

### **Empowering Progressive Clergy in Africa**

At its root, homophobia can be traced to religious origins as cultures wrestle with the “divine design” of LGBT people and their reconciliation within faith communities. The Fellowship Global is working with advocates to establish an organization of United Coalition of Affirming Africans in Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda to be at the forefront of engaging faith leaders in difficult dialogue about culture and human sexuality by forming

These national networks will launch with a national conference and will lay the groundwork for a pan African progressive Christian movement. The United Coalition of Affirming Africans (UCAA) has the potential for skipping decades of struggle and moving directly to a more collaborative model for the elimination of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Without such a movement, the people of Africa will continue to be exclusively exposed to and influenced by the American religious right and its homophobic agenda.

Each UCAA national group will engage Christian clergy, and LGBTI activist primarily focused on the social, legal, and moral inclusion of LGBTI people in each country with a secondary emphasis on the economic and social concerns of the country.

While respecting other faith traditions in Africa, UCAA provides a progressive and inclusive Christian lens that allows African Christians to focus on the specific factors within their belief system and the particular role Africa plays within the global economy of Christianity.

Ultimately, this grassroots movement with a progressive faith frame can discern a path toward affirming the inherent dignity and equality of the LGBTI community in Africa while positively impacting its economic, social, and health concerns. The inter-sectional perspective of structural social change is critical as it pro actively connects the LGBTI experience in Africa with the totality of the human experience in Africa. As has been the case in the American LGBTI movement particularly among Black Americans, the strategic points of access to drive LGBTI inclusion in Africa can be woman’s issues and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.