

TOWARDS A HOLISTICALLY INCLUSIVE CHURCH DEVELOPMENT FOR RURAL WOMEN IN KENYA: A COMPARATIVE APPRAISAL OF Q METHOD FOR MALAWIAN IPA PROGRAMME

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Abstract

This paper looks at holistic transformative development for rural women which is church based. The study shows the historical development of diakonia, its disintegration from evangelical circles and how it has impacted the local context of Africa Inland Church (AIC). While it aims for the transformation of rural women's contexts in Kenya. The paper thus takes a comparative approach with a Malawian case study to articulate holistic development. The specific context is Ebenezer, Kithuiani area in Kangundo Sub-County, Machakos. Modern negative attitudes toward marginalised rural women need to be re-shaped by the church. This approach amplifies social transformation and social change further into a holistic gospel paradigm. It interrogates how the mentioned disintegration affects social action and the church's development agenda by comparing it with the Q Method in the Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) program in Malawi.

Keywords: *Diakonia, Social action, Inclusive development, Transformative development*

INTRODUCTION

Ebenezer Self Help Group was pioneered by the author in 2017. The motivation for this article was twofold: from development studies in Africa International University (AIU) and the marginalisation factor of the women in Ebenezer, Kithuiani area. A questionnaire was distributed to all the invited women from that community. It had several questions which were faith-based and also development-oriented such as: Where do you attend church services? How has your faith enabled you to develop spiritually? What is your understanding of development? Has your church begun any projects to empower you? What are some of your God-given abilities as a woman? Where do you work? What is your income per month? Are there any Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies (SACCO) or women's group you attend? What activities are done by your group?

The author took the role of facilitator and through the ballot, the women voted for the candidates to fill the committee leadership positions. The agenda focused on the common needs of the women. The needs were the practical day-to-day experiences of these rural women. The common ground arrived at was holistic alleviation of poverty and the suffering of the women in family lives.

The geographic assessment of the study area is defined as being mountainous with low rainfall. Technologies of water harvesting are not used or available. The soil is red-volcanic with crops like maize that taking a long time to mature discouraging the women. Drought-resistant crops with early maturity would be more relevant. Most families in this area rely on cash crops like tobacco crop which requires less rain. The author therefore sensed the need for agricultural economics and current farming methods for them as discussed in this paper.

From the questionnaire, it was concluded that no churches in the area had any projects for women in the community sense. Three quarters of the 32 participants had no stable income although they had abilities like making pots, baskets, and more than half of the women practiced small-scale farming activities. These included rearing cows, goats, chicken and cultivation among others.

Jesus' model of ministry was holistic. Some selected passages like Luke 4:16-18 validate the fact of transformational development if the verse is read from its Christological perspective. In Luke, the transformative agent is the Holy Spirit. On this argument, Sharon Ringe draws from the Old Testament motif of the Jubilee to the New Testament motif of setting captives free. She argues that:

In addition to redefining "the poor" to whom the message of God's reign comes as good news, the Gospels also draw connections between people's responses to the poor and their relationship to Jesus as the Christ (Ringe, 1985, p. 60)

From the above line of thought, she discusses the parable of the rich young man, the story of Zacchaeus, and the anointing at Bethany (ibid, pp. 60-64). She then concludes the eschatological dimension of Jesus' good news to the poor.

It is a short step...to the perspective of the Great Judgment (Matt. 25:31-49), where the enthroned and sovereign Christ is explicitly identified with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, the imprisoned and where one's case before the heavenly tribunal is resolved on the basis of one's responsiveness to the human faces of Christ in the poor and oppressed (Ringe, 1985, p. 64).

The dimension that Ringe paints goes back to the Jubilee themes of the Old Testament and projects to the Last Judgment. This helps one to crystallise Jesus' missional method as that which encompassed gospel and *diakonia* all in one package. Jesus' inclusive mission is imperative for the African Inland Churches (AIC) and other African churches that seem to detach *diakonia* from the gospel.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The evangelical church and specifically the Africa Inland Church in Kenya have separated social work from proclamation, with the exclusion of rural women. Gender equity has also not been achieved by AIC. For the AIC church, development has become "institutionalised" or "privatised." The mantra then becomes, "I own, therefore I am" and "We own..." to use these coined phrases. It is the dichotomy of spiritual and material realms that "leads Christians to believe that God's redemptive work *only* in the spiritual realm and material world is left to the devil" (Myers, 2001, p. 7).

There is an underlying aspect of commercialisation of development after making it "private." The more pertinent aspect becomes the exclusion of those outside the church. This has been indwelt by negative attitudes to the outside-of-church marginalised community who are seen often as victims and not "neighbours" in the biblical sense. Broader themes are as follows:

Although national gender equity in Kenya may not be realized, the author hopes the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) will achieve it somehow. The BBI report as released has inclusivity as Issue Number 3 in the Memorandum of Understanding (BBI, p. 5). It denotes the fact that there has been "absence of deliberate policies aimed at integrating marginalised segments of society. It has also included 'gender and inter-generational equity' as part of the national ethos" (BBI, p. 4). However, the gender equity which the author advocates here is the church-based one which finds itself in a two-tier front of inclusive gospel.

Previous Approaches

This portion tries to tackle how development has been understood over the decades by different development practitioners. Several approaches are briefly analysed:

Economic Approach

The global outlook of this approach is where rich or developed countries assist poor developing and undeveloped countries to attain and sustain their own economic developments. Economic development is assumed to occur when economic growth becomes beneficial to all segments of society in any country. Economic equity and efficiency are the vehicles to economic development.

Economists will forecast on different factors and sectors in a country to increase Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The proponents here are either problem-oriented economists (Papanek, 1971, p. 355) or economic input-output development strategy planning (Leontief, 1986). They normally use econometric models for the same. Classic examples are two-gap model, growth model, strategic model and also the resource allocation planning model (Papanek, 1971, p. 41).

Basic Needs Approach

This approach prioritises only basic needs such as food, water, shelter, health and education. Sometimes it extends to material needs like shelter and clothing and non-material ones like security, employment, and political liberation (Stewart, 1985). These are prioritised in the development process. The participation of the masses has normally been included in this approach.

This approach becomes cyclical since it is hard to prioritise human needs. For some, food is basic while for others, shelter and security are more basic. Basic human needs are also complex. Proponents have in recent times turned to technology to alleviate the same but it has faced challenges on quality-of-life indicators that are diverse and dynamic globally. The consensus is that poverty alleviation under this approach is complex (IDRC, p. 25).

Modernisation Approach

It arises mostly from the rise of the USA after World War II when the USA emerged as a superpower. This approach assumes that the more human beings are civilized/educated or modernised in lifestyles, the more developed they will be. The needy receive more welfare under this approach. In short, modern societies are more productive, holding all factors constant. But modernisation has 'Americanisation' and 'Europeanisation' in it. In politics, the more modernised a nation is, the more it has citizen participation and resource distribution. It assumes that since modernising brings transformation, all traditional structures must be replaced by modern ones.

Legal Advocacy Approach

This is a rights campaign strategy of development. Several NGOs and agencies like the UN Women; Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR); Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID); Plan International; Women for Women International (WWI) have been initiated. They advocate against domestic violence, rape, victimization, discrimination, and gender bias. The input of this approach has been to amend or propose new legislation of state or governmental policies regarding women. The output has been activism, more government inclusive policies, projects and pragmatic handling of women's issues.

Capacity/Capability Approach

Its global formulations have two major parts: freedom and the functioning of valuable human beings. The development practitioner Amartya Sen has tried to merge the two parts. It can be understood in a linear version:

Resources → Capability → Functioning → Utility

One major setback of all the above approaches is that they have been globalised. Sen is right on anti-discrimination and re-distribution of resources. Development practitioners have always felt that "development" needs to follow a set of global strategies. This mindset has made the local context of the church stagnate on the development agenda given the multiplicity of development strategies, its content and knowledge notwithstanding.

A survey of global practitioners on development was also done as follows:

John Friedmann

Friedmann understands development as expanding people's access to social power. His school of thought is on radical alternative development. His emphasis is on democratizing rural/local value systems. From this, his vision of empowerment as enhancing the capacity (social power) to those disenfranchised is visible (Friedmann, 1992).

Robert Chambers

Chambers denotes development as enhancing people's wellbeing. His newest book *Can We Know Better* critiques what orthodoxy is doing wrong and also offers proposals for knowing better. He urges for strive towards equality, justice, well-being and the marginalized (Chambers, 1983).

Amartya Sen

He visualizes development as increasing freedoms to human beings, technical knowhow, and modernisation but less on increasing material wealth. 'Effective' freedom gives a person a real opportunity or what he calls 'authentic self-direction' such that one is able to shape one's destiny. Freedom consists of two aspects: process aspect which has the ability to act on what matters (agency) and opportunity aspect which entails real opportunity to achieve the valued functioning. He reasons that the free person will act and bring about change based on what he/she values (Sen, 1999, p. 19). The approach is people-centered for it places the human agency at the center.

Robeyns on the other hand argues for freedom to achieve wellbeing as important and that it must be understood from the base of human capabilities. But this poses a critical question: what are people actually able to do and be? Using the capability approach, one may follow the theory of social justice with its aim to focus on freedom of choice, but not achievements (Robeyns, 2017).

David Korten

Korten (2001) for his part argues for increased personal and institutional capacity to mobilize resources for sustainability. Having worked in Asia for 15 years (1978-1992), he critiqued the old development paradigm of development. In the paradigm, nature is merely commodified, and economic growth will eventually correct the evils on social relations and the environment.

METHODOLOGY

The study was qualitative in nature. It employed the narrative approach. It was carried out with 60 rural women participants in 2017. The author further transcribed and analysed the collected data from questionnaires. This was followed by the formation of a women's self-help group which is active to date. The key research questions were: Is the AIC proactive in social action and community development? How can the AIC make integration of gospel and social action into a transformative development paradigm?

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

First, the term 'development' as discussed has undergone diverse and broad evolutions and paradigm shifts. The author intentionally delineates it from transformative development. Transformative development entails bringing positive and holistic change to human life (Myers, 2011, p. 3). By holistic, the author means the gospel message integrated with *diakonia* (social action and service to the community). Credit is given to Korten for the new development paradigm since in it, life is the core measure of value. The earth is the source of this life hence ecological stewardship is a priority to it. Economic prosperity is evaluated against the wellbeing of people, nature, and living communities' parameters. The only assumption is that there will be democratically accountable governments which in turn produce or trigger properly functioning healthy markets. By 'healthy' markets, Korten refers to the aspect of market principles that favor life interests over financial interests. They are socially oriented. For Korten, life is the appropriate measure when it comes to economic choices and not monetary factors. Further, he believes in the maintenance of institutional infrastructures for communal benefits. Appreciation is also given to Chambers on participatory democratic reciprocity where the poor participate in their own development. Chambers (1983) is plausible on consulting the poor about what 'poor' means to them, and their priorities. Further, Jayakumar Christian's way of development which is construed from kingdom response to powerlessness can give impetus for the justice paradigm in church development.

On the one hand, though, any development approach which elevates economic improvement as an end in itself is limited. For how does it address existential poverty? To this end, Chambers construed economic development as a means to extend freedoms and his approach received global attention. On the other hand, the capability/capacity approach must be an umbrella construct; not seeing freedom only but a mix of freedoms and capabilities. Thus, it can include theories of justice and development.

Second, the evangelical Church must formulate holistic gospel integration with *diakonia* or better social action. As already discussed, Jesus' mission was integrated. On integration, Nolan incorporates the liberation dimension as part of God's plan. For him, evangelization is holistic, it encompasses the whole salvific process. He asserts:

[O]ur evangelism will be fully integrated with our mission. It will be the same as work...we shall be able to see it as part of God's great project to redeem the world and to establish [his] reign on earth' (1990, pp. 10-11).

He is precise that evangelisation is the whole, liberation is part of it; he argues similarly that "evangelisation must include human liberation struggles" (Nolan, 1984, pp. 160-63). Jesus himself attacked oppression and all its causes in his ministry here on earth.

COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY: IPA PROGRAMME AMONG MALAWIAN RURAL WOMEN

The author chose Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) for comparison to the Ebenezer group due to its initial research-based Q methodology of approaching rural women populations in Malawi. The IPA is intentional on ecological stewardship making it applicable to the Malawian situation of unfavorable climatic conditions. The case of ecological stewardship resonates with the Ebenezer Kithuani context. The unique difference is the Q Methodology which is plausibly relevant and can be adapted to the Ebenezer group as discussed below:

The Q method is defined by Cairns and Brown. It operates from sampling to monitoring of the project. As per Cairns, there is a purposive selection of the participants' sample (Cairns, 2012). As per Brown, since it based on

the participants' views, it picks 'a volume of discussion' (Brown, 1986, p. 58). They are allowed to do a Q sort, a table of what they like most in their opinions. From this Q sort, the participants' perspectives are brought to the table of analysis. It helps in broadening out the issue at stake and bringing ownership on the part of participants.

Firstly, the IPA does massive surveying and sampling in field research. Through this, they ascertain the 'concourse.' This is the subjective voice of the poor in their context; what they say their situation is and what they think can work for them. The concourse method has been employed by the World Bank in a publication named *The Voices of the Poor*. Secondly, the data collected in concourses is analysed with the community in mind. Agricultural analysts are involved as well as banks, agencies, NGOs. Thirdly, training projects follow. In the case study, the Canadian Food grains Bank in conjunction with Central Africa Presbyterian Church did training on new farming technologies. These programmes, coupled with seed distribution, gave the rural women a breakthrough. The church was the local implementer of the project.

Fourthly is the Q methodology monitoring. The Q method enables project monitoring and evaluation and also policymaking. It takes and rates wide samples to estimate the impact of variables like empowerment and poverty alleviation. All IPA projects are thoroughly monitored and evaluated; this generates ongoing reviews and thus enables sustainability.

The Malawian context can be praised for inclusivity. The Kenyan on the other hand has been slow even in the midst of policymaking and legislation towards rural women. There is the Bill of Rights in the Kenyan Constitution (Chapter 4, Article 19ff). Equality is provided for in Kenyan Law. But practically, is there gender equity in Kenya? The researcher feels that there is untold gender inequality in our country (cf. Baraza, 2008, p. 1).

Holistic Gospel

A holistic view of salvation and development should emanate from a holistic gospel. The contemporary development paradigm has elevated the issue of social transformation and change as the top priority. Our argument here is that social transformation is part of the holistic gospel paradigm, but it is not the whole. The whole is the sum total of social transformation, human development in totality, with an intentional spiritual transformation at the core. This integration must not be only theoretical but practical in all aspects. As per Myers, the "biblical worldview is holistic in the sense that the physical world is never understood as being disconnected or separate from the spiritual world and the rule of God who created it" (Myers, 2011, p. 8).

The early church and the missionaries preached and also practiced holistic gospel, one that integrates God's mission with social action. The 20th century saw human rights movements, charity and philanthropy, and watered-down social action (cf. Hugen, 1998, p. 92). The evangelical church has in the 19th century followed the secularisation of the human rights movement. By so doing, social action was 'detached' from its mission. Carl F.H. Henry also noted this retreat from the social relevance of the gospel (in Ireland, 2015, pp. 16-17). But the 21st century has seen a slow resurgence of social action integrated with the gospel.

From the above underpinnings, evangelicals have voiced out the detached gospel problem over and over again. Wiebe quotes John Stott on the issue of the disintegrated gospel:

The Christ some follow...others among us are alert to his commission to evangelize but have somehow never heard his call to care for the poor, the sick, the hungry and the deprived (1979, p. 31).

John Stott reports the conclusion from the evangelical Lausanne Conference of 1974. He asserts that the Lausanne Covenant declared that "evangelism and social-political involvement are part of our Christian duty" (Stott, 2012, p. 29). The holistic gospel paradigm further demands a re-reading of the Christological passages precisely in the New Testament. Christological re-reading of Luke 4:18-19

Brendan Byrne compares the above passage with the LXX of Isaiah 61:1-2 (also Isaiah 58:6). He observes the release (*aphesis*) in both. He notes the phrase 'the oppressed go free' (*enaphesei*) only occurs in Luke but is alluded to in Isaiah 58:6. He connects "the sense of releasing the oppressed with the wider program of social justice and hospitality to the poor" (Byrne, 2000).

The release itself is from the bonds of sin but "Spiritual release is, in Luke's perspective, a beach land and pledge of liberation that will encompass the totality of human life, including the socio-economic structures of society" (Byrne, 2000).

Following the Jubilee traditions of the Old Testament, Sharon H. Ringe concludes the spiritual sense of this release portraying Jesus as the herald of liberation. On those traditions, she argues hermeneutically that:

Those various social, political, and ecclesiastical contexts provide clues to the meaning and impact of the images by means of which the Jubilee traditions are presented, and to the ways in which their *liberating power*, and the portrait of Jesus as the herald of liberation, were ...affirmed (Ringe, 1985, p. 35).

Moreover, even in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) and the Beatitudes (6:20-33), liberation is holistic. Bosch also argues that the biblical portrait of salvation is broad, coherent and deep as the exigencies of human existence (Bosch, 1999, p. 400). He continues:

Hatred, injustice oppression, war, and other forms of violence are manifestations of evil; concern for humanness, for the conquering of famine, illness and meaninglessness is part of the salvation for which we hope and labor. (ibid., p. 397).

There are two scholars who have argued out on the 'Christic' paradigm. Firstly, Elizabeth A. Johnson, as quoted by Neils H. Gregersen, argues its holistic nature to include all life:

Write the signature of this Christic paradigm, drawn from gospel mercy, across the cosmos. Then it becomes clear that plenitude of life for all, including poor human beings and all living creatures, not just for a slice of the world, is God's original and ultimate intent. Deep incarnation as enacted in Jesus' ministry underscores the dignity of all that is physical, for bodies matter to God: all bodies, not only those that are beautiful and full of life but also those damaged, violated, starving, dying, bodies of humankind and other kind alike. Jesus' ministry grounds compassion for all the bodies in creation (1995, pp. 133-156)

She sees the natural world (cosmos) and justice to the poor placed together. She aptly argues; 'the implications of the Christic paradigm bring social justice and the meaning of the natural, evolving world into a tight embrace. On Jesus she states:

He did not hesitate to speak movingly of how God clothed the wildflowers in splendor, and was even concerned with a sparrow that falls to the ground (see Matt. 6:28 and 10:29). Citing Isaiah, he proclaimed, along with good news for the poor and freedom for the oppressed, a year of favor from the Lord, this last evoking the covenant tradition of Sabbath year and Jubilee when the land was allowed to rest and recharge in Luke 4:18-19 (ibid.).

Secondly, Sallie McFague argues that the Christic paradigm reveals that as far as the living God is concerned, "liberating, healing, and inclusive love is the meaning of it all." (McFague, 1993, p. 161).

Since community transformation has spiritual, socio-economic, political and cultural dimensions, the missing ingredients of social justice and cultural engagement must be re-factored. On this implicit tenet, Bryant Myers calls out for biblical transformative development, a holistic view of poverty and a survey of development thinking. A narrowed view of poverty as a lack of something or a deficit has led to narrowed approaches that address only the financial aspects. This even leaves out existential and spiritual poverty out of the continuum of addressing it. The outcomes of transformative development will be changed people and just, peaceful relationships.

Addressing the False Dichotomy

Bryant Myers in his comparative analysis is opposed to any development practitioners who set up a false dichotomy between the spiritual realm and the material. In Myers' formulation, he critiques the Western world's modern world view. He attributes this to the Enlightenment era (2011, p. 5). He highlights what he calls the 'great divorce' of separating the material and the spiritual realms. The West, as per Myers, postulates that the material and the spiritual realms are unrelated (ibid.). He denotes the tragic reductions that follow poverty reduced to lack of basic needs and thus development is reduced to meet those physical needs (ibid.). The spiritual realm versus the material realm is depicted thus:

Spiritual Realm	Material Realm
Revelation and believing	Observation and knowing
Faith	Reason
Religion	Science
Private and personal	Public
Values	Facts
Church	State

Modernity's separation above, he argues, is "part of the explanation for how we have come to understand Christian witness, and specifically evangelism, as *being unrelated to development*" (Myers, 2011, p. 7). He succinctly captures other dichotomies: separating Christian witness and social action, separating word, deed and sign and finally limiting the scope of sin and the gospel. Divorcing the spiritual from the social and material aspects stems from a false anthropology and sociology (Bosch, 2006, p. 110).

Based on the dichotomy in Myers' account, his argument is more plausible when we turn to development. Myers foresees it and argues that Christian development agencies are not immune to the said phenomenon (2011, p. 7). Combining evangelism as meeting spiritual needs and relief as meeting physical needs has often led to a dependency syndrome on the part of the receiving community. The more pragmatic way is to use their experiences, analyse them, educate them, then later partner with them in a holistic dimension.

Transformational development must be underscored as a theological challenge to the church in the current times. Since the traditional orthodoxy was holistic, evangelical churches (AIC in mind) must re-capture its working methodology in all dimensions of its operations. Although historically there has been a missiological emphasis for the church, current trends have church societal transformation among its top priority (cf. Bosch, 1999, pp. 376-393).

Following the above arguments, the evangelical church must undergo paradigm shifts towards holism in gospel proclamation. There are plausible paradigm shifts for the church in our days. In his book *Church Next*, Eddie Gibbs handles a relevant one, from living in the past to engaging with the present. Here, he envisions the growth of 'new paradigm' churches. He argues that the church is poised now at a strategic point of inflection.

A second shift is from bureaucracy to apostolic networks. The networks include empowerment, relation dynamics, diversification, and decentralization among others. He further tackles the shift from generic congregations to incarnation *communities* (emphasis mine). Here the main issues are becoming a church that infiltrates the community and can accommodate diversity.

More shifts are from program-centered to people-centered development (McNeal, 2009, p. xiv). Although practitioners have shifted from the traditional enrichment sector to new 'income' economic approaches, the author emphasises it. This is the approach of Gary Fields (1980). David Mosse and others affirm the approach:

The limited gains in productivity achieved (by governments) reflect not only the difficulties of climate and soils...many poor communities have had lengthy histories of frustrating experiences with government programmes and tend to view new initiatives with suspicion (Mosse et al., 1998).

Practical Church Inclusive Development

Patriarchy is still a challenge at the grassroots of AIC in the sense that rural women are rarely accorded the same duties or privileges as men. In the author's Ebenezer local context, men had their self-made jobs or were farming while women are mostly casual laborers on the farms. Nonetheless, there are several ways in which the AIC church can try inclusivity of women:

First, by the use of practical theology. Richard Osmer does a theology towards congregational leaders. He analyzes the biblical leaders versus Jesus first. He observes God's use of leaders in the Old Testament:

God provides Israel with leaders, anointed with the Spirit of God, to help it live with covenant fidelity. Priests play a special role in Israel's worship of God, overseeing the cult of offering sacrifices to God on the people's behalf. Judges, sages, and kings provide leadership in the organization of the covenant community, offering wise teachings, settling disputes guiding its political affairs, and protecting it against external threats. Prophets speak God's word to Israel, announcing divine judgment when it strays from covenant fidelity, calling it to repent, and offering hope if it returns back to God (Osmer, 2008, p. 28).

He then compares the New Testament motif of Jesus as the perfect king, prophet, and priest. He used all these offices to transform his ministerial context. He then formulates a model. Osmer's model has four tasks which are formulated under four attentive questions:

- What is going on? (descriptive task)
- Why is it going on? (interpretive task)
- What ought to be going on? (normative task)
- How can we respond? (pragmatic task)

This model can be used and integrated to bring the marginalised women on board. Osmer (2008, p. 153) argues that sound theological and ethical interpretation will result in transformational practices which in turn are found in faith communities. These transformations occur better when interactions with women and youth are evident.

Second, by use of the pastoral circle in practical theology domain, any communal situation outside the church can be addressed. The pastoral circle is depicted as follows:



*Figure 1: The pastoral circle
Source Henriot & Holland (1983)*

It has four moments: experience/immersion (what is happening here?), social analysis (why is this happening?), theological reflection (what does it mean?) and action/pastoral planning (how should we respond?). When the pastoral circle is used as a 'circle of praxis', it cements to reflective practices by the church and as per Peter Henriot and Joe Holland it 'opens up dynamics for faith and action' (Henriot & Holland, 1983, p. 9). The pastoral circle is useful for social, cultural and theological analysis of the given community being researched on. In other words, it is a tool for contextualization of the community's experiences.

Third, by crafting a philosophy of development strategic plan; Since transformative development is a process, it must encompass a laid out documented programme; this I call a philosophy of development. One key area is planning. Rumelt is insightful on three key areas of strategic planning: diagnosis, guiding policy and coherent actions (Rumelt, 2011, p. 7). He emphasises creative thinking and reflected actions. Diagnosis assists to know the reality on the ground; what is going on. The policy guideline maps out an overall approach and a set of actions to be undertaken. Strategy is never complete until 'action' is undertaken and it must be tied with what is diagnosed and the guiding policy. The strategic objectives need to be close to the organisation. He calls these 'proximate' objectives. The 'kernel' of strategy is the best way discussed by Rumelt to guard against many options but to circle in on the most proximate objective and goal.

Another key area is sustainability. Most projects in rural areas lack monitoring and evaluation in which sustainability becomes a challenge. The Malawian IPA program's Q methodology comes as a tool for evaluation. The Q methodology from IPA and other development practitioners will still be a tool for rural contexts in development. Monitoring and evaluations will give reviews and impetus for more transformation. The church ought to engage in the monitoring process. Transformative development must also measure sustainable social change. Fourthly are agricultural economics for rural communities. Agriculture forms the backbone of their economy. A globalised farming agency called ECHO (a Christian non-profit organization which brings glory to God by using science and technology to transform poor communities) has been

instrumental in providing sustainable solutions to fight hunger. ECHO uses science and technology versus ecological stewardship to transform local poor communities. The ECHO issue was very informative on traditional technologies which could be used to improve plant performances (ECHO, 2005). The ECHO issue (2002) discussed what was named the Green Famine by the World Vision in Ethiopia 2001-2002. There were key climate and environmental issues when maize plants never yielded. Mercer (1998) observes:

The negative view of drought...ought to be replaced by the much more realistic that drought...is not exceptional but normal and farmers are being encouraged to work with the environment not against it.

ECHO uses agricultural economics and localizes their programs for the farmers in remote poor countries. It has achieved success in crop yield. The researcher is of the opinion that its gender-inclusive agri-technology and agri-business methods are relevant, suitable and timely for remote areas like Ebenezer, Kithuani area. This is preceded by the fact the agriculture is their major economical means of livelihood hence the reason for factoring it in their development agenda.

Christology of development and of the 'other'

The AIC church (and by extension other evangelical churches) needs this kind of theologising in its PD. As already discussed, Christological re-readings of Luke 4:18-19 and other texts will be a must. As per the Belhar Confession, the church is called to stand where God stands (Belhar Confession 3).

On the 'other', loving God and neighbour is part of our ecclesial mission (Mk. 12:30-31). The evangelical church must include re-creating human lives to be like Christ in relating to our neighbors, rebuilding all broken relationships and being inclusive of the outside community in its missiology.

In synthesis, the two models laid above can be adapted and contextualized for the transformative development agenda of rural women in Kenya. If the models are coupled with a pragmatic philosophy of development and a theologically informed Christology of the other, the church's definition of development will be broad. In retrospect, the Q method will further engage, and help marginalized women's concourses at the forefront. They will own the projects and if monitored using the Q method again, there will be sustainability. Of course, there will be key obstacles to be met by every organization including the church. However, I concur with Rumelt that failure to face the challenge (s) is a bad strategy (Rumelt, 2011, p. 7).

CONCLUSION

The future is positive for inclusive and transformative development of rural women. The gospel message must be accompanied by *diakonia*, as Jesus modeled it. If the AIC (evangelical) church takes into consideration an inclusive holistic gospel approach and engages development thinking, it serves as an NGO in herself and more growth is expected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Transformative education in AIU for pastors will necessarily require integration of development studies and practical theology in their curriculum.
2. A specified research center for women in AIU. This center will organize, coordinate and implement rural women's developments, annual conferences and rural development symposiums based on Kenya's Vision 2030.

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