



Greetings from the **new** ACTEA office! Welcome to a virtual tour of ACTEA's new and modern office!

Message from ACTEA Director

The pioneering African theologian and theological educator Dr Byang Kato (1936–1975) of Nigeria is the founding father of ACTEA. Serving as the General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA), he issued a call at a meeting in Limuru, Kenya in November 1975 for the establishment of

- i. an agency to accredit theological institutions in Africa,
- ii. graduate level institutions here on the continent,
- iii. publications by evangelical African scholars, and
- iv. of an academic journal to serve the needs of African evangelical Christianity.

Sadly, he did not live to see ACTEA's birth. But in 1976 AEA established ACTEA – then known as the Accreditation Council of Theological Education in Africa – as part of AEA's Theological Education Commission. Paul Bowers, ACTEA's first director, recalls that the AEA Executive Committee then decided to establish “an accrediting service for evangelical theological schools in Africa, appointment of a Council to direct this new initiative, designation of a coordinator to implement the project, and placement of the whole under the oversight of the AEA Theological Commission.” If Byang Kato were still alive today, I imagine that he would be happy to see how far ACTEA has come. But if he were to stand in the boardroom of ACTEA's new office, I imagine that he would see more than the beautiful trees and the Nairobi skyline – he would be looking ahead to see what God still has in store for the Church around the world through the work of theological education in Africa!



Portrait of Byang Kato at Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS) in Nigeria

A Home for ACTEA

From 1976–2014, ACTEA lacked a permanent home. While ACTEA remained faithful to its calling, often overcoming nearly insurmountable odds to do so, the ACTEA office was simply wherever the current ACTEA director happened to sit down with his briefcase – sometimes South Africa, sometimes Nigeria, sometimes Zambia, sometimes abroad in the United States. In 2013 the Council resolved to move the office permanently to Nairobi, Kenya, where AEA, ACTEA's parent organization, is located. So in 2014, for the first time ACTEA acquired a permanent office. Becoming officially registered as a non-profit society, ACTEA was able to establish a permanent office, sharing a corner in AEA's old offices in Nairobi. In September 2017, we moved to a larger space in a small outbuilding on the campus of Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST; now part of Africa International University/



ACTEA visit to Scott Theological College in Machakos, Kenya (July 1979)

AIU). But while each of these moves were definite improvements on the past, the space available remained inadequate to the need of fulfilling our vision of enriching and renewing theological education in Africa.

Meanwhile, through the leadership of Aiah Foday-Khabenje, AEA stepped out by faith to construct a 9-storey plaza for operations and sustainability. Construction on the magnificent AEA Plaza began in 2015 and was completed and dedicated to God's service in April 2019.

Earlier, when the work started in 2015, Dr. Khabenje, who also served as a member of the ACTEA Council, invited ACTEA to purchase office space in the AEA Plaza then under construction. The Council, held in 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, approved this invitation. The Council believed the project was strategic for the future growth of the organization. The Lord provided the initial deposit to purchase 5082 square feet of space. The balance was to be cleared by February 2020. However, due to COVID, ACTEA downsized to a modest 1860 square feet. Of course, ACTEA's office space would need some more work before we could move in.

AEA Plaza and ACTEA Office, under construction



AEA Plaza, under construction



Executive Director's Office



Workstations

ACTEA Office, October 2022



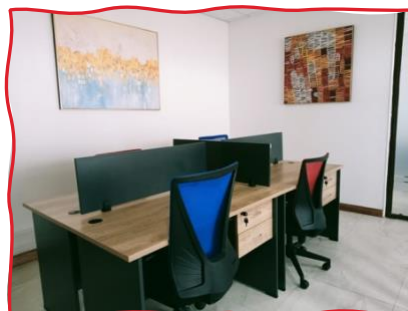
AEA Plaza



ACTEA's Boardroom



Administrator's Office



Office Workstations



Hallway view from Workstations



Administrator's Office



Flo Kagwamba and David Tarus at the office, excited and ready to keep working!



Executive Director David Tarus, in his new office

We praise God that this project is now complete. We moved from the campus of AIU to the new offices in February of this year. We have five modern offices (three are rented out), a smart board room, an archival room, and an open workstation. Oh — and a small breakroom to make tea and coffee. We thank God for the generosity of individuals and donor agencies around the world who made this project a success.

The office will facilitate ACTEA's mission of strengthening Africa's theological education through accreditation, scholarship, and support services in order to serve the Church and transform society. The office provides extra income and has improved our brand.

If you find yourself in Nairobi, come and visit! You can find us on the sixth floor of the AEA Plaza on Valley Road.

grace and peace,

The ACTEA Staff

To learn more about ACTEA's story, read the following:

- Bowers, Paul. "Byang Kato and Beyond." *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* 28, no. 1 (2009): 1–21.
- Bowers, Paul. "Theological Education in Africa: Why Does It Matter?" *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* 26, no. 2 (2007): 135–149.
- Kato, Byang. "We are at a Turning Point in Africa's Church History." *Africa Now* (September–October 1974): 6–7.
- Tarus, David. "The Contributions of the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA) to Excellence and Renewal of Theological Education in Africa." Chapter 4 in *A Critical Engagement with Theological Education in Africa: A South Africa Perspective*, edited by Johannes J. Knoetze & Alfred R. Brunsdon, 53–65. Reformed Theology in Africa 7. Cape Town: AOSIS, 2021.