

Lessons in Tree Climbing

One of our dear African friends passed away in May. He always liked to quote an African proverb at every meeting. I remember him saying, "A single arm does not allow you to climb a tree!" Nothing could be more true when it comes to facing of the "big trees" of COVID 19.



The first COVID 19 patients in Ivory Coast appeared in March. Emmanuel, the national coordinator of the CHE Ivory Coast Association, AISEC, members of the Global CHE Network, and his team went in search of "other arms" to climb that COVID-19 "tree". RESCOF (<http://www.rescof.com/>) quickly developed

and shared prevention tools with AISEC in the form of picture booklets, adapted to their local context. Fifty discovery group facilitators were trained to do home visits using these booklets. They explained how COVID-19 is transmitted, how people can protect themselves, and they shared God's Great Story. For the past two years, AISEC has initiated training sessions on how to multiply disciples using an integral approach: as disciple makers in families and communities. Discovery groups are tools used in this approach.



Five church networks in five different regions have been involved in "climbing the tree". They have mobilized their members to join the project and were trained to implement these discovery groups. They distributed the hand sanitizing gels, masks and picture booklets.

The GBH association, a member of the Healthcare Christian Fellowship, contributed by targeting people living with HIV. More than 300 HIV positive people have benefited from their assistance in terms of awareness campaigns, the distribution of hand sanitizers, masks and home-based care. This association also contributed by training pastoral teams to give correct information about COVID-19, as well as in how to implement preventative measures.

Member organizations in the network became "arms" and contributed financially towards locally manufactured masks and gels.

Today we express our gratitude to God, whose ways are perfect, for the people who have come into His Kingdom in recent weeks through this program, who have joined discovery groups and are beginning to follow Jesus.

We will need to climb other trees in the coming months. We will put our arms together to do so!

Martine and Emmanuel