



## **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR CHURCH INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A CASE OF THE ANGLICAN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN KENYA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study sought to establish the biblical and theological basis for church involvement in Community Development (CD). The Anglican Development Services (ADS) of the Anglican Church was used as the case for this study. The study targeted four ADS regions namely; Pwani, Eastern, Mount Kenya East and NAIKA (Nairobi, Kajiado and All Saints). The theory of Reconstruction Theology (RT) advanced by Jesse Mugambi as a paradigm for CD was employed. A sample of 330 respondents gotten from a target population of 1,827 was used. Descriptive survey design was employed. Utilizing questionnaires, interviews, and Focus Group discussions data was gathered. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 computer software was used to analyze quantitative data in frequency and percentages while qualitative data was analyzed thematically and narrative formats in accordance with the study objectives. The findings showed that biblical and theological basis for church involvement in CD were highly valued. This compels the church to engage community in socio-economic and political development through conscientization, transformational participatory and goal-oriented empowerment. The study recommends more effort be made to disseminate biblical and theological teachings to educate communities about wholistic mission of the church. Implementation of CD be based upon proper biblical hermeneutics and contextual theologies as a demonstration of service to the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable in community.

**Key Words:** Community Development, Anglican Church of Kenya, Anglican Development Services, Biblical and Theological Basis, Church Involvement

### **BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

Collins English Dictionary (1999), defines development as a process of advancement, gradual growth or formation of new information. Constitutional Debate No.3 (1996), defines development as multi-dimensional process involving re-organization and re-orientation of socio-economic systems. Development means investing in peoples' through education, health, nutrition, safe water, communication systems and freedom to effectively participate in community. According to United Nations (1963), CD is a process by which the efforts of the people are aligned with those of state, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) and CD partners to improve locals in re-constructing socio-economic and political immediate needs of the people. In this study, CD points to self-realization, self-development, self-fulfillment and non-dependence of community.

The role of the church in development has generated debates in political, religious, cultural, environmental and socio-economic spheres. CD has been a critical discipline in the secular and religious fields locally and internationally, drawing considerable ecumenical interest since World Conference on Church and Society held in Geneva in 1966 (Klaasen, 2019). There has been a connection between the church and CD as both conterminously exist to address contextual realities affecting the poor, the marginalized, and the vulnerable. A church that disregards service to the community loses the rationale of its very existence.

In terms of biblical basis for church involvement in CD, God has since creation been empowering community (John 5:17). Okullu (1983), traces CD in creation; when God said “. . . be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1:27). Luke 4: 18-21 and Matthew 25:35-40 serves as a fulfillment of the *euagellion* (good news) to the poor; the sick and liberation from oppressive forces (Lehman, 2018). Theologically, God is the source of life in the *cosmos* (all worlds) and is at the periphery of society (Webber, 2018). God’s *anthropomorphism* (personalization) manifests *shalom* in terms abundance. The Old Testament (OT) affirms the dignity of humanity as created in the *imago Dei* (image of God) and likeness (Genesis 1:27-30). God places people in community to reflect His character in co-creation in the midst of a fallen world. Pillay (2007), holds that Jesus’ *kenosis* (incarnation) in the New Testament (NT) relates to socio-economic and political ideologies; as He and the Apostles spearheaded the good news within and without communities.

Global perspectives on church involvement in CD dates back to Greco-Roman societies; the church found it a noble vocation to advance the welfare of the deprived (Luke 4:16-18). The church has continued to promote community socio-economic and political development ideologies (Strivers, 1993, Winter, 2009 and Pillay, 2007). The Anglican

Church world-wide, has been offering assistance to the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable, compelled with compassion of Jesus Christ in mitigating poverty, poor health, oppression and myriad forms of injustices (Omanyo, 2014).

In Africa, CD pre-existed the coming of Arabs (600-1450 AD), a distinctive feature that religion was integrated in African society (Mbiti, 1969 and Yusufu, 2016). Crooks (2009), states that the Methodist Church in Cambodia invested in Bible studies that offered communities knowledge and skills in farming, saving loans, and entrepreneurship. Klikberg (2003), rates FBOs highly in enhancing CD in Berlin, Southern Africa, and Malawi. Similarly, World Bank (2008), indicates that FBOs facilitate 50% of health and education services in Africa. However, despite FBOs success in enhancing CD in Africa, Green (1991), Sakwa (2007), and Tenai (2016), annotate that Sub-Saharan Africa has experienced poverty in rural households. World Bank (2018), indicates that 82% of Africans in Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL) and conflict areas experience food insecurity, unemployment, poor infrastructure, inequality, poverty, lack of access to education, healthcare, and skills. World Bank (2019), forecasts increase of poverty in Africa from 55 % in 2015 to 90% in 2030, indicating widespread adverse effect on community livelihood.

In East Africa, Okoth (2000), traces the origin of CD to Portuguese Catholic missionary in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, which involved evangelism, commerce, and trade. In Kenya, the arrival of Johann Krapf in Mombasa in 1844 provided a missionary strategy to health, agriculture, and education as social gospel (Nkonge, 2012). In Kenya, Anglican FBOs in CD include Primates World Relief and Development Fund which support alleviation of hunger and food production (Diocese of Ruperts Land, 2020), and Bread for World of Germany that empower the poor and promote justice (Anglican Aid-Let Grace Flow, 2020). Ole Sapit (2019), reinstates that the missionary strategy was to construct a school, health unit, a garden, and carpentry workshop at every mission station. The ACK has had a long history of commitment to integrated development with CD as one of the strategic plans dealing with maternal health and lifestyle diseases, HIV/AIDS, climate change, environment management livelihood, and emergency response (ADS Kenya Strategic Plan 2020-2024).

The church using biblical and theological impulses proclaim *euagellion* of justice and liberation for the down trodden (Luke 4:18-19). Omondi (2019) focuses on ACK Kenya Decade Strategy (2018-2027), on wholesome: evangelism and Christian formation, living, health, ecology, education, media and institutional sustainability and governance to enhance development processes. Tsuma and Wambua (2020), claim projects funded by the church are a powerful global drive with socio-economic, political and environment objectives. The study was valuable because, despite the effort of ADS in enhancing CD in Pwani, Eastern, Mt. Kenya East and NAIKA regions through agriculture, environment, health, human rights, poverty alleviation, peace building, food security, economic empowerment, advocacy, water and sanitation, HIV/AIDS, and governance strengthening, communities have persistently experienced poverty, poor health, unemployment, social inequalities, poor governance, and widespread corruption. This has been perceived by some critics as an evidence of the non-involvement of ADS in CD and lack of recent empirical data on the extent and influence of ADS contribution in enhancing livelihoods. In an attempt to contribute in bridging the existing knowledge gap, this study sought to investigate the dynamics of ADS of the AC in enhancing CD in Kenya.

### **Purpose of Study**

To investigate the dynamics of ADS of the Anglican Church in enhancing CD in Kenya.

### **Objective of Study**

To establish the Biblical and Theological basis for Church involvement in CD.

### **Research Question**

What are the biblical and theological basis for church involvement in CD?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Christians approach the Bible as the final authority to development concerns of the world. Mugambi (1989), defines theology as the systematic discourse about God. According to Nkonge (2008), theology in its essence is aspects of training-formal or informal.

### **Biblical and Theological Basis for Church Involvement in Community Development**

The Bible is the infallible word of God to the world. Pobee (1979), elucidates that theology is concerned with existential situations that humanity finds in. The biblical and theological teachings are based on fortitude that God

provides to the oppressed through community. The development work of ADS in Kenya draws its mandate from John 10:10b "... I have come that they may have life to the full" (Bwibo, 2014). However, despite the church interventions in CD, there has been worrying poverty levels in Kenya. The study findings uphold that too often the people disregard or misapply biblical and theological impetuses.

### **Biblical Basis for Church Involvement in Community Development**

The Israelites were involved in CD as a personal responsibility, unlike in modern dispensation where alignment is on the state, NGOs and FBOs for aid. Bindow (1988), argues that it is human right for citizenry to be provided by the state with basic needs like education, medical, water, food and security. This has biblical basis as God judges a nation that overlooks the deprived (Psalm 9:18-19). The study found a growing crisis caused by poverty, homelessness, poor health, joblessness, inequality, insecurity and criminal cases. This could be as a result of the church's concern over worship rather than *psychosomatic* (concern for body, mind, and soul). Okullu (1981), reinstates that the church is engaged in community by word and action. However, educational institutions, medical and social services, agricultural and technology advance the gospel message more than evangelization. Therefore, Christians all over the *cosmos* have a mandate of Matthew 25:35-46 to the plight of the deprived in terms of food, water, accommodation, freedom, clothing, security, and healing.

Thiong'o (2019), reinstates demand for spiritual than the physical goal of the church. Christians demand to give resources to the ministry is a hermeneutical problem on prosperity gospel (Malachi 3:10) that renders the church less functional as the poor are blamed for poverty. The *eschatological* (heaven-ward) gospel is detrimental as it lazes personal and communal economic development (1 Peter 2:11). This study established that biblical teachings lack a wholistic model of CD; thus inadequate livelihood. The study recommends church civic obligation in enhancing CD. There is need for a constructive biblical paradigm as Bosch (1982), puts it that Christian are in the world, but not of the world. Community has a task to share in God's creativity and stewardship of world resources to rebuild a better livelihood for all as depicted in Genesis 1:27.

The OT biblical basis for church involvement in CD identify with God's concern for justice and mercy (Proverbs 11:1; Amos 5:11). Bandow (1988), holds that God regulated Israelite's economy to safeguard widows garments (Exodus 22:26), control of excessive interest charges imposed on the poor (Exodus 18:17). The Israel's sabbatical year restored land to disadvantaged (Exodus 23: 10) and as Sider (1981) says, it led to release of the Israelites debts; spanning the rich and the poor gap (Exodus 23:10-11). Besides, every seventh year, the land was left uncultivated, and debts to poor Israelites cancelled (Deuteronomy 15), and *Yiddish* (fiftieth year), the land was redeemed by the original landlord (Leviticus 25). However, biblical and theological privileges, this study fronts that community must work and not be passive recipients from the church, FBOs, NGOs or states. The community has to conscientiously be productive and self-reliance. Kibucwa (2012), calls it theology of work that actively involves community in productive activities.

Kinyua (1999), exhibited CPK interventions such as health, education, spiritual, social, family life, community empowerment, livelihood, and social services as interventions to reduce poverty. However, his conclusion of development as a *bona fide* of the church is far-fetched, for no church on her own is capable of contributing to socio-economic and political developments. Further, although, Kinyua (1999) expounds on some biblical foundations for development such as Exodus 5-12, Psalm 24:1, and Amos 5:11, he fails to relate their practicality in the world of CD. The study established that biblical texts are meaningful when justice is made in terms of their hermeneutics and exegesis to derive contextual realities and CD priorities.

According to Owensby (1988), Daniel (2016), and Bandow (1988), Jeremiah, Zechariah and Ezekiel challenged Israel's leaders for ignoring the widows, the orphans, the poor, conceding violence, oppression, and exclusivity (Leviticus 25). This study instigates that the church has a duty to transform community by use of the biblical impetus not in selective forms but wholistically. The application of the deuterocanonical books such as Tobit, second Ezra and Sirach due to their richness to socio-economic and political aspects is critical. Authentic interpretation of the bible and theology according to contexts is valid and recommended.

In the NT dispensation, the mission of God to the world is to bring wholeness. Kibucwa (2012), asserts that God's mission is people's mission. However, the church has failed to apply the gospel to whole life, restricting it to spirituality (Kinoti, 1994). Monroe (2012), contention that the church is primarily a spiritual organization with a

secondary focus on socio-economic issues is inappropriate distinctiveness (Matthew 5:13-16). To reduce poverty, the entirety of God's word has to be applied to every aspect of human existence. For instance, the medical care strategy of the church shows that the first converts to Christ were people helped through medical ministries (Luke 17; 12-19, James 2:15-16). This also holds true for the church's approach to providing aid to the homeless, hungry, sick, naked, and those in need. Paul's journey to Jerusalem and Judea served the deserving communities (Romans 15:25-27) while Tabitha's generosity (Acts 9:36), serve as demonstration of societal advancement.

Maggay (1994), avers that the NT speaks of existential relationship of God's creation with humanity personal responsibly through sharing clothes and food (Luke 3:11) as early believers had all things in common with no needy among them (Luke 2:44-45), material possessions to show God's love (1John 3:17), social justice in doctrine of service (Matthew 25:35-43), and Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-19). Brueggemann (2006), views on liturgy of abundance links to this study as Jesus Christ served God and *cosmos*. Mathew's comparison of the church as salt and light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16) represents the *Missio Dei* to the world.

The church as *koinonia* of members with *charisma* and the NT concept of *shalom* relates to abundance model to the world "Jesus went to all cities and villages, teaching, preaching and healing" (Matthew 6: 33; 9:35). Nkonge (2018)'s on community livelihood avers that Jesus on top of being a preacher was a carpenter (Mark 6:3), Paul was an Apostle and tent maker (Acts 18:3) while most disciples of Jesus Christ were fishermen (Mark 1:14-19). The choosing of deacons (Acts 6) marked social welfare ministry while priesthood of all believers, places Christian's role in CD. This study established that the church has less disseminated teachings on CD. This calls the clergy to address woes of tribalism, poverty, corruption and unjust economic structures using theological impulses such *oikos* (house) and community (Ephesians 2:19-22) as advocated by Nkonge (2016) and Mugambi (2015)'s RT that informs service to the disadvantaged into a new social order.

### **Theological Basis for Church's involvement in Community Development**

Theology is a systematic disclosure of God (Mugambi, 1989). Villa Vicencio (1992) avers that a theology which fails to address the most urgent questions asked by ordinary people is not a theology at all. Okullu (1983), and Nthukah and Gathogo (2015), provide theological basis for church involvement in CD as... "Be fruitful, fill the earth, subdue, till and keep the garden and that God is the Lord of all life and fruition" (Genesis. 1:22-29; Matthew. 6:25). This study found that communities have the potential to revitalize economic and socio-political life through conscientization, and interventions such as *koinonia*, *diakonia*, agri-mission, laity theology, theology of work or development, and incarnation.

According to Groningen (2000), the church has a crucial role as a change agent and a witness to the community. In their 2015 study, Ayiemba et al. argued that the church is responsible for eradicating poverty and achievement of equality, dignity, and freedom for all people, regardless of faith or nationality. The findings by Bakker (2016), demonstrates that theological views of the church have significant role in uplifting the development welfare of communities. Bosch (1982), Mugambi (1995), and Pillay (2007), aver that the church has a transforming effect and exists to improvise people's standards of living by assimilating models of development that reflect values, self-reliance, self-actualization and self-fulfillment.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted as it enabled explore, determine and report social issues (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The study was carried in four ADS regions, namely; Pwani, Eastern, Mt. Kenya East and NAIKA which were purposively selected in line with Creswell and Garrett (2008), recommendation of arriving at investigated knowledgeable. The regions were unique in terms of diversity, occupation, ecosystem, resources, infrastructure and policies. The target population was 1,827 and a sample size of 330 respondents comprising of 206 ACK clergy, four ACK Bishops, 57 ADS staff, 26 ACK Christian lay leaders and 37 community leaders was sampled through a Sampling Matrix.

Table 1: The Sampling Matrix

Category of Participants	Population	ACK Bishops	Anglican Clergy	ADS Workers	ACK Lay Christian Leaders	Community Leaders	Sample Size
Pwani	404	1	43	12	5	11	72
Eastern	402	1	51	5	7	11	75

NAIKA	346	1	41	11	5	4	62
Mt. Kenya East	675	1	71	29	9	11	121
ACK Bishops							
Total	1,827	4	206	57	26	37	330

In terms of research instruments, questionnaires collected data from ACK clergy, ADS staff and community leaders. Interviews were conducted to ACK bishops and ADS top management. The FGDs gathered data from Christian lay leaders. Diagnostic tests were conducted to assess suitability of quantitative data focusing on research objectives. Quantitative data in raw form was processed. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 software was used for analysis of quantitative data in forms of percentages and frequencies. Qualitative data was generated and presented thematically and in narrative formats.

## FINDINGS

### Biblical and Theological Basis for Church Involvement in Community Development

The study sought to establish the biblical and theological basis for church involvement in CD. The clergy, ADS staff and community leaders were provided with a set of Likert statements. Table 2 presents a summary.

Table 2: Biblical Basis for Church Involvement in Community Development

Statement	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Total
The creation of man in God's image (Genesis 1:26-28) is a basis of development	1.8 5	0.3 1	0.3 1	17.0 49	80.6 232	100.0 288
Psalm 9:18-19 (God's judgment upon a nation that forgets the disadvantaged) stirs the church to be involved in development	1.4 4	1.0 3	3.1 9	18.8 54	75.7 218	100.0 288
Nehemiah 2:18 (Let's us arise and build) motivates the church to participate in development	1.4 4	1.4 4	0.3 1	17.7 51	79.2 228	100.0 288
Tobit 4:7-10 (Taking care of the poor as an offering that pleases God in heaven) inspires the church to participate in development	1.7 5	1.4 4	15.6 45	39.2 113	42.0 121	100.0 288
Jesus's Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-21 inspires the church to participate in development	1.4 4	1.7 5	0.7 2	23.6 68	72.6 209	100.0 288
The church involvement in development is based on Christ's command of loving God and neighbour (Luke 10:27-29)	1.4 4	1.0 3	1.4 4	23.3 67	72.9 210	100.0 288
Luke 4:18-19 (Jesus' concern to the world in socio-economic and political matters) calls upon the church to participate in development	1.4 4	1.0 3	0.3 1	21.5 62	75.7 218	100.0 288
Abundant life taught in John 10:10 inspires the church to participate in development	1.4 4	1.7 5	1.0 3	16.7 48	79.2 228	100.0 288
The economic sharing of Christians by St. Paul's in Romans 15:25-27 serves as a motivation to development	1.4 4	1.0 3	1.4 4	34.7 100	61.5 177	100.0 288

Data obtained illustrated that the majority of the respondents 281(97.6%), acknowledged creation of man in God's image (Genesis 1:26-28) is a basis of CD, that God's judgment upon a nation that forgets the disadvantaged (Psalm 9:18-19), stirs the church involvement in CD, 272 (94.5%), and that the Nehemiah 2:18 "Let's us arise and build" motivates the church to participate in CD, 279 (96.9%). 234 (81.2%) respondents, maintained "Taking care of the poor as an offering that pleases God in heaven" (Tobit 4:7-10) inspires the church to participate in CD, 277(96.2%) respondents, indicated that Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-21, inspires the church to participate in CD; church involvement in CD is based on Christ's command of loving God and neighbours in Luke 10:27-29 by 277(96.2%). The majority of the respondents 280 (97.2%) said Jesus' concern to the world in socio-economic and political matters calls upon the church to participate in CD (Luke 4:18-19), 276 (95.9%) respondents, maintained that abundant life taught in John 10:10 inspires the church to participate in CD and that the economic sharing of Christians as espoused by St. Paul's in Romans 15:25-27 serves as a motivation to CD by 277 (96.2%). In general, respondents scored highly for biblical basis for church involvement in CD, the variable obtaining a mean rating of 93.54%.

The findings confirm that Church involvement in CD has biblical basis, and are consistent with observations by Maggay (1994), Bosch (1977) that Christians have a biblical mandate to be involved in the CD not in doctrine but in social justice (Matthew 25:35-43). Jesus destroyed fabrics of uncivilized communities by feeding over 5,000 men (Mark 8:1-21), as an indication of a church in the world but not of the world to propagate CD. However, there is need

to use Deuterocanonical books such as Tobit, second Ezra and Sirach for their richness in socio-economic and political aspects unlike other studies that hardly considered Apocrypha as basis for CD.

### Theological Basis for Church Involvement in Community Development

The study also intended to establish theological basis for church involvement in CD. To achieve this, respondents were provided with a set of six Likert statements. Their responses are as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Theological Basis for Church Involvement in Community Development

Statement	SD	D	NO	A	SA	Total
The concept of <i>Shalom</i> (Peace) which means right relation with God, humanity and creation is crucial in enhancing development	1.7 5	0.7 2	3.1 9	43.4 125	51.0 147	100.0 288
Evangelization as the identifying feature of the church involves taking care of the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable	1.7 5	0.7 2	3.1 9	47.6 137	46.9 135	100.0 288
Reconstruction Theology informs the church involvement in development	1.4 4	0.7 2	8.7 25	61.1 176	28.1 81	100.0 288
The church responds to peoples' socio-economic and political needs by empowering community in the area of development	1.7 5	0.3 1	3.1 9	42.7 123	52.1 150	100.0 288
Since creation, God has been transforming communities in development through His involvement in their daily affairs	1.4 4	1.4 4	1.4 4	36.5 105	59.4 171	100.0 288
Green Theology, Laity Theology, Eco-Theology, <i>Oikos</i> Theology, <i>Koinonia</i> , <i>Incarnation</i> , <i>Harambee</i> and <i>Diakonia</i> are integral interventions in enhancing development	1.4 4	1.4 4	9.4 27	60.4 174	27.4 79	100.0 288

Information obtained from respondents indicates that the majority 272 (94.4%), were of the view that *Shalom* is crucial in enhancing CD; 272 (94.4%) respondents, maintained that evangelization as the identifying feature of the church, involves taking care of the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable and that RT informs the church involvement in CD by 257 (89.2%). 273 (94.8%) respondents, indicated the church should respond to peoples' socio-economic and political needs by empowering community; the majority stated that since creation, God has been transforming communities in CD through His involvement in their daily affairs by 276 (95.9%), and that Green Theology, Laity Theology, Eco-Theology, *Oikos* Theology, *Koinonia*, *Incarnation*, *Harambee* and *Diakonia* are integral interventions in enhancing CD by 253 (87.8%).

The results of the study on theological basis for church involvement in CD showed a mean rating of 92.8 % indicating a high degree of agreement by the majority of respondents. The findings imply that the church's contextual theologies justify her involvement in CD. This has reference to Villa Vicencio (1992), Nkonge (2008), and Magesa (1976), that community involvement in CD is an essential component of missiology. Similarly, Mugambi (1995), avers that Christian theology has a role to play in the socio-economic and political transformation of Africa *via* reconstruction on three levels: individual, cultural, and religious.

### Extent to which the Church Disseminates Teachings on Community Development

To establish the extent to which the church disseminates teachings on CD. Table 4 presents summary of the findings.

Table 4: Church's Dissemination of Teachings on Community Development in the Community

Statement	NE	LE	AE	GE	VGE	Total
The church teaches about good agricultural practices to improve productivity	1.4 4	17.0 49	65.6 189	13.5 39	2.4 7	100.0 288
The church teaches about clean water and sanitation to enhance quality of life	1.0 3	16.7 48	64.9 187	13.9 40	3.5 10	100.0 288
The church promotes developmental education to reduce illiteracy and poverty	0.7 2	13.9 40	54.5 157	26.0 75	4.9 14	100.0 288
The church promotes justice and peace towards a conducive environment for development	0.3 1	12.1 35	53.5 154	27.8 80	6.3 18	100.0 288
The church propagates children, gender and human rights issues to enhance the quality of human life	1.0 3	22.9 66	60.4 174	10.8 31	4.9 14	100.0 288

The church promotes health care in community towards enhancing the quality of human life	-	6.6	38.2	38.5	16.7	100.0
		19	110	111	48	288
The church calls upon community to offer relief to needy people in line with Christ's command to love and share	2.4	28.8	42.7	18.4	7.6	100.0
	7	83	123	53	22	288
The church offers employment to the youth by providing micro-finance for self-reliance	2.8	25.0	51.0	15.6	5.6	100.0
	8	72	147	45	16	288
The church assists persons living with disabilities by providing self-reliance skills	3.5	39.9	41.0	12.5	3.1	100.0
	10	115	118	36	9	288
The church gives HIV and AIDS awareness and care to the community for the promotion of wholistic life	1.0	6.6	32.6	38.9	20.8	100.0
	3	19	94	112	60	288
As a steward of God's creation, the church teaches community about environmental preservation and conservation	0.7	5.9	31.3	30.6	31.6	100.0
	2	17	90	88	91	288

Data obtained show that the respondents who stated that the church teaches about good agricultural practices to improve productivity to a great extent by 46 (15.9%) were the minority. Those who opined that church teaches about clean water and sanitation to enhance quality of life were 50 (17.4%), 89 (30.9%) respondents indicated that church promotes developmental education to reduce illiteracy and poverty and, 98 (34.1%) respondents, said the church promotes justice and peace towards a conducive environment for CD. Respondents who thought that the church propagates children, gender and human rights issues to enhance the quality of human life were 45 (15.6%), those who acknowledged the church calls upon community to offer relief to needy people in line with Christ's command to love and share were 75 (26.0%), those who indicated that the church offers employment to the youth by providing micro-finance for self-reliance were 61(21.2%) and those who said the church assists persons living with disabilities by providing self-reliance skills were 45 (15.6%) fewer than those who thought to the contrary. The proportion of the respondents who indicated that the church promotes health care in community towards enhancing quality of human life were 159 (55.2%), those who felt that the church offers HIV and AIDS awareness and care to community for the promotion of wholistic life were 172 (59.7%) and those who stated that in stewarding God's creation, the church teaches community about environmental preservation and conservation were 179 (62.2%).The findings could be interpreted to mean that whereas the church could be perceived to minimally disseminate information on general CD issues, it has spent considerable effort in three main areas; Health Care (55.2%), HIV and AIDS awareness (59.7%), and environmental preservation and conservation (62.2%).

An inquiry was made to ACK bishops and ADS top management. The question posed was: What are the emerging biblical and theological issues in the world of community development? In response, Baya (OI.2021) observed that:

The church is informed by the holistic gospel of Jesus Christ in John 10:10 that 'I have come so that you may have life in abundance'. This entails finding love, health and life in the present world. The philosophy of development is valuable in uplifting the livelihood of community. In the modern world of CD, the church could employ the concept of Agri-mission which means using agriculture as a tool for mission to address high poverty prevalence. The church has a role to execute her mandate employing non-discriminatory, humanitarian and missionary approaches that consider value for people as created in the image of God and to reach out to all people without discrimination on religious, socio-economic, cultural or political orientations. The church's role is to develop biblical and theological motifs that express meaning within the life-stream of the community.

According to Kibucwa (OI.2022):

All theologies inform CD. A theology that does not propagate holistic concerns fails to meet community needs. The Church is a community itself and at the grassroots. CD involves adopting new farming methods at the ground root to where people are. The church is about: people, survival, food, hygiene, food, going to school, learning and living well. You cannot remove the church from development in anyway; the church must be and remain involved in matters of CD. It is the duty of the church to ensure that development is done in systematic way to ensure community benefits. A church that does not involve itself in challenges affecting community is not a church but a fake one. CD ensure people are enjoying life in wholeness, are healthy, have money, road to use and decent houses. There is no good news if people are not living well.

According to Mutua (OI.2022):

The church must consider contextual reality to cater for physical and spiritual needs of community. The church expedites a call for humanitarian approach to motivate participation in CD between various stakeholders in improvising productivity and better living standards.

According to Mugo (OI.2022):

Biblical and theological emerging issues in the world of CD include intrinsic biblical and psychological social needs affecting community such as sexuality, ethical issues, technology, cash transfers, health issues in relation to genetically modified organisms, legal aspects, global warming, urbanization, environmental and climate change. The church consciousness in addressing the socio-economic challenges by putting into consideration the current scenarios in CD is critical.

Mwanziwe (OI.2021), responded that:

Humanity is endowed with the sacred mandate to subdue earth by good stewardship, work is a responsibility from God to human beings through which God demands restoration of the creation. The church has an advocacy role for the voice of the voiceless by empowering community to a self-reliance livelihood.

This study established emerging biblical and theological trends in the world of CD. Traditionally, this was unnatural due to the skeptical perception of the church involvement in CD. Personalized believes on church ministry without socio-economic and political mission is biblically biasing, and inept to deal with poverty. This has reference to Kinoti (1994)'s report that one out of every three Africans lack enough to eat. This has dire effects due to its direct relationship with under-development, poor health, criminology, death and psychological consequences. The finding agrees with Mofikeng (1990), that the liberative messages of God demand release from all that which negatively exploit community.

The qualitative results from FGDs with Christian lay leaders showed that: biblical and theological basis enhanced CD as the salt and light of the world (Matthew 5:13-14). The theology for life connects the church and underprivileged in community. The emphasis on humankind solidarity with creation as part of God's divine mandate in Genesis 2 is key in enhancing CD. The three servants and varied talents calls for productive economic model in Matthew 25:13-30, the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), shows concern to the needy, poor in health and the vulnerable in community. Other biblical basis include: The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19) emphasize on the plight of the poor, while 2 Timothy 2:15 calls for industriousness to God's and humanity service. Additionally, Christians are to eat from their labor (Psalm 128:2), a call for creative human stewardship (Ephesians 4:24), sharing things in common (Acts 2:42), enjoying good health in 3 John 1:12 and defending the weakly and fatherless (Psalms 140:12).

On enumerating other biblical and theological basis for church involvement in CD, qualitative responses from open-ended questions indicated thus: On agriculture, Jeremiah elucidates trees planted by the water side implying environmental conservation and management, Jewish calendar on agricultural work ensured productivity, Psalm 125 on the mountains that surround Jerusalem signifies promotion of natural resources; productive land requires proper management as depicted in Isaiah 5, Jesus as the branch that produces fruits informs CD in John 15:1-8, Magi in Matthew 2:11 symbolize abundance of the earth. In terms of wellness, Jesus went to communities doing good (Acts 10:38) while Matthew 25:40 signifies the plight of the poor and love of God exemplified in whatever you have done to the least of these, you have done to me. In terms of industriousness, James 2:14-28 demands faith and action, Joseph's steadfast in food economy and security in Genesis 41:41-46, and feeding of the 5000 demonstrates service to God and humanity (Matthew 14:13-21).

The study findings shows that the majority of the respondents, 183 (62.5%) answered the open-ended question on other biblical and theological basis for church involvement in CD. The most quoted biblical basis by the majority were placed using eight thematic areas namely: Matthew 14:13-21 on feeding the 5000 men as a demonstration of service to God and humanity by 48 (26.2%), Joseph's socio-economic success story in Genesis 41:41-46 by 46 (25.1%), Jesus development intellectually, stature and in favor with humanity and God in Luke 2:52 by 21 (11.4%), the three servants given talents to utilize in Matthew 25:13-30 by 16 (8.7%), faith without action as dead in James 2:26 by 14 (7.6%), stewardship and care of the land in Genesis 2:15 by 13 (7.1%), James 1:25 on good health by 13 (7.1%), and communal responsibility to the poor in Acts 2:37-47 by 12 (6.5%). The findings though minimally indicates that; feeding of the

5000 men by Jesus in Matthew (26.2%) and the story of Joseph's as the Egyptian economist in Genesis (25.1%) were the most preferred scriptural basis for church involvement in CD.

Further, the findings are an indication that CD as a *diakonia* (service) to community is critical and are consistent with Groningen (2000)'s claims that the church is a witness of the gospel and an agent of change in the world. Similar perspectives are shared by Alawode (2016), that role of the church is not solely to preach and evangelism, but progressive CD. According to Nkonge (2019), a wholesome ministry for a wholesome nation will be enhanced by a 'wholesome' set of Clergy who are well prepared for the challenges facing the country in this decade. Mosse (2002), Nkonge (2014) and Omanyo (2014), claim that for proclamation of the good news to be credible, the church in mission has to transform society by providing social services such as education, health and socio-economic and political impetus. Gitari (1996), holds that taking care of creation and execution of God-given responsibilities redeems humanity from woes. This kind of biblical and theological interventions in CD help address emerging trends within the health sector, research, technology, sexuality, modified elements, COVID 19, lifestyle diseases and worrying poverty levels.

## CONCLUSION

The chapter confirms the fundamental function of biblical and theological basis in enhancing CD. This is despite CD being perceived as secular and alien to the ministry and mission of the church. The findings confirm that implementation of CD by the church is based upon strong biblical and theological basis to positively influence the livelihood of community. This realization serves as a strong demonstration of service to the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable in community. Biblical basis inform socio-economic and political human spheres. Theologically, the source of life is God's work in creation that is continued to uplift community living standards and self-reliance for the current and future generations. Knowledge gained from the study shows that God's intention for humanity since creation has been a world filled with healthy, peaceful, equitable and lovingly engaged communities. The research found that central to the realization of effective CD is proper biblical hermeneutics, contextual use of theological impetus and inclusivity of the Bible. The study concludes that for ADS to become sustainable, there is need for training, and refreshing courses to varied cadres of people and development of CD training curriculums and community management skills aspects guided by contextual priorities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Whereas findings illustrated strong biblical and theological basis for church involvement in CD, data obtained illustrated minimal extent of dissemination of information on specific but critical CD aspects including good agricultural practices to improve productivity, clean water and sanitation to enhance quality of life as well as developmental education to reduce illiteracy and poverty. To improve on the sustainability of CD within the targeted areas, it is recommended that more effort be made to disseminate biblical and theological teachings to educate communities about the wholistic mission of the church. To improve on development activities for the benefit of communities, beneficiary communities and CD partners should be appropriately engaged about the tenets, mission and strategic plans of ADS as an institution of CD. The ADS target recipients should be expanded through conscientization process, goal-oriented empowerment and transformative participatory approach. Suitable and contextual hermeneutical measures in terms of biblical and theological impetuses should be put into proper exegesis to address biases associated with interpretations regarding the church involvement in CD. This is crucial in contributing towards achievement of ADS community development objectives. Proper hermeneutics as well as the use of contextual theologies such as green theology, laity theology, eco-theology, *oikos* theology, *koinonia*, incarnation, harambee, *diakonia*, theology of work, theology of development, and reconstruction theology be intensified as integral interventions in enhancing CD in Kenya.

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