutions that the lecturers will be released for further studies. If someone doesn't make use of the scholarship within six months, it will be forfeited.

- b) The Board acknowledges the application of Chatha Msangaambe for a scholarship to continue with his D Th in 2005. The scholarship is granted, provided that the budget allows and the candidate meets the requirements outlined in the guidelines.
- c) The Board confirms that the scholarship for the two ladies who applied through Nifcott is still available, provided that a proper request be presented to the EC, including a full presentation of the financial implications.
- d) The Board takes note of the fact that Christopher Munikwa found a full scholarship for further studies at the Western Theological Seminary. It is sad to hear, though, that he did not get a visa for studying in USA because of unfounded suspicions that he would not return to Zimbabwe. The Board wishes him success with the whole process of re-application.
- e) The Board reconfirms previous decisions to the effect that the administration of these scholarships will be handled through the SU system. The money will be credited directly into the student's account, who will then be able to withdraw the funds according to his/her needs. Since the scholarship extends over three years for D Th, the University will make only one third of the full amount available in a given financial year, and only half of the amount for M Th (with a two year duration). If the student would not complete the course, the University will be asked to change the bursary into a loan that will have to be repaid.
- f) Other institutions outside NetACT are also accepted for these scholarships, but only if the same course cannot be done at any of the NetACT institutions. This will also apply to the training of support staff at the institutions, such as a librarian.
- g) The Board asks the secretary to compile a complete set of the regulations concerning these scholarships from the minutes of all the previous meetings. This set of regulations will be appended to the minutes of the current Board meeting, and will regulate the future administration of the scholarships.

### **Application for membership from Namibia**

Prof Hendriks explains the situation in Namibia concerning the two theological institutions (i.e. Namibian Evangelical Theological Seminary and Paulinum). Over the years these two institutions were unable to work together. In June 2003 they formed the Namibian Research Institute (NRI) as a way of cooperating. The lecturers of the two institutions are jointly participating in this research project. The NRI is now applying for membership of NetACT. They delegated Rev Zach Pienaar to represent them at the NetACT Board meeting and present their request. The Board votes in favour of allowing them to become members, on the condition that they will provide a confirmation in writing that they accept NetACT's identity, vision, mission and values as stipulated in the constitution.

### **Studying Congregations in Africa**

- a) Studying Congregations in Africa was printed with donations from various sources. NetACT institutions had to inform the ED on how many copies they needed. These were provided free of charge, with the suggestion that they could be sold to students at an affordable price, and the funds be used for the acquisition of books for the libraries of the various institutions. At Stellenbosch they were sold to students at cost price (R100 each)
- b) Dr Scott Cunningham of ACTEA asked if the book could be made available to libraries of theological institutions all over Africa. The Board approves. The books may also be sold at cost price to students of other institutions in Africa.
- c) The book is being translated into Portuguese. The Board gives permission that the Portuguese translation work may be paid from NetACT's publications account. It will cost R8000.
- d) The ED asks all institutions to provide NetACT with the number of books they will require for the next academic year within the next month.

- e) The secretary thanks Prof Hendriks on behalf of the whole gathering for the hard work he put into the production of this book. Not only have the institutions acquired an important new resource for teaching, but the book is also serving to build NetACT's reputation.

### Other publications

- a) Two future publications have already been approved – on preaching in the HIV/AIDS context and on Christian Ethics in Africa. Dr Johann Cilliers and Dr Nico Koopman have been accepted as coordinators. They have to draw up a project proposal as soon as possible, in conjunction with the NetACT office. Funds will be required for possible co-writers to come together. The maximum number of people involved in each book should not exceed ten. Coordinators will ask institutions to nominate prospective co-workers and motivate the nominations with CV's. These may include even people who are not on the institutions' faculties. At least three meetings will be required – for initial planning, for the testing of the material, and for final approval before publication.
- b) Petra College approached the ED with a request for assistance in producing a book on "Children's ministry in Africa". The Board regards this as an important need for theological education in Africa, but fears that NetACT might at this stage be restricted by the availability of funds for a third book. If other resources become available, however, this project may of course also continue.
- c) The Church of Scotland was approached, but chances look slim for funding. The Reformed Mission League in the Netherlands seems to be a more hopeful prospect, but so far there is no assurance of assistance.
- d) Publications will be a very meaningful and lasting contribution towards theological education in Africa. It can become one of NetACT's most significant projects. If no specific funding can be solicited, the Board suggests that priority should be given to the book "Preaching on AIDS in Africa".

### Brief reports from all the institutions

- a) **Murray Theological College** (MTC) complains about a serious shortage of staff. Currently they only have four full time members of staff. Rev Rutoro indicates that they are hopeful to be assisted through NetACT's lecturer exchange programme. Three of the lecturers are in any case also busy with further studies. MTC also experiences a lot of financial problems and have recently introduced the requirement that the students should be paying for their studies. Obviously this measure is not really solving the problem. The Board agrees that MTC should be considered for the provision of a full time lecturer for a couple of years through the mediation of NetACT. The need would be for lecturers in New Testament and Ecclesiology. Dr D T Banda suggests that the institutions should think of breaking up their courses into semester units, since guest lecturers may often be available only for shorter periods, like 3 months or less.
- b) **Zomba Theological College** (ZTC) currently has 90 students, 11 lecturers. Accommodation is one of their main problems, but they have started to address the issue. Currently they are also setting up an IT centre with the help of the Church of Scotland. The ZTC will also buy computers for each member of staff. The school is further doing its best to find opportunities for lecturers to improve their qualifications. Their biggest headache is the issue of finances. The participating churches are failing to pay their dues. An effort was made to let the churches pay in advance. It even came to a situation where students had to be prevented from attending classes because their churches had not yet paid. The ZTC is now targeting the local churches to raise funds for specific needs. Further needs: someone to teach Old Testament.
- c) **Stellenbosch University** is also facing new challenges. A major new dimension is the requirement to work with three different churches in the theological training. With acclamation the Board takes note of the fact that the new dean of the faculty of Theology at the SU is a lady – Prof Elna Mouton. The SU is also busy with a variety of building projects – an IT centre, archives and a chapel. Prof Hendriks is very excited about the fact that they got a contract to investigate the poverty situation in the Western Cape. Several members of staff were appointed in the Faculty to work on this project. One advantage is that this project is fostering good cooperation with other sectors in the society. The Nepad initiative of President Mbeki required training of chaplains for police, armies and correctional services in Africa. Stellenbosch was chosen for this purpose. This is a wonderful opportunity to make an impact on Africa. The SU's involvement with NetACT was a deciding factor for getting these opportunities. The faculty also gets a lot of requests for agreements with institutions abroad. The

faculty made a decision that involvement in Africa would be their first priority and therefore faculty members will be rewarded for ventures into Africa. One of SU's major problems is the fact that Government subsidies were cut to such an extent that it is causing serious financial shortfalls. There are also a lot of new requirements from the government in terms of curricula. The biggest challenge is probably to make an impact in the area of improving race relations and unifying the nation.

- d) **Hefsiba (Vila Ulongue, Mozambique)** reports that they now have five Mozambican lecturers. Two of them have completed the postgraduate diploma in Theology at SU. Three are studying through the University of the North West (Potchefstroom). Their vision is to train leaders that will be able to train others – not only for the Reformed Church in Mozambique, but even other churches. They also have good relations with other theological institutions in Mozambique. One of the biggest challenges is also the financial sustainability of the school. They are doing a lot in terms of training students and serving ministers for a ministry relevant to the HIV/AIDS challenges of the country. They urgently need a printer for the institution. They also need to do maintenance on computers and perhaps even replacement. If the equipment would be available, there would be an opportunity to train secondary school students in the use of computers. Another problem is accommodation for the lecturers. Some of them are occupying student houses. Due to this situation they may also have to limit the new intake of students. Dr Manie Taute has also announced that he will be leaving Mozambique, since he has accepted a call to Portugal. This will leave a void. Rev Cuboia has been appointed as new principal, and is concerned about the fact that he is not able to speak English.
- e) **Justo Mwale Theological College** is in a stable situation and has increased the number of students. They do, however, have a shortage of staff. Two of the staff members left in the past year. Rev Chilenje was appointed and they hope to have someone from South Africa. They may also receive a lecturer from the Netherlands. Two great needs are for a qualified librarian, especially for the ordering of books and for the computerising of the library – and an IT technician. If NecACT could be of assistance in these areas, it would be wonderful. Accommodation and transportation will be available. They have computers, but only two are working properly. They would like to put up an IT centre for training students as well as serving ministers. They are also working on the renovation of student accommodation and the house of one of the lecturers. There are also plans for building a chapel. Security has to be improved. Planning for the Master's Degree programme is in progress with the assistance of Prof Jannie Botha, and they hope to start the new course in 2006. They will have their own accreditation for the course, but would also like to be linked to SU in this regard. They are still looking for recognition from their own government.
- f) **Reformed Institute for Theological Training (RITT)** re-established fish ponds with the help of donors. They also have an agricultural project running (60 hectares of land) to provide food for the students. The students have to pay fees which they cannot always manage. RITT is working hard on enlarging their library – resulting in a building project. They are also erecting accommodation for married couples. Another challenge is accreditation. RITT gets recognition through St Paul's (Limuru). At the same time the school is limited by this situation. They feel tied up by the requirements of Limuru. Therefore RITT is aiming for accreditation by ACTEA. They would like to eventually offer a Bachelors degree in Theology. Rev van der Ham was replaced by Rev ..... , sponsored by the Reformed Mission League. The school will introduce a semester system from August this year.
- g) **Nkhoma Institute for Continuing Theological Training (Nifcott)** has been involved in serious new developments recently. The institution embarked on an intensive theological training course due to the acute shortage of ministers in the Nkhoma Synod. The church decided to recruit 10 students to be trained in two years' time, following the same curriculum as the Diploma in Theology students at ZTC. It is encouraging to see that the Synod is doing its utmost to raise the funds for this project from the local church. With this new course, however, Nifcott is also struggling with a shortage of staff – they have 4 full time staff members at the moment. These same people have to continue teaching the practical one-year course that used to be offered at Nifcott. At the same time the school is also planning to take its in-service-training programme for ministers to a new level, and for that purpose plans have been drawn for a training centre at Nkhoma (adjacent to the existing school buildings).

## Nominations

The chairman calls upon all official delegates to propose names of candidates for the position of chairman of the NetACT Board. The nominations are done by secret ballot and will be announced early tomorrow morning.

## Adjournment

The meeting is adjourned until tomorrow. Dr Chiphangwi closes the day's proceedings with a word of prayer.

## Tuesday, 13/07/04

### Further Reports on institutions

- a) **Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary (Nets)** is well established, offering diploma and degree courses. They have a sufficient number of lecturers, most of them indigenous Namibians. Their big project at the moment is to build a new library. **Paulinum** is the United Evangelical Lutheran theological seminary. This is also quite a strong institution with an extensive history in theological education in Windhoek. The **Namibian Research Institute (NRI)** is focusing on research projects regarding the church, and enjoys full cooperation from both the above mentioned theological institutions. Lecturers from both institutions are participating in the research, thus rendering an important service to the Christian community in Namibia, and at the same time building common ground between the institutions and drawing them closer together.
- b) **African Bible College (ABC)** has a big library, but the books are perhaps not so relevant to the African context. They also intend to develop the electronic side of the library. They have a lot of applications for enrolment, but can only accommodate 40 new students per year. The problem is a lack of accommodation. Another problem is for students to get the required fees. Some of the students study for a Masters through the Reformed Theological Seminary.

### Library assistance

- a) The ED informs the Board about assistance that institutions could get with their libraries. ACTEA advertised a website in their newsletter ([www.langhampartnership.org](http://www.langhampartnership.org)) from which theological institutions can get library books at a special price.
- b) Negotiations with the Logos library system are also continuing, and large volumes of material may soon become available on CD to NetACT institutions. This will actually be an incredibly valuable resource to our institutions, provided that we have the technology and the know-how to make proper use of it.
- c) In the light of the previous point the development of IT facilities and skills at the NetACT institutions should remain a matter of urgency. For this purpose it is not sufficient to acquire equipment – the theological community must also be trained to use them, including staff, students, library personnel, etc.

### Receiving the ACTEA newsletter

The Board accepts a proposal that the NetACT office should help all the NetACT institutions to be included on the mailing list for the ACTEA newsletter. This will require registration with the ACTEA office and the payment of a minimal fee of US\$10 per year.

### Theological Training in Angola

Prof Jurgens Hendriks reports about the fact finding mission which he, the PM and others have undertaken into Angola. It was an extremely difficult and exhausting trip, but at the same time exceptionally rewarding in the light of the current situation in terms of theological training in that devastated country. The following aspects of the report are highlighted:

- a) The church in Angola was in a war for 40 years. Since the end of the war they have three types of theological training. The first level is that of awarding a certificate. This is the level at which they are

training at the “Instituto Biblico de Kinkuni” (IBK). IBK joined NetACT last year. There are, however, at least two other theological institutions in the Reformed/Presbyterian tradition. One is in Luanda, the other in Huambo. At Huambo they offer even diploma and degree courses. Their infrastructure seems to be much better than at the other places. The NetACT delegation discussed with the various role players the possibility of selecting one person to represent them all on the NetACT Board. It should preferably be a person who is conversant in English, and who can also be trained to use the computer and email facilities. The Board carries this suggestion, and the institutions in Angola will be informed accordingly. They will have to discuss the issue internally and then choose their representative. Further negotiations and actions from the NetACT office will be channelled through this representative.

- b) IBK received the electronic equipment which NetACT donated to them last year. Unfortunately they don't have sufficient knowledge to operate the computer, and the cell phone was stolen.
- c) They had a whole list of other needs, which the delegation promised to present to NetACT. Those include the following: A printer; an UPS (uninterrupted power supply); a cell phone for the email connection; cell phones for 7 staff members and a vehicle for the school. The Board agrees to provide a printer, a cell phone and an UPS to the office of the General Secretary (or coordinator, as he is called there) of the *Igreja Evangelica Reformada de Angola (IERA)* in Luanda, provided that there will be sufficient security (to be kept in the safe of the coordinator's office), and that a person is trained for the use of the equipment. For the other equipment NetACT can't do more than bringing the Angolan institutions in contact with possible donors.
- d) One of the biggest needs is for well-trained lecturers. Most of the current lecturers do not have higher qualifications. The Board suggests that we should look for available Portuguese speaking lecturers (perhaps even retired people), who can assist the institutions to get up to standard. In the lecturer exchange programme of NetACT priority should definitely be given to Angola, and in this Hefsiba can obviously play a major role.
- e) The chairman thanks the delegation that went to Angola for a very courageous undertaking. From the report it is quite clear that the fact-finding mission was indeed very essential. The report was well prepared, and helped the Board to understand the situation and to take informed decisions.
- f) Rev Campos Afonso thanks the Board for allowing the light of the Gospel to shine in Angola. There was a time when the light was nearly extinguished. Now they are in a time of rebuilding. NetACT's involvement is very important. One finger cannot beat a drum (Angolan proverb).

### **Report about NetACT's HIV/AIDS project**

- a) Dr Amon Kasambala presents the report prepared by Ms Janet Brown. He highlights the plans that were adopted at the previous meeting of the NetACT Board in Stellenbosch, in which various phases of implementation were anticipated. It is obvious that very few of those goals could be achieved over the last year, mainly because the expected funding from USAIDS could so far not be obtained.
- b) The Board further notes that the conference about the integration of HIV/AIDS in theological curricula, which was held in Pietermaritzburg under the auspices of ACTEA, was attended by at least five representatives from NetACT institutions. Only two were officially delegated (Ariko Ekitala from RITT and Kruger du Preez from Hefsiba), but JMTC, ZTC and Nifcott sent representatives at their own expense. According to Ariko Ekitala's report, and the testimony of others who attended, it was a very helpful and profitable meeting, assisting institutions to develop their curricula for the HIV/AIDS ministry of the Church.
- c) The Board welcomes the suggestion from the report about the development of an enhanced pastoral care component for the NetACT course on HIV/AIDS. The report proposes that Amon Kasambala be appointed to initiate the work on such material. The Board confirms this proposal and encourages him to go ahead with the work. At a later stage he could involve representatives of the other institutions to add experiential value to the book from different situations in Africa.
- d) It is agreed that NetACT can get training through CABSA (Christian AIDS Bureau of South Africa) if the money would become available from USAIDS. Amon is authorised to pursue and speed up this fund raising effort.

- e) The Board notes that some extra facilitators have already been trained in the meantime (Venancio Patrique from Hefsiba and Lewis Mwanamvekha from Zomba). Not only will they require further training, but there is also a need to help all other institutions to have at least one trained facilitator to present the course on HIV/AIDS Awareness.

## **Planning and budget**

- a) Ron Hartgerink presents a spreadsheet with all the planned expenses for the next 18 months. These expenses exceed the expected income by more than R146 000. The Board is therefore set before the challenge to reduce the provisional budget by this amount.
- b) Though it was originally decided to allow all institutions to invite visiting lecturers in the coming year, the Board unfortunately has to swing this decision around and limit this privilege to only the following five institutions: Angola, MTC, JMTC, Nifcott and Hefsiba (according to NB 96 d above, Angola should have priority). R8000 is budgeted for each institution, but that does not mean that the funds will be at the disposal of the institutions to use as they want. If the travelling cost for the one institution is less than R8000, the remaining money will be used to make up for the costs pertaining to other guest lecturers that might be higher than R8000. Institutions can for instance not claim the money and try to invite two guest lecturers on the same amount.
- c) The Board decides that the budget for the publishing of the book on Christian Ethics in Africa has to be removed for the time being, but if any funds should become available from donors that have already been contacted, the EC will have the right to authorise the resuming of the work on that book.
- d) The budget for the curriculum development is also reduced from R40000 to R20000. In the long run the first amount may still be needed, but the reduced amount will suffice for the year to come.
- e) It is agreed that only one new full scholarship will be awarded in 2005. This will reduce the budgeted amount from R80000 to R40000
- f) Ron promises to present the adjusted budget to the Board tomorrow morning for final approval.

## **Board meeting for 2005**

The Board decides that next year's meeting will again only accommodate one delegate from each institution, but institutions are free to send another representative at their own expenses. It is suggested that Hefsiba should be the venue for the 2005 meeting and the motion is carried. The Hefsiba delegates also accept the offer.

## **Financial statements for 2003**

The ED presents the audited financial statements for 2003 to the Board (the audit was done internally and externally within the financial system of the SU). After a brief discussion the Board accepts the statements as correct.

## **Election of new chairman**

The chairman announces that two people, namely Dr Saindi Chiphangwi and Dr D T Banda, have been nominated for the position of chairman of the NetACT Board of Governors. The official delegates vote by secret ballot. It is announced that Dr D T Banda of the Justo Mwale Theological College will be the chairman for the next three years. Dr Kasambala will continue to function as chairman till just before the end of the meeting, when he will officially invite Dr Banda to take the chair.

## **Evaluation of congregational involvement of NetACT institutions**

Prof Hendriks challenges the institutions about their involvement in congregations, since that is somehow the heart of the NetACT's vision. Several of the delegates give testimony of how their training is geared to build up the congregations. Courses that are helpful in this regard are the Nehemiah Bible Institute's course for church leaders, the Veritas course in Bible Interpretation and the Project Africa material. The institutions also value the Kingfisher courses positively, although there seems to have been some misunderstanding about what exactly they are prepared to offer and how that can be suited to the particular needs of the institutions they would like to assist. The ED also reminds the Board that Zach

Pienaar, the Namibian delegate, has an exceptional gift for guiding congregations through processes of change.

## **Adjournment**

Prof Hendriks leads in a closing prayer and the meeting is adjourned for the rest of the afternoon. ZTC arranged a programme for the afternoon, which includes a visit to the Kachere bookshop, the Zomba market and the Zomba plateau. The day is concluded with a reception on the ZTC campus.

## **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2004**

### **Budget accepted**

- a) Ron Hartgerink presents the adjusted budget. In this final budget, the “complete case” presents the amounts proposed during the Board’s discussion of the various NetACT activities that require funding, while the “prioritised list” presents the final amounts awarded to the various activities in accordance with the available funds.
- b) The Board accepts this final copy of the budget, which will also be attached to the minutes. The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to Ron for his very competent guidance in these matters.

### **Closing remarks from outgoing chairman**

- a) In his concluding remarks as outgoing chairman of the NetACT Board, Amon Kasambala challenges the delegates to continue thinking about the issues in the Bible study we have been doing each morning. He strongly recommends Rick Warren’s book *“Purpose Driven Life”* for personal devotions and use at our theological institutions.
- b) He further stresses the need to look at the financial sustainability of NetACT. He suggests that the Board should perhaps start thinking about acquiring a house that will generate income. Partnership with particular institutions and donors should not make us dependent. These partnerships should rather empower us to initiate new ways of finding our own feet.
- c) He also highlights the importance of consultation as a particular piece of advice to the new chairman. None of us can do it alone. Team spirit is crucially important in the EC and the entire Board. We are far apart, but technology makes it easier these days. The success of the current meeting has to do with the maturity of being able to listen to each other. NetACT has made big strides in developing into maturity over the past four years. Amon expresses the conviction that NetACT is indeed ready to play a significant role on the African continent.
- d) He further advises the entire Board to give the new chairman room for initiative. He must be able to dream – as Amon has also done. Though consultation remains essential at all times, the new chairman must be given space to express his own gifts in leadership.
- e) Amon concludes his remarks with a reminder that he will still be available in any way he can offer assistance. He promises not to impose himself, but if asked, he will offer any help he is capable of.

### **Remarks from the new chairman**

- a) Dr D T Banda, the new chairman, who is the principal of Justo Mwale Theological College in Lusaka, Zambia, takes the chair. In his opening remarks he indicates that the acceptance of this new responsibility has come to him without anticipation – therefore he regards this as a time to think rather than speak.
- b) He states the conviction that leadership is very important according to the Bible. But leadership is not to be done in isolation. He reminds the Board of the proverb used by Rev Campos Afonso of Angola saying that you can’t play a drum with one finger. Therefore he will also depend on those who have a lot of experience within NetACT. He will rely on the guidance of the previous chairman, the wisdom of the vice-chairman, the competence of the executive director and the project manager, as well as the gifts of people like Ron and others.

- c) Dr Banda concludes his remarks by calling on the entire Board to keep on praying for NetACT, because he believes it can indeed play a significant role in the current situation in Africa. In particular he stresses the need to pray for the people in office.

## **Minutes**

- a) Though the minutes of the first two days of this meeting of the Board have been handed out to all the official delegates, it is obvious that nobody has had the opportunity to read through the minutes and make sure that they are a true reflection of the discussions and decision of the Board. Therefore the Board decides to accept these minutes in principle, with the addition of the record of the proceedings of the last day. However, corrections can still be sent to the secretary within the next two weeks. Afterwards these minutes will be taken as the final record of the meeting and be distributed to all the institutions.
- b) The secretary will also include the following addendums with the minutes, as approved by the Board: the 2005 budget, the contact details of all the delegates, and the regulations concerning NetACT scholarships.

## **Closing prayer**

Following the proposal of the PM, the whole group attending the Board meeting gathers around the new chairman, and all lay their hands upon him. Then the vice-chairman, Dr Chiphangwi leads us in a moving prayer for Dr Banda as new chairman. He continues to thank God for everything that has been achieved through NetACT, and specifically at this meeting. He also intercedes for all the institutions in their efforts to serve the coming of God's Kingdom in Africa, and finally prays for travelling mercies upon all the delegates as they return to their various homes.