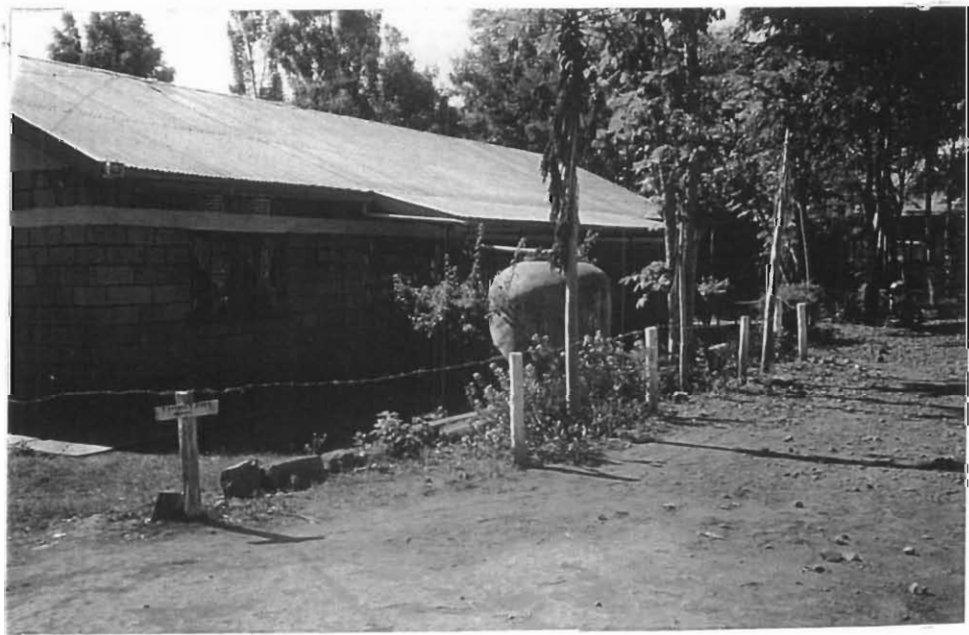


The Christian Community Services teaches and offers a variety of agricultural, livestock and community health services...



Top: "this is what we offer"...CCS advertises its services at the entrance of Wangu'uru Extension Station.

Below: "practising what we teach"...CCS demonstrates roof catchment for relatively clean water for domestic consumption. Women groups have adopted this strategy of constructing water jars.



**THE CHURCH AGAINST POVERTY: *AN ASSESSMENT OF THE  
WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES (CCS) IN THE  
KIRINYAGA ANGLICAN DIOCESE IN KENYA.***

**AMOS MURAGE KINYUA**

**SUPERVISOR: PROF. KLAUS NURNBERGER**

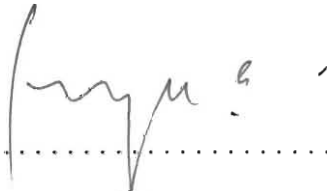
**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the Degree of Master of Theology  
(Leadership & Development) in the School of Theology, University of  
Natal, Pietermaritzburg.  
September 30, 1999.**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my wife, Margaret and our two children, Flora and Faith whose encouragement, support, and understanding made it possible for me to be away from them during the entire time of study at the University of Natal.

## DECLARATION

This thesis (unless where specifically stated) is my original work. It has not been submitted to any other university for assessment or for any other purpose. I therefore submit it for the first time at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, as a partial fulfilment for the Master of Theology Degree in Leadership and Development



..... Signed

AMOS MURAGE KINYUA

University of Natal Pietermaritzburg.

September 1999.



# CONTENTS

Dedication. ....	i
Declaration . ....	.ii
Contents . ....	iii
Abstract . ....	x
Acknowledgement . ....	xii
List of Abbreviations . ....	xiii
List of Tables . ....	xiv

## CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction . ....	1
1.1 Problem . ....	1
1.1.1 The Background of the problem . ....	1
1.2 Establishing poverty criteria . ....	2
1.3 Motivation of the study . ....	3
1.4 Research methods,techniques and instruments . ....	4
1.4.1 Case study research . ....	5
1.4.2 Piloting . ....	6
1.4.3 Scheduled questionnaires . ....	6
1.4.4 Semi-structured interviews . ....	7
1.4.5 Participant observation . ....	7
1.4.6 Data collection . ....	8
1.4.6.1 Primary sources . ....	8
1.4.6.2 Secondary sources . ....	9
1.4.7 Self-administered questionnaire . ....	9
1.5 Sampling . ....	9
1.6 Limitations of the study . ....	10
1.7 Theoretical framework . ....	10
1.7.1 The role of theology . ....	10
✗1.7.2 The role of the church in development ✓ . ....	11

1.7.3	Women participation is an important strategy for sustainable development	12
1.8	Conceptual framework	12
1.8.1	A participatory rural approach	12
1.8.2	An integrated development approach	13
1.8.3	Environmental sustainability and development	14
1.9	Outline of chapters	15

## CHAPTER TWO

2.	Geographical and Social analysis of the area of study	17
2.1	Introduction	17
2.2	Section One:Geographical and Demographic Overview	18
2.2.1	Position and size of the Diocese	18
2.2.2	Topography and climate	19
2.2.3	Administration and political units	20
2.2.4	Population size	21
2.2.5	Population:distribution and density	21
2.2.6	Urban population	22
2.3	Section Two:Social Economic Analysis	23
2.3.1	Introduction	23
2.3.2	Human settlement and its historical background	24
2.3.3	Social dimensions of development	24
2.3.4	Rice growing	25
2.3.5	Employment	27
2.3.6	General overview of the economy	27
2.3.7	Social and economic infrastructures	28
2.3.7.1	Health facilities	28
2.3.7.2	Education facilities	29
2.3.7.3	Other aspects of welfare	29
(i)	Electricity	29

(ii)	Cooperative facilities .....	29
(iii)	Informal sector .....	29
(iv)	Nutritional status .....	29
(v)	Adult education .....	29
(vi)	Family planning .....	29
(vii)	Supporting development agencies . ✓.....	29
(viii)	Voluntary agencies .....	30
2.4	Conclusion .....	31

### CHAPTER THREE

3	The Genesis, vision and <i>modus operandi</i> of the CCS .....	33
3.1	Introduction .....	33
3.2	Background information .....	33
3.3	Organisational structure of the CC .....	34
3.4	The organisational structure of the Kirinyaga Diocese .....	36
3.5	The CCS mission statement and vision .....	36
3.6	The CCS legal status .....	37
3.7	The CCS programmes .....	37
3.8	Funding .....	38
3.9	Towards self-reliance .....	38
3.10	The CCS theology and <i>modus operandi</i> .....	38
3.10.1	The doctrine of creation .....	39
3.10.2	The doctrine of human being .....	40
3.10.3	The ministry of the prophets .....	40
3.10.4	The Psalms .....	41
3.10.5	The doctrine of incarnation .....	42
3.10.6	The kingdom of God .....	42
3.10.7	The ministry of the apostles .....	44
3.10.8	Jesus' 'model of growth' .....	44
3.10.9	The Apostle Paul's mission .....	45
3.11	Summary .....	45

## CHAPTER FOUR

4 The CCS Rural Development Department: Food Increase Programme .....	47
4.1 Introduction .....	47
4.2 The background and purpose of the FIP .....	47
4.2.1 Crop production. ....	49
4.2.2 Structures and approaches of delivery .....	50
4.2.2.1 Structures .....	50
4.2.2.2 Approaches .....	50
4.2.3 Target groups/Gender issues .....	56
4.2.4 Appropriateness of extension approaches .....	57
4.2.5 Sustainability .....	57
4.3 Animal production .....	58
4.3.1 Beef production .....	60
4.3.2 Other livestock	
(i) Goats .....	61
(ii) Pigs .....	61
(iii) Rabbits .....	61
(iv) Poultry .....	62
(v) Bees .....	62
4.3.3 Feeding and livestock nutrition .....	62
(i) Pasture .....	62
(ii) Fodder .....	62
(iii) Concentrates .....	63
4.3.4 Veterinary services and animal health .....	63
4.3.5 Technical packages .....	63
4.4 Environment and natural resources .....	63
4.4.1 Conservation technical packages .....	64
4.4.2 Appropriate technology .....	65
4.4.3 Water resources .....	66
4.5 Constraints to agricultural development .....	67
4.5.1 External constraints .....	67

4.5.2	Constraints interior to the organisation	69
4.6	Comments and recommendations	70
4.6.1	The CCS mission	70
4.6.2	Agro-industrial development	71
4.6.3	Access to land	72
4.6.4	Marketing of agricultural produce	73
4.6.5	The sheep and goat multiplication centre	74
4.6.6	Poultry and its economic value	74
4.6.7	The fishing industry	74
4.6.8	Livestock disease control	75
4.6.9	Environment vs. horticultural farming	76
4.7	Summary	76

## CHAPTER FIVE

5	The CCS: Community Health and Social Services Programmes	78
5.1	Introduction	78
5.2	Section One: The CCS Interventions in Community Health	79
5.2.1	The Profile of health facilities of Kirinyaga district in relation to Mwea Division	78
5.2.2	Maternal and Child health care and Family Planning	80
(i)	Ante-natal and post-natal care	80
(ii)	Immunization	81
(iii)	Nutrition and Growth monitoring	81
(iv)	Family Planning.	82
5.2.3	Health education.	84
(i)	Village Health Committees	84
(ii)	Community Health Workers	85
(iv)	Community Based Distributors of contraceptives	88
5.2.4	Mental health and drug abuse	89
5.2.5	Dental health	89
5.3	Section Two: The CCS and the social Welfare interventions	89

5.3.1	The CCS against Aids .....	90
5.3.2	Relief Services .....	92
5.4	Conclusion .....	93

## CHAPTER SIX

6	Data Analysis and Interpretation .....	94
6.1	Introduction .....	94
6.2	Section One: Research methodology. ....	95
6.2.1	Collecting data .....	95
6.2.2	Data analysis .....	96
6.3	Section Two: Data interpretation, findings and recommendations. ....	96
6.3.1	Data from interview with the contact farmers. ....	96
6.3.2	Data from interviews with other role players .....	102
(i)	Ministry of Education .....	102
(ii)	Department of Adult Education: literacy and poverty .....	110
(iii)	Ministry of Health: fertility and poverty .....	112
6.3.3	Disease incidence and poverty .....	115
6.4	Data from the questionnaire from the clergy .....	119
6.5	Data from interview with key personalities .....	122
6.6	Section Three: summary .....	125

## CHAPTER SEVEN

7	Theological Reflection .....	128
7.1	Introduction .....	128
7.2	Historical Perspectives on Church and Development ..✓.....	129
7.3	The Role of the Church in Development .✓.....	130
7.3.1	The Church as a Servant .....	130
7.3.2	The Church as the 'Alternative Community' .....	132
7.3.3	The Church as the 'Contrast Society' .....	135
7.3.4	The Church as a 'Redemptive Community' .....	137
7.4	The Role of Theology in Development .....	138

7.5	The Participation of Women in Development .....	144
7.5.1	Women and education .....	145
7.5.2	Women and law .....	146
7.5.3	Women and Gender Discrimination .....	147
7.5.4	Women and Leadership .....	148
7.6	Conceptual Framework .....	149
7.6.1	Participatory Rural Approach .....	150
7.6.2	The Integrated Development Programme .....	151
7.7	Summmary .....	152

## CHAPTER EIGHT

8 Conclusion .....	.154
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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Women groups are popular and increasingly transforming the society .....	163
Appendix 2	Empowering Women to be self-reliant .....	164
Appendix 3	The Rice crisis .....	165
Appendix 4a	Interview schedule for the beneficiaries of the CCS development projects .....	.166
Appendix 4b	Questionnaire for the clergy .....	172
Appendix 5	(Polluted) Water, water .....for consumption or irrigation? .....	176

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>177</b>
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## ABSTRACT

This study centres on Church involvement in community development. The study seeks to demonstrate that the model adopted by the Christian Community Services is a fruitful experiment of church involvement in community development - one that has a tremendous potential to shed theological as well as practical light on church involvement in community development.

After offering the statement of the problem and a brief geographical and social analysis of Kirinyaga Diocese, the study traces the genesis, vision and the *modus operandi* of the Christian Community Services. It then discusses the CCS 'Food Increase Programme' through the organisation's Rural Development Department. The Community Health and Social Services Programmes are presented as some of the CCS's interventions to reduce poverty in the community. The impact of these interventions was evident after the data collection, analysis and interpretation. The study then offers a theological evaluation and reflection of the work of the CCS as a model of church involvement in development activities in the community..

The study argues that Christian theology has a particularly significant contribution to make to the debates about community development. In a pluralistic society in a secular age, a special responsibility is laid on the Church to present its distinctive understanding and insights to address the abject poverty among the vast majority of her followers. Without this, her public life is impoverished. Theology of development is the tool of the Church to achieve this vision.

Although difficult to define, development is seen as the process of transforming the conditions of life of the people referred to as 'the poor' such that they can lead a more holistic life. The main objective of the CCS development activities is to allow the poor to become the subject, not the object, of development strategies. Given the opportunity to do so, they have shown themselves to be capable of making rational choices regarding their own destinies. In this context, it is hoped that this dissertation will help to contribute to an increased understanding of Church involvement in development from within for, by and with the poor.

As a result, therefore, new optimism for the role of the Church in development may emerge



from the current pessimism. The study has concluded that the Church's involvement in development is not an 'extra' but a bona fide function of the Church.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this work has involved many people to whom I am deeply indebted, but whom I am unable to mention individually. However, I owe special thanks to the Christian Aid and the Bursary Committee of the School of Theology, without whose financial support and recommendation respectively, this study would not have been possible.

I thank my supervisor, Prof. Klaus Nurnberger, whose academic excellence and tutelage not only shaped this study but also impacted on my personal view of Christian life. His constant urge 'to push on' was a great driving force that kept me on track until completion. He is one of those rare individuals who can cross the worlds of academe and practice and who can push people on both sides to examine their assumptions and play out their logics. His supervision has been a major factor towards attaining the quality and completion of this dissertation.

The members of the 1998 Leadership and Development class showed patience and wisdom in my many questions as we struggled together to make sense of what God demands of the church. Without their lively debates and insights, this study would have been much poorer. The members of the post-graduate seminars at the University helped to shape my research by their criticism, encouragement and advice. They ensured that I was kept on a theological track.

I owe a lot of gratitude to Mrs Margaret Murage, a social scientist at District Development Institute, Embu, for her guidance in the drafting of the questionnaires used in this project. I am indebted to Margaret Reynolds for her competent proof reading of the thesis.

My wife Margaret has had to live 'a divorced life' for the last two years when I was at the University of Natal for this study. She never faltered in her commitment and support and, above all, bore the burden of the family all by herself. I am deeply indebted to her. Last but not in the least, our two daughters, Flora and Faith have had to do without their dad during the entire period of study. Their understanding was immeasurable and I am indeed grateful to them.

A. M. KINYUA.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.
AI	Artificial Insemination.
AMREF	African Medical Research Foundation.
BCCS	Board of Christian Community Services.
CBO	Community Based organisation.
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics.
CCS MKE	Christian community Services of Mount Kenya East.
CCS	Christian Community Services.
CHAK	Christian Health Association of Kenya.
CHW	Community Health Workers.
CORAT	Christian Organisation Research Advisory Trust.
EZE	<i>Evangelische Zentralstelle fuer Entwicklungshilfe.</i>
FIP	Food Increase Programme.
FPAK	Family Planning Association of Kenya.
GNB	Good News Bible.
GoK	Government of Kenya.
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IBRD	International Bank of Reconstruction and Development.
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.
KJV	King James Version.
KREP	Kenya Rural Enterprise Programme.
KTBH	Kenya Top Bar Hives.
NCKK	National Council of Churches of Kenya.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation.
NIB	National Irrigation Board.
OMN	Organic Management Network.
PRA	Participatory Rural Approach.
SAPS	Structural Adjustment Programmes.

UNESCO      United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation.  
WCC          World Council of Churches.

## LIST OF TABLES

### Table

2.1	Area of Kirinyaga District by Division .....	19
2.2	Administrative Units by Division .....	20
2.3	Population Distribution by Division .....	21
2.4	Population Density by Division .....	22
2.5	Projected Population of Major Urban And Market Centres .....	23
4.1	Selected Groups and their Activities .....	53
4.2	Livestock Population in Mwea in 1996 In comparison with other Divisions .....	59
4.3	Production of Seedlings in Mwea Division .....	64
5.1	Distribution of health facilities by Division in 1995 .....	79
5.2	Outreach Clinic Achievements in 1996/1997 .....	83
5.4	Distribution of Relief Seeds at Wang'uru in 1992 .....	92
6.1	Distribution of Interviewed Contact Farmers .....	97
6.2	Primary School Enrollment by Gender .....	103
6.3	KCPE Performance by Gender .....	105
6.4	Secondary School Performance by Gender .....	106
6.5	KSCE Candindates by Gender .....	108
6.6	Adult Literacy Enrollment by Division by Gender .....	110
6.7	Births by the Age of the Mother at Health Institutions and at Home .....	113
6.8	Malaria and Other Disease Incidence at Mwea. ....	117
6.9	Distribution and Response Pattern of the Questionnaire to the Clergy ....	119

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 The problem**

How is the (Anglican) Church in Kenya responding to the situation of poverty in the communities in Kirinyaga Diocese in general, and Mwea Division in particular? What challenges and constraints does the Church face in attempting to transform the situation of the poor in the communities? What role are women playing in the development of the church in general and the community in particular? The first question constitutes the core problem that we set out to address in this thesis. The second and third questions point to the sub-problems arising from the core.

#### **1.1.1 The background of the problem**

Poverty is a major problem in many parts of the Anglican Diocese of Kirinyaga in Kenya and especially the Mwea Division where rains are scanty and unreliable, soils are poor and/ or some people have no land. According to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) indications are that poverty in Kenya is mainly a rural phenomenon. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), the agricultural productivity of women determines how much food is available in the family (Trends in Developing Economies, 1996). In many parts of rural Kenya, including Mwea, men have migrated to the cities, leaving their wives with the sole responsibility for sustaining their families. These households are generally poorer than those headed by males, with fewer income-earning adults, poor education and skills, and less access to land, credit and extension services.

Poverty is a consistent theme throughout the scriptures. If it is true that the Scriptures assert that God is on the side of the poor, the Church should make this biblical theme a central part of her teaching. For instance, in the Exodus ( chapters 5-12) God displayed his power in order to free the oppressed (Sider 1971:54). Owensby (1988:x) argues that much of the prophets' message had

to do with how the economic realities of the day affected the lives of the poor of the nation.

Traditionally, the Church has had the tendency to ignore the concrete and historical dimensions of the message of God so that 'the theology of salvation of souls' has triumphed. Contrary to this convention, the response of the Anglican Diocese of Kirinyaga to the situation of poverty has been the establishment of Christian Community Services (CCS) as the development arm of the Church. CCS aims at empowering poor communities to discover their potential and effectively participate in achieving sustainable development. As a church-based organisation, CCS emulates the holistic gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in John 10:10 "I have come so that you may have life and have it abundantly" (KJV). Although this text primarily refers to the final act of history, it also refers to finding love, health and life in the present.

The CCS recognizes that the theology of life is a critical reflection on the comprehensive praxis in which the Christian community participates. It is done as a deliberate effort in the light of the liberative message of God as witnessed to in the Bible (Mofokeng 1990:168). However, the church's overt recognition of the problem neither automatically leads to programmes attempting to find solutions nor does it stimulate collective social action.

The CCS, in collaboration with the government and other development agencies, endeavours to serve the 'whole person' so that all physical, social, economic and spiritual needs are met. On the basis of the Mission Statement of the CCS, this study seeks to investigate the extent to which the CCS has become the development arm of the church in the Mwea Division of the Kirinyaga See of the Anglican Church in such a way that the poor, marginalised and destitute communities are being empowered to be in control of their own development in a holistic and sustainable way.

## **1.2 Establishing poverty criteria**

Who are the poor? In order that an action is directed toward reducing rural poverty, it is essential to identify the target groups. Hence, if we view the struggle against poverty as part of a broader

movement towards justice, peace and the integrity of creation, then we must be careful not to define 'the poor', who are the ones our ecumenical missions and services are most concerned about, in too narrow terms. The poor are those who are nameless, ignored by many as being insignificant. They do not have the means to satisfy their own basic material, intellectual, cultural or religious needs in order to live a life of human dignity. In this study, we shall adopt Nurnberger's definition of 'absolute poverty', that is, 'a situation in which income does not meet the level of basic essentials...' (1999:61).

The incidence of poverty in Kenya is especially severe for children and women of child-bearing age; they not only have a generally low level of family income but they are caught in a poverty circle which affects the very young, the recently married and the old. The aged are a relatively small proportion of the population, but those under 15 years of age typically account for 50% of the population (The NCCCK Report on Capacity Building, Regional Profile of Kirinyaga 1996). The consequences of poverty for the young are serious, as the effects of malnutrition and general deprivation are felt for the rest of their lives.

A situation in which people are free to shape and develop their own way of living, at however low a level on the economic scale this may occur, can often encourage greater common efforts among people to improve their conditions. This is why any assistance given to help people fulfil such needs as food, health, housing, education, clothing, paid work, freedom of expression and freedom of religion must also take into account the existing social conditions : do these allow for life lived in dignity and self-determination?

### **1.3 Motivation of the study.**

What motivates me to do this study? The following concerns justify my interest in the study.

(i) In my opinion the CCS might be a fruitful experiment of church involvement in development activities in the community - one that has tremendous potential to shed theological as well as practical light on church involvement in development.

(ii) In my opinion the Church should offer 'a theology for life' - a theology that relates the



church to the poor in the community, the marginalised, the hungry, those that have no hope of tomorrow, the displaced, the sick, the oppressed and the powerless. In our opinion, the inception of the CCS, as well as its work for the past twenty years, is a concrete attempt at constructing a 'theology for life'.

(iii) While the CCS initiative may constitute a welcome concretization of church involvement in development, it is itself a departure from the conventional and prevalent church attitude towards development. This attitude is also prevalent in the Anglican Church in Kenya. The prevalent church attitude towards development is influenced by a theology that emphasizes a split between body and soul - often with the soul being regarded as being more important than the body and thus the 'after life' as being more important than the 'here and now'. This only works if one thinks that the soul is immortal while the body is not, as Hellenistic philosophy does (Nurnberger1999b:Personal communication). In our time and context, the individualist notion of 'finding personal salvation' (= here-after bliss) may represent a spiritual escape from a situation where the demand for social responsibility is apparent.

In contrast, it is my view that the activities of our Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the Scriptures are evidence of his concrete concern for the poor, the marginalised, the oppressed and the exploited. Consequently, there is no split between the soul and the body. In other words there should be no dichotomy between faith and the rest of life and indeed where this dichotomy has persisted it has led to distortions.

#### **1.4 Research methods, techniques and instruments.**

Each type of research design answers a different question. In a study such as this, where the main thrust is a critical evaluation of the work of an organisation, the researcher is faced with a problem: the researcher is likely to be accused of denigrating the organisation or of being biased for or against it. In addition, complete and accurate measurements of the activities of human beings is impossible. Yet, social science research aims in that direction. The researcher should be aware of his/her biases, values and assumptions and the effects these are likely to have on his/her research. All this underscores the importance of the researcher carefully working out his/her type

of research methodology. It is against that background that I have opted intentionally for the case study methodology with its inherent limitations.

#### **1.4.1 Case study research.**

The case study can answer the question ‘What is going on?’ (Dixon et al 1987:107). A case study may be of one person, one group, one family, one classroom, one town, one nation. The aim of a case study is a description of a unit rather than the test of an hypothesis (Labovitz & Hagerdorn 1981:48). Rossouw (1996:4) observes that most studies of this nature rely heavily on interviewing of respondents and data available from secondary sources. The descriptive research is viewed (probably with some truth) as a fact finding expedition.

According to Merriam (1988), the case study has its own way of assembling, organising and integrating its results in a particular set of research findings. The aim of the case study methodology is to “examine events or phenomena... looking at the situation as it is with no attempt to manipulate the subject” (quoted in Mwangi 1998:7).

Ball (1996:75) observes that the case study methodology is widely and variously used across the whole range of social science disciplines. It attempts to be holistic and exhaustive. In a case study, data are collected by direct presence on the site or in face to face exchanges with the subjects. Ball goes further to observe that in the case study, the researcher aims to share experiences with the researched, to witness events first hand, to question action within settings (1996: 75).

According to Ragin, in the case study, the researcher’s primary goal is to link the empirical with the theoretical - to use theory to make sense of evidence and to use evidence to sharpen and refine theory (1992:225). For his part, Bulmer acknowledges the importance of descriptive research (case study) because it has played and continues to play a particularly significant role in the formulation of social policy (1977:3).

In the light of the above, one may conclude that the design and conduct of case study research is

responsive, creative and accommodating to a particular setting. Indeed as Lincoln and Guba put it “any case study is a construction itself, a product of interaction between respondents, the site and the researcher” (1985: 4).

Yet the case study research methodology is not beyond critique. For instance, it is frequently accused for its lack of generalizability (Balgar 1965 and Shaunhessy 1985 quoted in Ball 1996:75). However, in the final analysis case study research methodology as elucidated above seems to maximize the capacity of participation of the subject, thereby reducing or eliminating ambiguity and mistrust from both parties, that is, the researcher and the researched. For these reasons I opt for this kind of methodology.

#### **1.4.2 Piloting.**

As observed by Wilson, piloting the data-collection instruments is essential, whether interview schedules or questionnaires are used (1996:103). In this project, a pilot investigation was done before the main investigation. It was intended to assess the adequacy of the research design and of the instruments to be used for data collection. Arising from the pre-test exercise, the original interview schedules and questionnaires were re-designed to meet the shortfalls detected.

#### **1.4.3 Scheduled questionnaires.**

A standard schedule (see appendix 4a), which was drafted with the consultation of Mrs Margaret Murage, a social scientist, was used for each respondent who were mainly the CCS contact farmers, community health workers, members of various women’s groups and other direct beneficiaries of the CCS development interventions. In the belief that nothing informs theory better than practice, the respondents were visited at their sites. These field visits gave the researcher a concrete view of what people are doing in the community and the problems encountered in development. In addition, the interview schedules and related reading prepared me to initiate a dialogue with the researched and build confidence on both sides. The research then proceeded on complete mutuality and goodwill.

#### **1.4.4 Semi-structured interviews.**

Interviews such as these are managed to a large extent by the interviewer who sets the agenda of questions, probes more deeply into issues of interest with supplementary questions and records the answers and the discussion. They do not use standardised schedules (Wilson 1996:95).

In this project the interviews were conducted, more or less, like natural conversations between two people. This methodology was used primarily for personalities such as the diocesan bishop, Church leaders of other denominations, and relevant heads of government departments. I felt that these people were too busy to have the time to fill in a questionnaire. The interviewees' responses were recorded in field notebooks. This was more obtrusive than tape recording but the respondents seemed comfortable with it. Consequently, by using this method of collecting data, the interviewees were open and gave maximum co-operation. However, two personalities under this category, namely the Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Kenya and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the CCS, preferred to have their interviews tape-recorded. Probably due to their experience and self-confidence, they were not apprehensive concerning this mode of interview.

#### **1.4.5 Participant observation.**

Participant observation refers to a rather wide range of activities ranging from actually becoming a bona fide member of the group under study to informally observing and interviewing group members from the outside (Blalock & Blalock, Jr., 1982:95). In this project, I opted for the latter. A potential threat of validity to this methodology comes from observer bias. The particular cultural knowledge or particular theoretical standpoints of the researcher can affect what is selected for observation and how it is interpreted and recorded. How then can a researcher assess the validity of his or her observations? Foster (1996:91) suggests cross-checking them with other sources of data! Thus if a researcher's conclusion is supported by data from other sources, then we can be more confident of its validity. Alternatively, data produced by different methods - for instance from observation and from interview - can be compared to cross-check validity. The two approaches of validation were used in this project. However, Foster warns us that at the end of the day, 'we can never, of course, be absolutely sure of the validity of observations, but we must decide and make

clear to what extent confidence in that validity is justified' (1996: 93).

#### **1.4.6 Data collection.**

The case study method does not prefer a particular mode of collecting data or analysis of data over others. The method is a design more prone to researchers who are interested in insights, discovery and interpretation and explanation than hypothesis testing. This method attempts to come up with a holistic description and explanation of the phenomenon under review.

##### **1.4.6.1 Primary sources.**

In this project, interview schedules, administered questionnaires (see appendix 4b) to role-players in CCS development activities and observation formed the primary sources of the data collection.

A major advantage of this interview approach is that literacy is not necessary and so the sample is much less limited than that to which a questionnaire can be applied (Peil 1982:71). Another advantage is that a personal approach usually produces more satisfactory results than a questionnaire from an unknown source, especially in societies (for instance the subject of this study) where interaction is usually highly personalised. Further, supplementary questions can be used to get additional information - to understand what an answer means. For instance, through interview schedules, socio-economic conditions were assessed by asking respondents questions about their household environment, fuel, sources of domestic water and sanitation. Respondents were asked about ownership of particular goods such as radio and televisions (to assess access to media), refrigerators (to assess food storage), bicycles (to assess mode of transportation) and cattle, goats, sheep and cash crops (to assess levels of wealth).

However, I took on board that interviews are generally more expensive both in terms of money and time - for instance, the researcher may be required to travel long distances when the subjects are not gathered, say, in a school or some other gathering. Similarly, it may take as long as 45 minutes or more to interview one subject. Thus, in a way, interview schedules were restrictive.

#### **1.4.6.2 Secondary sources.**

Interviews, questionnaires and observation were all important sources of data in this research. But they did not comprise all the forms of information gathering. A considerable amount of data was accessible from the official records, such as census data, health statistics and information from departments, in addition to the CCS's statistics collected on a relatively regular basis. The literature review of relevant works as shown in the bibliography was most useful. Finnegan sees the secondary sources as copying, interpreting or judging the material to be found in the primary sources (1996:141). An important advantage of using secondary data is that the data collected on a regular or periodic basis yield information on trends over a time. In addition, secondary sources avoid problems of gaining the subject's co-operation. However, in using existing data, the researcher should ask why the data was collected, determine the adequacy of the data collection methods, and investigate the extent to which the data accurately describe the variables identified (Blalock & Blalock, Jr., 1982:92).

#### **1.4.7 Self - administered questionnaires.**

Wilson has observed that open-ended questions do not constrain the respondent's beliefs or opinions to predetermined categories as "fully standardized methods of data collection must do" (1996:101). In addition, uncoded questions allow the researcher to search the full range of responses obtained before reducing replies in a set of categories. However, Wilson warns that potential for bias introduced by the interviewer is considerable (1996:101).

In terms of cost, self-administered questionnaires are cheaper than interview schedules though the response rate is usually low and the researcher has no control over the conditions in which the data are elicited. Bearing the aforesaid in mind, I opted to the open-ended and self-administered questionnaire for the clergy.

### **1.5 Sampling.**

A sample is a set of elements selected in some way from population (Schofield 1996:25). The

aim of sampling is not only to save time and effort, but also to obtain consistent and unbiased estimates of population status in terms of whatever is being researched. The sample in this project was selected through stratified random sampling whereby the population was divided into six sub-populations (strata) and elements for the sample were randomly selected.

## **1.6 Limitations of the study.**

As the development arm of the Church, the Christian Community Services of Mt Kenya East (CCS MKE) operates within four Anglican Dioceses, namely Kirinyaga, Embu, Mbeere and Meru - with a total area of 2 010 118 sq. km. and a combined population of 3 025 150 people (CCS Integrated Proposal 1997/99:4). Thus for logistical reasons the study could only cover a small area.

The case study concentrated on the Mwea Division in view of its vulnerability in terms of scanty and unreliable rains, landlessness and poor soils leading to poverty and diseases such as kwashiakor, marasmus, malaria, anaemia and Vitamin A deficiency. Again the process of empowering the rural communities, their context and environment motivated this study. Thus the end product was intended to facilitate the liberation and empowerment of the grass root victims of poverty in the Diocese.

## **1.7 Theoretical framework.**

The following themes will constitute the theoretical framework of the study:-

### **1.7.1. The role of theology.**

The poor are a by-product of the system in which the church lives and for which it is co-responsible. The poor are marginalised by our social and cultural world. In Gutierrez's words they are "exploited, oppressed proletariat, robbed of the fruit of their labour and despoiled of their community" (1979:44-45). Although Gutierrez is referring to the situation of landless peasants on large estates in Latin America, his observation is commensurate with that of the poor in Kenya in

that they are not only marginalised but also denied their humanity by the abject poverty in which they live. The majority of the population in the rural areas are economically, politically and social-culturally weak and relegated to the margins. Thus, theologically speaking, they are not living a 'holistic life' or, in my opinion, what Nurnberger has described as "comprehensive wellbeing" (1999: 7). White and Tiongco (1996) have observed that the process of doing theology and development involves four stages: (i) the need to encounter the poor, (ii) understanding why they are poor; (iii) through reflection, making a critical judgement whether or not our interpretation corresponds with reality and (iv) planning and implementing the strategies to bring about the required changes. Thus, the eradication of poverty is not a generous relief action, but a demand that we go and build a different social order (Gutierrez 1983:45). Therefore, theology is called upon to address, and be addressed by, the whole of life. It is the task of theology to stand alongside the poor, helping the believers to relate faith to the rest of life.

Different actors and social groups are involved in the pursuit of development: some have the wealth, the political clout, the organisational capability, the skills and the social status to be in firm control of the process. I consider the Church to be part of that privileged group. Her main tool for development, though, is theology. In this context, the CCS involvement in development activities in Kirinyaga Diocese, and in particular in the Mwea Division, underscores the role of theology in development activities. The theology of development means social concern for the poor populations.

### **1.7.2 The role of the church in development.**

The church is not of the world but in the world. Its task is to proclaim the kingdom God by challenging the values that are not consonant with God's kingdom. This demands that the church becomes world-oriented, that is, that it sees the locus of its mission as the community in which it exists in its personal, cultural, political and socio-economic context (Cochrane et al 1991:53). The church takes the world as a properly theological locus. Thus the beneficiaries of the church's action in this type of ecclesiology are not exclusively, or primarily, the members of the church itself. Rather, they are all the brothers and sisters the world over, "who hear from the church a



word of comfort, encouragement, or who obtain from the church a respectful hearing, or who receive from it some material help” (Dulles 1974:91). In my view, the Anglican Church through the CCS development activities at Mwea is meeting this challenge.

### **1.7.3 Women participation is an important strategy for sustainable development.**

According to the national census of 1989, women in Kenya form 52% of the population (Mwaura 1973:3). Two thirds of the female population residing in the rural areas are engaged in subsistence farming (CBS, Economic Survey 1988, May 1988:3). It is common knowledge that the majority of the church members are women. They are an important factor and resource of development both in the church and in the society. In spite of that, their position in the church is ambivalent. While they often play an important role within the church’s organisation, in effect their position in the decision making hierarchy is negligible both in the church and the society. In my opinion, it is crucial that women’s experiences, perceptions and talents be incorporated in the development agenda of the church in particular and the society in general. For this reason CCS would prioritize gender empowerment as a strategy for achieving sustainable development. In other words, the gender component is central to the theology of social transformation.

Besides the aforesaid, poverty is a critical factor influencing child welfare. If family income, particularly that of women, can be raised, children will benefit. Increasing access to credit financial services and micro - enterprise training are effective ways of helping women increase their income. The effective utilization and ability for women to engage resources productively cannot be over-emphasized.

## **1.8 Conceptual framework.**

I shall adopt the following development concepts in this study:-

### **1.8.1 A participatory rural approach.**

On the one hand, traditionally development has been seen as a task done by the rich for the poor.

On the other hand, religiously oriented Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have commonly defined their roles as instruments of charity engaged in transferring material resources to those in need (Korten 1990:223).

The 'participatory rural approach' (PRA<sup>1</sup>) is one of a growing family of approaches and methods of development with the NGOs. Korten sees these approaches as 'a people centered-development vision that embraces the transformation agenda' (1990:5). The PRA recognizes that the sovereignty (in development) resides with the poor, the real social actors of positive change. Thus, the poor articulate their own needs and come up with their own strategies for addressing these needs. Chambers seems to support this view when he says '...And on this the poorest are the experts - they know more than ignorant outsiders who have not bothered to try to find out' (1983:202).

Although PRA strategy is time consuming, in the long run it is more sustainable than strategies that tend to define the needs of the communities and interventions that would address the needs for the recipients. The role of the CCS as a development agency should be only that of a catalyst or facilitator. It should empower the local communities to discover their potential and effectively participate in achieving their own sustainable development.

### **1.8.2 An integrated development approach.**

Community needs are related to one another. For instance, soil erosion will cause poor harvests. The shortage of food will have severe health consequences, e.g. malnutrition related diseases. An unhealthy population will cause poor economic growth, resulting in poverty. Poverty will lead to social problems. Thus in most cases one problem causes a chain reaction of other problems. Hence the solution of community problems must be dealt with in an integrated and holistic way (CCS Integrated Proposal 1997/99:6).

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<sup>1</sup>The term 'PRA' is used here essentially as the standard acronym for 'Participatory Rural Approach' in the CCS archives and literature.

The integrated development approach implies the lumping together of sectors, using one to supplement the other, avoiding duplication and maximising the utility of the resource. It calls for development facilitators to be versatile in all sectors of community needs. The integrated development approach is highly innovative and seeks to respond to the needs of the community in an integrated way through a multi-disciplinary approach to those needs and their solutions. However, the danger of the integrated approach is that professionalism seems threatened when the development facilitator tends to be 'a jack of all trades' and probably a 'master of none'.

### **1.8.3 Environmental sustainability and development.**

For a long time 'development' was simply regarded as synonymous with an increase of the national income of a country. The current development practice hitherto supported increases in economic output that depended on unsustainable depletion of the earth's natural resources and the life support capabilities of its ecosystem. In the light of changing trends in politico-economic thinking, 'development' has taken a broader meaning, incorporating various factors that influence - or even determine - people's quality of life, including the natural environment, with its critical bearing on all aspects of community welfare. In this connection Nurnberger has observed as an intractable problem "the cumulative destruction of the natural habitat, on which all life on earth depends, the wasteful depletion of non-renewable resources, especially fossil fuels, and the over-exploitation of renewable resources" (1999a:3). Continuing exploitation of material resources naturally accentuates scarcity and may result in environmental degradation. Most environmental resources are finite and in many cases they are not renewable. It is vital that rational use should be made of them to obviate irreversible ecological damage. Thus, CCS development activities should pay due cognisance of environmental issues.

In the light of the aforesaid, this study seeks to analyse critically (that is, to record, describe, explore, characterize) and evaluate theologically the work of the CCS in Mwea Division of the Diocese of Kirinyaga of the Anglican Church in Kenya, as a model of church involvement in development, especially in regard to empowering the poor and the marginalised in the society.

## 1.9 Outline of the chapters.

This thesis is presented in eight chapters of which the first is this introduction. In this chapter, after briefly stating the problem and its background, the motivation to do the study was offered. I proceeded to set out the research methodology, and stated the theoretical and conceptual framework. By so doing I laid the foundation of the project.

Chapter two is divided into two sections. Section one gives the geographical and demographic data of the area of this study. This information is important in order to understand why the CCS operates here and why it follows a particular mode of operation. Section two discusses the social, economic and ecological profile of the inhabitants of Mwea to whom the work of the CCS is supposed to be a response.

Chapter three traces the genesis of the Christian Community Services of Mt Kenya East, discusses the CCS's organisational structure, mission and vision and its *modus operandi*. The information will be the basis of our critical evaluation of the CCS's development activities in Mwea Division of Kirinyaga Diocese.

The major resource in the Mwea Division is land. With a farm area of 504 sq km and the irrigable nature of its landscape (The Kirinyaga Development Plan 1997-2001), Mwea produces various grains such as rice and maize. Horticulture is emerging as a lucrative enterprise. But food security is the most important issue facing the population of rural Kenya and it remains a serious concern in Mwea. In recognition of this need, CCS started the Wang'uru Extension station in the area to increase food production by offering extension services to farmers, enhancing environmental conservation activities and other development related interventions to boost self-sufficiency in food. Chapter four will chronicle CCS's involvement in agricultural activities, livestock production and other natural resources exploitation such as forestry and agro-forestry activities.

Primary health care has become a crucial instrument to improve the conditions of the rural communities. Child mortality which is generally measured as a rate per thousand of children dying

before their fifth birthday, reflects the main environmental factors affecting the health of the child such as nutrition, sanitation, communicable childhood diseases, and accidents occurring in and around the home. The main goal of the community health programme is to improve the health status of the community by involving community health providers. The first part of chapter five charts the CCS's interventions through community health, namely: health education, family planning services, treatment of minor ailments, growth monitoring and antenatal and post natal care (The CORAT Evaluation Report of the CCS, November 1997). The second part of the chapter discusses the CCS's activities in a social welfare programme, namely the HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns.

Thus, chapters four and five have critically evaluated the CCS's development interventions in the community. Chapter six analyses and interprets the data collected in relation to these interventions. It is an attempt to evaluate and integrate the totality of the CCS development activities and make appropriate deductions of these activities. In the process we test the hypothesis - CCS might be a fruitful experiment of church involvement in the development activities in the community - one that has tremendous potential to shed theological as well as practical light on church involvement in development.

This study is ultimately a theological enterprise. Chapter seven offers a theological evaluation and reflection of the work of CCS as a model of church involvement in development in Kirinyaga Diocese. The aim here is to assess the contribution of the Christian Community Services to the wider ecclesiological concerns of the Church. The church as a sign of the Kingdom needs to engage with the vision of community that Jesus modelled - thus offering hope in the face of a worsening social, economic, ecological and political situation. It is hoped that the insights of church involvement in development activities, lessons and constraints gained in this study can easily be applied to other parts of Kirinyaga Diocese, Mt Kenya Region and indeed the rest of the country and the wider world with appropriate qualifications.

Finally, chapter eight will draw conclusions by summarising the whole study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. Geographical and Social Analysis of the Area of Study**

#### **2.1 Introduction.**

In the preceeding chapter, we stated the problem under investigation and detailed our research methodology. What is the nature of the concrete and social situation that the CCS is called to address? Put in another way, why and how does the CCS operate at Mwea? The task of the present chapter is to provide a geographical and social analysis of the area of study. This information is important to understand why the CCS operates here and why it follows a particular mode of operation.

The study focuses on the Mwea Division of the Kirinyaga District, which is part of the Kirinyaga Diocese of the Anglican Church in Kenya. This chapter is in two sections. The first section describes this area in terms of topography and climate, demographic profile and administrative units. Section two records the social analysis of the area of study. This section is about the poor of Mwea and the constraints of social and economic relationships within which they are trapped. It is also about their inability, given such constraints, to escape from poverty all by themselves. In their case, neither the provisions of public policy nor specific development stimuli are enough to help them. There is a need for socially concerned individuals, who can mobilize them for development. The effectiveness of such individuals and organisations would depend on their realistic understanding of the complexity of cultural, economic, political and human factors which condemn the poor not only to economic deprivation but also to a many-sided incapacity to sustain their human dignity on their own.

The aim here is to set into perspective the social situation which the work of the CCS is supposed to address.

**2.2 Section One : geographical and demographic overview.**

**2.2.1 Position and size of the diocese.**

The Anglican Diocese of Kirinyaga covers the four administrative Districts of Kirinyaga, Isiolo, Marsabit and Moyale. The Diocese stretches from Kirinyaga District on the southern side of Mt Kenya (120 kilometres north west of Nairobi) and extends across the semi- arid and arid plains of Isiolo and Marsabit Districts to Moyale, a desert town on the northern border of Kenya and Ethiopia. Map 1 shows the geographical position of the Diocese.

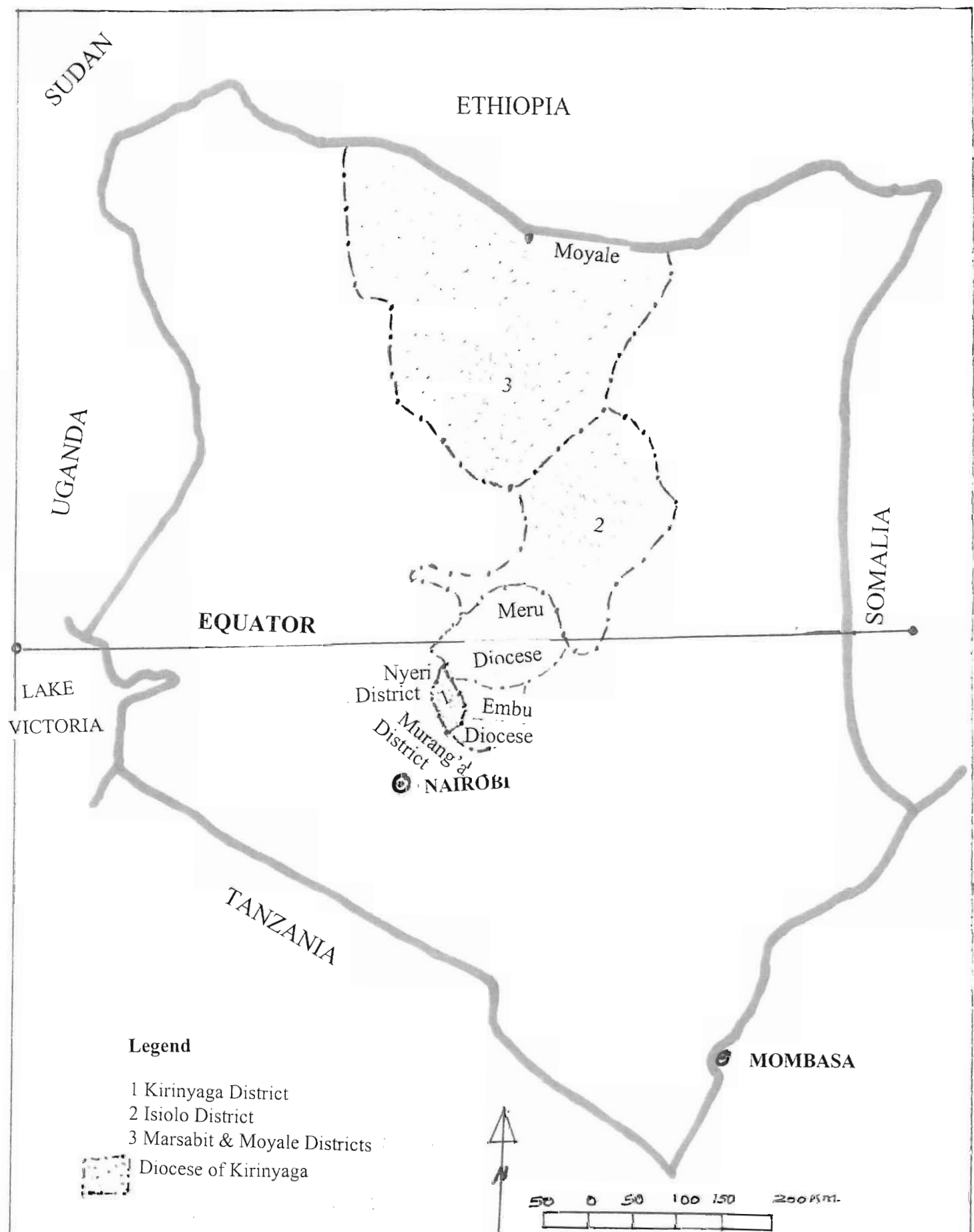
Kirinyaga District is the smallest of the four districts that comprise the Diocese. The District covers about 0.3 per cent of Kenya’s total area (Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001). Kirinyaga borders Nyeri and Murang’a Districts to the west, Mbeere to the south and Embu to the east. It is located between Latitudes 01<sup>01</sup> South and 0<sup>o</sup> 1 40<sup>0</sup> South and Longitudes 37<sup>01</sup> 1 East and 38<sup>0</sup> East (Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001).

The District covers an area of 1437 sq km. Mt Kenya Forest to the northern side of the District occupies 21.2 per cent of the total are of the District (Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001). Kirinyaga District has four administrative Divisions namely Gichugu, Ndia, Mwea and Municipality. The latter was recently carved out of the first three and it therefore does not appear in Table 2.1 or in Map 3.

Table 2.1 shows the area of Kirinyaga District by Divisions.

Map 1

Location of the Anglican Diocese of Kirinyaga



Source: Christian Community Services Office-Kerugoya.



**Table 2.1**  
**Area of Kirinyaga District by Division**

Division	Area Km <sup>2</sup>
Gichugu	214
Ndia	335
<b>Mwea</b>	<b>581</b>
*Forest area	307
Total	1437

Source: Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001

\*The forested area does not touch Mwea.

### **2.2.2 Topography and climate.**

The Kirinyaga District's landscape can be divided into three distinct relief features. The area between 1480m and 2000m above sea level forms most of Mwea Division and consists of gently rolling plains and isolated hills like Murinduko. It also forms part of Tana River basin.

The intermediate area between 2000m and 4800m above sea level consist of middle Gichugu and Ndia Divisions. The area rising 4800m to over 6800m consists of most of the high land and includes Mt Kenya Forest. The geological structure has influenced the pattern of river flows in the District in that where the rock has low resistance, erosion has resulted in the formation of river banks which are very steep and water falls which are deep ( Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001).

The rainfall pattern is typically equatorial, since the District is situated within the Highlands of Kenya and near the Equator. Thus, the District has two rainfall seasons, the long rains which occur from March to May and the short rains which occur from October to November. The area bordering Mt Kenya Forest to the north of the District receives most rainfall and is an area of high economic

potential. However, the rainfall decreases from the high altitudes on the slopes of Mt Kenya towards the semi-arid zones in the eastern part of Mwea Division which is an area of low economic potential.

The District’s ecological zones have been influenced by the climate. These zones may be divided into high potential, medium potential and marginal area, according to elevation and amount of rainfall. Map 2 presents simplified agro-ecological zones of the District. The whole of Mwea Division falls under the marginal cotton zone.

The evaporation from the soil and transpiration of the plants is lower in the upper zones than in the lower zones due to heavy rainfall and forest covering which reduce evaporation. The high rate of evaporation and transpiration in the lower zones, especially the Mwea Division, has resulted in low yields of crop production.

### 2.2.3 Administrative and political units.

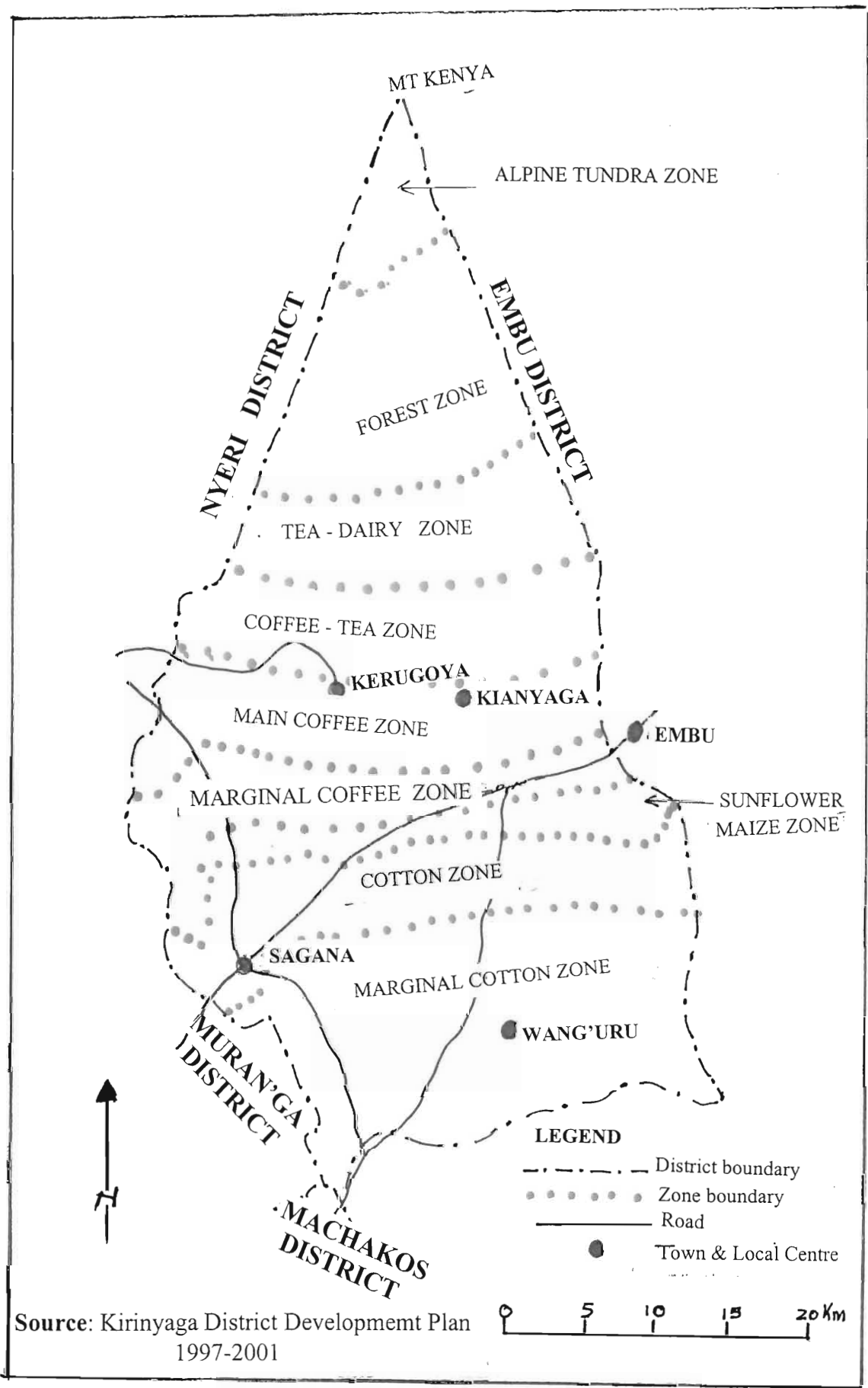
Table 2.2 shows administrative units by Division.

<b><u>Table 2.2</u></b>		
<b><u>Administrative units by Division</u></b>		
<u>Division</u>	<u>No of locations</u>	<u>No of sublocations</u>
Gichugu	6	23
Ndia	8	32
<b>Mwea</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>21</b>
Total	20	76

**Source:** Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001.

The Mwea Division is subdivided into six administrative locations comprising 76 sublocations. The sublocations are usually small administrative units manageable for development. The District has four constituencies namely Gichugu, Ndia, Mwea and Kerugoya/Kutus Municipality and two local authorities - Kirinyaga County Council and Kerugoya/Kutus Municipality. Politically, locations

Kirinyaga District : agro-ecological zones



also form the electoral wards for the Local Government (the County Council). Map 3 represents the three administrative Divisions of Kirinyaga, showing the position of Mwea in the District.

**2.2.4 Population size.**

The last census in Kenya was held in 1989. According to that census the District’s population was 391 512 people. It was growing at a rate of 2.88% per annum (Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001). The relatively low population growth can be attributed to increased family planning practices, due to the improvement of education, especially for women, and hence the preference for smaller families.

**2.2.5 Population: distribution and density.**

Table 2.3 shows the population distribution of the District by Division.

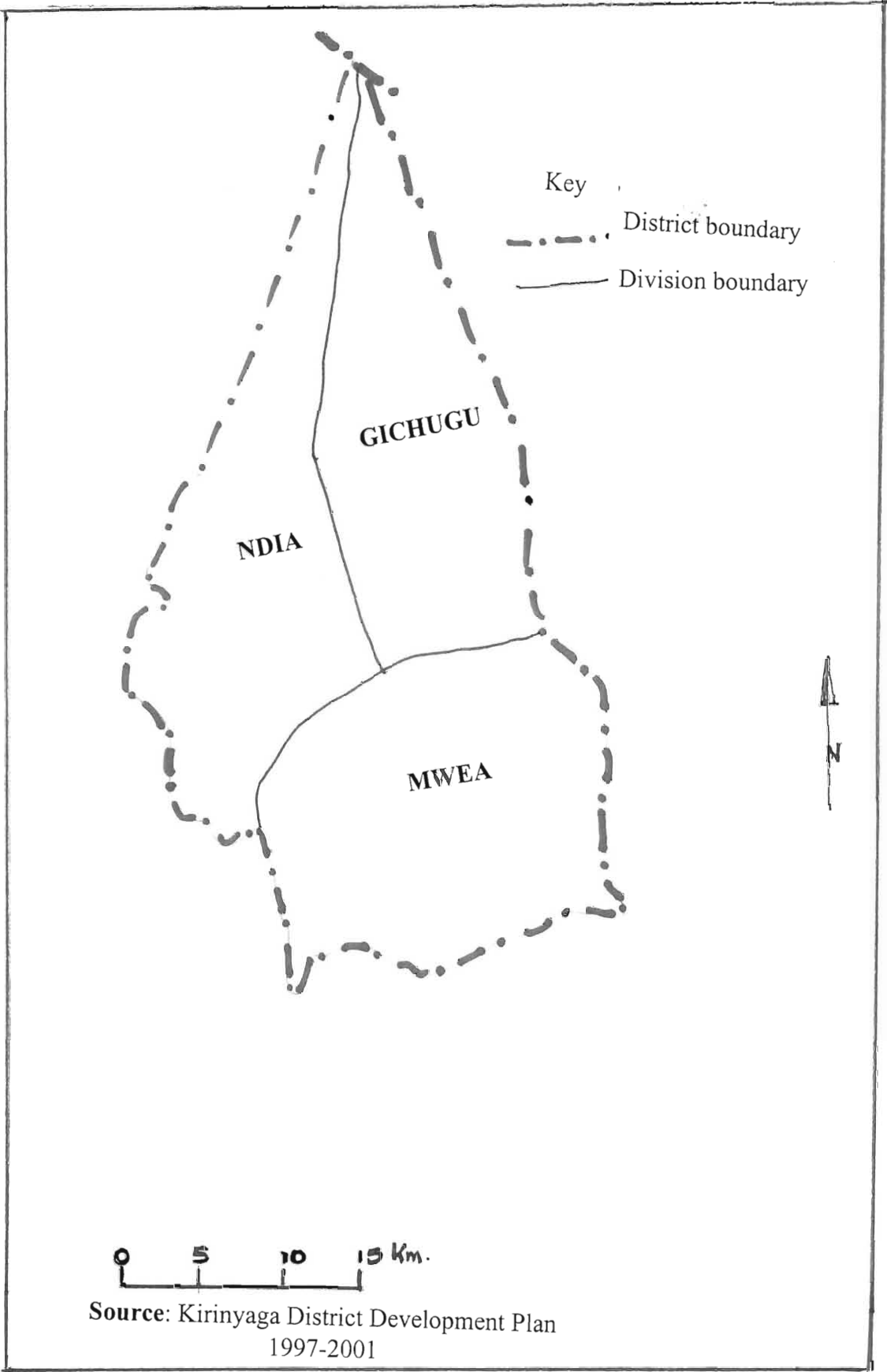
<b><u>Table 2.3</u></b>				
<b><u>Population distribution by Division</u></b>				
<b><u>Division</u></b>	<b><u>1989</u></b>	<b><u>1997</u></b>	<b><u>1999</u></b>	<b><u>2001</u></b>
Gichugu	108 052	135 812	143 863	152 782
Ndia	174 647	220 066	233 113	246 543
<b>Mwea</b>	<b>108 813</b>	<b>137 067</b>	<b>145 190</b>	<b>153 798</b>
Total	391 512	492 945	522 166	553 123.

Source: Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001.

In relation to its area, Mwea Division has less people if compared with other Divisions probably because of the unfavourable climate which is dry and hot most of the year.

Population density in the District was 272 persons per sq km in 1989 and is expected to increase to 367 by the year 2001 (Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001). Table 2.4 shows population density of Mwea Division in relation to the rest of the District.

Kirinyaga District : administrative boundaries



**Table 2.4**

**Population density by Division**

<u>Division</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2001</u>
Gichugu	505	635	672	714
Ndia	521	657	696	385
<b>Mwea</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>265</b>
Total	272	343	363	385

**Source:** Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001.

In the 1989 census the highest population density was found in Ndia Division (521 people ) and the lowest density was found in Mwea Division (187 people) which is the largest in area. This disparity can be attributed to the location of the District headquarters, Kerugoya, which has attracted people due to the availability of and search for employment opportunities. Better urban infrastructure has also attracted investors and the business community to the Division.

### **2.2.6 Urban population**

The District's urban population is about 15% (Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001).

Table 2.5 indicates the projected population of major urban and market centres.

**Table 2.5**

**Projected population of major urban and market centres**

Centre	1989		1997		1999		2001	
	Urban	*Catchment	Urban	Catchment	Urban	Catchment	Urban	Catchment
Kerugoya/Kutus	9585	3400	11793	4183	12345	4379	12898	4595
Sagana	2800	4200	3445	5168	3606	5410	3768	5652
<b>Wang'uru</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>2707</b>	<b>1353</b>	<b>2834</b>	<b>1417</b>	<b>2960</b>	<b>1470</b>
Baricho	900	5300	1101	6521	1159	6826	1211	7132
Kimunye	800	6200	984	7628	1030	7986	1076	8343
Kagumo	500	640	615	7845	644	8243	672	8612
Kianyaga	400	2450	492	2999	515	3156	538	3297
Total	7600	23290	21137	35697	22133	37417	23123	39101

**Source:** Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001.

\*Catchment indicates the peripheral population of the urban settlement.

Wang'uru, the biggest market centre in Mwea has over 2000 people and is projected to reach 3000 by the year 2001 (Kirinyaga District Development Plan 1997-2001). It has been promoted particularly by the introduction of horticulture in its catchment area. The boost of economic activities and especially horticulture-based industries is expected to enhance the growth of the town in the foreseeable future.

## **2.3 Section Two: Social Economic Analysis.**

### **2.3.1. Introduction**

In different societies, the poor are poor for different reasons. Not all of those reasons are purely economic. The explanations of conditions of the poor only in terms of their economic deprivation often fail to take into account the wider cultural, political and human problems which go hand in hand with poverty. The following are the socio-economic dynamics that we think manifest the poverty of the Mwea people.

### **2.3.2 Human settlement and its historical background.**

The official (Kenyan) definition of the term ‘human settlement’ adopted by the National Environment Secretariat is:

A human settlement is a built environment where human beings live.

It is an area where human beings can *provide themselves with housing and its components, and other supplies and services which human life needs to satisfy or create its own vitality* (emphasis mine). In as much as it is a place where man can settle himself to live, it can be a farm, a village, a small town or a city

(Environment Management Report, National Environment Secretariat, July 1978).

This definition is relevant because it echoes my concern for church involvement in sustainable development activities. In this regard, it is when people have decent housing and their basic human needs are met that we can say they are enjoying comprehensive wellbeing.

The history of the Mwea population is one of immigration from and assimilation with the neighbouring Districts, namely Embu, Mbeere, Murang’a and Nyeri. Thus the population of Mwea traces its existence from different districts with a diversity of cultural backgrounds. This emigration has had substantial political, social and economic implications. The most prominent among these consequences is, unlike in the rest of the District, the Mwea people do not owe nepotistic loyalties in their daily life. Clan nepotism is known to have been a hindrance to rapid development in the rest of the District.

Mwea has a severely limited area of good topsoil. Through the impact of population growth and other factors, the land has reached, or even exceeded its carrying capacity. The consequences are the emergence of extensive soil erosion in the Division and scarcity of portable water, wood and grass for fuel and other purposes.

### **2.3.3 Social dimensions of development.**

Despite the structural and economic reforms undertaken in Mwea and the District in general to



stimulate economic development, there are still people who are living in pathetic conditions in the Division. Those vulnerable groups are found in the villages which were set aside as common land during land consolidation and demarcation. Most of these people are poor and landless. They earn their living by cultivating subsistence crops e.g. maize, on the road reserves in addition to engaging in other illegal activities such as brewing traditional beers under unhygienic conditions.

There is another group of poor people found particularly in the rice growing scheme. These groups live as tenants in the Mwea Irrigation Scheme and grow rice which they sell to the National Irrigation Board. They occupy small congested plots in the settlement scheme. Since they are poor they have difficulties in affording their basic requirements like food, health and school fees for their children. The supply of the needs of this vulnerable group should be addressed through programmes to provide them with adequate incomes to meet these basic requirements.

The village economies are dependent primarily on agriculture, together with money sent home by the predominantly male migrant workers who work in the city and other urban centres in the country. The farming economy is organised within the framework of the compound family households. A typical household consists of a man, his wife (wives) and children.

#### **2.3.4 Rice growing<sup>2</sup>.**

Due to its impact on the poverty of the people of Mwea, rice growing needs a special comment at this juncture. A brief history of the project suffices:

The Mwea Irrigation Scheme was prepared by the MauMau freedom fighters in detention during the emergency. At the end of the emergency in the late 1950s, most detainees went home. A few were left behind and chose to produce rice for the Board on a commission basis. A majority of those original farmers have since died and their two-acre plots passed on to their children.

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<sup>2</sup>For a detailed account on this subject, see chapter 4, paragraph 4.6.3.

Rice is grown under the umbrella of the National Irrigation Board (NIB) which is a parastatal charged with the development of rice growing in the country. It was formed during the colonial administration. Because of this historical background it seems that some of the rules and regulations governing its operation tend to be punitive in nature.

The Mwea rice farmers and the NIB at the time of this study, were locked in a fight over the rice paddy. On the one hand, the farmers believe that they own the paddy and should only pay the NIB for services it renders. The state corporation, on the other hand, believes it owns the land on which the rice is grown. Accordingly the NIB has contracted the farmers to produce the crop on land it owns and with services it provides. The NIB also owns the canals through which irrigation water is delivered to the farms. It supplies fertilizers, seed and chemicals to the farmers. It collects paddy for processing and marketing. The farmers allege that the farm inputs and services from the NIB are expensive and leave the farmer unable to break even after the sale of the crop. In addition to poor marketing, the cereal faces unfair competition from cheap imports, and the poor marketing which has led to low prices. The NIB then deducts its costs and hands over the remainder to the farmer.

The farmers have always felt inadequately compensated in this 'contract'. They are not consulted. The farmers have always complained about the charges levied on them by the National Irrigation Board. When the NIB refuses to pay farmers it has contracted to produce seed or review payment for rice farmers, the parastatal (government) cannot be said to be tackling poverty. It is the onus of the government and its institutions to alleviate poverty.

For many years, the NIB used brutal force to keep the farmers silent. But this is no longer acceptable in the present situation of legal and human rights. Perhaps because of its violent punitive background, the NIB has never found it necessary to employ good management practices in the way rice is grown there. When all is said and done, the rice farmers are among the poorest group in the District in spite of their hard work in the paddies.

### **2.3.5 Employment.**

A job meets several human needs. It provides income, regulates daily activity, establishes a sense of identity, and offers opportunities for social interactions and meaningful life experiences. Employment is, therefore, crucial for the fulfilled life of a human being. Thus the kinds of jobs available and opportunities for creating jobs within communities have enormous implications for the individuals who live there or come there to work.

A series of descriptors such as educational level, age and gender, helps to characterize the labour force of a locality. The age structure of the community is also an important aspect of the labour market. For instance, is there an abundance of labour at the entry level? Like many rural areas, the young unwilling to work in the farms, work with minimal wages and no benefit, is a teething problem in Mwea. In addition, since there are no industries, skills acquired and training opportunities are non-existent in Mwea.

One of the most significant changes in the nature of the rural labour force is the increasing participation of women. Rural women have traditionally participated less in the formal labour market than have the urban women. This has been in part because of the importance of women's unpaid economic activities, including caring for the livestock, helping with the crops, or maintaining the homes. Changes in the economy have made these traditional practices less effective. Financial pressures have also increased the need for women to seek cash incomes. For these reasons, women in Mwea are found in small scale businesses for consumer goods, vending, knitting and sewing, tie and dye, etc. They are also involved in merry-go-rounds<sup>3</sup> and other informal economic activities.

### **2.3.6 General overview of the economy.**

Rural communities are not self-sufficient. Generally, they are active in all the four phases of a nation's economy: (1) extracting resources, (2) producing, (3) distributing, and (4) servicing.

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<sup>3</sup>For further treatment of the merry-go-round, see chapter 4.2.2

Extracting resources refers to the collection of the natural resources such as mining (e.g., extraction of quarry stones), fishing, harvesting crops or clearing the bush. Production includes any process that converts the resource into usable goods or service - what we sometimes today refer to as a value-added process. Distribution includes the business and transportation networks needed to move natural resources, products, and services to where each can be consumed.

In Mwea the majority of people still employ human energy in these economic activities. However, animal traction is emerging as an ecologically sustainable means of increasing agricultural production. Animal traction allows nutrients to be recycled and soil fertility is maintained through the use of animal dung as well as manure and compost residues. Oxen (castrated bulls) are dominant draught animals especially for pulling ploughs. Donkeys are suitable for pack transport and for pulling carts in relatively flat areas like Mwea. The animal traction is thereby reducing human drudgery and improving the quality of life.

Finally, services include activities needed to support the other three functions and provide for quality of life. Examples include banks, insurance companies, recreation etc. In Mwea there is only one banking institution. There is not a single insurance service operating from the Division. Consequently, people have to travel to the urban centres outside the Division such as Kerugoya or Embu for these services.

## **2.3.7 Social and economic infrastructure.**

### **2.3.7.1 Health facilities.**

There is only one hospital in Mwea and that is non-governmental; 21 dispensaries, five of which are non-governmental; two private maternity homes and three outreach clinics which are non-governmental. A more comprehensive account of this aspect of development is discussed in chapter five of this study.

### **2.3.7.2 Education facilities.**

Mwea has 60 primary schools of which 14 are sponsored by the church. The Anglican Diocese sponsors five of them. There are 14 secondary schools in the Division, ten of which are church sponsored. Again the Anglican church sponsors six of the secondary schools. A detailed account of the education situation is found in chapter six of this study.

### **2.3.7.3 Other aspects of welfare.**

(i) Electricity: Electricity distribution covers a number of trading centres in the Division.

(ii) Cooperative facilities: Unlike other Divisions of the District, Mwea does not have a strong cooperative movement. This is probably because most of the cooperative societies are dealing with the marketing of coffee and dairy activities which are not relevant to Mwea.

(iii) Informal Sector: The informal economy includes economic activities that are not regulated by laws, such as an exchange of labour for goods. Such an activity is generally not monitored. The main activities include general retail businesses for consumer goods and agricultural inputs, the furniture industry (both wood and metal fabrication), technical trades (motor vehicle mechanics and home appliances repairs) etc.

(iv) Nutritional status : Diseases such as kwashiakor, marasmus, anaemia and vitamin A deficiency are rampant in Mwea. A detailed account of disease incidence is given in paragraph 5.1.2 (iii) of this study.

(v) Adult education (literacy): The adult illiteracy is relatively high, especially among men. Seasonal agricultural activities affect the enrolment for literacy courses as well as inadequate facilities and a scarcity of teachers. We shall deal more fully with this topic under paragraph 6.3 (iii) of this thesis.

(vi) Family Planning : The Division has many organisations which provide family planning services e.g. the Ministry of Health, the Family Planning Association of Kenya (F.P.A.K.), the Christian Health Association of Kenya (CHAK), *Maendeleo ya Wanawake*, the CCS and private practitioners. A fuller account in this area is covered under paragraph 5.1.2 of the study.

(vii) Supporting development agencies : The following supporting development agencies are

evident in Mwea:

1. The Divisional Development Committee.

This meets four times in a year. It is the supreme organ on matters pertaining to development. It approves development projects in the Division and, where necessary, recommends them to the District Development Committee for funding. The Committee's membership is drawn from all government departments represented in the Division, local political leaders such as Members of Parliament, councillors and party leaders as well as representatives of the NGOs working within the Division. Some prominent individuals are co-opted to represent various interests, for instance the women's organisations. However, the committee is dominated by men.

2. Locational and Sublocational Development Committees

These meet as often as four or more times a year to set the agenda for the Divisional body. The membership is drawn as for the Divisional Development Committee above.

3. The Divisional Land Control Board

This is composed of 7-12 permanent members and meets monthly under the chairmanship of the District Officer. Its main function is to regulate land issues especially sales and mortgages. Membership is drawn mainly from prominent individuals who are knowledgeable in local land issues. They are appointed by the administration. The board, like the other two committees, is male-dominated.

(viii) Voluntary Agencies:

The Division does not have many voluntary agencies. The few organisations operating there have helped in developing some specific factors. The major ones are:

1. The Kenya Rural Enterprise Programme (KREP).

It started its operations in 1994 and is mainly involved in small sale credit schemes. At the time of this study it was not clear how many people had benefitted from this organisation or the total loan disbursement so far.

2. *Maendeleo ya Wanawake*.

It started operating in 1985. It runs a community based distribution of contraceptives project which supplies non-clinical methods of family planning in the Division. It has trained several Community Based Distributors.

### 3. The Organic Management Network (OMN).

It attempts to promote better farming and animal husbandry by using only organic manure. It discourages farmers from using artificial fertilizers.

### 4. African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF).

This supports groups in Mwea in the making of mosquito nets and selling them at affordable prices.

### 5. World Vision International.

This supports women's groups in Mwea, especially in educating children from poor families.

### 6. National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK).

Through its Population and Family Life Education Programme, the NCCCK is involved in the dissemination of material concerning population and family life issues. The NCCCK conducts courses, seminars and workshops, lectures and discussions for many target groups, pre-primary, primary, secondary and post secondary teachers, youth in and out of school, married couples, the clergy, secular and church leaders of all categories, the disabled etc.

### 7. The Christian Community Services (CCS).

It is involved in development activities in areas of health, education, agriculture and human resource development. It is the subject of study in this project.

## 2.4 Conclusion.

This chapter, has looked at the geographical setting of the research area. Section one, analysed the social, economic and ecological situation of the area. We have seen that Mwea is an area of low rainfall, resulting in low economic activities. The population density is low as compared to the rest of the District. In section two, we noted the socio-economic status of the area. The village economies depend on agriculture. Due to a lack of industries, unemployment is high. Training opportunities are basically non-existent. The net result of all this is poverty in the communities. The Church's response to this situation of poverty has been the creation of the Christian Community Services department to undertake development of the communities. The CCS, among other development agencies, is attempting to support the Mwea people in reducing poverty through various interventions. The aim in this chapter was to sketch the background that informs why

the CCS operates and follows a particular mode of operation in the area of study. The following chapter, traces the genesis and the vision of the CCS, study its organisational structure, locate its theological underpinnings and then discuss its *modus operandi*.



## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. The Genesis, Vision and *Modus Operandi* of the CCS

#### 3.1 Introduction.

The previous chapter looked at the geographical and social situation of Mwea. The aim was to understand the area in which the CCS operates and why the organisation follows a particular mode of operation. How and why was the CCS started? How is the organisation suited to the work of development and what is its mission statement? These are the concerns in the present chapter. The task in the present chapter is to trace the genesis of the CCS, discuss its organisational structure, and examine its mission and vision. Finally, the organisation's *modus operandi* will be explored with the intention to evaluate it later.

#### 3.2 Background information.

The Anglican Diocese of Mt Kenya East was established in 1975. The Kirinyaga Diocese was created when the bigger Diocese of Mt Kenya East was subdivided in 1990 to form the two Dioceses of Kirinyaga and Embu. In 1997 the Diocese of Kirinyaga was further subdivided to create the two Dioceses of Kirinyaga and Meru. The former comprises the administrative Districts of Kirinyaga, Isiolo, Marsabit and Moyale.

Due to the general poverty of the people and, in particular, the high infant mortality rate, the then Bishop of the Diocese of Mt. Kenya East, The Rt. Rev. Dr. David Gitari and other Diocesan leaders felt the need to invite a team of Christian Organisation Research Advisory Trust (CORAT) experts to do a baseline study of the causes of the malady. CORAT is a non-governmental-organisation (NGO) with international reputation and expertise that facilitates such services for other NGOs.

The survey confirmed the high mortality rate and revealed that it was due to poor nutrition, poor access to health-care facilities, and infectious and immunizable childhood diseases related to poor environmental sanitation. The CORAT report also identified various community needs in agriculture and other socio-economic spheres. The findings were presented to the Diocese with a

recommendation that it was necessary to start a primary health-care programme.

The Diocese adopted the CORAT report in 1978 and in the following year the Christian Services Community (CCS) was founded to address the problem of child mortality in particular and poverty in general.

According to its Mission Statement, the CCS was to :

empower the poor, marginalised and destitute communities  
within Mt Kenya East Diocese to be in control of their own  
development in a holistic and sustainable way (CCS Mission Statement).

The Mission Statement proposes that the CCS should carry out the above mandate through:

- (i) sustainable food production and food security,
- (ii) community -based health services,
- (iii) environment conservation,
- (iv) social welfare and economic activity,
- (v) community development education,
- (vi) relief services to the affected communities.

The approach of the CCS of Mt Kenya East to development has since been adopted by the whole Anglican Church in Kenya, comprising 28 Dioceses as a model of church involvement in development activities.

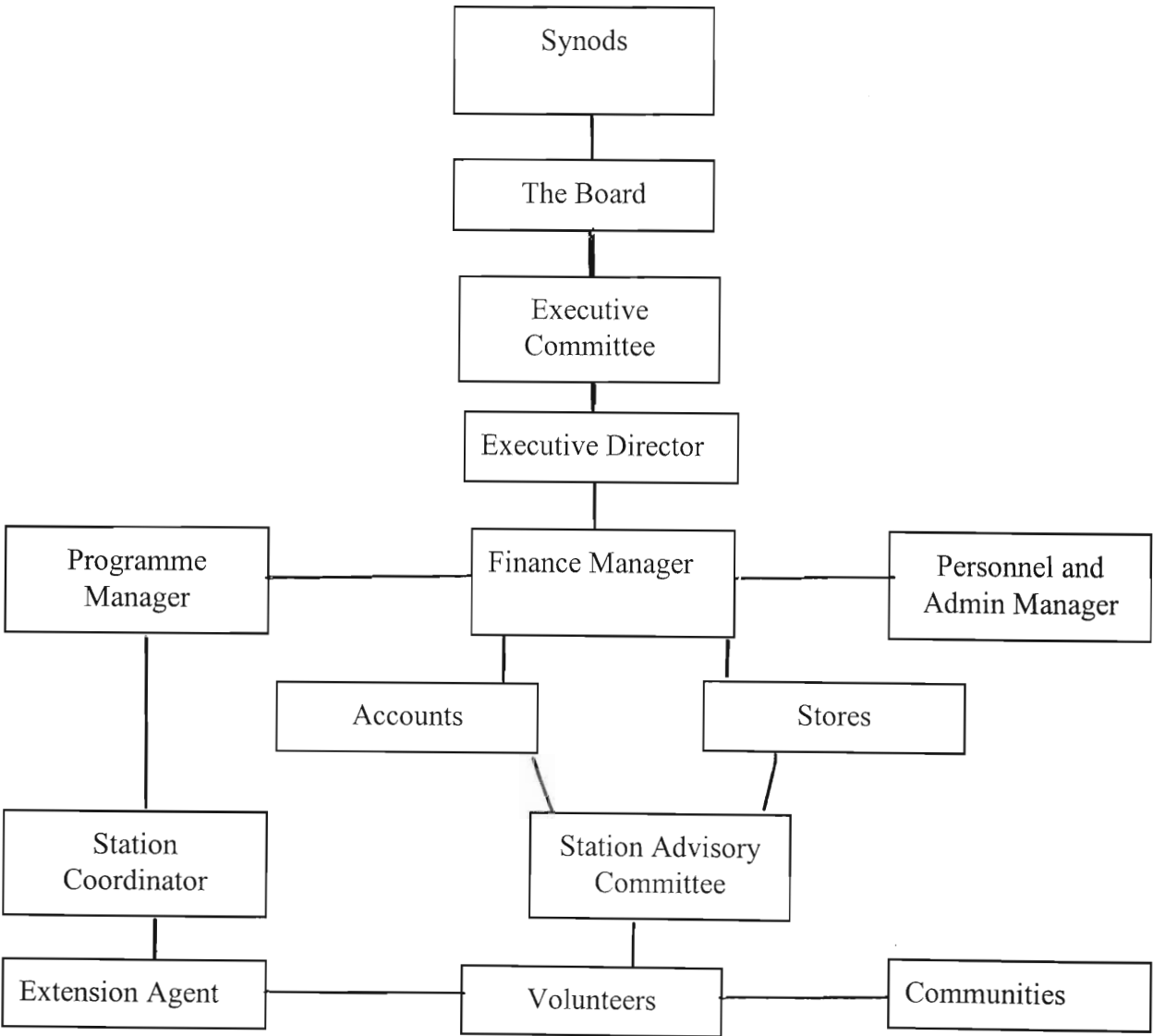
### **3.3 The organisational structure of the CCS.**

The CCS is run by a Board of Christian Community Services (BCCS) which is comprised of five members from each of the Kirinyaga, Embu, Mbeere and Meru Synods and the Executive Director. For easy governance, there is an Executive Committee of the Board of Directors which meets from time to time to address issues of governance, policy and administration. For day to day operations of the company, there is a Management Committee made up of the Executive Director, the

Programmes Manager, the Personnel & Administration Manager and the Finance Manager. The other important legal body is the Station Development Committee positioned at each of the CCS Extension Stations. It is responsible for the programmes of the CCS within the station catchment area.

The chart below shows the organisational structure of the CCS.

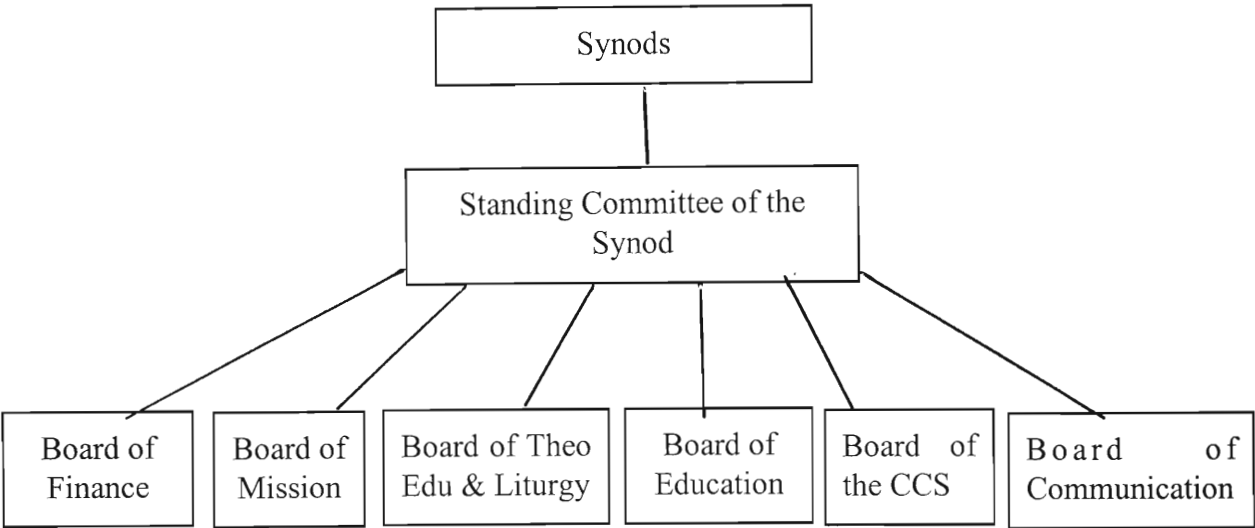
**Organisational structure of the CCS**



**3.4 The organisational structure of the Kirinyaga Diocese.**

The CCS is sufficiently organised to meet the challenges of the activities it has chosen to engage in and it does so with the guidance of the Diocesan Synod. Below is the organisational structure of the Diocese of Kirinyaga showing the functional location of the CCS Board.

**Organisational structure of the Diocese of Kirinyaga showing the functional location of the Board of the CCS.**



**3.5 The CCS Mission and Vision.**

The CCS Mission Statement and the CCS reports to the Synod of Kirinyaga held on 3rd to 5th December 1998 indicate that the existence of the CCS and its purpose are clear in the minds of the key people, that is, the Synod, the Bishop, the CCS staff and senior members of the staff in the Diocese.

However, it seems that this is not true in the case of other stakeholders, as came out in the course of this research, especially with regards to the clergy (please see chapter six of this study). For this reason, it seems important to me that the ‘theological underpinnings and the call of CCS’, should

be documented and incorporated in the Diocesan theological thinking of all stakeholders. Such a step may minimise the false expectations and hopes of the communities in the Diocese that might be tempted to perceive the CCS as a charitable organisation in the sense of a Father Christmas.

### **3.6 The CCS legal status.**

Although essentially an NGO, the CCS was registered in March 1982 as a ‘company limited by guarantee and without share capital’. In view of the mushrooming of NGOs of doubtful credibility in the country, this registration gave the CCS acceptability to the donors and other partners.

The CCS has 27 objects in her Memorandum and Articles of Association<sup>4</sup> showing what the CCS could undertake to do. However, the interest of this study is only in the organisation’s development activities in the Mwea Division in particular and in the Diocese of Kirinyaga in general.

In an evaluation of the CCS done in December 1987, CORAT recommended:

... that the Board develop a policy document for CCS to guide in understanding the reasons for which CCS exists. This may best be done in form of a constitution. It should clearly articulate the purpose and theological underpinnings and call of CCS. It should include a statement of purpose which is concise and simple, yet conveys the full sense of CCS calling (CORAT Evaluation Report of the CCS November 1997:13).

At the time of this research, it was not clear if the CCS had implemented this important recommendation.

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<sup>4</sup>In the course of this research, I was not able to access all the organisation’s files. I am, nevertheless, of the opinion that the lack of actual access to the Articles of Association does not in any way affect the mission of critical evaluation of the work of the CCS in terms of development.

### **3.7 The CCS programmes.**

These are carried out within three departments of the CCS, namely Rural Development, Community Health and Social Services. I turn to the activities of each of the departments in chapters four and five.

### **3.8 Funding.**

The CCS depends 100% on donor funding for staff sustenance and implementation of programme activities. In my view the organisation is, therefore, threatened not only by donor fatigue but also by global economic trends.

The *Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe (EZE)* and the Bread for the World (*Brot für die Welt*) remain the main donors with a current working agreement extending to the year 2000. Other partners providing a one-off funding or long term funding include the Anglican Church of Canada; Trinity Church, New York; Tear Fund; Christian Aid -UK; Action by Churches Together, Geneva, and Church World Service, Nairobi.

### **3.9 Towards self-reliance.**

In recognition of the organisation's vulnerability because it is dependent on external funding, the Board of Directors formed a Task-Force on Sustainability to study and recommend possible interventions. The Task-Force has since made initial proposals [and suggestions] including:-

- (i) The establishment of a communication bureau at Kerugoya (implemented).
- (ii) The establishment of health clinics at all extension stations (implemented at Wang'uru).
- (iii) The establishment of income-generating training facilities at all extension stations  
(implemented at Wang'uru).
- (iv) The establishment of self-sustaining projects like agro-vet shops, horticultural farming etc.  
(partially implemented at Wang'uru).

### **3.10 The CCS theology and *modus operandi*.**

Addressing the 1st Ordinary Session of the Synod of Kirinyaga held from 17th-21st August 1992 at St Andrew's Bible College, Kabare, Bishop Gitari said "Because of our theological conviction that the Gospel must touch every aspect of human life, we established the Board of Christian Community Services..." ( Bishop's charge to the 1st Ordinary Session of the Synod of Kirinyaga). In the charge the Bishop emphasized the importance of the gospel embracing the whole human being, that is, the material (body), the spiritual (the soul), the social and intellectual aspects of life. In this context, the above quotation seems to point to the core theological underpinning of the Christian Community Services of Mt Kenya East. However, there are no documents that formally articulate the theological thinking of the organisation. Consequently, I had to turn to Bishop David Gitari (personal interview with him on 9th February 1999 at his study) and his writings, founder bishop of the CCS, lay co-founders and the CCS officers, to seek their insights that led to the inception of the organisation. From the information gathered we then sought to give theological insights that inform the organisation. The following theological themes seem to inform and undergird the CCS operations.

#### **3.10.1 The doctrine of creation.**

Gitari observes that the "cultural mandate [in creation] is the call for humanity to develop and unfold the creation as the image-bearer of God" (1996:122). Gitari argues that unlike the absent landlord, God is interested in what he created (1996:122). Subduing and ruling are one facet of the image of God - hence an essential part of what it means to be human. Our solidarity with creation should serve to keep us from oppressive rulership. Thus humanity should see itself as God's vice regent, responsible to God for stewardship of creation. Proper stewardship of creation brings liberation for nature and humanity because in it we are fulfilling our God-given roles. A similar view of holistic stewardship of the creation is echoed by Anderson when he says "To say that 'the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof' (Ps. 24:1) is to affirm that no area of life escapes the unconditional religious concern that informs our creaturely existence" (1994:1). This holistic view of sustaining creation is further supported by Dayton when he observes that it

“is at once spiritual, physical and social: Rev.21:1-4; 22-24; 11: 15b” (1987:52-61). Thus stewardship is a form of social responsibility and has an ethical demand: the poor have equal rights to God’s resources (Deut.15: 8-9). In this light, the CCS is the church’s arm to achieve the vision of holistic stewardship of the created world.

### 3.10.2 The doctrine of the human being.

The doctrine that humanity is created in the image of God means that it is given responsibility to have dominion over all creation. When the image is obscured, then dominion is impaired. When the image is restored then the dominion is fulfilled. Thus since the human being is created in the image of God, we should co-operate with God in caring for what God has created. This implies that human beings are not mere spectators but fellow-workers with God (cf. 1Cor.3:9). In that connection, Suggit (1993:19) says that the creation of human beings means that they share in God’s ongoing work of creation. Langefeld puts it even more succinctly:

From a Christian point of view human dignity is rooted in our creation in the image of God. This means that we reflect the image of God when we are free to exercise *responsibility and creativity with others in shaping of our personal, social cultural and religious worlds* (emphasis mine). (1996:104).

In the eyes of the CCS founders, the organisation’s development activities are shaping many a people’s personal and social worlds.

### 3.10.3 The doctrine of incarnation.

The basic mission of Jesus and the central theme of his teaching is that, in his own person and work, the kingdom of God is already present in great power among men and women. It is precisely as a follower of Jesus that the Church is involved in the world. This involvement is no addendum to the church’s ‘proper’ task, but an essential part of it. By virtue of her nature, the Church stands in relation to the world; she carries on her shoulders all the distress and anxiety, all decency but



also the radiant hope of expectation of the human race. In other words, Christ is incarnate in the Church. According to the logic of incarnation, the Church will seek always to strengthen her life by appropriate visible structures (Dulles 1974:186). Cochrane et al put it more succinctly:

Indeed, the theological meaning of his incarnation is bound up with narratives of his life we know as the gospels in such a way as to make Jesus' ministry a sign of hope for all who otherwise have little grounds for it (1991:63).

In this context, Jesus is perceived to have entered into the society to be with the people. Today he challenges us to go where the people are. The CCS development interventions among the communities are a concrete response to that challenge.

#### **3.10.4 The kingdom of God.**

The kingdom of God is one of the most debated themes in the study of the Gospels. For instance Norman Perrin in his superb work, *The Kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus*, examines well over 30 scholars. It is however, probably not disputed that a careful reading and examination of the Synoptic Gospels point out that the kingdom of God was central to the whole mission of Jesus, his proclamation and his healing ministry in particular.

The teaching of the Synoptic Gospels implies that, though God's kingdom will be fully realized in the future, the person and ministry of Jesus on earth has already made God's kingdom a reality. Thus Mark tells us that after John the Baptist was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mk. 1:14-15). Jesus saw himself as the one in whom the kingdom was already being realized. His task was not only to announce that "the kingdom of God was at hand", but also to inaugurate the kingdom. The much discussed saying in Matt.12:28, "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you," (cf. Lk. 11:20) not only puts his mighty works within the context of the kingdom, but also indicates quite clearly that these mighty works are nothing than the active presence of this kingdom.

Before Easter and Pentecost, the kingdom of God was limited to the person of Jesus and to those who had direct personal contact with him (Ladd 1980:271). But even in this context, Ladd rightly observes that not everyone in Palestine could enjoy the blessings of the kingdom (1980:271).

After Easter and Pentecost, the kingdom of God working through Jesus' disciples was to make an impact upon the rest of the world. When Jesus said that they were to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13-14), he meant that the world was to feel the influence of the kingdom of God (Ladd 1980:303).

The mission of the Church is none other than the mission of Christ. In other words, the mission of the Church is to proclaim the kingdom of God. The mission of God is always particular and specific, never nebulous. God always intervenes in human affairs, because human history is the arena of the divine activity. Thus the mission of the church is a manifestation (though incomplete) of the kingdom of God through its proclamation as well as social service and action. She performs good works, that God prepared in advance for her in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:10). The good works and actions point back to the kingdom that has already come and look forward to the Kingdom that is yet to come.

Jesus demonstrated the arrival of the kingdom of God by works of mercy and deeds. The Church is called today to a similar integration of words and deeds. In a spirit of humility we are to preach and teach, minister to the sick, feed the hungry, care for the prisoners, help the disadvantaged and deliver the oppressed (Cassidy 1991:255). The CCS sees itself as a partner and co-worker in extending God's kingdom to the communities.

### **3.10.5 The Psalms.**

The Psalms repeatedly raise the issue of poverty. Many of them are petitions (e.g., Psalm 6) made by those who turn to Yahweh seeking deliverance from their troubles. Such petitions clearly show the general expectation that Yahweh will be the protector of the weak and unprotected, particularly strangers, widows and orphans (Pixley & Boff 1989:45).

The work of the CCS in the communities, particularly with the poor and marginalised is a concrete illustration of how the Church can become the hope for the poor.

### **3.10.6 The ministry of the prophets.**

In Israel, the prophets kept alive the tradition of Yahweh as the God who took the side of the poor in a society dominated by the ruling class dependent on the court (Pixley & Boff 1989:41).

For instance, Amos showed how the love of luxury was making a mockery of their religious devotion to Yahweh. For Amos, the poor were trampled under by the wealthy who were crushing the weak, forcing them to give them grain (5:11), defrauding the poor, being hard on the destitute (4:11). No justice was executed, especially when dealing with the poverty-stricken (5:15). There was, therefore, on the one hand, great poverty and, on the other hand, indescribable luxury. The rich were lolling on their ivory divans, sprawling on their couches, dining off fresh lamb and fatted veal (6:4), lapping wine by the bowlful and using for ointment the best oil (6:6). Probably in our contemporary language, there was a vast income gap. Some were living in slums but the rich owned besides their permanent homes, winter and summer houses as well (3:15). This situation was unbearable to the just and loving God. The Lord was going to punish the nation and those in power for the apostasy from him and for all the iniquities towards their fellow-men.

Micah defended the poor in the name of Yahweh. He saw the root of the problem in the ruling class of Jerusalem, with corrupt princes, judges, priests and prophets (3:9-12). The dispossessed peasants will take over the lands at present held by the landowners through force, and the rulers will lament that they are now the despoiled with “no one to measure out in the community of Yahweh” (2:1-5).

Hosea denounced the way religion was being used as a deceitful cloak for the accumulation of riches. Yahwehism of the ruling class was at bottom nothing other than worship of Baal, the god who brought rain and material abundance. Religion had become prostitution; its rites carried out not for love but for gain (Pixley & Boff 1989:43).

Isaiah hoped for a king who would defend the poor with integrity (11:1-9), that is, he looked forward to a society in which one class would not exploit another.

This brief look at the great prophets of Israel shows how each, in his own different way, kept alive the tradition of Yahweh as God of the poor. In our days, it is the same righteous God, with the same unchangeable divine laws of love and justice with whom we have to deal. The advocacy role of the CCS and its development activities with the poor are concrete evidence that the Church has continued in this prophetic tradition.

### **3.10.7 The ministry of the Apostles.**

The choosing of the seven deacons in Acts 6, implies that the Apostles were involved in relief services, besides preaching and praying. The Apostles handed over the social welfare ministry to the deacons. The Church through the CCS activities continues to participate in that ministry especially during natural calamities such as drought, floods and other crises when she gives relief services to the community.

### **3.10.8 Jesus' "model of growth".**

Luke tells us that "Jesus grew both in body and in wisdom, gaining favour with God and men" (2:52 GNB). Here Luke mentions four spheres or dimensions in which Jesus developed: stature, wisdom, favour with God and favour with men. If we were to translate these four spheres into contemporary thought, we might say that Jesus showed physical development (body), mental development (wisdom), spiritual development (favour with God), and social development (favour with men). As Moffitt has put it, the four categories meet all human needs (1987:235). Thus from a Christian perspective, Jesus 'growth' becomes the role model of human development. The Church then should participate in creating a conducive environment in which this growth can take place, especially for the poor. However, this kind of "exegesis" might not be acceptable to some people. Nevertheless, in my opinion, what is important is the 'truths' revealed in the passage making good sense of the biblical message such that the believing community is challenged to

be “the salt of the world”. The community then responds in a concrete manner to that challenge. The CCS interventions are aimed at that goal.

### **3.10.9 The Apostle Paul’s mission.**

Finally, in consideration of the themes that inform and shape the theological understanding of the CCS, a casual look at Paul’s treatment of the issue at hand, that is, development, will surface. Paul does not seem to have any dilemma regarding his particular call to preach the gospel and its social content. For instance, it is noteworthy several times Paul departed from his task of verbal proclamation to the task of carrying out missions of relief (see Rom. 15:25; cf Acts 11:27-30; 13:2). Thus, though the Apostle sees himself as set apart as the ‘apostle to the Gentiles’, concerned primarily with proclaiming the good news of the gospel, he is still concerned with the physical needs of the Jewish church community. His accounts found in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, as well as in Galatians 1:7-10 and Romans 15:25-27, are clear testimonies to that effect. As Vinay and Sugden (1987:58) have observed, the subject of giving financially for others is found throughout Paul’s letters. He also exhorts the people of God to work so that they can give. The activities of the Christian Community Services among the poor would be seen as a response to Paul’s challenge to Christians for the concern of the less advantaged in the community.

### **3.11 Summary.**

This chapter traced the genesis of the CCS. The organisation was established to address a concrete situation of child mortality in particular and poverty in general. The CCS adopted the ‘empowerment paradigm’ as its strategy to carry out its mandate. In this regard, the organisation has accumulated a lot of experience. The CCS is, therefore, sufficiently organised to meet these objectives. In addition, the praxis of the CCS is theologically motivated by the ‘need of the gospel to touch every aspect of human life’.

However, the founders of the CCS (with exception of Bishop Gitari) are not professional theologians. Rather they are lay people who ‘theologised’ their understanding of the scriptures

and came out with the vision - the CCS. Thus in order to discern theological motifs that inform the CCS, I have used a 'less technical approach', that is, unlike the conventional exegetical approach to biblical themes, the themes were allowed to address the context. This is perhaps what Gutierrez (1983) calls 'reading the bible from below'.

Thus, in this chapter an attempt was made to follow a theological and biblical argument on affluence and poverty in a deliberate but faithful interpretation. But as Nurnberger has put it "As in all cases where the Bible is consulted we end up with the dilemma of the limited applicability of our own findings to our own situation" (1978:171). However, the attempt to give the theological rationale of the CCS by drawing from both the Old Testament and New Testament perspectives, whereby God is seen to be actively involved in the sphere of human life. While the CCS itself has not drawn up such rationale, I believe that it acts in accordance with what I have drawn up. In this light, the goal of the CCS to bring about social transformation should, therefore, be seen to model the good news so as to provide the Church with the opportunity both to respond to the commands of the gospel and to live in obedience to it. In my opinion, the CCS model of development gives the church a unique ecclesiology, i.e. one that has been articulated largely not by arm-chair professional theologians, but by ordinary people in a concrete context.

The CCS programmes are carried out through its three departments of Rural Development, Community Health and Social Welfare. The next chapter outlines the CCS development activities through the Rural Development department.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **4. The CCS Rural Development Department : Food Increase Programme**

#### **4.1 Introduction.**

Food security is a most important issue facing the population of rural Kenya, not least in the Mwea Division of Kirinyaga Diocese. The rate of population increase in rural Kenya is high and the size of farms is constantly being reduced. It is impossible for the relatively small urban sector to provide employment for more than a small proportion of rural people in the foreseeable future. This means that the solution to the food security problem must be found in the countryside. A requirement of any solution is that it should raise the standard of living of all rural people including the poorest, and that it should be sustainable, which means that any new system must be in harmony with the environment.

In the previous chapter, we saw that CCS was established as the church's response to a situation of poverty in the Diocese. How is the CCS addressing the problem? The task of this chapter is to chronicle and evaluate poverty interventions of the organisation in Mwea. The organisation has adopted a 'Food Increase Programme' to alleviate poverty among the community. Firstly I shall look at crop production and secondly at livestock production as strategies to reduce poverty. These two economic sub-sectors form the core of the CCS strategic interventions to combat poverty not only at Mwea Division but also all over the CCS operational area. The concern here, however, is the CCS's interventions to combat poverty in the Division. So far it appears that the CCS has targeted the increase of food production at Mwea Division with enthusiasm.

#### **4.2 The background and purpose of the Food Increase Programme - (FIP).**

In 1984/85, there was a severe drought and famine in Kenya. After the drought, early in 1986, the CCS, in conjunction with Bread for the World in Germany, carried out a study on the food situation in the Diocese of Mt Kenya East. The report recommended a 'Food Increase Programme'. Six agricultural extension stations were to be established to implement the project in the marginal areas of the Diocese, of which Mwea is one. The aims and objectives of the FIP

were:

- (i) to strengthen and upgrade community knowledge on crop production, animal production, irrigation and water management, environmental conservation, sustainable agriculture, food storage etc. as they relate to food security;
- (ii) to increase development awareness pertaining to self-reliance on food supply and marketing among the rural communities through organised self-help community groups (women and youth);
- (iii) to improve the health of the community by providing food security and safe water in all the areas;
- (iv) to train local volunteer workers and contact farmers, community animal health attendants and *Walimu wa Ukulima* (farmer teachers) to serve as resource persons in their own communities;
- (v) to recruit and deploy extension agents to serve as catalysts in the rural development efforts by conducting specific courses and seminars, experiments and demonstrations on crop and livestock production techniques;
- (vi) to promote tree planting and play an active role in soil and water conservation as strategies to protect the environment;
- (vii) to promote sustainable agriculture through the proper use of organic manure and plant extracts for use in crop production;
- (viii) to facilitate advocacy on issues of social injustice which may affect food security directly or indirectly;
- (ix) to improve the management skills of the community e.g. in livestock production, small scale irrigation etc;
- (x) to mobilize the community to achieve these objectives (CCS Joint Appraisal Report 1997:3).

The FIP has emphasised food security as part of a holistic approach through technical packages which promote sustainable agriculture as opposed to modern farming practices. This sustainable agriculture is based on farming practices such as mixed farming (animal and crops), crop rotation, intercropping and agroforestry. It values the traditional knowledge of farmers and insists on the farmers' participation in planning and testing solutions.



#### **4.2.1 Crop production.**

The main crops that are planted in Mwea are rice, maize, millet, sunflower, cotton, soya beans, beans, and horticultural crops such as french beans, tomatoes, sweet corn etc. The CCS activities are directed at these crops. Rice and horticultural production will be highlighted because they form the major economic activities in Mwea. This does not mean that the CCS is not promoting indigenous grains such as millet and maize.

The report mentioned the following technical packages for the promotion of crop production:

- (i) compost making and utilization;
- (ii) double digging (digging in such a manner that the top soil is put several inches deep so that the roots of the crop can reach it);
- (iii) home industry (food processing and preservation);
- (iv) traditional grain storage;
- (v) agroforestry (i.e. use of land where crops and perennial trees or tree form plants are grown together so that socio-economic and environmental benefits are accrued from the interaction;
- (vi) herbs and herbal preparation;
- (vii) soil/water conservation (nine seed hole i.e. hand-made trenches used during a drought or dry season to conserve whatever little moisture there is for crop survival;
- (viii) kitchen garden (families are encouraged to grow green vegetables and fruit around the home compounds for household consumption rather than depending on the market);
- (ix) intercropping (traditional farming system in many developing countries, especially where farm land is limited. For instance, in Kilimanjaro Highlands, Tanzania, the perennial cash crop is coffee, but due to scarcity of land, coffee is intercropped with maize, beans etc.
- (x) fertility trenches.

## **4.2.2 Structures and approaches of delivery.**

In order to offer the above packages and achieve the set goals, the CCS adopted various structures and approaches:

### **4.2.2.1 Structures.**

- (i) Station Coordinator: He/She is an extension agent who coordinates all the CCS activities in a given catchment area. The officer consults with the Advisory Committee in assessing and addressing the needs of the community.
- (ii) Extension Agents: These are government-trained technicians and diploma holders in such disciplines as agriculture, veterinary science, and livestock production. They are full time employees of the organisation. The CCS has equipped them with motor cycles. The Extension Agents also offer extension services to the farming community through the contact farmers.
- (iii) The Advisory Committee: The committee is made up of twelve persons who are elected by the community through the church. The main duty of the committee is to advise the CCS, to assess the needs of the community and to seek the solutions. The committee also acts as a management board of the Extension Station. It was not clear to me how long the members hold office. However, I got the impression that they stay in office as long as they are willing to do so.
- (iv) Contact farmers: For easier delivery of services and the achievement of the projected objectives in the community, the CCS has recruited contact farmers throughout the Division. The contact farmers are trained intensively as resource persons to the community and act as a link between the community and the CCS extension agencies. The contact farmers also assist in training other farmers in the community. At the time of this study, there were 30 contact farmers scattered strategically over the Division. The main objective of their training is to strengthen and update the community's knowledge on crop and animal production, small scale irrigation, organic farming and other activities related to food security and storage.

### **4.2.2.2 Approaches.**

- (i) Educational tours: these are organised for Mwea farmers and the Advisory Committee to visit

other farmers either within the Diocese or in other districts and provinces. The farmers are accompanied by the CCS extension officers and, on occasion, by some clergy. The tours provide the farmers with opportunities to exchange ideas and experiences with their counterparts. In order to discourage would-be joy riders, the CCS has introduced cost sharing whereby farmers are expected to meet part of the cost. However, farmers see this as a burden and would have the CCS pay the total cost. They consider the time factor they put in these activities as sufficient contribution to vindicate their commitment.

In 1996, the Wang'uru extension station organised five tours for 84 farmers while in the following year an equal number of farmers participated in four tours. Sadly, women are often unable to take part in such tours. This might be attributed to the fact that they often have to seek leave of absence from their husbands and, at the same time, they are reluctant to leave their homes unattended for prolonged periods. But women play an important role in food production and they should not, therefore, be left outside the mainstream of development activities. Consequently, it seems to me that CCS should sensitise men through seminars and workshops to release their spouses. Women should also be encouraged to participate more actively.

(ii) Field days: These are organised on the station farm and in the contact farmers' fields. During the field days the communities come together at a pre-determined venue where various experts, say in horticulture, or dairy farming, up-date the community on the new methods and approaches in particular development activities. The experts are drawn from relevant government departments and the CCS personnel. The former are not paid for the service rendered since they are assumed to be on their routine official duties. However, the CCS arranges for their transportation to the venues where and when necessary. These arrangements underscore the good working relations between the CCS and the Government.

Field day events seem to be popular. In 1996, for instance, 2295 people participated in 10 field days throughout the year. This success may be attributed to the fact that it costs the farmers nothing or very little in monetary terms since the events are localised.

(iii) Group dynamics: The empowerment of the community is a process which is effectively implemented through community mobilization, sensitisation and skills in group dynamics to up-lift their standard of living.

In an effort to cope with poverty, members of the local communities form community-based organisations (CBOs) which range from merry-go-round groups, self-help groups, women's groups, welfare associations, etc. These organisations help strengthen the individual efforts in poverty reduction by pooling their resources, be they labour or monetary. Through the function of such groups, communities are also able to garner support from NGOs and church organisations.

In 1996, the Wang'uru CCS extension station was working with 25 groups with a total membership of 538. In 1997, the groups increased to 27 with a total membership of 827. Most of the groups' activities were focused on crop farming, but a few concentrated on specific aspects such as bee-keeping, poultry or tree nursery. It is evident from the group membership that attempts to integrate women in policy formulation, planning and implementation have been successful. However, much effort is still needed to integrate the youth.

Table 4.1 shows group membership and activities. (Please also see appendices 1 and 2).

**Table 4.1**

**Selected groups and their activities**

<u>Group</u>	<u>No of Members</u>	<u>Activities</u>
Nyakio Self-help	60	farming, poultry, tank construction, merry-go-round, savings, tree nursery, school fund contribution, oil extraction from sunflower;
Kiratina Women Group	30	tree nursery, merry-go-round, kitchen-garden farming, poultry;
Utheri wa Mutithi	38	tank construction, farming, merry-go-round;
Mutithi Youth Group	11	organic farming, merry-go-round, rice growing;
Nyakinyua Women group	28	rice farming, dry land crop farming, merry-go-round, kitchen garden farming, construction of group houses.

**Source:** Wang'uru CCS Extension Station.

Table 4.1 reveals that the merry-go-round model is popular in all groups. Hence it is imperative to comment on the model here. The merry-go-round (*stokfela*) is an agreement between a group of people to support one another by contributing money to a common pool from which members can borrow at a reasonable rate. In some cases, however, the merry-go-rounds do not lend the money in the strict sense of 'lending' but rather rotate it between the members. This concept of rotating savings' associations is very widespread in market centres, offices and rural area. The associations are mainly informal. The members have a common need, say raising school fees. They come together to solve their problem and meet their needs. They organise themselves around that need. They decide on the amount of money each of them will contribute as the 'capital'. They open up a register of membership. They determine the frequency and the amount of money to be saved. By balloting, they draw up a sequencing roster to rotate the receipt of savings among the

members.

From the widespread nature of the merry-go-round system, it can be gathered that the schemes are meeting a need. This is because the groups build up considerable funds which can then be accessed by the members. On their own, these individuals would never be able to save so much money.

The objectives of the groups range from social to economic. For instance in the Nyakio group, each member contributes Ksh 20 (R2.0) monthly to a common fund. At the end of the year, the funds are disbursed in an agreed modality by the members to enable them to celebrate Christmas with their families. In addition, members support one another to build water tanks for roof-catchment. Each tank costs about Ksh 15 000 (R 1 500 ) - a sum which members would never be able to raise individually. The members of Nyakinyua group support one another to pay school-building funds for their children and meeting wedding and funeral expenses.

This is an interesting phenomenon because the money which is paid out is raised by the group members themselves, in the long term each member does, in fact, raise the money which is later paid out to him/her. In monetary terms the effect would be the same if each member would pay the contribution into his/her own savings account. However, the members would probably not do so on their own. It is group solidarity and group pressure which makes them save.

Thus the strength of the merry-go-round lies in mutual respect and self-discipline of the members. For example, the members formulate rules and sanctions which are enforced, such as fines for non-attendance of meetings. Other dynamics such as strict adherence to the application of money for useful purposes as per the objectives of the group come into play. Ultimately, these measures enable the groups to meet their obligation to their members.

If compared with other conventional money-lending agents such as commercial banks or co-operative societies, the merry-go-round model has the following advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages:

- (i) The merry-go-round is accessible to groups.
- (ii) It is simple and organised according to the capacity of the members.
- (iii) It enables members to meet specific needs.
- (iv) It could be the entry point for more institutionalised schemes, e.g. a funding agent can channel its lending to meet a bigger community project through a merry-go-round group.
- (v) It is widespread and generally accepted.

Disadvantages/Problems:

- (i) The funding portfolio is low.
- (ii) The funding's circulation is limited.
- (iii) The merry-go-round growth potential is inhibited by the limitations of the members.

In addition to the above, the groups face varied obstacles and problems in attaining their objectives. The problems include: financial mismanagement by their leaders; inadequate financial support and insufficient inputs of materials and equipment; a lack of elementary skills by the majority of members, including inadequate literacy rates; poor marketing channels; and inadequate infrastructure. These difficulties require active and flexible responses in a timely manner by the Government and the NGOs and other agencies working in the area. The support should be given in a way that does not discourage these micro-level initiatives but instead enhances their development.

I further noted that, though the merry-go-round is a popular model, the CCS extension agents seem to spend more time with some particular groups and particular contact farmers than others. This tendency seems to deprive other members of the community at large of sufficient extension services and training opportunities. However, this may be a personal weakness of some extension agents and cannot be generalised. It should be possible to monitor the trend through closer supervision of the individuals concerned.

The leadership of these groups is exercised by women. The groups have initiated activities that may lead to improved rural development, as the activities address local needs, i.e. food production, employment, and income generation. The groups are found practically in all locations of the

Division and membership ranges between 10 and 100. Thus women are increasingly assuming significant and participatory roles in socio-economic and ecological conservation activities in the Division. Indeed the formation of large numbers of groups which are managed and controlled by women indicates their attempt to gain access to, and control over resources that have historically been dominated by men. The active leadership of women reveals their potential to raise their living standards. That may help develop their families and the community. It is, therefore, more expedient for the women to form groups to gain access to, and control resources rather than to try to do it individually.

For these reasons the CCS and other agencies should continue to support the groups' activities, especially through provision of technical and financial information and infra-structural supports as well as management and organisation training. The Government should provide the overall stimulative policy framework. Rural planners need to take into account the activities of local people and to integrate their initiatives and activities when planning for these areas. The local people, and especially women, must be allowed to participate fully in the planning stages.

#### **4.2.3 Target Groups / Gender Issues.**

For the majority of the rural population in Kenya, farming and related activities represent the only realistic source of food or income. How much is produced depends on who produces and where and who has the means to buy the food. Thus when food production is controlled by women, it will be available for home consumption, while men tend to sell the food at the expense of sufficient provision for the home. Similarly, the yield will depend on the place, for example places like Mwea are marginal and hardly yield enough to last until the next rains. But even if there is sufficient food in one area, those who are far may not afford the prices. In the light of the aforesaid, I appreciate (i) the efforts by the CCS in selecting the community groups and contact farmers - it is particularly encouraging to note that most of the groups selected are women's groups and (ii) that the groups represent the whole community and do not discriminate on the grounds of religious affiliation or gender. At the same time I lament that some technical packages may overburden the contact farmers and lead to a lack of motivation for the programmes.



Because our society is still largely conservative, the struggle for the gender equality is a difficult and challenging one. It comes against entrenched social attitudes and traditions that would consign women to their so-called traditional roles. There is need to change outdated cultural arrangements which relegate women to inferior positions. The church, is best suited to take the lead in that direction, although in this case, the Anglican Church does have a track record of gender equality. However, the situation has improved recently.

#### **4.2.4 Appropriateness of extension approaches.**

The following extension approaches were applied to disseminate knowledge in FIP and were observed to be appropriate and effective:

- (i) one day seminars organised in church compounds, the station and contact farmers' fields;
- (ii) residential courses organised at the station, government institutions and private institutions;
- (iii) tours for farmers and advisory committee members and staff;
- (iv) field days organised at the station, contact farmers' fields, or group demonstration plots;
- (v) demonstrations conducted at the station, farmers' fields, or group demonstration plots;
- (vi) farmers' shows, demonstrations by the farmers organised at the church compounds on what they have learnt;
- (vii) contact farmers who are given extra training to promote agriculture in their localities;
- (viii) community groups who are given extra training and act as a community resource for members.

#### **4.2.5 Sustainability.**

I appreciate the efforts made by the CCS through the Food Increase Programme in striving towards achieving sustainability at community level. These efforts were evident in the following aspects:

- (i) the adoption and ownership of technical packages by the community, for example, peasant farmers were practising farming techniques taught by the CCS personnel and contact

farmers;

- (ii) acquired leadership skills in the community - this was most evident in women's groups;
- (iii) community willingness to contribute to services rendered, i.e. the community dug the furrows for irrigation water;
- (iv) increased productivity on farms despite unfavourable weather conditions - the community confirmed that through the CCS extension services they had enough harvests to feed their families.
- (v) use of acquired skills, for example, *jua kali* (locally made) sprinklers were being used widely in the farms.

The staff and the Advisory Committee have made efforts towards the sustainability of the projects concerned at the level of the extension station in the following ways:

- (i) purchase of seed in bulk for sale to the community: the seeds are available at affordable prices to the farmers and are also within easy reach;
- (ii) introduction of income generating enterprises, for example, the clinic at Wang'uru - (the income generated is ploughed back by way of buying drugs and thus unlike in the government hospitals, the clinic has sufficient drugs for the community and is no longer dependent on donor funding for restocking);
- (iii) the construction of hostel and multipurpose halls for seminars which are rented and hired to the communities and other organisations to generate income. Ultimately, such income will be used to meet the overhead costs so that the donor funds voted for personnel may be directed to development projects.

### **4.3 Animal production.**

Although Mwea Division has the largest area under livestock, it has the lowest carrying capacity if compared with other divisions in the district because it receives a low average rainfall and cannot produce adequate fodder for supporting higher numbers of livestock.

Table 4.2 shows the livestock population in Mwea in 1996 in comparison with the other Divisions.

**Table 4.2**

**Livestock population in Mwea in 1996 in comparison with other Divisions**

livestock	Mwea	Gichugu	Ndia
Dairy cows	910	12594	14118
Heifers	6024	5783	5862
Bulls	4316	7897	5451
<b>Total</b>	<b>11250</b>	<b>26274</b>	<b>25431</b>
Zebu /beef Cattle	7560	310	1500
Mature	11380	470	1984
Immature	<b>18940</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>3484</b>
<b>Total</b>			
Sheep: Wool	86	20	30
Hair	3875	3405	6800
<b>Total</b>	<b>3961</b>	<b>3425</b>	<b>6830</b>
Goats: Dairy	650	648	950
Meat	18709	5030	7200
<b>Total</b>	<b>19359</b>	<b>5678</b>	<b>8150</b>
Pigs	1800	1950	1500
<b>Total</b>	<b>1800</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>1500</b>
Poultry Local	180000	136413	104866
Exotic	6150	3000	4900
<b>Total</b>	<b>186150</b>	<b>139413</b>	<b>109766</b>
Rabbits	13800	6500	8457
<b>Total</b>	<b>13800</b>	<b>6500</b>	<b>8457</b>
Beekeeping : Long hives	2780	3460	1500
*KTBH	1282	300	313
<b>Total</b>	<b>4062</b>	<b>3760</b>	<b>1813</b>
Donkeys	750	35	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>60</b>

**Source:** District Livestock Development Office- Kerugoya

\*Kenya Top Bar Hives

The table shows that in 1996, Mwea Division had 910 dairy cows as compared to 12 594 and 14 118 in Gichugu and Ndia Divisions respectively. This indicates that Mwea is not suitable for dairy farming. This implies that the supply of milk and other dairy products i.e., cheese, butter, yoghurt, and ghee is inadequate. The little milk produced is consumed within the household. The little surplus is sold by individual farmers to the local hotels, institutions and individuals. The shortfall in production to meet consumer demand is imported from the rest of the District.

Table 4.2 further shows that the Division had more beef cattle, goats, poultry, and rabbits than the other Divisions. On the one hand this is probably because Zebu cattle and goats are more hardy than dairy cows. On the other hand poultry and rabbits do not depend on grazing and they seem to fulfill an important role in meat production. It is an indication that Mwea has a potential for beef and meat production with a ready market in the rest of the District. The livestock activities in the division include the production of milk, eggs, mutton, beef, goat meat and honey for local consumption. Hides and skins are also produced and marketed outside the Division. The significant high number of donkeys in the Division indicates the importance of the 'beast of burden' as the draught animal especially in pulling carts. In the rest of the District people are more affluent so that they can afford to use vehicular transport rather than donkey carts.

The CCS food increase programme is active in the livestock production sector in the following ways:

#### **4.3.1 Beef production.**

Though strictly speaking there is no commercial production of beef in the Division, the Hazel and Zebu are the main breeds kept for beef. They are kept in the sunflower and marginal cotton parts of the Division where they are freely grazed. Some of the indigenous cattle breeds also produce milk. The traditional use of livestock for paying bride-price (*ilobolo*) is long gone partly because of insufficient grazing fields, change to the modern monetary economic system and certainly the poverty in the community cannot cater for the luxury.

The oxen are mainly used for draught purposes and are slaughtered later. The area under pasture is greatly diminished if compared to the area under crop production as farmers prefer to plant staple crops or horticulture. Improvement in productivity through breeding is limited as artificial insemination services (AI) are not available in the Division except on call. Moreover, the milk production level does not warrant major investments in private AI services. There is an urgent need to introduce improved cattle breeds, as these could form the basis of increased production and, to establish factories dealing with hides and skins. In my opinion, the CCS should explore this sector with the other role players in the development field e.g. the Livestock Development Department of the Ministry of Agriculture.

#### **4.3.2 Other livestock.**

##### **(i) Goats**

Although traditionally goats are popular animals for slaughter, they are normally habitual browsers and, therefore, perhaps not suitable for an area such as Mwea where the ecosystem is fragile. Like cattle, their traditional value as units of bride-price has greatly diminished, due to among other factors, the reasons cited above. Nevertheless, the CCS is prompting the rearing of dairy goats which are proving popular especially because they are 'zero grazed' i.e. they are reared and fed indoors. Fodder is normally collected from the fields and is supplemented with a few concentrates. For that reason goats do not require much land or long hours of grazing in the fields. However, I noted that the bucks retained at Wang'uru CCS extension station do not benefit the community effectively since most farmers are in the interior. Although the station is located at the headquarters, the Division is vast. I suggest that more bucks be kept by the groups and the contact farmers so that farmers can easily take their female herds for serving.

##### **(ii) Pigs**

According to the Kirinyaga Development Plan 1997-2001, the district is one of the few districts ear-marked by the government for a pilot pig project. Initially, the CCS Wang'uru extension station came up with plans to support this industry. However, at the time of this research, the only evidence indicating the CCS's involvement with the project was the empty piggery at the extension station. Further inquiries of the farmers indicated ignorance of the project. It was not clear at all

what happened. The CCS should revisit the programme and revive it.

#### (iii) Rabbits

In his 1997 annual report, the District Livestock Development Officer indicates that the population of rabbits has been increasing since 1991, with the exception of 1994 when there was an unexplained decline. The gradual increase may be attributed to the CCS promotional activities (among others) utilising church youth groups to popularize rabbit keeping. The enterprise requires very little land, hence, with more aggressive promotional campaigns, an expansion of rabbit keeping can be expected in the foreseeable future. It would be a worthwhile occupation for the youth who are otherwise idling in the country-side without gainful employment.

#### (iv) Poultry

There was a general upward trend in the production of both indigenous and exotic poultry breeds due to the demand for eggs, the availability of chicken meal and favourable poultry prices.

#### (v) Bees

Honey production through Kenya Top Bar Hives (K.T.B.H.) has been declining due to a lack of organised marketing for honey and also due to increasing prices of K.T.B.hives while the number of log bee hives remained almost constant. The former are utilised basically for commercial bee farming while the latter represent the traditional way of gaining honey for domestic purposes.

### **4.3.3 Feeding and livestock nutrition.**

#### (i) Pasture

The expansion of grazing areas is only possible at the expense of crop production except on land not suitable for such purposes. But farmers prefer growing staple crops to livestock farming. In addition, the quality of fodder and pastures is affected by the weather. During a drought most pastures dry up and animals have to be fed on rice straw, maize stover, banana leaves and stems and any other green vegetation, including leaves from trees.

#### (ii) Fodder

Fodder expansion is difficult for similar reasons. Common fodder includes sweet potato vines, which have a dual purpose, and Napier grass. The latter does not flourish well under the harsh climate of Mwea. Farmers are being advised to grow high quality fodder so that milk production

can be increased either for home consumption or to earn an extra income for the family.

#### (iii) Concentrates

Concentrates are available in the stockists' shops but at a considerable price, which is often out of reach of the poor Mwea farmer. Inquiries on site also revealed that the quality of some concentrates was suspect. The CCS advocacy desk promised to take up the matter with the appropriate authority.

### **4.3.4 Veterinary services and animal health.**

The CCS, in conjunction with the relevant department, offers vaccination against foot and mouth disease, rinderpest and lumpy skin disease for cattle as well as vaccination against rabies and the baiting of stray cats and dogs. Generally, veterinary drugs are expensive and out of reach of the poor Mwea farmers. In addition the CCS trains and re-trains community animal health attendants who help in minor diagnoses and treatments.

### **4.3.5 Technical packages.**

Concerning livestock development and health, the following technical packages are offered by the CCS at community level:

- (i) training of community animal health attendants;
- (ii) livestock structures, i.e. the CCS helps farmers in the designing of paddocks, pens and stables;
- (iii) 'zero-grazing' i.e. rearing livestock indoors (this helps the farmer to save time that would otherwise have been spent looking after the animals in the open fields);
- (iv) bee hives;
- (v) fodder production.

## **4.4 Environment and natural resources.**

It has now become clear that any 'development' which does not embody conservation and enhancement of the environment will, in effect, be pseudo-development. If one ignores the impact

of agriculture on the environment, one may dangerously over-estimate the potential of future development. For that reason the CCS food increase programme is environment friendly.

**4.4.1 Technical packages.**

Concerning environmental conservation, the following CCS technical packages are offered at community level:

- (i) afforestation, i.e., increasing forest coverage by planting trees;
- (ii) tree nurseries;
- (iii) conservation of wetlands;
- (iv) soil/water conservation (terracing and stripping, i.e., planting grass strips on contours);
- (v) energy conservation (energy saving stoves).

In addition, CCS has vigorously embarked on the promotion of agroforestry (i.e the use of land where crops and perennial trees or tree-form plants are grown together so that social-economic and environmental benefits are accrued from the interaction.

Table 4.3 shows the production of tree seedlings by various groups in the Division between 1992 and 1995.

**Table 4.3**  
**Production of seedlings in Mwea Division**

Producer	1992	1993	1994	1995
FESD	102 390	62 775	47 162	29 911
Chiefs	63 390	5002	5455	958
Other depots	176 906	139 611	16 577	13 457
Schools	34 948	19 290	16 577	13 457
Women's groups	534 724	278 357	314 754	316 840
<b>Total</b>	<b>912 358</b>	<b>505 035</b>	<b>400 525</b>	<b>374 623</b>

**Source:** District Forestry Office, Kerugoya, 1996.



It is worth noting that women's groups surpass all other agencies in raising seedlings and, since the CCS works very closely with the groups, it is a safe assumption that the CCS is doing a commendable job in that line. These seedlings are produced in nurseries and are sold for planting - thus becoming a source of income to the groups. The project also enhances the division's chance of having adequate fuelwood in the future. However, it is unfortunate that the production of seedlings has been declining. The research was not able to establish the cause of either the decline in most categories, or the much more dramatic than in others. The CCS and the Forest department should investigate and address the situation appropriately.

The seedlings project needs to be strengthened to build a larger resource base for the timber industry which has very high potential in the Division and district-wide. Perhaps one way of working towards that goal is targeting schools, village polytechnics and other public institutions, especially where labour for watering is easily available at the primary site of the tree nurseries. In addition, specific programmes should be provided to encourage farm forestry among small holders to increase the wood supply.

#### **4.4.2 Appropriate technology.**

Appropriate technology is highly innovative and can enhance development especially in rural areas where electricity, oil and other forms of energy are lacking. In the promotion of appropriate technology the following CCS technical packages are offered:

- (i) windmills;
- (ii) boreholes (the communities share the costs by providing maintenance);
- (iii) rope and washer pumps on wells - (over 20 pumps were installed in the Wang'uru programme in 1996/97);
- (iv) low cost animal carts - (7 carts have been made and sold to farmers in Mwea);
- (v) use of ploughs for land preparation.

These technical packages were observed at the Wang'uru CCS extension station as well as in the field. However, in my opinion, some of the technical packages, for instance chemical fertilizers and

sprinkler irrigation, are not relevant to the promotion of sustainable agriculture. Artificial fertilizers are harmful in the long-run as they emit by-products, like ammonia, which reduce soil fertility.

#### **4.4.3 Water resources.**

Mwea is watered by the rivers which originate from the upper zone of the district and by canals originating from these rivers. The canals are constructed to supply water for the irrigation of rice paddies and horticultural crops. Most of the water has been contaminated not only by effluents from coffee factories in the upper zone, but also through a lack of sewerage systems in the urban centres through which the rivers flow to Mwea. This has affected water for consumption, especially in the lower section of Mwea and Ndia Divisions.

Roof catchment is an important source of water in the lower zone of the Division where the area is not adequately served by rivers or canals. A number of women's groups working with the CCS are involved in roof catchment projects by constructing water jars.

In addition there is a great potential for underground water in the Division because the water table is very shallow. However, the underground water, particularly in the lower zone, is not suitable for domestic use as it is either contaminated or salty and therefore not fit for consumption.

The CCS objectives are to make safe water available for domestic purposes, livestock as well as for small scale irrigation, the reduction of water-borne diseases and the reduction of the distance walked by women and other water fetchers so that they spend more time in other productive activities, including food production.

The CCS is involved in the following water management activities:

- (i) one day seminars for 30 participants on water management, conservation, harvesting and storage;
- (ii) preservation of water points and catchments e.g., the communities are encouraged not to

- cultivate river banks, and avoid clearing bushes around wells;
- (iii) residential training - farmers are trained on good water management techniques;
- (iv) the rehabilitation of bore holes, i.e. communities are encouraged to renovate boreholes;
- (v) demonstrations on water harvesting devices, small scale irrigation systems; rock and roof catchments and appropriate technology e.g. rope and washer pumps;
- (vi) enabling the communities to develop kitchen gardens.

## **4.5 Constraints to agricultural development.**

There are two types of constraints that we were able to identify. Firstly, there are ‘external constraints’ about which, in my opinion, the CCS can do nothing or very little and for which the Government should be responsible. These constraints affect every development agent equally and their negative impact on the pace of development is profound. For example, the roads are impassable during the rainy season and farmers cannot get their produce to market outlets. During the dry season, the roads are rugged with potholes and gullies which subject motor vehicle to a heavy maintenance cost which is in turn passed to the farmer in the form of high transport charges.

Secondly, there are constraints that are ‘interior to the organisation’ or specific to a development agency, and which the agency can, in the long run, overcome in order to achieve the desired goals.

### **4.5.1 External constraints.**

Like any other rural part of Kenya, the Mwea Division faces problems relating to inadequate infra-structural facilities which include safe water supply, energy supply, communications and physical development plans. The Division also lacks properly planned urban development structures conducive to the setting up of industries.

- (i) As already observed, the existing water supply has been contaminated, and over-utilized. All the small and emergent towns, such as Wang’uru and Kimbimbi, do not have proper sewerage

disposal systems, or facilities for the disposal of waste. This has detrimental effects not only on the health of the communities but also affects the setting up of industries. Water is a basic requirement for efficient disposal of waste. Potential investors have, therefore, been discouraged by the high cost involved in waste disposal. The Division has also experienced cases of contamination of ground water and rivers.

(ii) The utilization of 'non-commercial' energy is dominant in the Division. It takes the form, overwhelmingly, of firewood, either in its natural state or as charcoal. But inevitably, it leads to forest destruction and the wholesale decimation of the vegetative cover. Grave ecological consequences have become measurable in such terms as soil erosion, disruption of water-catchment patterns, and loss of agrarian productivity.

Electricity in the Division has been supplied to a few trading centres. Only low voltage electricity, which is not suitable for industrial processing has been supplied to these trading centres. The effect has been to limit the development of industries in these centres, particularly the growth of informal sector activities, and especially the setting up of small scale agro-industries. If the Division could have a regular supply of electricity, small industries, especially agro-based, would be established to process the raw materials. These would in turn create employment opportunities that would greatly enhance rural incomes in the Division and the District.

Constraints in Kenya on the utilization of solar energy at present rest upon the need for sophisticated technology with serious cost implications. However, implements such as simple and cheap sun cookers, coils of plastic piping for heating water could be developed and promoted among the communities. The former are being made at St. Andrew's Bible College, Kabare - hence the Church and the CCS could easily promote the project through demonstrations and publicity.

(iii) Another infrastructural problem facing the Division is the poor road network. During the rainy season, in particular, the poor condition of the roads makes the transportation of agricultural produce to the markets difficult. The most affected are horticultural products. This has often led

to a substantial loss of earnings, which could have been utilized to support the setting up of industries. Thus, as a result of the poor road network, development in the Division has been retarded.

(iv) The horticultural products grown at Mwea are exported to overseas markets. The prices very often fluctuate erratically subjecting the farmers to untold pain and losses when they cannot sell their produce.

In the absence of a well developed road network, an efficient telecommunications system would go a long way in ensuring that communities maintain contact with the market outlets. This is particularly so in the age of modern technology. The telecommunication services are, however, not properly developed or maintained where they are available at all. This has made it difficult for the farmers and other role players in the marketing of the agro-products to exchange information required to promote the industry.

(v) It has been pointed out that all the key trading centres lack physical planning - hence their physical development has been haphazard. This has led to congestion which has discouraged investment. No provision has been made for industrial development. The key trading centres which need co-ordinated physical development to tap the potential of the rural areas are Kagio, Wang'uru, Kimbimbi and Makutano.

#### **4.5.2 Constraints interior to the organisation.**

(i) It was pointed out at the beginning of this study that the CCS is 100% donor funded. Due to the inability of the CCS donor (s) to cope with the expanding development needs, CCS activities in the agricultural sector have been limited. While it is appreciated that CCS has finally decided to move, albeit slowly, towards self-reliance, it is a regrettable fact that it has taken almost 20 years to realize the danger of dependence while its own mission is to promote self-reliance in the community.

(ii) Closely associated with the above is the inability of the available funding to sustain sufficient

personnel, resulting in staff retrenchment and retirement. This has left the organisation with a small and overworked staff. This may eventually lead to staff de-motivation and a decline in the quality of services.

(iii) In spite of the personnel constraints, the CCS seems to be too ambitious, trying to spread its wings everywhere. In my opinion, the organisation should rethink its approach to development so that it may concentrate on a particular project at a time or a given geographical area and only move to the next project or area when it has achieved the targeted goals. This seems to be the approach taken, with apparently some success, by Plan International in the neighbouring Embu district. Plan International has identified one marginalised division in the district and the organisation's impact on development has really been felt there, though, of course, there are other variables that have determined its success.

#### **4.6 Comments and recommendations.**

At this juncture I would like to make some observations relating to the CCS interventions concerning the food increase programme through the crop and livestock production sectors as discussed above.

##### **4.6.1 The CCS Mission.**

So far it appears that the CCS has targeted food increase and production at Mwea with enthusiasm and it is to be commended for that vision. However, the beneficiaries of the interventions discussed above have their own land or are capable of hiring land from other landlords. In either case, the CCS is paying more attention to those among the poor that have some individual economic base (land or money) and the initiative to achieve. The CCS activities then represent a major shift and departure from the CCS original mission namely "an attempt to empower the poorest of the poor". In other words the CCS is not able to define the "poorest of the poor" or even set the criteria for the selection of the beneficiaries under the circumstances.

But having said that, on the other hand development always tends to be uneven, because preconditions, abilities and initiative are not spread equally in the population. When some people in a social context forge ahead, the others tend to be instigated and motivated to roll up their sleeves and try to emulate them, even if on a lower scale. It is important for both the organisation and the population that instances of success outnumber instances of failure, otherwise the drive is lost.

#### **4.6.2 Agro-industrial development.**

(i) Horticulture, which is an emerging economic activity, is growing rapidly in Mwea. Apparently, there is over-production of horticultural crops such as tomatoes, leading to a lot of waste. The problem has been a lack of processing and marketing facilities. There is a need to set up a plant to process horticultural products in the Division as this would transform the raw material into an important income earner. Because this task might be beyond the CCS's capacity, the organisation should take up the matter with other role players and key development agencies in the Division. The CCS could start by sensitising the community to form a cooperative society to handle the issue. There is no evidence that any organisation is addressing this important issue.

Nonetheless, the processing of tomatoes and other fruit jam is apparently a simple process which does not require sophisticated technology. Similarly in a sunny country it is easy to make simple dryers out of sheet iron and wire mesh which lead hot air over the fruit or vegetables. The CCS should seek ways and means of acquiring this simple technology which could be developed to help the communities process foodstuffs for domestic consumption.

(ii) As observed in chapter two of this study (paragraph 2.3.4), rice is the major crop in Mwea and is grown both for domestic consumption and the market. In his annual report of 1997, the District Agricultural Officer has pointed out that Mwea has the capacity to grow more rice and to help meet the national demand. In the pursuit of its objective to increase food, the CCS should address the situation by empowering more farmers to grow this crop. More rice would lead to the expansion of Mwea Rice Mills, creating more employment and giving additional income to the farmers. At the moment the CCS involvement in rice growing is not impacting on the community.

### **4.6.3 Access to the use of land.**

Whatever the system of cultivation, or the density of the population, the question of who controls the land is vital, as it is a key determinant in the distribution of rural income and wealth. The formulation of policies for rural development must be based on certain fundamental assumptions regarding land. For instance, what are the institutionalised structures that regulate the relationship of men and women to land? In Kenya, as in many developing countries, land is a power base and a symbol of authority and hence a source of political power. Land also forms part of the customary heritage and therefore to be landless is synonymous with powerlessness. Indeed the relationship to land is personal. The farmer sees it almost as part of himself/herself, and the livelihood of his/her family depends on the land. The self-esteem of land owners is much greater than that of the landless labour employed on large estates. For these reasons land tenure is crucial to increased production. In the rest of the District, land has been registered under freehold title. This has enabled the communities to present their titles as collaterals to acquire development loans from banks and other financial institutions.

But for the last 40 years or so, Mwea rice growers have lived and cultivated the land as tenants of the National Irrigation Board (NIB). They occupy small congested plots in the settlement scheme. Since they are poor, they have difficulties in affording their basic requirements like food, health and school fees for their children. Although they work hard in the rice paddies, their standard of living is deplorable and there is no doubt that these poor farmer are being exploited.

The relationship between the farmers and the NIB is very strained. The farmers have refused to release their crop to the NIB and are calling for the liberalisation of the industry so that they market their own produce to the highest bidder. At the time of this study hundreds of bags of rice were precariously stored in a makeshift store where it was vulnerable to weather conditions (see appendix 3). On the one hand the crop may be soaked by rain. On the other hand it may dehydrate under the heat of the sun and break into pieces of low sale value. The implication of this is that many children will drop out of school because their parents cannot afford to pay the requisite fees. Ultimately, these children will end up in the streets. Then the CCS and other development



agencies may again have to write proposals seeking money from donors in support of the children. The CCS has not done, and indeed is not doing, enough in terms of advocacy to help the Mwea rice farmers.

#### **4.6.4 Marketing of agricultural produce.**

There are two broad aspects of this issue: firstly, the accessibility of markets, and secondly, pricing and fiscal policies. It is no use encouraging greater productivity if markets are not available, or if prices are so low that they act as a disincentive.

Marketing of agricultural produce in Mwea is done by individual farmers, the majority of whom lack the skills and the capacity to market their produce. Most of the horticultural produce are perishable and need cooling facilities to avoid losses in transportation and during marketing. Such facilities are lacking and need to be developed. It is self-evident that under inefficient market conditions, prices of products are relatively low, while the price of farm inputs are high, reducing the farmers' margin. Other problems faced include unrealistic price fluctuation which make the farmers vulnerable. For instance, at the time of this study, the price of a crate of tomatoes fluctuated between Ksh 500 (R 50) and Ksh. 1500 (R150) at the whim of the brokers or middle-men. The farmers need to have more bargaining power to achieve higher returns for their produce. The farmers should register as a co-operative society to streamline and harmonize their operations. Once again, the CCS should empower the community to raise leaders who are capable of carrying and overcoming this problem.

Storage is another important aspect of marketing. There are heavy losses through a lack of pest proof methods of storage, a problem to which far too little attention has been directed in agricultural policies. Because of the perishability of farm produce and the fact that prices tend to be lowest at harvest time, the farmer who has no access to proper storage facilities suffers considerable loss. The fear of the farmer that his/her harvest will be destroyed by pests will force him/her to sell the crop in a hurry, often at a throw-away price, not knowing the nature of the next season. If the rain fails, the farmer needs food and the CCS will intervene by giving relief food.

To avoid such situations, the CCS should liaise more closely with agricultural research stations, government departments and agrochemical manufacturers to try to help the farmer in fighting pests and improving the storage of harvests and to educate the farmers on proper usage of these chemicals.

#### **4.6.5 The sheep and goat multiplication centre.**

Sheep and goats provide a major source of meat for Kenyans. Since the main concentrations of production and consumption are in zones of low and marginal potential like Mwea, improvements in this industry can have important benefits to low income rural families. To improve sheep and goat raising, the District Livestock Development Officer in his 1997 Annual Report, has recommended (1) the provision of adequate complementary resources to extension officers, (2) that a comprehensive breeding policy be developed with a focus on raising the incomes of herders of sheep and goats and, (3) appropriate credit programmes for herders to improve their stock. In this connection the CCS should liaise more closely with the District Livestock Production office and seek which role the organisation can play in the venture.

The CCS has sufficient capacity to contribute towards the achievement of these goals. Wang'uru extension station would be of immense value to the local communities and should be developed as a multiplication centre especially for dairy goats. In its current state concerning animal production, the station is neither functioning nor sending the right signals to the community as a centre of excellence in animal production.

#### **4.6.6 Poultry and its economic value.**

According to the Government Sessional Paper No 1 of 1986 on Economic Management for Renewed Growth (1986:76), the poultry industry has been one of the most rapidly growing sectors in agriculture. Poultry is raised both in modern, large scale hatcheries and on small farms. Although market forces largely determine where and how this industry expands, the CCS in conjunction with relevant agents needs to work a strategy to improve poultry farming at Mwea, especially in view

of the industry's major problems, namely inadequate disease control, high feed prices, inadequate credit facilities and long distance travel to collect day old chicks. The Division in general and the District in particular need a small hatchery of course after a proper feasibility study. The advantage of a centralized hatchery is that the farmers will control not only the quality of their birds but also the market so that there is no overproduction which naturally lowers the farmer's income.

#### **4.6.7 The fishing industry.**

Fishing is an important source of protein in Kenya but a major employer only near the lakes and the coast. Fish-eating habits are no longer disdained by the up-country people, as in the past. The fishing industry is, therefore, promising. The Masinga dam on the river Tana, the biggest river in Kenya, marks the southern boundary of Mwea Division. This gives the Division the unique opportunity to develop a fishing industry and fish farming with the attendant prospects of creating employment opportunities.

#### **4.6.8 Livestock disease control.**

Livestock diseases have been a major obstacle to increased livestock production not only in Mwea but also in many parts of the country. Foot and mouth disease, which can sharply reduce dairy production among improved stock, is controlled by a combination of vaccination and movement restrictions. Tick-borne diseases are controlled by dipping cattle but the costs are high and some farmers show reluctance to dip their animals. Farmers should be sensitised and educated on the importance of disease control, and where possible they should be organised in groups to manage their own dips. They should also be supported to get veterinary drugs at affordable prices. This is because the Government has stopped running the dips.

#### **4.6.9 Environment versus horticultural farming.**

The emerging horticultural farming is definitely a welcome development, especially in generating income to the rural communities. However, the promoters of this industry, including the CCS, should not lose sight of the fact that the industry is somewhat dependent on chemical fertilizers and

sprays which at the end of the day are not only a health risk to the users but are also not environmentally friendly.

Organic farming should be promoted. As opposed to chemical farming which targets feeding the plant, organic farming rests in feeding the soil. Plants can then draw nutrients from the soil, leaving those they do not need. Organic farming's greatest advantage lies in the ability to promote soil health, making the earth favourable to the survival of a myriad micro-organisms and plants. In Kenya, the Institute of Organic Farming is among the leading organisations involved in the promotion of the practice. The Institute is represented in the Division by the Organic Management Network (see chapter two, paragraph 2.6.3) and the CCS would easily liaise with them.

#### **4.7 Summary.**

This chapter has investigated the CCS's activities to alleviate poverty through its Rural Development Department. The organisation has targeted increase of food production with enthusiasm through the Food Increase Programme. The Programme was established as a response to the severe drought and famine in Kenya in 1984/85. The Food Increase Programme aims at food security at household level in Mwea Division through sustainable agriculture. To achieve the target, the CCS has put in place structures such as extension agents, contact farmers, women's groups etc., and approaches such as education tours, field day events, shows etc. Women's groups, especially the merry-go-rounds, are fulfilling an important role in the socio-economic life of the communities, although the groups have management problems.

In crop production, the main thrust has been on horticulture farming and the promotion of indigenous grain e.g., millet. The former is quite understandable since it is also a source of income for families to educate their children and meet other obligations. The growing of rice, the main grain in Mwea, is currently riddled with uncertainties. I called for the CCS to address the situation.

In animal production, it was noted that Mwea has a potential to boost beef and meat production. However, a lack of fodder, pasture and sufficient land are a major problem. The answer to that is

improving the stock rather than expansion of the farming. The CCS in conjunction with the government is offering veterinary services such as vaccination against foot and mouth disease, rinderpest, lumpy skin, rabies etc. Poultry and rabbits were particularly seen to be promising because they do not demand much land. This could offer an alternative source of meat.

It was also noted that the CCS recognizes environmental conservation as an indispensable ingredient of sustainable agriculture. The organisation is thus involved in afforestation, agro-forestry, water conservation in addition to the promotion of appropriate technology e.g. rope and washer pumps, low cost animal carts and the use of the plough for land preparation.

The chapter identified two broad categories of constraints, namely external and interior. The former refer to infrastructures such as the poor road network which only political goodwill can address. The interior constraints include insufficient funding which the organisation can be able to address with some success especially through meticulous planning, transparency and accountability.

I commend the organisation for its determination and input especially in the face of the seemingly insurmountable 'external constraints' enumerated above. It is noticeable that the CCS has put in place regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of its activities. The efforts made by the Wang'uru CCS extension station in collaborating with relevant government departments, the communities, the advisory committee and other NGOs within the station's operational area are commendable. However, the organisation needs to do more to support the rice farmers in terms of growing and marketing the crop. Probably even more urgent for the rice farmers is the need to have a lasting solution to the problem of land ownership. Finally, it was evident that attempts to integrate women in policy formulation, planning and implementation through groups are bearing fruit. But more needs to be done towards the integration of the youth.

The following chapter, examines the CCS interventions in community health and social welfare as a strategy in the food increase programme to combat poverty among the poor of Mwea.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **5 The CCS: Community Health and Social Services Programme**

#### **5.1 Introduction.**

The previous chapter evaluated the development activities of the CCS primarily through the Rural Development Department of the organization. However, as mentioned in Chapter Three (paragraph3.2), it was the concern for the health of the people of the Diocese of Mt Kenya East which ultimately led to the inception of the CCS. The Community Health Programme was then the precursor of the CCS. It is, therefore, helpful to consider some of the initiatives that illustrate what the church can do in community health. Social welfare in the community has a direct bearing on the health of the people. As Wilson and Ramphela have observed, “health is intimately bound up with the wider wellbeing of the community” (1989:292).

This chapter discusses the development interventions of the Community Health and the Social Welfare Programmes of the CCS. The chapter is divided into two sections. Section One presents the interventions through the Community Health Programme. Section Two outlines activities through the Social Welfare Programme. The CCS is transforming the situation of the poor of Mwea through the two programmes.

#### **5.2 SECTION ONE : THE CCS INTERVENTIONS IN COMMUNITY HEALTH.**

##### **5.2.1 The profile of health facilities of Kirinyaga District in relation to Mwea Division.**

Apart from crumbling or neglected physical structures and poorly maintained equipment, the most glaring deterioration of medical services in public health institutions in Kenya has been the perennial shortage of drugs. The situation has continued almost unchecked for too long, to the extent that many Kenyans have, resignedly, come to take it as a way of life, struggling instead against financial odds to take their sick ones to private hospitals.

There are 66 health facilities in the District comprising of hospitals, health centres, dispensaries and nursing homes. According to the Medical Officer of Health, Kerugoya, the Government operates 63% of these facilities while the rest are sponsored by NGOs and private individuals. Mwea Division has the highest number of facilities, most of them being Government dispensaries. Ndia follows. The District Hospital falls under Ndia.

Table 5.1 shows the distribution of health facilities in the District.

**Table 5.1**  
**Distribution of health facilities by Division 1995**

Division	Hospitals		Health Centers		Dispensaries		Outreach Clinics GoK    NGO	Private Nursing Homes	Total
	*GoK	NGO	GoK	NGO	GoK	NGO			
Gichugu	-	-	1	1	7	6	-    1	1	17
Ndia	1	-	2	1	9	4	-    2	2	21
<b>Mwea</b>	-	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	-	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	- <b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28</b>
Total	1	1	4	2	32	15	-    6	5	66

**Source:** District Medical Office of Health, Kerugoya 1996.

\* Government of Kenya.

But even under the circumstances described above, the government hospitals and health centres are over-utilized because people, mostly the poor, have no choice. The hospitals also act as referral centres for dispensaries and private maternity or nursing homes. At times when drugs are available in dispensaries, there is a marked decrease of attendance in the main hospital. However, generally speaking, the introduction of cost-sharing in the government health facilities affected the attendance because few people could afford the charges. Although private health facilities are under-utilized due to high charges, patients' attendance improves when drugs are unavailable in government health facilities and when certain health services cannot be obtained from these health

institutions.

In 1989 the doctor/population ratio was 1:26 100 while in 1995 it was 1: 30 611 (District Medical Office of Health, Kerugoya) showing that the doctors are over-utilized. Most health facilities lack equipment necessary for their efficient operation. There is, therefore, need to strengthen the staffing and equipment in the hospitals so that more of the population can be served adequately to build a strong nation in general and a healthy population to eradicate poverty in the Division in particular.

Women play an important role in the society. They are more involved in the well-being of the child and the family than men. In addition more often than not women and children suffer most where there is inadequate or poor health care, poor nutrition, and poor environmental sanitation. Similarly, women and children suffer more risks in times of natural disasters such as drought, floods and earthquakes.

For these reasons the CCS interventions are focused on maternal/child health care and family planning, the former target group being women of child-bearing age, 15-49, and the latter group being children of 0-5 years of age. These interventions are delivered in several approaches.

### **5.2.2 Maternal and child health care and family planning.**

Each child's physical, mental, emotional and social well-being is dependent on many interrelated factors in his/her environment. While these include elements such as infection control and nutrition, long term measures promoting healthy life styles and responsible parenthood are equally important. Hence, programmes ensuring the well-being of adults, especially women of child-bearing age, also benefit the child. The mother-child health care is delivered in a number of approaches.

#### **(i) Ante-natal and post-natal care.**

This service is mainly delivered by qualified nurses. The clients get the services either at the CCS clinic at Wang'uru extension station or consult the mobile services that are available at pre-



determined centres on given schedules within the Division. The CCS trained Community Health Workers in the villages are usually trained on palpation and general examination of the mother. They are able to detect a normal or a breach position of the baby, and therefore advise the mothers appropriately.

(ii) Immunisation.

Children below five years are immunized against six childhood diseases, namely: tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and measles. These vaccines are administered as follows:

- (a) Immunization against tuberculosis (BCG) is given at birth or first contact. An average of 20 children are vaccinated per month.
- (b) Immunization against polio is given within the first three months in 4 doses at 4 week intervals. About 40 children are served per month.
- (c) Immunization against DPT (diphtheria, whooping cough, Tetanus) is administered in 3 doses at 4 week intervals. About 40 children per month benefit from this service.
- (d) Immunization against measles is given once at 9 months. About 20 children per month benefit from this intervention.

The Ministry of Health provides the vaccines to the CCS personnel. This underscores the good working relationship between the Government and the Church.

(iii) Nutrition and growth monitoring

The Baseline Survey of 1976 (Chapter Three, paragraph 3.2) confirmed that many children were found to be below normal weight. Premature births and low weights are recorded from poorly nourished mothers. Poor nutrition in children affects brain development which is important for proper learning. This leads to illiteracy and weak people who cannot participate fully in development.

The diet inventory carried out in this research suggested a very low intake of nutritionally

important foods. Everywhere the staple diet consisted mainly of starch (in the form of maize, rice, potatoes, bread, porridge and sugar) and the menu was deficient of protein and greens. Meat and vegetables are eaten only once in a while.

The effects of low levels of nutrition, particularly on vulnerable groups and the labour force, can lead to loss of time while attending hospitals to seek treatment and spending money on purchasing drugs. Such money could otherwise be used on productive activities. But while the lack of a balanced diet may be attributed to poverty, the ignorance of the population, especially mothers, about nutritional ingredients is also responsible to an extent.

In that light, the CCS is teaching and encouraging women to start kitchen gardens and to keep chickens for eggs. Consequently, the under fives who are predisposed to malnutrition are fed on a balanced diet at their homes. In addition, special emphasis is put on breast feeding and a weaning diet. Growth monitoring is routinely done for them. The growth curve of most children has been seen to change positively on the chart.

However, the nutrition supplementary programmes for children and lactating mothers will be of a short-term nature. They only benefit those who attend the CCS clinics or go to hospital due to malnutrition. A longer term solution could only be achieved through the education of the general population, particularly the women, to ensure healthy, cost-effective feeding practices. In addition, efficient collaboration and networking between the private and the NGO sectors could assist in dispensing more efficiently preventive and curative health services to the people. In the interim, the CCS should put more efforts in nutritional campaigns creating awareness, especially among mothers, of the importance of certain foods in their diet.

#### (iv) Family Planning

The CCS has two approaches in providing this service:

##### (a) Outreach programmes or mobile clinics

The outreach services are delivered directly to the clients in the villages. The services are mostly

provided by community-based distributors. In addition, mobile clinics, run by qualified nurses, have regular visits at predesignated stations within the Division. The family planning package consists of health education, counselling, provision of the oral contraceptives, tube ligation and, where appropriate, provision of condoms. Tube ligation is normally referred to the government hospital.

Table 5.2 shows the achievements of the outreach programme in 1996 and 1997.

**Table 5.2**  
**Outreach clinic achievements 1996 and 1997**

activities	1997		1996	
	Rukanga	Kanjinji	Rukanga	Kanjinji
No. of immunized children	190	310	253	162
No. of children weighed	1064	977	412	538
No. of ante-natal mothers	2	57	3	4
No. of FP clients	47	24	2	34
sick above fives	4	24	8	7
sick below fives	23	40	10	51
No. of health education sessions held	620	758	100	90

**Source:** CCS Report to the Kirinyaga Synod of 2nd to 5th December 1998.

The mobile clinic service is not sustainable in the long term due to the poor state of the roads, the increasing cost of fuel, vehicle maintenance and the cost of drugs. Consequently, the CCS is phasing it out in favour of dispensaries and health centres. The CCS is replacing the service by equipping these institutions with surgical equipment, gas fridges and drugs. Hopefully, the new service delivery will be even more successful than the mobile clinic.

villages for public health activities such as clearing the compounds to eradicate mosquito breeding places; building shelters for the CCS clinics, and taking their children for immunization, treatment and growth monitoring. The Village Health Committees have proved particularly useful in mobilizing the communities during epidemic campaigns such as against cholera, typhoid and others.

At first sight, the voting method for the Village Health Committee membership seemed democratic. But since the election is done in the church, quite often the Committee is seen, at least locally, as an 'Anglican instrument'. Yet the Committee is theoretically intended to serve the whole community irrespective of religious affiliation. Frequently, people who hardly know anything about public health are elected to the Committee. Such Committees become sterile sooner rather than later. In fact, many Village Health Committees are dormant though probably not entirely for this reason.

In my view, it is imperative that the Village Health Committee should reflect the local leadership talents capable of delivering quality services to the community. For that reason I would suggest that election to the Committee be done in close liaison with the local administration. Such an approach would probably cater sufficiently for diverse interests and abilities in the community, irrespective of their religious affiliation.

#### (ii) The Community Health Workers

The Community Health Workers are voluntary workers elected by the individual parishes. They are trained at St Andrew's Bible College for eight weeks by the CCS and other facilitators. The institution offers an ideal learning climate through the interaction between the Community Health Workers and those studying theology. This interaction bridges the separation of the Gospel in spiritual and material concerns. The interaction has proved useful because later the Community Health Workers and the priests will continue to work together in the parishes and support one another. Thus good interpersonal relationships, developed at the Theological College, have had positive effects on relating theology and community health with each other. The shared life by

I commend the CCS for the insight of equipping the dispensaries and the health centres. However, in view of financial constraints, it is not clear how the personnel to run the institutions will be remunerated. Probably a solution would be to invite the communities to share the cost by paying a modest fee for the services rendered and the drugs. However, an important issue is to ensure that the health facilities are accessible to the most vulnerable in the society. Towards that end, it might be advisable to work out modalities to cater for this category of the population, without compromising the need for the community to shoulder part of the burden.

(b) The base clinic.

This is situated at Wang'uru CCS extension station. People who need the services offered are expected to visit the centre. The site is rather too far from the people in the countryside and hence inconvenient. Nevertheless, whether the service is delivered from the outreach or the base clinic, any complicated case is referred to the Government hospital for specialized investigation and action.

### **5.2.3 Health education.**

Health education has remained a major intervention to solve the community health problems in Mwea. The CCS has adopted a number of approaches to offer health education to the community.

(i) Village Health Committees.

Village Health Committees are elected by the congregations in a parish. Their main function is to identify the community's health needs such as water supply. The Village Health Committees then liaise with the local health authority to solicit the necessary technical support from the CCS. The CCS may respond directly or may approach another development agency on behalf of the community. The Village Health Committees are also expected to give financial gift tokens to the Community Health Workers in the village to motivate them. However, this kind of incentive is always problematic. Nobody knows what to expect and what to give and the system can easily be abused on either side. A predetermined fee would be better. In the circumstances, the Village Health Committees may promulgate rules (e.g. a nominal fee) from time to time to sustain the village projects. In addition, the Village Health Committees are expected to mobilize their

the two groups is a good foundation on which to build a holistic ministry of the gospel. It gives the Community Health Workers a theological dimension and flavour.

The curriculum covers simple therapeutic techniques for diseases such as malaria, abdominal pains, worms, headaches, colds, and skin diseases, e.g. simple sores and insect bites. The candidates are also introduced to first aid methods, family planning, immunisation of children under the age of five years and nutrition. The Community Health Workers are introduced to examinations of pregnant women. The aim is to enable the Community Health Workers to give the mothers appropriate advice regarding nutrition and personal hygiene.

On completion of the training at St Andrew's, the graduates are posted to Government health facilities for two weeks. The objective is to gain experience in health education, dispensing, examination of expectant women, counselling and learning simple dressings and first aid.

The Community Health Workers are deployed in their respective villages. Their main duty in the villages is to visit the people at their homes. The Community Health Workers pray together with the families, treat minor ailments, and promote family planning awareness. They educate people on general health issues. Besides pastoral visits, the Community Health Workers reach the community through the chief's meetings and other public meetings. They visit schools, village polytechnics and churches where they are given opportunities to teach or explain matters of health.

My inquiries revealed, however, that most Community Health Workers visit only Anglican churches. But since the community, regardless of religious affiliation, is in need of health education, such a practice is unhealthy. I would suggest that the CCS should spread the selection for training in this important area to all denominations. It is also important to instil in the candidates an ecumenical spirit, especially during their training. In this regard, co-opting facilitators from development agencies of other denominations might be helpful.

The Community Health Workers are equipped with First Aid kits to enable them to carry out health education effectively and in a holistic manner. In my understanding, the equipment is given on loan. Any replenishing of supplies is intended to be paid for in cash. The funds used for this loan scheme should, therefore, ideally operate as a revolving fund if the Community Health Workers repay the loan given to them when they sell the drugs in the kits.

However, to enable the loanees to repay, the CCS needs to attend to the following:

- (a) The period of loan repayment is not stipulated in the application forms that we scrutinized.
- (b) Among the equipment and the drugs, there are items of a capital-asset nature which the loanee may find difficult to pay for solely from the sale of drugs. Such equipment includes blood measurement machines and stethoscopes. The cost of this equipment totals Ksh 4900 (R 490) or 61 per cent of the Ksh 8040 (R 804) loan, while the drugs total only Ksh 3140 (R 314) or 39 per cent of the loan. Clearly, the monetary value of the equipment far exceeds that of the drugs.
- (c) Since the Community Health Workers are volunteers and the Village Health Committee is supposed to give token pay only, it is not clear whether the equipment remains the property of the Committee or the CCS or even the Community Health Worker. In this context, the Community Health Worker may not understand the ownership and this may affect the repayment of such equipment loans.

Many Community Health Workers have abandoned their work, notwithstanding the investment in their training but due to time constraints this research was unable to establish the drop-out rate. However, it is not an overstatement to say that unless action is taken urgently, the project of the Community Health Workers will collapse. According to its report to the First Ordinary Session of the Synod of Kirinyaga Diocese, held from 2nd to 5th December 1998, the CCS and other organs of the church are aware of the problem. What is not clear is whether any action is being taken to reverse the trend.

In my view, the drop-out trend is largely a moral question, to the extent that those who are poor (the Community Health Workers) are expected to work voluntarily, whereas the CCS development

officers called to supervise, train, advise and motivate them are in paid employment. Should Community Health Workers be expected to work voluntarily, even in their own villages, without pay, when actually they sacrifice valuable time in which they need to work to survive? As mentioned above, I think a predetermined fee should be charged, even if it is very small, especially because there are real expenses involved for the workers. The fee should also be seen as a symbol of recognition and status of the workers. Voluntary worker and handouts are often not appreciated.

Paying the Community Health Workers also raises the problem of determining the extent to which villagers can be trained to take responsibility for their own health care. This means that the community must organise itself and raise funds to compensate the service providers from among their own ranks. In the traditional society, the diviners and healers also receive compensation for their services and the communities accept that. There seems to be no final answers to these ethical questions, i.e., to compensate or not. Suffice it to say, it is important to keep both perspectives (of to pay or not) in mind and promote the values of self-help as well as the responsibilities of the wider society.

#### (iii) Community Based Distribution of contraceptives.

Some of the Community Health Workers are trained as community based distributors of contraceptives. After successfully acquiring the skills of counselling and distribution of the contraceptives, the Community Based Distributors are supplied with family planning drugs, blood measurement instruments and stethoscopes. Problems akin to those of the Community Health Workers mentioned in paragraph 5.2.3 above are being experienced with Community Based Distributors. The ownership of the equipment is still ambiguous. Again we suggest that the CCS should sort out the matter as the current situation is not only confusing but also de-motivating the Community Based Distributors.

#### **5.2.4 Mental health and drug abuse.**

Recently, the CCS has ventured into the mental health problems of the community. A number of social problems in the community, e.g. shattered dreams, broken marriages, unemployment etc.,



have probably led people to alcoholism, taking of drugs - especially among the unemployed youth - and social violence. On the one hand, the CCS has launched a campaign in all educational institutions against drug abuse among students, who are the most vulnerable group. On the other hand, the communities are sensitised to treat mental cases as they treat any other disease. This has led to a healing effect among the relatives of mentally sick people because, traditionally, such patients were ostracized in the society, leading to guilt feelings among the relatives. Relatives and friends are currently enlightened on how to seek treatment at specialized institutions for their patients. In addition, they are acquainted with the legal aspects in regard to the property of mentally sick persons in accordance with Chapter 248 of the Mental Health Act of Kenya.

#### **5.2.5 Dental health.**

Just as mental health care, dental health care is a recent intervention that the CCS has added to its basket. The dental health campaign is carried out in educational institutions, hand in hand with the other health programmes mentioned above.

#### **5.2.6 Summary.**

In concluding this section, it is clear from the foregoing that the Church, through the CCS, is much involved in the health needs of the people. In my opinion such interventions are a concrete example of a practical theology that is “seeking to address the ‘public’ sphere of life, and not only the ‘personal’ sphere” (Cochrane et al 1991:45). This, I believe, is a legitimate expression of God’s mission. When such a theology characterizes the Church, she deals with the concrete problems and struggles of the society. Ultimately, the Church incarnates Christ in the society and the Church becomes relevant to the society.

### **5.3 SECTION TWO :THE CCS AND SOCIAL WELFARE INTERVENTIONS.**

This section looks at social welfare interventions in which the CCS is involved. Though it also operates some relief services, the CCS through its social-welfare portfolio is primarily concerned

with the spread of HIV/AIDS. Rather than approaching the AIDS pandemic through the Community Health Department, the CCS sees the problem as belonging more to the social domain than do conventional diseases. The approach seems appropriate in the context because it challenges the community to rethink their social behaviour, lest they are tempted to relegate the incidence of HIV/AIDS to the traditional medical domain over which they may have little or no control. People are, therefore, made to realise that their social behaviour is crucial in checking the spread of this major killer.

### **5.3.1 The CCS against AIDS.**

A substantial amount of data on the actual number of AIDS cases are usually obtained from hospital records, while information on HIV prevalence and incidence is gathered annually from 13 sites throughout Kenya which were established as part of a sentinel surveillance system.

Trends and figures on AIDS prompted the organization to join in the war against AIDS. The number of children orphaned by AIDS in Kenya is expected to reach 600 000 by the year 2000. The concern over the spread of HIV has resulted in the national theme being changed from the global “Towards a Landmine Free Africa” to “Challenges of Caring and Protecting Children From HIV/Aids” (Daily Nation, Wednesday, June 10, 1998), underlines the relevancy of our national concern of the scourge towards the younger generation.

What is the Church’s concrete response to and attitude about the AIDS pandemic that is devastating people’s lives? Has she adequately and appropriately engaged with this relatively new crisis? How is she suited to curb the AIDS /HIV prevalence? In Kenya, the Church ministers to the largest section of the population. Out of the country’s 30 million people, 80% profess to be Christians. Further the statistics show that 49% of the youth attending church services are sexually active (Daily Nation, Thursday, June 4, 1998). The Church is the only place where one can reach so many people at once, so many times. It addresses many people for 52 weeks, probably more than many organisations fighting AIDS. For this reason church leaders and organizations have tremendous potential to curb the spread of AIDS. The CCS is aware that the problem of

HIV/AIDS has not spared the Church, just as it has not stopped wreaking havoc on other institutions.

The main target group in the campaign against HIV/AIDS is the youth, both in villages and in educational and other institutions. The campaign is carried out through seminars, video shows, posters, brochures, leaflets, music and drama. In addition, the CCS works with AIDS patients to present living examples. The venues of promotional activities include the churches, schools, community grounds such as markets and other social gathering places.

The CCS also targets opinion leaders because they can influence behaviour change. Leaders can easily start a ripple effect on the grassroots. The organisation strongly teaches that HIV/AIDS is caused by a virus and is not a curse or witchcraft. As a consequence of the CCS campaigns, some clergy are openly addressing the AIDS pandemic in their sermons/ministries.

However, in programmes targeting attitudes and behaviour changes, it is not possible to measure the impact immediately. Time will tell the success of these interventions. In the interim, it can be assumed that the spirited interest shown and demand displayed by head teachers, churches and other parties at CCS Aids awareness campaigns suggest the desired impact is being felt.

The objectives of the campaign are :

- (a) Working with the District multi-sectoral AIDS awareness planning team.
- (b) Training and mobilizing counselling teams.
- (c) Passing appropriate messages/factual information about HIV/AIDS to the community in order to help people develop a positive attitude toward AIDS patients in the society.
- (d) Sustaining the home-based care of people with AIDS, visiting them in hospital, and giving technical advice to families with AIDS patients at home. Here the need for participation by communities in the control, assistance and rehabilitation of children is emphasised by initiating and contributing to programmes and projects within their areas.

Given the evidence that the vast majority of HIV infections in Kenya are contracted through heterosexual contact, information on sexual behaviour is important in designing and monitoring intervention programmes to control the spread of this fatal disease. In the context, the CCS wants to promote AIDS prevention in ways consistent with the Church’s moral and pastoral teaching. The CCS needs to create sufficient capacity so that the Church can respond appropriately to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Clearly, the CCS is playing its part in the campaign against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is hoped that other churches in the country are also doing their part. Unfortunately, church leaders in Kenya have wrongly been portrayed as being indifferent to the AIDS crisis and even hostile toward persons with the disease.

### 5.3.2 Relief services.

In addition to the HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, the Social Department of the CCS offers relief services to the most vulnerable in the society, especially during calamities such as famine.

Table 5.4 below shows the distribution of relief seed from the Wang’uru Extension Station in 1992.

**Table 5.4**

**Distribution of relief seeds at Wang’uru in 1992**

seed variety	value in Ksh.	No. of beneficiaries
Maize	3040	760
Beans	8228	760
Cow peas	1054	527
Total	12322	2047

**Source:** CCS archives Wang’ru Extension Station.

Note: The figure might be misleading because they do not indicate whether all the beneficiaries came from Mwea or include other parts of the District. We were not able to access the relevant records, assuming they are available. Since Mwea is the most marginalised part of the District it may be safe to assume that the majority of beneficiaries came from the Division. However, we would not build on that. Often the most marginalised find it most difficult to attract attention to their plight, while the stronger candidates are in a better position to fend for their interests. It is also possible that the distributing agencies are biased towards their own kith and kin. At worst, corruption distorts distribution.

In 1997, the CCS distributed 12 metric tons of grain to 1000 beneficiaries across the Diocese.

Again the research was not able to establish how many of them came from Mwea. Nevertheless, relief services are definitely a short-term solution to emergencies. The CCS should never lose sight of its vision to help the poor and marginalised to attain their own sustainable development.

#### **5.4 Conclusion.**

This chapter, carried out the profile of health facilities in Kirinyaga District in relation to the distribution of the same in Mwea. Although the Division has the highest number of these institutions, they are, lamentably in deplorable conditions. The major obstacle is lack of drugs. It is against that background that it is noted that the CCS has made an impact on the health of the community in some specific areas. Firstly, the immunisation programme of children under five years, and the ante-natal and post-natal services are commendable. Secondly, the community health workers and distributors are playing a critical role in the promotion of community health. But the CCS and the community need to resolve the problem of ownership of the equipment kit as well as the question of rewarding these workers. Thirdly, the organisation's interventions against the spread of HIV/AIDS are getting positive responses from the congregations, schools and community leaders. The CCS has targeted the youth and opinion leaders in the awareness campaign against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As a consequence of this campaign, some clergy are more openly addressing AIDS pandemic in their sermons and/ministries. This is a profound breakthrough since the Church has in the past avoided direct dialogue on sexual matters. However, the results of the CCS investment are not self-evident in the short term.

In spite of the shortcomings cited, and in recognition of limited financial resources and the attendant constraints, the CCS is determined to live up to its Mission Statement. What remains a challenge to the organisation is to be innovative enough to generate more funds, preferably locally, to meet its ambitious community health programme.

The next chapter, presents data collected for this project. I proceed to interpret and analyse this data with a view to shedding more light on the CCS development effort in Mwea.

## CHAPTER SIX

### **6 Data Analysis and Interpretation.**

#### **6.1 Introduction.**

The last two chapters, have discussed the development interventions offered by the CCS through its three departments, namely, the Rural Development, Community Health and the Social Welfare Departments. The problems in rural areas include overpopulation and a deteriorating human-land ratio, environmental degradation, low rural incomes and a lack of both rural and non-rural off-farm employment opportunities. What are the indicators that the CCS interventions and strategies are addressing these problems in the rural Mwea?

This chapter seeks to analyse and interpret data collected on the CCS development interventions in relation to poverty alleviation in the communities. The analysis presents a critical evaluation of the work of the CCS in Kirinyaga in general and in Mwea Division in particular. Given the geographical and the unique social circumstances in which the CCS is operating there, the organisation's interventions should be seen as supplementing the Government's and other development agencies' efforts. The focus of the chapter is on the CCS's interventions using the data collected from contact farmers and the beneficiaries of the CCS interventions, other development role-players, the clergy and some key personalities associated with the CCS. In the process, an attempt is made to test my hypothesis namely: The CCS might be a fruitful experiment of church involvement in community development.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section briefly gives an overview of research methodology. The second section provides data interpretation, findings and recommendations. The third section offers a summary of the chapter.

## **6.2 Section One: Research methodology.**

### **6.2.1 Collection of data.**

In order to give an accurate profile of this project the researcher intentionally opted to be flexible in data collection methodologies. Thus combinations of structured questionnaires and open-ended interviews were used in tandem to increase the areas of information available. The data were collected from the CCS archives, through interviews, (please see appendix 4a for interview schedule) questionnaires (appendix 4b) and observation. The interviews were primarily focused on the CCS contact farmers, agents, local management committees of various projects, and women's groups. All of them are direct beneficiaries of the CCS development interventions in one way or another. An attempt was made to interview the respondents at their respective sites in the field in order to give the researcher an opportunity of first-hand experience and observation of the data required.

At the time of this study there were 78 parishes in Kirinyaga of which 18 were in Mwea. Each parish is headed by one priest. Mwea Division had 18 priests, two of whom were women. The diocesan clergy in the parishes and at the diocesan headquarters were served with a self-administered questionnaire (appendix 4b) which they were requested to return to the diocesan office. The questions were deliberately open-ended. Wilson has observed that open-ended questions do not constrain the respondent's beliefs or opinions to predetermined categories as "fully standardized methods of data collection must do" (1996:101). In addition, un-coded questions allow the researcher to search the full range of responses obtained before reducing replies to a set of categories. However, Wilson warns that the potential for bias introduced by the interviewer is considerable (1996:101).

In terms of costs, self-administered questionnaires are usually cheaper than interview schedules, though the response rate is usually low and the researcher has no control over the conditions under which the data are elicited. Bearing this in mind, the researcher opted for both the open-ended and self-administered questionnaire methodology for collecting data from the clergy.

Others interviewees were the key role-players or associates of CCS activities, e.g. the Diocesan Bishop, the CCS Board of Directors, senior CCS officers, heads of relevant Government departments, and Church leaders of other denominations. It was felt that those individuals were too busy to attend to a questionnaire. They were interviewed by appointment at their places of work.. Some of the interviews were taped, if there were no objections. I hope that all these sources led to a holistic inquiry which gave substance to the project. Most respondents co-operated, seemed to enjoy the interviews and appeared to be taking it seriously. They seemed to give honest answers to my questions. The co-operation between the researcher and the respondents may be attributed to the respect with which the priesthood is held in our society. As one of the priests of the Diocese, the researcher enjoyed this goodwill. Another factor which may have contributed to the rapport is that the researcher had shared his vision with the Diocesan Bishop. As a result of their meeting, the Bishop introduced the researcher and gave him an opportunity to make a personal appeal for support for the project during a clergy and church workers conference held on 8 December 1998.

### **6.2.2 Data analysis.**

Commenting on data analysis, Peil says:

Whether data come from documents, through observation or interviewing, the process of analysis involves organisation, manipulation and consideration of their meaning...(Peil 1995:130)

Through the data presented, I examine and evaluate the work of the CCS, especially in regard to empowering the poor and the marginalised in the society to be in charge of their development.

## **6.3 Section Two: Data interpretation, findings and recommendations.**

### **6.3.1 Data from interviews with the contact farmers.**

There are 30 CCS contact farmers scattered in Mwea Division. Table 6.1 shows the distribution by gender and age of the farmers that were interviewed.



**Table 6.1**

**Distribution of interviewed contact farmers.**

location	Gender		Age		Total
	Male	Female	under 45	Over 45	
Mutithi	4	4	3	5	8
Thiba	7	2	2	7	9
Nyangati	1	-	-	1	1
Kangai	1	-	-	1	1
Tebere	2	1	-	3	3
Murinduko	1	-	-	1	1
Total	16	7	5	18	23

**Source:** The CCS Wang'uru Extension Station.

The 23 interviewees represent 77% of the total contact farmers in the Division. The table shows 16 or 70% of the interviewees were male while only seven or 30% were female. Only five or 22% of the farmers were below the age of 45.

The interpretation of this data reveals a number of crucial facts that impact on the development of the community:

(i) A common feature among the contact farmers was that they owned land - a vital resource in the rural areas. Since the majority of the contact farmers are men, it would appear that few women have access to land ownership in Mwea. Considering the fact that women make up slightly more than 50% of the population ( Daily Nation, Wednesday, May 12, 1999), this is rather unfortunate. The marginalisation of women in land ownership may be attributed to the customary practices which have discriminated against women not only in land ownership but also in the ownership of property in general. In this case, the 30% were apparently widows who seem to have beaten the odds and acquired inheritance from their deceased spouses. Women play an important role in food

production but, as Pearson has observed, “without direct ownership or right to farm land, a woman has little say in allocation of the income or crops” (1992:297). Landlessness and/or lack of access to it can mean to the woman a total dependence on the (male) head of the family. If the husband is irresponsible, the situation may pose real difficulties to the woman in meeting her own and her children’s needs for food and clothing. For this reason I would urge a philosophy of development that enhances not only participation and the economic status of women, but also their access to and ownership of economic resources. I suggest, therefore, that the Church and the CCS should sensitise the community to shed customary norms, e.g., non-ownership of property (especially land) by women. Such norms in my view are an obstacle to sustainable development. But such norms are a deep seated and complex issue. Thus which steps could be taken to change the system? One could begin, for instance, with joint ownership (even of other property) by spouses so that with the demise of the husband, the wife is in control, as well as with the stipulation that it is the wife who has to inherit the land (property), not the sons or some other relatives when the husband dies. However, this presupposes a change of the patriarchal world view. I think that the church can slowly make some inroads in that direction by teaching her congregations.

(ii) The development through the contact farmer paradigm has left out a vast majority of the population aged 45 years and under. The explanation for this phenomenon is that historically land ownership has been in the hands of the elderly in the community. It seems that this trend has largely persisted in Mwea in spite of the changed land tenure system from communal to registered freehold title. The significant point is that land, the primary resource in the rural areas, is not easily available or freely accessible to a large proportion of the population which has the most potential and needs the resource to earn a living to feed and educate their children, pay medical expenses and meet other financial obligations. Therefore, eliminating the existing land ownership barriers would eventually create access to land for more middle-aged citizens (and especially women) to provide a decent life to their children. I would suggest that the church and its organs such as the CCS should advocate a change of the land tenure system so that this vital resource is readily accessible and available to those in the community who can make the best use of it for the greater

good of the society. This would ensure that the large active proportion of the population is not restricted in food production for their families. The culture of owning land for the sake of prestige should be overcome.

(iii) 83% of the interviewees were found to be using firewood as their main source of fuel. The remaining 17% were using charcoal and dry cow dung. An insignificant number combined charcoal and paraffin. Since Mwea is in a dry zone, the bulk of the firewood is imported from outside the Division. This means that a large proportion of the meagre incomes available to the community is diverted to this need rather than feeding the families. In addition, and of equal concern, the fragile local flora is threatened by extinction as the communities take away the available vegetation and convert it into fuel.

In the light of what has been said above, I propose that development activities in Mwea should take environmental concerns seriously. Agro-forestry should be enhanced. For example, *grevia robusta*, a popular agro-forestry plant, could be introduced. It does not affect crops and acts as a nutrient provider by absorbing nitrates from deep soils and depositing them on top soil through leaf fall. This helps in the reclamation of top soils that are regularly leached by wind and water erosion. Its other advantage is that it grows fast, while its branches provide firewood through regular pruning. The fodder crops could be planted between the trees. The leaf fall conserves water for the fodder and allows it to grow even during the dry season. The common fodder crop in Mwea is Napier grass which is also useful in soil management. The main purpose of agro-forestry is to conserve both soil and farm water in order to boost returns.

In addition, farmers could be encouraged to plant one tree or more to replace each tree they cut. Promotion of 'appropriate' technology such as solar energy and energy-saving stoves could also enhance environmental conservation as it would provide an alternative source of cooking energy.

Because of the scarcity of cooking fuel, the communities cannot afford to boil water for domestic consumption which, as we have already noted, is highly contaminated. Thus children and adults

become vulnerable to waterborne diseases. An unhealthy population cannot produce sufficient food to meet its basic needs. They become poor and the vicious circle of poverty continues.

I appreciate the CCS efforts toward environmental conservation, but my casual observation convinced me that more can be done including proper co-ordination with the Church. Each church compound should, for instance, have a tree nursery project.

(iv) All the interviewees use raw water for their domestic consumption. Only 26% have access to piped water. A further 26% draw their water from the rivers that flow through Mwea which are already polluted from the upper zones of the district. The rest get their water from canals ( please see appendix 5) or boreholes. A minimal number of the latter group have roof catchments but these do not have a holding capacity to last until the next rains. Clearly, there is no safe drinking water in Mwea.

I commend the CCS support to women's groups who are constructing water jars for the purpose of harvesting rain water. However, I feel that this potential resource for comparatively safe water is neither sufficiently exploited nor is there concrete evidence that serious attention is being directed towards it.

Related to the issue of unhealthy water is the CCS involvement in the promotion of horticultural farming in the Division. The success of horticultural farming is highly dependent on the application of fertilizers and chemicals for spraying. The artificial fertilizers are harmful in the long run as they emit by-products like ammonia which reduce soil fertility. Their effects can only be offset through the use of lime, which is expensive. Chemical residues add to the pollution of the environment.

The CCS may want to argue that it is promoting organic farming to counter the use of artificial fertilizers. However, due to its commercialised nature, horticultural farming needs quick returns. Consequently, farmers are not keen to adopt organic farming.

For this reason I suggest that ways and means of using local materials to develop water filters be devised and promoted for use by the communities, especially the schools. Alternatively, the CCS should abandon agricultural activities that depend on chemicals.

(v) A mere 17% of the interviewees responded that there were some specific projects for women supported by the CCS in their areas, but none for children and the disabled. But it is common knowledge that women, children, and the disabled are the most marginalised and disadvantaged among the poor in the society. In addition women and children constitute a significant percentage of the population. In that light, it is a matter of concern that the CCS does not seem to recognize the fact. We would propose that the CCS addresses this need by starting projects with a bias towards children and the disabled.

(vi) On general economic benefits, 39% of the interviewees indicated that their standard of living had improved through the CCS interventions. 18% thought that, in spite of the CCS interventions, their standard of living had not changed. The other 43% declined to commit themselves on either side. This is probably because our people tend to hide their 'affluence' in fear that the door for help might be closed in the future.

However, my observation suggested a significant improvement in the people's lives through CCS development interventions. This is evidenced especially through the women's groups. Women have been able to improve their houses - removing the grass thatch and putting corrugated iron sheets. They admitted that they are able to pay school fees for their children without much strain through the merry-go-rounds; press oil from sunflowers (see appendix 2) for domestic use and make bricks for sale. In all of these activities, women are supported by the CCS.

The communities were found to be receptive and willing to work hand in hand with the CCS. Their contribution in labour and kind was remarkable. It was a positive indicator that they were gaining from the projects. However, there is always room for improvement.

The overall observation concerning the system of using contact farmers as an approach to development activities in the community, however, was that it anticipated a ‘trickle down’ effect on the rest of the community. There was little doubt that the contact farmer played a role in development by passing the knowledge gained through seminars, workshops, educational tours, demonstrations and shows etc. to other farmers. Nevertheless, there was a subtle conception in the rest of the population that the contact farmer was a ‘CCS farmer’. On the one hand, this concept makes it difficult for the local community to see the contact farmer as a resource person in their midst. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that contact farmers are in fact volunteers in the implementation of the CCS programmes. Some technical packages may overburden them, leading to a lack of motivation to support the programme. In the circumstances, it seems worthwhile for the CCS to re-evaluate this paradigm. To avoid the conflict, the CCS could perhaps wean the contact farmers every two years. This would diminish the monopolistic tendency perpetuated by long serving contact farmers. In addition it would give a chance for others to make their contribution.

**6.3.2 Data from interviews with other role players.**

The CCS is working in collaboration with other development agencies to alleviate poverty in Mwea. Some of those partners were interviewed on a wide range of issues with a view of shedding more light on the impact of the CCS on some specific areas of development.

**(i) Ministry of Education: education and poverty**

According to the District Education Officer, Kerugoya, there are 60 primary schools in Mwea of which 14 or 23% are church sponsored. The Diocese of Kirinyaga sponsors five or 36% of all church-sponsored primary schools.

Table 6.2 shows primary school enrolment by gender in the last two years.

**Table 6.2**  
**Primary school enrolment by gender**

Year	1997	1998
No of boys	13798	13495
No of girls	13996	14254
Total Enrollment	27794	27749

**Source:** District Education Office-Kirinyaga.

The table shows that 303 (or 2.2%) boys dropped from school while the number of girls increased by 258 (or 2%) in 1998. The major cause of school drop-out was believed to be a lack of money to pay school fees, to buy books, to pay for the building funds etc., lack of food (i.e. children, especially boys, run away to fend for themselves), domestic problems (i.e. broken families) and child labour in the rice fields. In addition, with the Aids scourge, many children have been rendered orphans. In the absence of a family set-up and in view of the disintegration of the traditional extended-family values, these orphans drop out of the school.

In the circumstances, specific schemes to care for the orphaned in the school are needed. But we suggest that the Church should not fall back on the conventional “children’s homes”. I think that the homes tend to detach the children from their normal environment which is vital for the holistic growth of a human being. In the long term children in such homes might suffer psychologically from a sense of not ‘belonging to a family’. Eventually, therefore, they are stigmatised in their adult life.

Besides the unsuitability of the “children’s homes” it may not be easy to run the homes for logistical reasons as the number of orphans swell due to the Aids epidemic. In the circumstances, we propose that the Church should explore a pastoral ministry through which the orphans would be raised by their immediate relatives or willing adopters. The CCS would then devise ways and means to support the children’s education at the normal facilities where they integrate with their

peers from normal families.

Another area of need in education, where the CCS interventions would be of immense value, is educating intelligent children stemming from poor families. In a number of cases these unfortunate children have had to discontinue their schooling due to lack of funds. Although the Church, through her Education Department, is giving bursaries to some extreme cases, the support is grossly inadequate.

In order to reduce school drop-out due to hunger, the CCS could explore ways and means of establishing a school feeding programme for children in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools. Such a programme would have an added advantage: improvement of the nutritional status of the school children by providing a reasonably well-balanced diet. The overall aim would be to improve learning and overcoming school drop-out on account of hunger. In order to avoid the dependency syndrome, the parents could be encouraged to share in the cost by paying a small fee. The church and the CCS would, however, engage in an aggressive campaign to build a strong financial base.

Many of the remedial actions suggested so far have a financial implication. In view of non-availability of funds, I would suggest that the church should adopt the well known Kenyan spirit of *Harambee* which means people pulling together and pooling their resources for a communal project. However, this would be at the initial stages of launching the project and probably annually thereafter, otherwise harambee projects are becoming monotonous. Another method of supporting the project would be raising crops on unused schools' farms<sup>4</sup>. Currently, most of these farms are left fallow.

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<sup>4</sup>Archbishop Gitari Academy, of which I have had the privilege of being the Chair of the Board, can be cited as model. It grows most of the food consumed by the pupils. Any surplus, say of green vegetables and milk especially during the school holidays, is sold to the local community and the income is used to buy other food items unavailable on the farm.



In the interim, the Church should continue enhancing counselling services to both parents and pupils. In the latter case, parish ministers should pay pastoral visits to the schools within their parishes and hopefully identify particular cases for referral to the CCS or any other agent for further action.

The Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination is crucial for proceeding to secondary school. Table 6.3 shows the KCPE performance by gender for the last two years.

**Table 6.3**  
**KCPE performance by gender**

Year	1997	1998
number of boys	1022	1018
number of girls	988	1070
Total number of candidates	2010	2088

**Source:** District Education Office - Kirinyaga.

The examination concludes the primary school education and hence its implication cannot be underrated. The data shows that there was a slight drop of 0.4% of the number of boys sitting for the National Examination while the number of girls increased by 7%. Let us analyse:

Of the total 2010 candidates in 1997, only 416 (or 21%) were absorbed by government and other secondary schools. An incredible 1604 (or 79%) could not proceed with further education - largely due to the limited capacity of the existing secondary schools and other post-primary school institutions. Only 221 of the boys (22%) and 195 of the girls (20%) comprised the more fortunate who proceeded to secondary schools.

The data reveals that 1604 children terminated their education at primary school at the crucial and tender age of 15 years and below. On the one hand, they are too young to be absorbed in the labour

market, even if the jobs were available. On the other hand, they have hardly any skills to prepare them for self-reliance in society. Consequently, they join the army of the poor and dependent in the society. The girls are even more vulnerable. They may end up in prostitution or fall to early pregnancies and early, almost always unstable marriages.

This is a daunting problem which is probably beyond the capacity of the Church. I am, however, inclined to believe that the Church, through its organs such as the CCS, should work toward finding a solution of the problem. Probably one of the solutions would be to increase the capacity of secondary schools in the Division to absorb more KCPE graduates. This might mean either increasing the number of the schools or expanding the existing institutions. It may also be useful to start village and youth polytechnics and industrial training centres to teach various trades, arts and crafts (e.g. masonry, tie and dye, cookery, sewing etc.). Such institutions would impart skills to the graduands to enable them to become independent. The Archdiocese of Nairobi has a training centre and perhaps the CCS would want to learn from it.

#### (ii) Secondary school education

If the picture on the primary school education is gloomy, it is hardly any better in secondary school education. According to the District Education Officer, Kerugoya, there are 14 secondary schools, ten (or 71%) of which are sponsored by the various churches. The Diocese of Kirinyaga sponsors six (or 60%) of them.

Table 6.4 shows enrollment by gender for the last two years.

**Table 6.4**

#### **Secondary school enrolment by gender**

Year	1997	1998
Number of boys	1698	1667
Number of girls	2432	2311
Total enrollment	4130	3978

**Source:** District Education Office - Kirinyaga.

The data reveals that there was a drop-out of 31 (2%) and 121 (5%) of boys and girls respectively in 1998. In 1997, the drop-out was 112 and 77 for boys and girls respectively (District Education Officer, Kerugoya). The drop-out was attributed to similar factors as in the primary school, except for the girls in the secondary school, where early pregnancies were cited as the main factor. The drop-out proportions at secondary education level have increased substantially as compared with drop-out ratios in primary schools (under 15s).

The results demonstrate that school retention is highest at the ages corresponding with the primary school level and lower at secondary school ages. This trend may be attributed to social factors. At the primary school level, pupils are young. They can cling to their parents, family, and friends, other social tensions notwithstanding. In contrast, at secondary school level, the students are adolescents. They are impatient and hardly withstand the consequences and frustrations of broken families. They opt to go it alone, drop out of school and leave home to go into the world.

The great preponderance of girls who are enrolled in secondary school may be attributed firstly to the common knowledge female-male population imbalance in the society. The former makes up 52% of the population in the country. Secondly, as we noted in Table 6.2, the drop-out ratio of the boys is higher than that of the girls for reasons analysed in paragraph 6.3.2 (i).

It is self-evident that the Church would play a critical role if it could alleviate the situation. Here we again cite counselling services to both the parents and students as crucial. However, perhaps even more important is teaching the adolescents lessons on family life. This could start at the church-sponsored schools. Probably that would reduce the many unwanted teenage pregnancies. For a long time the church's approach on the subject has been dogmatic. At worst she has pretended that the problem of teenage pregnancy does not exist. But a problem cannot be solved by simply wishing it away. Ultimately, the church has had to contend with the pastoral issues of single mothers, broken families and street children. In this context, family life education is essential to the overall reduction of poverty in the communities. The CCS, as the development arm of the Church with expertise, should extend family education to all church institutions, including

sponsored schools.

High school education culminates in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination. It is a bridge to adult life for an elite. Table 6.5 shows candidates by gender in the last two years:

**Table 6.5**  
**KSCE candidates by gender**

Year	1997	1998
Number of boys	128	162
Number of girls	334	345
Total number of candidates	462	507

Source: District Education Office-Kirinyaga.

In 1998, 162 boys compared to 128 in 1997 sat for the Kenya Certificate for Secondary Education (KCSE), while 345 girls compared to 334 in 1997 sat for the examination. There was an increase of 34 (26.6%) and 11 (3.3%) boys and girls respectively in 1998. However, in 1997 out of the total 462 candidates only seven (one boy and six girls) or 1.5% of the candidates were admitted into the universities. A further 59 candidates or 12.8% (27 boys and 32 girls) were admitted into post-secondary institutions, such as Teachers' Training Colleges.

This data reveals that 396 pupils or 85.7% did not proceed either to the University or to any other post secondary education. They fell into a labour market that has not been able to absorb past graduates. Although our statistics in this case only apply to 1997, there is reason to believe that the situation has been much the same for several years in a row. Again the preponderance of girls can be noted in Table 6.5 for similar reasons as observed in Table 6.4 under paragraph 6.3.2 (ii).

Clearly, the Church or the CCS does not have the capacity to address this herculean problem. It is nevertheless my submission that in its institutional form the Church should explore ways and

means of tackling it. One approach would be job creation in the agricultural sector which at present is underdeveloped. At the time of this study, a lot of commercial horticultural activities were taking place. I saw many young men and women selling french beans in the collecting centres, working on furrow irrigation or land preparation. My interviews at the centres revealed that the owners of the french beans were the young people themselves. There seems to be a big potential for expansion of this horticultural activity in Mwea because of the possibility of cheap furrow irrigation.

Another approach lies in starting a university to absorb excess students who may have qualified but lacked places in public universities. The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches have each adopted that strategy. Other churches such as the Seventh Day Adventist and the Africa Inland Church have started their own universities. The universities are open to students from other parts of the country regardless of their religious affiliation. However, the institutions have a deliberate bias towards the local communities.

Despite the seemingly negative image of the education profile in Mwea, it is encouraging to note that the Church has sponsored several primary and secondary schools. These schools can provide suitable sites for promoting environmental awareness, appropriate technology, arts and crafts. The Church should take advantage of the government's provision that allows the sponsor to contribute an input in the school curriculum. Thus with a proper ecumenical approach, the Church, the relevant authorities and other stakeholders could formulate education policies and programmes with a view to : (a) reducing drop-out in the school age population with emphasis on rural areas and among female students, (b) improving enrollment rates and (c) increasing education and other training opportunities for the rapidly increasing school age population so as to promote higher literacy and also cater for those who fail to progress to higher education. What is required is further co-ordination of the CCS activities to include formally an education component which is now lacking.

(iii) Department of Adult Education: literacy and poverty

The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation ( UNESCO) defines a literate person as one who can read and write, with understanding, a short simple statement of his/her everyday life (Kenya Population Census, Analytical Report, Volume IV, April, 1996). According to the same document Kirinyaga has a relatively high literacy rate, namely 70%.

Table 6.6 shows comparative enrollment in adult literacy classes in Mwea in relation to the rest of the district.

**Table 6.6**  
**Adult literacy enrolment by Division and gender**

Division	Full time classes			Part time classes			Self- help classes			Grand Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Central	66	313	379	36	228	264	-	-	-	92	541	633
Ndia	69	306	375	77	122	199	12	129	141	158	557	715
Gichugu	74	443	517	68	350	418	45	73	118	187	866	1053
Mwea	32	308	340	52	212	264	-	24	24	84	544	628
Total	241	1370	1611	233	912	1145	57	226	283	521	2508	3029

**Source:** District Adult Education Office - Kirinyaga.

The table shows that Mwea had the lowest enrolment figures in both sexes - 16% and 21.7% of males and females respectively. The table also shows that there were no self-help classes for males in Mwea while a mere 24 females learners participated. The low enrollment for the males (common for the rest of the District) may be attributed to the cultural attitudes of men not wanting to compete with women. The latter is culturally perceived as the weaker sex. Another explanation may lie in the fact that males might be busy elsewhere earning an income to support the family. The concept of adult education has also been misunderstood as imparting skills to the otherwise ‘un-educatable group of illiterate people’. This has created a negative attitude towards adult education. Since many of the illiterates are found in the church, the church should try to correct this unfortunate situation.

The CCS collaborates with various government departments and non-governmental organisations in adult literacy activities. The programme is charged with the provision of functional education i.e. education with skills aimed at equipping the learners with knowledge they can apply in their local setting to improve their lot. Notable among the collaborators was the Roman Catholic Diocese of Murang'a. The Catholic Diocese sponsors functional adult literacy in Mwea and Gichugu. It has conducted workshops and seminars for teachers and learners. It has provided supervisors with bicycles to enhance proper supervision and inspection of the programme. Unfortunately, as in many other aspects of development, it lacked an ecumenical approach. Consequently, there was duplication of services, leading to a wastage of resources. I would suggest that the CCS seeks dialogue with its counterpart in the Catholic Diocese of Murang'a with a view of drawing up a common strategy to address the issue.

As an in-house strategy, the Church (Diocese) and the CCS should develop appropriate policies and programmes that will raise adult literacy rates. For instance, the Church should strictly adhere to a literacy pre-qualification for those who aspire for leadership in the Church. The current requirement that those who desire to be considered for the lay ministry must attend Theological Education by Extension has not been enforced. The Presbyterian Church has, for example, insisted with some success that church elders must be literate. Christians could be encouraged to read the Bible for themselves. The CCS could develop and promote adult literacy through the women's groups and other development groups, e.g. the merry-go-rounds. It would be appropriate to start gender-sensitive adult literacy classes in order to encourage more men who might feel embarrassed to learn with women. This would reduce the gender disparity. In brief I would call upon the Church, through the CCS, to be more involved in projects to alleviate illiteracy. In my opinion neither the Church nor the CCS is currently doing enough towards addressing this social need.

Again the question of funding arises. It would be suggested that these programmes need not be implemented all at once. The important inference we attempt to draw for now is that the [Church] CCS development activities could be more innovative and integrated so that the existing church structures e.g. the Mothers' Union, are made available to address issues such as adult literacy. At

the moment these structures are not fully utilized. The CCS, as the arm of church development, should be able to mobilize these resources, perhaps at a minimal cost.

(iv) Ministry of Health: fertility and poverty

Fertility in Kenya rapidly increased during the early 1960s and 1970s culminating in the highest ever recorded total fertility rate of 8.0 in 1979 ( Kenya Population Census 1989, Analytical Report, Volume IV, April 1996). This was attributed to improvement in the standard of living, low use of contraceptives, low age at marriage and the high value accorded to children. These demographic trends posed diverse challenges to the government in so far as provision of basic needs was concerned. The introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS) in the course of the 1980s compounded the adverse socio-economic consequences of rapid population growth (Kenya Population Census 1989, Analytical Report, Volume IV, April 1996). The family planning programme that accorded fertility reduction was enhanced.

Table 6.7 presents births by age of the mother both in health institutions and at home in Mwea.



**Table 6.7****Births by age of the mother at Health Institutions (HI) and at home.**

Age	Dec. HI Home	Nov. HI Home	Oct. HI Home	Sept. HI Home	Aug. HI Home	July HI Home	Total HI Home
<15						2	2
15-19	98 45	98 35	69 25	43 15	105 35	247 86	660 241
20-24	183 100	169 64	126 69	84 33	181 80	319 70	1062 416
25-29	101 80	116 72	87 60	39 30	121 60	212 42	676 344
30-34	69 39	69 22	40 30	32 13	65 35	124 30	399 169
35-39	16 30	30 17	21 17	14 14	32 15	58 26	171 119
40-44	1 5	2 5	7 10	2 4	2 8	8 7	22 39
45-49	2 3	2 1	3 2	-	-	1 2	8 8
sub t	470 302	486 216	353 213	214 109	506 233	969 265	2998 1338
GT.	772	702	566	323	739	1234	4336

Source: District Registrar of Births and Deaths - Kirinyaga.

The data reveal a number of insights relevant to our study:

- (a) It suggests that women at age 20-24 have the highest fertility.

This has a number of implications. First, since the majority, about 95%, of women in Kenya stay married during their reproductive period (Daily Nation, Friday, April 23, 1999), age at marriage becomes an important milestone in their reproductive history. As already seen (paragraph 6.3.2 (i)), many girls before the 20-24 birthday discontinue their formal schooling due to various factors. The mean age at marriage for females in Kenya is 21.6 years and 26.0 for males (Kenya Population Census 1989, Analytical Report, Volume IV, April 1996). It is therefore safe to assume that they will marry when they leave school as an economic safety valve. In this context family planning is critical, otherwise the young women will find themselves with large families which they cannot

support. It is likely that such mothers in rural Mwea will be unemployed. That means they must depend on their spouses for economic support. Assuming that their spouses are likely to be under 44, an age group we have already seen is largely landless and jobless, then the family's survival becomes precarious. The marriages might become unstable, leading to broken families. Children run away from home and school into urban centres. They live by scavenging from dustbins. Those that do not migrate into the urban areas survive on menial jobs on the farms. The vicious circle of poverty continues.

If the young mothers are unmarried, they are likely to suffer even more frustrations and hardships as they bring up their children. In an attempt to earn money to feed the children, these women are tempted to fall into prostitution. This leads to social problems which impact on the communities.

Church structures such as the Mother's Union and Youth Groups discriminate against unmarried mothers who are seen as 'living promiscuously'. There is very little pastoral care and counselling to this segment of the community. Yet, it is at this age that the young mothers need a lot of moral support, especially in terms of family life education. Besides that, it might be necessary to offer them some material support.

Another option to curb the incidence of early child-bearing is to delay marriage. In that connection, Kpedekpo (1982) observes that extended formal education has been found to be one of the main reasons for the postponement of marriage among educated women and indeed it also delays the first birth. Hence education is one of the socio-economic factors that influence fertility. Thus female education comes out as a strategic motivator towards low fertility. Accordingly, the expansion of secondary school and post-secondary education for girls would help to curb rapid population growth. Since women form a large constituency of the Church, the Church through the CCS programmes could enhance women's education at Mwea.

(b) Fertility seems to be lower from age 30-34.

The table shows that fertility decreases in the age group from 30-34. A possible explanation for this phenomenon is that the efforts of the CCS (and other agencies) in family planning education is

in canals (see appendix 5) and in the rice ponds which act as their breeding grounds. In addition, high malaria resurgence may be attributed to climatic changes and, according to scientists, the growing resistance of mosquitoes to the available drugs (Daily Nation, Wednesday, May 12, 1999).

bearing fruit. This corroborates the NCKK report referred to in chapter one that “the declining population growth rate in the district is as a result of high prevalence of use of modern contraceptives...”(NCKK, Report on Capacity Building: Regional Profile of Kirinyaga District, 1996).

(c) Traditional birth attendants.

Finally, the table indicates that about 31% of the deliveries occur at home. This is a fact because it is not possible to bring every pregnant woman to the clinic. It is also reasonable to suspect that these deliveries occur without trained medical personnel. In addition, it is likely that the environment under which the births occur does not have sufficient sanitary facilities. In the circumstances, chances of contracting diseases cannot be ruled out. Besides that, birth complications could occur which might need expert handling. For these reasons, it is important to improve the situation at home. In that connection, we suggest that the CCS, through its Community Health Department, should train traditional birth attendants to handle cases diligently. They should be equipped with First Aid kits. It is probably even more important that the Department encourages pregnant women to attend ante-natal and post-natal clinics.

### **6.3.3 Disease incidence and poverty.**

The top six diseases within Mwea and their incidences from July to December 1998 is shown in Table 6.8.

Malaria, a disease which can easily be prevented, has over the years remained a major killer not only at Mwea but also in other parts of the country. According to press reports attributed to the Director of Medical Services, 107 per 1000 children aged below five die of malaria annually (Daily Nation, Friday, April 23, 1999). Nationally, malaria also accounts for 30% of outpatients and 19% of all admissions, 5.1% of whom die (Daily Nation, Friday, April 23, 1999). It is estimated that the total value of malaria-related production loss ranges between two and six per cent of the Gross National Product, with loss to the agricultural sector estimated at 13% (Daily Nation, Wednesday, May 12, 1999). Thus the disease presents a heavy burden on our health care system.

Mosquitoes, the malaria transmitter, are mostly found in Mwea where there is slow moving water

**Table 6.8 : Malaria and other disease incidence at Mwea**

cause	all ages	Dec.	Nov.	Oct.	Sept.	Aug.	July	Total
malaria	<1	12	4	9		12	12	49
	1-4	8	3	7			8	26
	5-14	13	4	5		2	13	37
	15-24	3	2	3	2	6	7	23
	25-34	6	3	4	1	4	10	28
	35-44	5	3	4	2	3	6	23
Pneumonia	<1	12	10	14	5	16	17	74
	1-4	5	4	5	4	6	6	30
	5-14	3	4	1	1		3	12
	15-24	2	3	1		3	1	10
	25-34	4	2	3	1	3	5	18
	35-44		3	2		1	3	9
heart diseases	<1	12	4	6	5	11	2	40
	1-4	1	1	1	4	5		12
	5-14	3	4	1		2	1	11
	15-24	2	5	3		2		12
	25-34	7	2	3	2	1	1	16
	35-44	12	2	4		5		23
Aids	<1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
	1-4	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
	5-14		2	-	1	-	-	3
	15-24	2	1	-	3	-	2	8
	25-34	2	1	1	2	2	5	13
	35-44	6	-	2	2	6	4	20
Diarrhoea	<1	-	-	-	4	-	1	5
	1-4	1	-	-	2	1	2	6
	5-14	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
	15-24	-	-	-	1	-		1
	25-34	-	-	-	1	2		3
	35-44	-	-	-	1	1		2
Anaemia	<1	1	1	1	-	1	2	6
	1-4	1	-	-	-	1	1	3
	5-14	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
	15-24	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
	25-34	2	-	-	1	-	2	5
	35-44	4	-	-	-	1	1	6

Source: District Medical Officer of Health- Kirinyaga

The table reveals that, although newly emerging health threats like AIDS seem to overshadow malaria, statistics indicate that the latter, in fact, poses a much greater problem. It is responsible for 32% of disease incidences in under fives and 37% in ages 5-44. Although it is possible that these data may contain some errors of omission, they nevertheless point to the fact that the health of the younger population in the community is threatened by death by malaria before they see their 45th birthday. Most of the deaths caused by malaria and other water-borne diseases in Kirinyaga District are in Mwea.

For this reason more attention should be given to the eradication of water-borne diseases, and malaria in particular, in Mwea. The local Village Health Committees should be revived. The committees would in turn mobilize the communities to clear the bushes and ponds around the homesteads. The campaign to eradicate malaria should also be extended to public institutions such as schools, church compounds, village polytechnics etc. In all these activities, the CCS and other collaborators could boost local capacities.

The habit of taking anti-malaria drugs seems to create resistance. The communities should be discouraged from taking anti-malaria tablets without prescription. Rather, the CCS should, in conjunction with the Public Health Department, create awareness of the use of insecticide-treated nets. These could be sold at subsidised prices to the women's groups to sell to the public. It is important, though, to point out that insecticides are poisons which have an indirect impact on human health. However, as a long term measure, it would be desirable to set up a research centre of water-borne diseases at Mwea.

Lastly, Table 6.8 also suggests that childhood diseases such as measles, polio, tuberculosis, diarrhoea, worms, kwashiorkor and marasmus, do not feature prominently under our category incidence of the common and fatal diseases. All of these diseases were identified as major health hazards by CORAT and led to the inception of the CCS (see Chapter Three paragraph 3.2). By implication, the CCS (in conjunction with other agencies) seems to have been successful in reducing these childhood diseases. The organisation is to be commended for this feat.

**6.4 Data from the questionnaire to the clergy.**

Table 6.9 shows the distribution and response pattern of the questionnaire.

**Table 6.9**

**Distribution and response pattern of the questionnaire to the clergy.**

place	distribution	return	per cent
Mwea	18	9	50%
Diocesan Office	3	3	100%
Rest of Kirinyaga	60	13	22%
Total	81	25	31%

Table 6.9 shows nine (50%) responses from the clergy in Mwea and 13 (22%) from the clergy working in the rest of Kirinyaga. The low response in the latter may be explained by the poor and unreliable postal services between the parishes and the Diocesan Office to which the respondents had been requested to return the questionnaires. The cost of postage could also have inhibited the respondents’ ability to respond. Another factor that could have contributed to the low response is the fact that December is a busy month for the clergy, many of whom would be writing their handing-over reports as they prepare to go to new parishes in the New Year. The latter reason may, to an extent, explain why a significant number of responses from Mwea have not been forthcoming. However, this did not affect our project adversely because we got sufficient data from those who responded.

Further analysis from table 6.9 indicates some interesting characteristics that have important implications for the work of the CCS. Twelve (48%) of the respondents indicated that they knew the Mission Statement of the CCS. By implication, the clergy, therefore, know the vision of the CCS. If that assumption is correct, then the clergy are likely to participate in CCS development activities. The clergy are influential leaders in their parishes. Their role in development activities,

therefore, is crucial. Hence their co-operation in development activities cannot be over-estimated.

Nine (36%) of the respondents thought that the CCS is likely to achieve the goals of its Mission Statement while only two (8%) thought the CCS is unlikely to achieve the goals. In my opinion it is essential that the role-players in development should have confidence in their enterprise. The CCS should utilise the goodwill it enjoys among the clergy and other stakeholders to enhance its work in the communities.

Nine (36%) indicated that they had best interacted with the CCS in Kirinyaga through its development activities in some of the parishes where they had worked in the last 9 years. A further five (20%) said they had best interacted with the CCS in all the parishes they had worked during the same period. Given the high mobility of the clergy due to transfers within the Diocese, it is evident that the CCS development activities are fairly widespread.

18 (72%) responded that the parish minister should be the link between the CCS and the Church while four (16%) indicated that the minister should have nothing to do with the CCS. Though it was not clear what prompted the big percentage who wanted to be the link of the CCS to the parish, it is safe to assume that the clergy do not see themselves exclusively as dispensers of the conventional gospel of spiritual welfare. This reflects a changed attitude of the church towards development confirming our hypothesis (see Chapter One, paragraph 1.3.iii). This trend has a significant theological implication. The clergy deem themselves to be agents of change. Therefore, they are potentially strong partners in development issues. As Witbooi has observed, clergy have an unobstructed constituency of people from all walks of life “rich and poor; young and old, professional people and labourers; politicians, educationists, medical doctors, lawyers etc. There is an abundance of human resources” (1997:101). Thus through the church minister, the CCS could establish links and consult with the professionals in various fields. In this connection it was encouraging to learn that the chair of the CCS Health Committee is held by a medical doctor. Other aspects of development would benefit from such expertise.



12 (48%) of the respondents agreed that the CCS-Clergy relationship was friendly, six (24%) thought it was lukewarm and only four (16%) thought that the relationship was unfriendly. It seems to me that the CCS image in the eyes of the parish priests need refocusing. We have already said that the clergy are influential, especially in the rural areas. The CCS can ignore its relationship with this constituency, only at its own peril.

12 (48%) of the clergy responded that, in dealing with the development activities, CCS was more effective than a comparable government department. 10 (40%) responded that the CCS was effective. The clergy are in touch with the community. The CCS interventions are directed at these communities. Although it is not clear what their criteria of assessment were, we can safely deduce that, since the clergy have the advantage of being with the people in the community, their testimony is credible and trustworthy.

13 (52%) answered that the CCS development interventions benefitted all people regardless of age, religion, or gender, while a mere six (24%) indicated that the CCS has benefitted more women than men. In either case the implication is that the CCS is indeed gender sensitive - an important aspect of development. However, my own investigation pointed out that CCS, for reasons indicated elsewhere in this study, needs to put in place more attention to the participation of women in general development.

While three (12%) of the clergy said that they were never involved with the CCS at any one time, seven (28%) indicated that they were involved with the CCS development activities once a year, four (20%) indicated monthly involvement, three (12%) responded that their involvement with the CCS was on a daily basis in their parishes. We appreciate that the CCS profile may not be the same in all the parishes. However, these responses may point to an underlying problem between the CCS and the clergy - namely, insufficient dialogue. I suggest that the CCS and the Pastoral Ministry should come together to look for common ground from which they can address development issues.

Finally, nine (36%) of the clergy indicated that they considered the CCS development as sustainable while an equal number considered it to be unsustainable.

A common feature among 77% of the respondents from the ‘rest of Kirinyaga’ was that they had worked in Mwea at some time during the last nine years. This reveals a high mobility of the clergy. I am of the opinion that such mobility may not be conducive to a smooth environment of development. Constant transfers destabilise projects because of the changes in leadership dynamics. I suggest that the CCS and the Diocesan administration should work out acceptable terms under which a priest could serve a parish for a reasonable period of time in order to understand and contribute meaningfully to the CCS development programmes in the parish. This might enhance project sustainability. It could also boost clergy-CCS relationships which appear ambivalent.

## **6.5 Data from the interview with key personalities.**

Among the issues which surfaced from the interview with the key people of the Diocese (e.g. Church Leaders, Chairman of the CCS Board of Directors, senior CCS officers) is that Mwea is the most marginalised area of Kirinyaga District. It was also apparent that the existence and the purpose of the CCS are clear in their minds.

The general perception of the Board was that the CCS had lived up to its calling of empowering the poor, destitute and marginalised. In particular the CCS was seen to have been successful not only in Mwea but also in other semi-arid and arid parts of the Diocese. The Wang’uru Extension Station was cited as a success story, as it offers extension services to Mwea and the rest of the district. The station has also attracted many seminars and workshops from beyond Kirinyaga.

According to the Executive, the CCS understanding of the “poor, destitute and marginalised” is based on the CCS’s own assessment of available resources for these people, e.g. when a community has access to three meals, education for their children, shelter, land and health care. The guiding philosophy of the CCS is based on the assumption that everybody is able to do something about development. For that reason the CCS acts as an energizer or catalyst. Its aim is not to

provide but rather to promote the potential in people to achieve the basic requisites of life. The CCS further sees itself as playing a collaborative role among other agents and role-players in development.

I respect the right of the CCS to define 'the poor, destitute and the marginalised' in the society. During my research visitations I learnt of the term '*Kupiga jack*' from such people, which literally means 'lifting off the ground and setting free for mobility'. I feel that this is what the CCS development interventions are intended for, to jack up the 'poor, destitute and the marginalised' and to empower them to take advantage of opportunities available in the economy to improve their own welfare.

However, what is not generally clear and self-evident is the definition of 'poor, destitute and marginalised'. The term is often used, but is hardly defined and therefore not well understood. As used by the CCS, it neither defines its scope nor characterises the targeted group. In my opinion, the term is very broad and vague. It should, therefore, be avoided as much as possible. All that is needed are proper guidelines, qualities and criteria of defining the term according to the local situation. It is important in the selection of the beneficiaries in different agro-ecological zones, who should objectively be counted among the 'poor, destitute and marginalised'.

Monitoring and evaluation are critical twin-aspects of any development activity. The CCS has a regular monitoring procedure of its programmes. The evaluation is made against established parameters. The criteria include performance indicators, financial sustainability and impact. In order to make the evaluations as objective as possible, they are done jointly by the CCS staff and the donor community.

The Executive pointed to a number of constraints that the organisation faces. The major one is lack of funds. Inadequate funding naturally limits the activities of the organisation in terms of programmes, planning and implementation. It is inconceivable that the CCS will ever have sufficient funds. I commend the Board for realizing this reality. As a result, the CCS is now venturing into income generating projects. The realized incomes can be utilized in running the secretariat so that

the donor funds can go to the development activities. However, this poses a big challenge to the CCS. The state has hopelessly failed to run profitable enterprises due to corruption, lack of accountability and transparency. It is not asking too much if one expected the Church and the CCS to set an example to the rest of the society.

Related to financial shortage is the lack of adequate and qualified staff. In the first case, for instance, CCS has only one nurse to supervise 180 CHWs scattered all over the Diocese. This means that even if the nurse worked extra hours, she would be unlikely to make any impact. The scenario is the same in other departments. On the one hand, the CCS staff is over-worked, and on the other hand, they are not rewarded commensurately. This may lead to low morale and poor service delivery.

It was apparent that the CCS did not have professionals in its establishment. Indeed very strategic departments of the CCS are headed by certificate holders. I appreciate that mere academic papers are neither a bona fide proof of service delivery nor of performance. However, an organisation can only compromise on professionalism at its own peril. In the context of the CCS, my understanding was that its emoluments could not attract highly qualified personnel. With due respect to the integrity and hard work of the CCS personnel, I would suggest there is a need to recruit professionals, especially in their finance and agriculture departments.

Donor rigidity was mentioned as another constraint that the CCS has to contend with. A case was cited where the donor gave funds to buy grain to alleviate famine in the community. The CCS realized that the most hard hit by the famine were the elderly, pregnant women, the sick and children under five. Clearly, what these groups needed most was not grain (maize) but high protein food such as beans, powdered milk etc. The CCS opted to use part of the funds to buy beans rather than maize. The donor was not amused. Indeed the issue nearly cost the CCS its relationship with the donor until the former prevailed upon the latter to despatch one of their own to visit the subjects. Although the issue was solved amicably, it is an experience that the CCS would not want to have again. One would wish that, in future, the donors would exercise a degree of control on their

funds. However, such control would be exercised with restraint in order to give the development agent leeway to administer the funds in the best way possible for the benefit of the community. The CCS should exercise total transparency and accountability to avoid suspicion. For instance, it was accused with some truth of despatching relief food to Anglicans only.

## **6.6 Section Three: Summary.**

After brief introductory remarks in the current chapter, I set out to analyse and interpret the data collected for this study. The data analysis and interpretation has two functions in the study. Firstly, it is an attempt to investigate the impact of and the extent to which the CCS development interventions discussed in chapters four and five, are being felt in the community in concrete terms. Secondly, it is also an attempt to test my hypothesis, namely : The CCS might be a fruitful experiment of church involvement in community development.

Section one, offered a brief overview of the research methodology used on the project. The data were collected from various sources to enrich the inquiry. Although there was co-operation between the researcher and the respondents, the research was certainly limited by costs, especially regarding the interview schedules and time factors. However, a combination of structured questionnaires and open-ended interviews used in tandem to increase the areas of information available, compensated the limitations to some extent.

Section two offered data analysis, interpretation and recommendations. The latter were given on the basis of the findings. For instance, it was revealed that the “contact farmer”, a key delivery structure of the CCS development interventions, not only excludes women and the youth but also anticipates a ‘trickle down’ effect.

One of the more disconcerting results of the data interpretation is the growth of unemployment, particularly of the primary and secondary school graduates. On the strength of this analysis, it was recommended that the expansion of secondary and post-secondary education would probably be an alternative, primarily to give the youth time to acquire skills and also grow emotionally.

The analysis of the literacy data revealed that adult literacy is higher for women than men. This is probably due to the cultural attitudes that hinder men from learning alongside women. It was suggested that it might be worthwhile to start gender-sensitive classes to attract more men.

On health issues, a concern about population growth was raised, especially because fertility is the highest between age 15-24. This implied that family life education would probably be focused on that age group. It was also argued that expansion of women's education may delay not only marriage but also the first birth. On disease incidence, it was clear that malaria has persisted as a killer in Mwea due to the slow moving water in the canals and the rice ponds which act as breeding places for mosquitoes. But the good news is that the six childhood diseases which led to the inception of the CCS no longer feature in Mwea. It is an indication that the CCS interventions are bearing fruit.

It was a relief to note that the church attitude towards development is changing. This was implied by the clergy when they said that they knew the CCS mission statement and that they considered the CCS development activities as sustainable. However, only a small percentage of the clergy indicated a regular monthly involvement with the CCS development activities. The implication is that the CCS might be ignoring the clergy but since the latter forms an influential group in the community, it is important that they are co-opted in the CCS activities in the parishes.

Interviews with key personalities revealed that the CCS's activities are appreciated. The perception was that the CCS had lived up to its expectations in spite of several constraints. The major constraint cited was insufficient funding. However, it is doubtful that the organisation will ever have sufficient funds. In the context it was encouraging to note that the CCS had started generating funds locally. Another constraint, though at a lower scale, was the donor rigidity. I called for a mutual understanding between the CCS and the donor(s). The former should strive to be transparent and accountable. The latter would exercise only a degree of control on their funds.

The final section of this chapter is this summary. After going through all the data collected, analysed and interpreted, it seems to me that the CCS activities towards poverty alleviation in Mwea have

impacted on the community especially the women. I therefore conclude that the CCS is a fruitful experiment of church involvement in community development. Consequently, the following final chapter of this study, reflects on the theological insights gained from the experiences of the CCS and the theological rationale underlying it.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### 7. Theological Reflection.

#### 7.1 Introduction.

Chapter Three, indicated that the CCS was established as a response to poverty in the diocese of Mt Kenya East. Chapters four and five discussed the organisation's interventions against poverty in Mwea. The previous chapter dealt with data analysis and interpretation in relation to these interventions. The present chapter is devoted to a theological reflection on the CCS development activities. These activities reflect a theology of development and are informed by a number of major ecclesiologies.

In the following pages, I shall argue, and demonstrate, that the development activities of the CCS fall under the general category of liberative theology. Commenting on the poor, Nurnberger says "Poor people usually have little self-confidence and initiative. They are listless and hopeless because nothing seems to work in their lives... We are born poor or rich and it is very difficult to get out of one's structural situation" (1979:74). In my view the poor need to be liberated from such a situation through our theological dispensation. In the context, 'liberation theology' is not necessarily to be understood in political terms but rather, as Gutierrez puts it, "it is a critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word" (quoted in Costas 1977:220). Hence I am not rhetorical by using the term 'liberation'. Rather in this context, the suffering of the economically poor is not seen so much that of destitution and starvation but as that of the indignity of begging and dependency. In other words, a theology of development emancipates the marginalised from social-economic and other oppressive structures in the society.

This reflection shall be informed mainly by the four themes and concerns set out in chapter one of this thesis namely: (i) the role of the church in development, (ii) the role of theology in development, (iii) women participation in development and (iv) the conceptual framework.



## 7.2 Historical perspectives on the Church and development.

Here I do not intend to offer a comprehensive historical perspective on the Church and development. The nature of this study would not allow that. A brief overview will suffice.

In the early church, involvement with social change in relation to the poor was personal. Its “architect was Augustine and his doctrine of charity: ‘obey God in order to win salvation’” (Vinay & Sugden 1981a:20). In this context the world and its social order was relativised by the priority of love for God. In the 18th Century, the Reformation brought a fundamental theological shift in the understanding of the church’s involvement in the society - especially in relation to the poor. Thus, as argued by Moila, Luther maintained that the church is involved in public life, that is, in the social, economic and professional spheres of life, and in secular society in general (1990:18-28). For Luther the church’s mission belongs to this world, not in heaven. Therefore, Christian vocation is directed towards one’s neighbour, and ultimately towards God.

In the modern era, we have witnessed the simultaneous expansion of Western colonialism and the world wide expansion of the church through the Western missionary enterprise. In the latter, the church’s involvement in the society was primarily the establishment of churches in pagan lands. The theological basis for this involvement was largely informed by the two kingdoms theology of Luther social change is left to the secular ruler (Vinay & Sugden 1981a:21). Thus the provision of social services such as education, trade schools etc. was for the furtherance of the Gospel, so that converts could read the scriptures and teach the church.

In the contemporary scene, the theology of liberation sees the church as called “to be a paradigmatic community”, i.e. a community that lives and demonstrates the liberating power of the gospel and the new possibilities available in Christ for a world oppressed by demonic principalities and powers (Costas 1977:53). The important contribution of the theology of liberation is the increasing consciousness of a growing number of oppressed people that their situation should not and need not remain as desperate as it is. In this view, theology is perceived to be not simply a spiritual or a rational knowledge of faith, but a critical reflection on the praxis of the church. Such a theology

addresses the most urgent questions asked by ordinary people, with special focus on the needs of the marginalised. Buthelezi emphasises this view when saying “life in its social, economic and political setting is the only meeting place with God...” (1973:155). *Quoted*

### **7.3 The role of the Church in development.**

I shall examine four main ecclesiologies which, in my opinion, substantially accommodate and give meaning to the CCS development activities as a model of church involvement in development: (a) Dulles’ “church as a servant”, (b) Lohfink’s “contrast society”, (c) Bosch’s “alternative community” and finally (d) the church as “a redemptive community”. Suffice to say that the four ecclesiologies are not ultimately distinct from one another. Rather in my opinion they are all genuine attempts to shift from traditional ecclesiology, in which the church focused on God and was seen as being called out of the world to an ecclesiology where the church is seen to be the sign of God’s presence in the world. In that view the church is called out of the world to be renewed and sent back into the world as an instrument of God’s salvation. The new emphasis sees the church as a chosen people sent into the world in order to be the church for others. Christians act as salt and light in the world in their calling in secular society, to preserve a just human and social order. This theology extends the Christian strategy to education, health, agriculture and other projects which enhance human dignity (Vinay & Sugden 1981a:36).

#### **7.3.1 The Church as a servant.**

Dulles’ (1974) study of comparative ecclesiologies offers five “models” of being the church, namely: the church as an institution, a mystical communion, a sacrament, a herald and finally a servant.

In the institutional model, the official church reaches, sanctifies and rules with the authority of Christ. The institutional model seems to deny salvation to anyone who is not a member of the organisation (1974:58).

In the communion models, the church is viewed as God’s people or Christ’s body, growing into the

final perfection of the kingdom. This model leaves it problematic “why anyone should be required to join the institution at all” (1974:58).

In sacramental ecclesiology, the church is understood as the visible manifestation of the grace of Christ in human community. The beneficiaries of the church, according to this ecclesiology, are all those who are able to articulate and live their faith, “thanks to their contact with the believing and loving church” (1974: 67). In other words, in this model the “sacrament” is primary and everything else is “secondary”.

According to Dulles, in the herald models, the church “takes an authoritarian role proclaiming the gospel as a divine message to which the world must humbly listen” (1974:71). In this model the “word” is primary and “sacrament” is secondary. Therefore, the mission of the church is to proclaim that which it has heard, believed and been commissioned to proclaim (1974:71). “Characteristic of this model”, as contrasted with institutional, mystical and communion models, “is the sharp distinction it makes between the church in its terrestrial form and the Kingdom of God” (1974:74). The beneficiaries of the church, according to this ecclesiology, “are those who hear the word of God and put their faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour” (1974:78). The goal of the church, therefore, is simply to herald the message. It focuses too exclusively on witness and neglects action.

In the servant models, the church’s mission is to help all persons in need wherever they are, with a decided bias towards the poor and the oppressed. The other ecclesiologies discussed give a primary or privileged position to the church with respect to the world. The church is seen as the active subject and the world as “the object that the church acts upon or influences” (Dulles’ 1974:83). Dulles tells us that, in contrast, “the servant ecclesiology” may be called “‘secular-dialogic’: secular because the church takes the world as a properly theological locus and seeks to discern the signs of the times; dialogic because it seeks to operate on the frontier between the contemporary world and the Christian tradition (including the Bible), rather than simply apply the latter as a measure of the former” (1974:86).

Of the five models proposed by Dulles, I find the servant model to be most appropriate to describe the CCS development activities at Mwea. It is the model which is most likely to enhance discussions about the church's involvement in development. In our view, the CCS development activities are geared to transform the conditions of the poor, marginalised individuals and communities to a better and fuller life. This image of the church expresses best the attitude which the CCS has developed over time in the Diocese. In other words, the church is seen to lead the communities to a more holistic life as envisaged by Jesus in John 10:10. However, it is important to point out that neither the CCS nor the Church has consciously and explicitly formulated such an ecclesiology. Rather, it is an attempt to give expression to what has been its implicit self-understanding by utilising theological models.

### **7.3.2 The Church as the “Alternative Community”.**

One of Bosch's main conceptual tools in handling ecclesiology is the idea of the “alternative community”. Thus for him ‘the Church too often fulfils the role of a social agency for the relief of painful disappointments;...’ and ‘In this alternative community we are not asked about the extent of our success but about the depth of our obedience’ (1982:32). It is apparently an attempt to combine the two types of ecclesiology, namely the church as *ecclesia*, a body called out of the world, and the church as the servant of the world. Livingston (1990:3) observes that the approach is not unique to Bosch. Many theologians have argued that if the church is to remain true to her nature as “Body of Christ” and have a redemptive impact on the society, she must maintain a distinct identity within the surrounding culture. For instance, the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC states the issue with simplicity: “The church is always and at the same time called out of the world and sent into the world” (Livingston 1990:12).

Arguing along similar perspective, Bosch sees the church as “called to be *in* the world but not *of* the world” (1977:14). Thus the church must remain independent of the world but nevertheless, perform its duties in the world. To be ‘*in*’ but not ‘*of*’ the world does not imply a decrease in involvement but actually an increase (1977:14). Again for Bosch, in the “alternative community”, Jesus destroyed all human definitions of community and solidarity by including the least three

groups of people who were normally excluded : “ the blind, the lame, and especially the lepers; the traitors of the nation and exploiters namely the tax collectors, and the enemies, especially the Samaritans and the Romans” (1982:15). It was the quality of life in the “alternative community”, humanly speaking, that led to the rapid and spontaneous expansion of the early church. Further for Bosch, its contribution to social change is not a secondary task of the church, but an integral part of its mission (Nicol 1990:93). For Nicol, Bosch endorses the belief that the church should have a preferential option for the poor (1990:93) and that the special concern of the church should be for the powerless and it should act in solidarity with them, encouraging Christians to get involved in God’s mission of transforming the world ( 1990:93).

This view is emphasized by Nurnberger when he says that “ being with Christ, means that we are involved in his dynamics of his self-giving love” (1979:73). Nurnberger argues that the Synoptic Jesus continues in the Old Testament tradition of God’s concrete intervention to restore his people’s wholeness, their wellbeing. Thus

he is experienced as the soter because he picks up the needs  
of the people, precisely in the form that they present themselves :  
he heals the sick, he restores the crippled, he liberates the oppressed,  
he grants fellowship to outcasts, he opens the horizons of hope  
for the despondent, he offers leadership to people who are sheep without  
a pastor, he discloses meaning to the confused, he forgives guilt where a sense  
of guilt is the problem (Nurnberger 1990: 207-208).

Thus for Nurnberger, “redemption, salvation and deliverance are concepts which only make sense if they are defined as responses to real needs” (1990: 207) and “salvation which is unrelated to human need is an empty concept and therefore irrelevant” (1990: 210).

Most church praxis is church-oriented, i.e. directed at creating, maintaining and developing membership of the local church. In order to play the role of a servant in the community, the church must be world-oriented. This means that the church should take the “locus of its mission as the community in which it exists...” (Cochrane et al 1991:53).

As Bonhoeffer puts it:

The church is the church only when it exists for others...

The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating but helping and serving.

It must tell men of every calling what it means to live in Christ, to exist for others (quoted in Bosch 1980:225).

Thus from what we have observed so far concerning the “alternative community”, it is clear that all the theologians cited emphasise that the church should respond to the needs of the community. Her calling is to be in line with the life and activities of the Jesus of the gospels who concentrated on these needs. He showed concern for and alleviated their physical problems. Jesus integrated physical liberation with spiritual salvation. There was no clear distinction between the physical and the spiritual in his ministry. In his miracles, Jesus’ concern was with the reality of human needs - poverty, sickness, hunger, sin, demonic possession. The people for whom Jesus had compassion are referred to as the poor, the blind, the little ones, the widows etc.

The interventions against poverty and the services to meet felt needs of the community offered by the CCS as described in this study echo these parameters of the “alternative community” and resonates the actions and the concrete life of Christ. The CCS then reflects and presents the church as the new community of believers, gathered by divine election, calling for new birth and conversion. Being the church under a new Lord, is a being on the way towards a new future but it is a future which is realized now, in other words in this world, though not yet in its fulness. Ultimately the church owes the world love.

But the concept of the “alternative community” is flawed because it suggests that the church could form a social entity next to, and apart from, the rest of the world, which it could then serve. This is clearly not the case, except where “the church” becomes a monastic order. The members of the church are also citizens of the world and subject to the same constraints that other members of the society are subject to. The church is always part of the world and must be renewed together with it.

The CCS model of development recognizes that fact.

### 7.3.3 The Church as the “Contrast Society”.

While conceding that the Exodus event constituted Yahweh’s fundamental act of liberation of his people, Lohfink (1987) parts ways with the conventional liberation theologians who he claims see the exodus as a political liberation. In this liberation, Moses appears as the prototype of the ‘politician’ involved in power struggles, party politics and concrete compromises. Jesus and his disciples then follow later as prototypes of the ecclesial-pastoral proclamation of the gospel (1987:51).

For Lohfink, on the contrary, the specific aim and object of God’s ‘option for the poor’ is a new society or ‘contrast society’ that Yahweh creates out of the poor Hebrews through the Exodus. This contrast society is not only in contrast to the Egyptian society they left behind but, beyond that, it is in contrast to all other societies in their world (1987:45). In the Exodus event the poor of Egypt can be brought into a land of happiness only because, on their way, they have been recreated at the mountain of God to form a new society. God’s presence lives in the midst of this society. In other words, the departure from the impoverishing Egyptian society would not have been genuine ‘liberation’ unless it led to the constitution of a new society that knows no poverty any more. Even then, the deliverance from Egypt was not primarily directed to release them from poverty but to the worship of God at Mount Sinai - forming the “contrast society”.

Lohfink’s argument contains an important insight. Hebrew history shows that, even after they were delivered from Egypt, when they failed to uphold the tenets of a new society that displayed God’s justice, they were punished by the same God who had delivered them. The Law at Sinai was meant to prevent structures from exploiting and oppressing the poor, to provide protection and relief for the vulnerable. The prophetic tradition informs us that when the ‘new’ or ‘the contrast society’ (that is Israel in the promised land) failed to uphold the ‘newness’, and instead ‘oppressed the poor’, God disapproved of their behaviour. Thus the Exodus event was not the end itself but a means to the end - ‘the contrast society’. Consequently, we should not, as the liberation

theologians do, over-emphasize the Exodus event as an end in itself but rather as a means to a society in which God's justice is practised.

Viewed from that perspective, the specific aim of God's 'option for the poor' is a new society emerging as the church from among the liberated poor (Lohfink 1987:52). It is from this church that transformation and salvation of the entire society can proceed.

For Lohfink, there can be no doubt that Jesus took up this concept of the "poor of Yahweh" (1987:74). Where the gospel truly prevails, the transformation of this world really happens for Yahweh's poor. There comes into being a miracle of a society in which people can relate in a new way "to material things and to one another, and where, as a result, there is no more poverty" (1987:75).

In my view the CCS development activities are characterised with an ethical bias to a 'contrast society' in which the communities are encouraged to be mindful of the welfare of others, and especially the poor and the marginalised. While it is difficult to measure or gauge the ethical dimension of these activities, there is no doubt that its group activities are rooted in a prayerful life and that the members seem to be conscious of their corporate as well as their individual responsibility in the community. In view of this, I am of the opinion that the CCS is inadvertently leading the communities, albeit slowly, to the creation of a 'contrast society'.

Nevertheless, as Nurnberger observes, the "contrast society" is saddled with the same problem as the "alternative society" (Nurnberger 1999b: Personal communication). In fact, it is the same thing but given a more radical name. Theoretically the Israelites could have formed an "alternative society" or a "contrast society" because they were a self-contained nation with its own structures and sovereign leadership. In fact even that proved to be difficult. The church is not a self-contained and independent social entity. The church is, sociologically speaking, a particular part of the society with a particular religious affiliation which may provide a particular kind of motivation to serve the society. But it cannot constitute a society of its own in contrast to the rest of the society.



However, in my opinion, although the church may not constitute a society of 'its own apart from the society', the CCS (as part of the church) does act as a 'contrast society' when its activities are targetted to transform the life of the poor in the communities. In biblical language, the CCS becomes the "salt of the earth" turning the communities into the "salt of the earth".

#### 7.3.4 The Church as a "Redemptive Community".

In Genesis 2, humanity is depicted as living in harmonious relationships with God and creation. Consequently, humanity experiences the richness the creation has to offer. The Old Testament notion of '*shalom*' suggests such a state of peace where everything and everyone is operating in the right relationships under God, i.e. between humans and God, spouse and spouse, parents and children, citizens and the state, people and environment, individuals and their work etc. Where all these things are in right God-ordained relationships with each other, there is *shalom*.

The New Testament, in the words of Jesus Christ, echoes this theme of *shalom*, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matt.6:33) - emphasizing the comprehensiveness of God's call in Christ to all men and women. Here the kingdom is not a 'welfare agency', but a community of right-doing (that is justice, peace and love). It is a new order of life which becomes at once the model of what the new society must look like and a measuring stick to judge the present order, without being at the same time a government programme. It proposes values to undergird society so that it might be truly just and humane (Costas 1977:308).

The early Christian church (Acts 4) retained the consciousness that a radically new age had been inaugurated by Jesus. In that connection, Sider notes "The massive economic sharing is indisputable" (1971:88). Yet this was only a continuation of the new community. Jesus had founded a community in which values of the promised kingdom, which was already breaking into the present, were being lived out. They based their faith on the one fact : Jesus was raised from the dead. Perhaps Nurnberger is even more categorical when he describes this *shalom* or peace as "comprehensive wellbeing in peace with God, who is the Source and Criterion of the whole reality..." (1990:206).

But having said that, the Christian analysis of a problem gets us nowhere unless it is accompanied by an appropriate response. The kingdom of God is when solutions, healing, redemption and restoration to a whole and healthy existence are experienced in Jesus Christ - where *shalom* prevails. In my view, then, peace in the sense of harmony in the society finds expression in emancipation from hunger, disease, ignorance and poverty, concern for the humanization of relations, various attempts at rural development etc. When the church is involved in interventions directed towards the comprehensive wellbeing of a community, such a church is instrumental in incarnating the kingdom of God in the community. It enters into the life of the community and becomes partners with the community in addressing community needs. That means that the church allows the people of the community to instruct it concerning its needs as it identifies with the people. The community is, therefore, transformed into a redemptive community, in which the quality of life gradually improves and the people increasingly take charge of their lives and the destiny of their community. In my opinion the Christian Community Services of Mt. Kenya East is fulfilling this role. It is creating a 'redemptive community'. In that context, the church is itself a redemptive community while, through its praxis, it also creates a redemptive community out of the secular community in which it works.

In conclusion, the CCS seems to accommodate a broad spectrum of the ecclesiologies discussed above. It is worth noting, however, that these ecclesiologies have neither well-defined boundaries nor are they exhaustive in themselves. The CCS paradigm, however, is different in that it is 'a theology from below' i.e. a theological concept that has been lived not by academic theorising but by lay Christians in their struggle to relate their faith to their concrete situation of poverty in the community. It is grounded in, and informed by, a theology of the 'whole gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ'. It is to the role of theology in development that we now turn.

#### **7.4 The role of theology in development.**

The previous section has looked at the role of the church in the development of communities. The present section addresses itself to the role of theology in development.

Our theology informs our understanding of development and what we see as development influences our theology. In Old Testament times, the sabbatical year was not only meant to restore justice for the poor and the disadvantaged (Ex. 23: 10 ff. ; Lev. 25:2-7). Sider supports this view when he observes “ sabbatical release of debts was an institutionalised mechanism for preventing an ever growing gap between rich and poor” (1971:82). In addition it had ecological concerns (Ex.23:10, 11). The year of Jubilee also envisaged an institutionalized structure that affected the poor automatically. In particular, it was to be the poor person’s right to receive back his inheritance at the time of the Jubilee. The principle also provided for self-help and self-development. With the land returned, the poor person could earn his own living. The biblical concept of Jubilee underlines the importance of institutionalized mechanisms and structures that promote justice. The crucial issue is that the scriptures prescribe justice rather than charity in the case of the Jubilee and the Sabbatical year.

X In addition to afore said, much of the prophets’ messages had to do with how economic realities of the day affected the lives of the people and the nation. According to the prophets<sup>5</sup>, *shalom* reigned in Israel when the people were in good relationships with Yahweh, when they practised righteousness, when they were in good health (Is.38:17), when they enjoyed economic prosperity (Is. 54:13; 66:12; Zech.8:12), a state of social harmony (Is.32:18) and absence of strife or violence (Jer.12:5; 14:13; 28:9; Zech.8:10). Thus as Onwu observes, the prophets proved to be enemies not only of everything that harmed moral values but also of whatever weakened the economy and endangered the development of the society (Onwu 1996:34). In the prophetic literature, therefore, *shalom* refers to well-being of the people and includes healing, prosperity, love, righteousness, justice, unity, freedom, repentance.

How do theologians view economic issues in the New Testament? Let us examine but a few theologians - Nurnberger, Pixley and Boff. In my view, the CCS activities seem to find expression in the theologies of these scholars, amongst others.

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<sup>5</sup>A fuller treatment of the prophetic insistence on justice is spelt out in chapter 3 paragraph 3.10..3.

Nurnberger maintains that “the essence of the Gospel is divine benevolence” (1990:213). Nurnberger continues to observe the trinitarian dimensions of the gospel, namely: (1) as the Creator God intervenes directly and visibly on behalf of his creatures, (2) in Christ, God enters the predicament of his creatures to transform it from within, and (3) God sets up a goal for his redemptive action: complete transformation of reality (including human beings) into a condition of comprehensive wellbeing which is anticipated in the power of the Spirit (1990:213).

Commenting on the theological foundation of the option for the poor, Pixley & Boff observe that the deepest foundation of the option for the poor is not anthropological (humanist, ethical, or political) in character, but theological and especially christological (1989:115). Thus faith in the Christ of the Gospels leads to the poor, and commitment to and with the poor. This option for the poor is concerned with structural, collective and liberating aspects of the living gospel.

Thus real poverty does not represent a mere socio-economic fact, it also has an ethical and religious dimension. It is an essentially human, and therefore also a theological phenomenon. So what is the theological significance of real material poverty? From an objective point of view, material poverty is not willed by God, it is not part of God’s plan. Therefore, it represents a contradiction of God’s will and this makes it a ‘social sin’. The poor who are subjected to the situation of poverty, are clearly not to be blamed for it. They are victims of their poverty. They are socially innocent, those to whom injustice is done, who clamour and are downtrodden children of God that the poor merit perpetual attention, whatever may be the moral or personal situation in which they find themselves. Nevertheless, that there is some truth in the perception that the poor often lack insight, initiative, commitment and efficiency to affect the impact which the poverty has is a fact. I have no wish to deny that. However, the concern here is the deeper reality : recognition of the destructive impact which poverty and powerlessness can have upon people. As Wilson and Ramphela have observed “crime, alcoholism, boredom, frustration with bureaucratic red tape, and despair are not confined to the poor, but there is no doubt that under conditions of poverty, social dislocation and powerlessness these bitter fruits tend to flourish and to be more poisonous” (1989:166). Thus the war we must wage against sin and evil in the church and society must begin with ourselves in

accepting radical change. Social vices arise because of inordinate individual and collective desire for power and wealth.

For its part the Bible goes so far as to interpret the groans, cries, complaints, shouts of anger and even blasphemies and curses which the poor hurl up to heaven as supplications with religious value that God will not fail to hear (James 5:4). The alternative offered is not riches but a material condition that will allow the poor to affirm themselves as human beings and develop in freedom. Paul has broadened the vision of economic support among the people of God. He devoted a great deal of time to raising money for the Jewish Christians among the Gentile congregations - even if for the congregation in Jerusalem. He developed intra-church assistance into inter-church sharing among the scattered congregations of believers (Sider 1971:93). In his letters, Paul's understanding of '*koinonia*' clearly vindicates the unity of Christians as symbolised by Christ thus: 'Because there is one bread, we who are many, are one body, for we partake of one bread' (1 Cor.10:17). Sider observes that "This brings us to the utter realization that as long as any Christian anywhere is hungry, the Eucharistic celebration of all Christians in the world is imperfect" (1971: 94). This idea challenges the church at the local, regional, and national levels and indeed world-wide, to address the situations of the less privileged in the society. The CCS is a response to this challenge.

X From the aforesaid it is evident that theology repeatedly and pointedly reveals that God wills transformed economic relationships among his people. But what kind of economic sharing can we envisage for the contemporary church? In terms of development theory, handouts are not the answer. They just lead to dependency and loss of dignity. The rich cannot develop the poor, the poor must develop themselves. The answer seems to lie in Nurnberger's words "we must share production, not consumption, then consumption will look after itself" (1999c:Ethos). It has been pointed out above that our theology informs our understanding of development and what we see as development influences our theology. The theology of the CCS is demonstrated by the actual work of development in areas of agriculture, community health and social welfare in the community. Through these interventions, the poor participate in their own development. They identify their own needs, work out the solutions to these needs and are empowered to meet the needs.

In this connection, White and Tiongco (1996:17) have proposed four stages of doing theology and development: (i) the need to encounter the poor, (ii) understanding why they are poor, (iii) through reflection, making a critical judgement whether or not our interpretation corresponds with reality and finally (iv) planning and implementing with the poor the strategies to bring about the desired results.

The first stage implies that in the process of doing theology and development, we need to identify and encounter, i.e. meet and listen to, the poor in their concrete situation as opposed to understanding their poverty merely intellectually or theoretically. Encountering the poor was indeed crucial to Christ's ministry. Jesus went out into the countryside where he met with the poor, the sick, the marginalised. In a similar manner, Church has to encounter the poor of the communities. The second stage involves understanding why the poor are poor. Only then is the Church likely to work for poverty alleviation. At the third stage, she makes a deliberate and critical judgement as to how her interpretation of the scene corresponds with reality. Finally, the Church plans and implements with the poor the interventions to realize the targets. Thus in her involvement or non-involvement in the struggle for development, peace, and reconstruction, the Church's theological and development perspectives cannot be separated. Both religious and social practice can legitimise present structures and domesticate people. They can also in practice begin to liberate people.

In the light of what is said above, there is a need for a theology of development in the local church. Yet, the tendency to assimilate models of development, defined and dictated by external forces renders the Church vulnerable and makes her open to abuse by unscrupulous birds of prey. The irony is that she cannot isolate herself from these models of development. However, the Church should scrutinise them carefully, see what works and what does not work and check whether the outcome is in line with the vision of the biblical message. I suggest that such values as self-reliance, self-actualization, and self-fulfilment should be her guiding principles at the local community level. As Banana says of an appropriate theology of development that is home grown, "its point of departure should be grounded within the environment of the poor themselves" (1994: 55).

In addition, a theology of development needs to be gender sensitive. Although most of the Bible has been written in a patriarchal and hierarchical culture, its message is fundamentally addressed to both women and men, who together form the community of the people of God. The message is ultimately about life and the relationship of human beings to God, to one another and to the creation. Hence Okure quoting Oduyoye suggests, that if the new creation is to become true in our times, “both women and men must re-examine (together) Christian tradition and confront the aspects that justify the domestication of women” (1993 :78). The resulting inclusive approach draws our attention to the rights of women and their vitality, not only in the field of theology but also in development. Theology must then appropriate these secular insights as its own because they are in line with the basic tenet of the gospel (Gal. 3:23 - 4:7). The CCS development activities are gender sensitive as seen in chapters three to five.

What emerges from this discussion on the role of theology in development, is a picture of the Church needing a pragmatic theology of development that enables her to discern effectively the context and environment in which she is situated. She will thus respond appropriately to the community. Such a theology of development recognizes that the biblical value of human life calls for a greater concern for the poor in the community. A theology of development, it could be argued, is intentionally a theology of integration i.e. it seeks to be holistic. Christians are invited to embark on a journey towards the transformation of our relation with God, our personal and interpersonal relationships, as well as the social and political structures within which we live, in the light of Christ’s Spirit of service, justice and love (Langefeld 1996:101). Here it is worth noting that the community is the vital matrix within which we remember who we are and within which we are confronted with possibilities of what we can still become.

It seems to me that such a theology undergirds the CCS development activities at Mwea. Through it, the CCS attempts to participate in sustainable development through equipping men and women with essential tools, skills and, at times, infrastructure to enable them to improve their standard of living. As Villa-Vicencio says, “a theology which fails to address the most urgent questions asked by ordinary people (and given the bias to the church in favour of the marginalised

people, especially their questions) is not a theology at all” (1992:40). Thus our theology informs our understanding of development and what we see as development influences our theology.

I now turn to the final theme that informs our reflection, namely women and their participation in development.

### **7.5 The participation of women in development.**

It was pointed out in chapter one that women in Kenya form 52% of the total population. The majority of the population is to be found in the rural areas. Literacy stands at 69.4% (Daily Nation, August 24, 1998) and is marginally higher among women. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, 47% of Kenyans in rural areas are absolutely poor (Economic Survey, May 1998:34). The poverty outlook is made even worse by the fact that the poor have the highest fertility rates. According to the same document, the mean household size for the poor is 6.4 members, while that of the non-poor is 4.6. Thus the poor have to feed and provide for more adult equivalents on their meagre incomes compared to the rest of the population, making their position even more precarious. A high percentage of the population at Mwea falls under this category. They work hard on their small-holdings (to which they hold no titles), to maintain their families, either through peasant farming, petty trading or vending, often carrying heavy loads on their backs. Much of the feeding of the family traditionally and still today lies in the hands of the woman and therefore she finds herself cooking, looking after little children, and washing dishes among bearing other domestic burdens. Sometimes she walks long distances to fetch water and firewood.

In these circumstances the woman's working days are long, ranging from fourteen to eighteen hours a day, except on Sundays when she is in the church. Thus there is a clear over-reliance on the female labour force, not only in the agricultural sector, but also in health and a whole range of social services. Unfortunately, society takes the women's labour contribution for granted. The irony is that the economic system cannot exist without it.



In Mwea, in addition to the traditional chores, Christian women are actively involved in church activities such as Mothers' Union programmes, building of churches, nurseries, community health, water projects, teaching in the diocesan sponsored primary, secondary and technical schools, evangelism and preaching, to mention only a few activities.

It is evident from the foregoing that in the Diocese in general, and in Mwea in particular, women actively participate in the life of the church and the community. However, the question concerns the nature of participation - hence what is their position and status? Is their potential being utilized to the full and how do they view themselves in light of this participation? This investigation revealed that women are still excluded from decision-making processes in the church and in the community in spite of the functions they perform. A few examples will suffice: in the Synod (the highest decision-making body of the church) held from 2nd to 5th December 1998, Mwea (ecclesiastically called Thiba archdeaconry) sent 36 people out whom only six or sixteen per cent were women. It has already been noted (in Chapter three) that out of eighteen priests in the area, only two are women. The scenario at Parish, Deanery and Archdeaconry councils is similar - women are grossly under-represented. On the community scene, again women hardly feature in the Divisional Development Committee, Divisional Land Control Board, to mention only a few of the important social structures. At this juncture it might suffice to highlight some areas of special concern that, in my opinion, hinder the meaningful participation of women in development activities at Mwea.

### **7.5.1 Women and education.**

The value of formal education as a tool for individual and societal development cannot be denied. Several rural households in Mwea are headed by women - either because the husband is employed in the city, or because the woman is single. In either case, women make important decisions about education, health, discipline and the feeding of their children.

The education of women, therefore, is one with a wide-ranging impact. Not only does it improve the mother's own health, but indirectly impacts on the nutritional status of the children. For

instance, greater use of contraceptives makes it possible to space children - thus improving the health of the child by creating time for the mother to care and bring up the child. Similarly, education empowers women to appreciate the value of immunization and other preventive health practices. So, continued gains for women participation in development are possible only with the expansion of education opportunities, which are very limited in Mwea, particularly for girls. Presently, the illiterate and poor rural women of Mwea, who have a stake in development, lack the ability, sophistication and skills to communicate their needs. As long as women are illiterate and ignorant, they cannot act judiciously in these vital areas of development in their own interests and in those of the community at large. But in the process of educating women, it is imperative that men, in view of their superior social position, are 'educated' or 'en-gendered' to share the decision-making structures with women.

### **7.5.2 Women and the law.**

The majority of the women in Mwea are illiterate. Consequently, they are hardly aware of the discriminative laws pertaining to marriage, property ownership, family law, and inheritance (especially of land and other resources). In some cases there is a conflict between the customary laws and the statute law. This has sometimes led to economic and other violence levelled against women. For instance, when the spouses die, resources such as land, are taken either by sons or the brothers of the deceased, leaving women to struggle to feed the family. In some cases husbands have sold or mortgaged the family land without consulting their wives, only to indulge in luxuries.

In my view the church, through the CCS and other organs, should sensitize the people through civic education and create community awareness in these areas so as to give women access to vital resources, especially land. This would in turn enhance their participation in community development. Parrat, emphasizing the need to educate women, especially on legal issues, puts it clearly: "seminars and discussions ... are aimed at self-awareness and conscientisation, advising women of their rights under the law and avenues open to them to redress grievances and improve their position" (1996:149)

### **7.5.3 Women and gender discrimination.**

Women have been socialized differently from men in so far as gender roles are concerned. Yet their contribution to development is of equal importance as that of men and should be recognized as such. In most households at Mwea women are responsible for production, they nurture the children, take care of most household chores and shoulder the bulk of hard labour in a traditional economy. These realities have given rise to women's agitation for their political inclusion as stakeholders in the economy. This would enable them to contribute to the decision-making process.

Gender sensitivity programmes should begin at schools where gender discrimination begins. While the syllabus does not make a clear distinction between the sexes, there are instances in school where gender discrimination goes too far. For instance, school girls are sometimes assigned duties which are thought to be suitable for their role, such as cooking, cleaning, sweeping and washing, without involving boys. In some cases girls are hardly ever assigned positions of responsibility such as school prefects, class monitors, leaders and team leaders.

Girls in the primary schools get used to women playing minor roles and rarely do they encounter women as education officers, inspectors, tutors at Teachers' Advisory Centres, head teachers or deputies. This is common in Mwea rural schools where few female members of the teaching staff play leading roles in organising activities such as sports, drama or music, activities which cut a positive public image due to their popularity in rural Kenya.

In schools girls see their peers gradually dropping out of school through pregnancy or because of a lack of money for school fees. Boys who make girls pregnant are allowed to proceed with their studies. To enhance gender sensitivity in schools, deliberate efforts have to be made to reverse the discriminatory tendencies, in schools in particular and the society in general. We suggest that the church, through the CCS and other organs, should urgently address this anomaly where half of the population is being marginalised on account of gender.

#### **7.5.4 Women and leadership.**

Although the Old Testament was written in a patriarchal context, it is replete with stories of women who played major roles in the history of Israel. Among the women who were recognized for their intelligence and devotion are Rahab (Joshua 2), Michal (1Sam.19:11-17) and Abigail (1Sam. 25:14-42). Deborah (Judges 21:8-9) stands out for her leadership in confrontation with the enemy. Others, like Judith and Esther, saved their nation in particularly difficult times. Ruth, an exemplary model of love and beauty, is named as an ancestor of Jesus Christ by one source (Mt.1:5). These are examples of heroic women in the Old Testament and they are a testimony to the fact that God has used women in various redemptive acts in the history of salvation. While all these might be exceptions to the rule in a patriarchal society, in which women played a subservient role, they nevertheless challenge the church of Christ to redefine the role of the women both in church and society.

Women in New Testament times were regarded as inferior not only by the Greek and Roman cultures but also by the Jews who were the custodian of God's law. But when Jesus appeared on the scene, he restored women to the dignity they shared with men in the eyes of God. Jesus' approach to women was radically different from that of the rabbis and other Jewish elite. Women were not appendages but active participants (Lk. 10: 38-42) and were privileged beneficiaries of his love and caring concern.

This deliberate association with, and promotion of women by Jesus has profound theological significance and practical implication for us today regarding the role of women in the church and the community. Mpumlwana suggests four strategies for women empowerment in the church and in the society:

- to educate men and women on issues of justice;
- to challenge and resist oppressive attitudes and structures in the church;
- to help Christians re-read the Bible so as to understand that we are all equal before God;
- to use persuasion to win people (1996:382).

In view of the centrality of the role women play in the church and therefore of the need to place

them in leadership positions both in the church and the society, I can only agree with Haddad when she observes:

Alleviation of poverty and development of a social infrastructure have little meaning without all voices being heard and the accompanying empowerment that results. People, particularly ordinary women, need to feel that their voice is heard and that it matters; then the church will become for them a place not of struggle but safety” (1996: 208).

However, even if we truly believe that women are of equal dignity according to the Christian faith, we cannot rely on biblical texts as if they spoke with one voice. As Nurnberger suggests, “We have to pick up the feeble beginnings of a struggle for female dignity against a massive traditional culture in biblical times, understand the theological legitimacy of this struggle and push it forward against the general practice in the church and the society today on the basis of these theological (rather than biblical) arguments” (Nurnberger 1999: Personal communication).

In the light of this discussion, it seems to me that any sustainable development must take the issue of women empowerment seriously. My observation is that the CCS initiatives to empower women at Mwea need to be boosted. I now proceed to examine the final theme and concern, namely the conceptual framework of the CCS development activities at Mwea.

## **7.6 Conceptual framework.**

It was observed in Chapter One that development has traditionally been seen as a task done by the rich for the poor. The religiously oriented organisations in turn have commonly regarded their roles as being instruments of charity in transferring material resources to those in need. Both approaches display the assumption that the profits gained by well-placed and capable people would ‘trickle down’ beneficially to the under-privileged and marginalised.

But White and Tiongco (1996) have demonstrated that such a conception is fallacious. They contend that the development process is always uneven and contradictory - “...some people gain

more and some less, while others (often the poor) lose altogether” (1996:16). Consequently, development agencies now draw up special programmes and projects with a poverty focus. The poor become the target of interventions from outside. The same spirit of working *for* the poor persists. How do we as Christians respond to issues of development and poverty then? How can the church engage in poverty alleviation without patronizing the poor? The poor should participate in eradicating their poverty and still retain their humanity.

In an attempt to address the situation, the Christian Community Services of Mt Kenya East has adopted two approaches proposed earlier in this study, namely the participatory rural approach and the integrated development programme.

#### **7.6.1 Participatory rural approach.**

The participatory rural approach (‘PRA’) is a human-centred development approach that is purposely directed to poverty alleviation. The model can be said to be three-pronged. First, it is participatory because it works with the recognition that the subjects of development - the poor - must be involved in the process of fighting poverty. This means appreciating that the poor are not just lacking income, but are also excluded from the positions of power. The participatory approach, therefore, insists that the poor participate in defining what their needs are. They decide to change things and put their decision into practice. Secondly, the PRA is ‘rural-biased’, i.e. its area of application is rural rather than urban. Thirdly, the PRA model implies that the development agent be with the subjects of development at the site. The CCS, being a church organisation, would want to insist on a ‘Jesus model’. Jesus spent much of his time with the poor of Galilee, the literally poor, and had a great affinity to all those at the bottom of the heap. Therefore, the CCS has put in place structures such as facilitators, extension stations, extension agents, contact farmers etc., in its approach to development.

The participatory rural approach model has several advantages over the conventional approaches to development. A few are cited:-

- Interaction. There is interaction of insights as the development agent learns from the

community directly, on site and face to face, and the community in turn learns from the agent.

- Facilitation. The participatory rural approach facilitates investigations, analysis, presentation, learning and taking action.
- Triangulation. This means that the participatory rural approach uses a range of methods and types of information from various disciplines, cross-checking the results.
- Sharing. The participatory rural approach enables sharing of information and ideas between the community members themselves and between them and the facilitators or development agents.
- Seeking diversity. The participatory rural approach recognizes that various perceptions are important for development planning.
- Do it yourself. The participatory rural approach offers opportunities for all to have personal experiences by 'doing it yourself'.
- Finally the participatory rural approach embraces errors, i.e. errors are accepted while using them as lessons for improvement.

From the above it is clear that the participatory rural approach model is appropriate and inclusive. It appreciates people for who they are because as Nurnberger puts it, “As poor people they have something to give which surpasses all possessions: themselves, as persons created in the image of God... friendship, love which are more enriching than all your the possessions put together” (Nurnberger 1979:72).

### **7.6.2 The integrated development programme.**

The second development approach adopted by the CCS is code-named “integrated development approach”. Due to the interlocking nature of human needs, this paradigm requires a multi-disciplinary development team, that is, a team whose members have different skills and knowledge. The components of the programme include community health, food security, environmentally friendly agricultural practices, adult literacy, social services and gender issues. The key issue in this approach is combining environmental concerns in the community development process with

policies and practices that are geared towards optimal use of natural resources. The effects of the unsustainable use of natural resources is demonstrated by the decline in food production and forestry resources.

## 7.7 Summary.

In this chapter we have seen how in its history the church has been involved (or not involved) in responding to the demands of the society in a given era. In each era, it was a struggle for the church to attempt to be what it ought to be, to discern what kind of values it ought to reflect into the community at large, and what vision it ought to share with the world in which the church is called. The church as a sign of the Kingdom of God needs to engage in the vision of the community which Jesus modelled and the early church followed.

The chapter has demonstrated that the CCS paradigm of development embraces a matrix of ecclesiologies. Firstly, the CCS shares the “servant ecclesiology” or “secular dialogic” philosophy that is geared to transform the conditions of the poor. Secondly, the CCS’s interventions to alleviate poverty echoes the concerns of Bosch’s “alternative community”. Thirdly, the CCS (as part of the church) echoes nuances of the “contrast society” of Lohfink. In biblical language the CCS acts as the ‘salt of the earth’ changing the communities to become ‘the salt of the earth’. Our final ecclesiological model was the ‘redemptive community’ where we saw that the CCS is not only “creating a redeeming community” but through its praxis is itself a “redemptive community”. However, what holds the balance is the fact that each of the ecclesiologies does not exclude, but complements the others. They all aim at putting the Christian faith into praxis. We noted that the role of theology is to inform our understanding of development.

The chapter further discussed the role of women in development and revealed that although women play a vital role in the economic process, they are often marginalised. I identified four areas, namely education, law, gender discrimination and leadership, that are bottle-necks to meaningful participation of women in development. If their emancipation is enhanced in all these areas, women might take more leadership roles in the church and the community. Such leadership should include



decision-making as a matter of fact.

Finally it was noted that the new approaches to development adopted by the CCS are not only gender-friendly but also appropriate because they focus on the poor themselves as stakeholders in their own development. The choice of the model of community involvement depends on the context. The key commitments of those new models is that development and its associated technology should itself be indigenous and thereby appropriate. Clearly, the old model of 'trickle down' economic development seems to have failed to improve the situation of the poor because ultimately it has only helped the rich get richer while the poor get poorer. In response to this critique, new models of development, such as the participatory rural approach discussed above, have been articulated in recent times, models which implicitly if not explicitly, break with the older idea of development as a transfer of material wealth to the poor. With the new dispensation, development is not measured solely in terms of economic material benefits, vital as they may be. Rather, development must also be assessed in relation to the quality of life that is engendered. This, I posit, undergirds the CCS interventions discussed in this study. Whether the new development models will ultimately deliver the required results, is difficult to say. It is quite easy to imagine scenarios in which the elite and the local power brokers in the communities manipulate such projects to their advantage.

In the next chapter, I draw the conclusions from this study.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### 8. CONCLUSION.

The theme of this study is 'The Church Against Poverty: A critical evaluation of the work of the Christian Community Services Department (CCS) in the Kirinyaga Anglican Diocese in Kenya'. In the introduction, I set out by providing a cursory poverty profile in Kenya. It was noted that poverty is a major problem in many parts of the Kirinyaga Anglican Diocese and especially in Mwea Division where rains are scanty and unreliable, soils are poor and many people have no land. The incidence of poverty impacts more on female-headed families due to fewer income-earning adults, poor education and skills, less access to land, credit facilities and extension services. The poor were defined as those lacking the basic necessities of life - food, clothing and shelter. The poor are poor because they have meagre means of meeting their basic material, intellectual, cultural or religious needs in order to live a life of human dignity. The effects of poverty are severest on children, women of child-bearing age and the disabled.

I then offered my motivation of the study in which I ventured that the CCS might be a fruitful experiment of church involvement in development interventions in the community. It was argued that the church should offer hope to the poor and further that the church should offer a 'theology for life' which I defined as a theology that relates the church to the poor in the community, the oppressed and the powerless. I opined that the CCS initiatives are a departure from the conventional and prevalent church attitude towards development.

How was the study to be carried out? This was the next concern. I set out the research methodology and instruments of the project, opted for a case study approach whereby Mwea Division was sampled as the area of study. The research was to combine field and literature review.

The theoretical framework was informed by three themes in development, namely: the role of theology, the role of the church and women participation. In terms of theology, it was noted that

a theology of development implies a social concern for the poor. I maintained that the church is called to see the locus of its mission as the community in which it exists in its personal, cultural and socio-economic context. It was acknowledged that women form the largest constituency both in the church and the society. It is, therefore, crucial that their experiences, perceptions and talents be incorporated in the development process of the church and the community.

The first chapter concluded by identifying two approaches to development. The “participatory rural approach” recognises that the sovereignty of development rests with the people, that is, the poor who are the subject of development. The “integrated development approach” is highly innovative and seeks to respond to the needs of the poor in an integrated way through a multi-disciplinary approach to those needs and their solutions. The final concern was the importance of sustainable development, that is, a development that incorporates environmental concerns.

Chapter two was an attempt to provide the geographical and social background of the area of study. It was noted that Mwea forms part of the Tana River basin, has low rainfalls, and has a low population as compared with the rest of Kirinyaga District. The social-economic profile of Mwea was sketched. Despite the structural and economic reforms undertaken in Mwea Division and Kirinyaga District as a whole to stimulate economic development, there are still many people living under pathetic conditions. Among these are the rice farmers who seem to be exploited by the National Irrigation Board. The CCS is among many NGOs that are trying to transform the conditions of the poor.

Chapter three focused on the genesis, vision and *modus operandi* of the Christian Community Services. It was stated that the CCS was formed in 1976 as a result of the CORAT report. The CORAT had earlier been commissioned by the Diocese to investigate the causes of high infant mortality in some pockets of the See, including Mwea. The survey revealed that the high mortality was caused by poor nutrition, poor access to health-care and infectious (and immunizable) childhood diseases, namely tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and measles. The report also identified various community needs in agriculture and other socio-economic spheres. The CCS

was established as a response to these specific needs. The CCS formulated its mission statement as being geared to empower the poor, marginalised and destitute communities within the Diocese of Mt Kenya East. The discussion on the organisational structure of the CCS revealed that the organisation is sufficiently organised to meet the challenges of its mission statement. Finally, the CCS theology and *modus operandi* embraces a variety of biblical themes which are summed up in the 'need of the gospel to touch every aspect of human life'.

Chapters four and five evaluated the CCS's interventions through the Rural Development and Community Health programmes respectively code-named 'Food Increase Programme'. The FIP emphasised food security as part of a holistic approach through technical packages which promote sustainable agriculture.

The Rural Development Programme focused on agricultural activities, namely crop and livestock production. The major crop is rice. Rice growing has a potential for expansion due to irrigation possibilities. However, rice growing is hampered by a land dispute between the farmers and the National Irrigation Board, high prices for farm inputs, low prices for the grain and poor marketing. I challenged the CCS to use its advocacy portfolio to address the situation. Horticultural farming is emerging as a lucrative enterprise but requires artificial fertilizers and spray chemicals which are pollutants of the environment. Again the CCS was challenged to look for a balance between economic benefits and pollution, especially since the organisation is committed to conservation of environment.

Livestock development is mainly directed towards the control of ticks and animal diseases, e.g., foot and mouth, and east coast fever. The Food Increase Programme of the CCS is active in the promotion of beef cattle, goats, poultry and rabbit farming. It was seen that Mwea has potential for meat production, probably with a ready market in the rest of the District. In particular, poultry and rabbits were promising because they do not require much land.

The CCS promotes food security through the services of extension agents, an advisory committee,

contact farmers and women's groups. Other channels of promotion include education tours, field days, agricultural shows, seminars and workshops to teach the farmers and the community.

A number of constraints that the CCS and other development agencies face at Mwea were identified. One set of constraints to development is an inadequate infrastructure, such as the road network, and a lack of physical development plans especially for urban areas. These constraints can only be addressed by the government. Another type of constraint identified was the perpetual lack of sufficient funds and personnel to carry out effectively the Food Increase Programmes of the CCS. In an attempt to overcome the financial constraint, it was observed that the CCS is transforming some of its activities into income generating facilities. Hopefully any money generated will be used to defray costs so that donor funds may be directed to development activities.

It was observed that the CCS has targeted food increase and production in Mwea with a lot of enthusiasm. Nevertheless, the organisation may have to re-examine its ambitious (probably unrealizable) drive to spread its wings everywhere. With that in mind, chapter four concluded with a recommendation that the CCS should probably target a specific programme or area and only move to the next after meeting the set goals.

Whereas chapter four concentrated on agricultural activities, chapter five highlighted the CCS's intervention through its Community Health Portfolio. A profile of health facilities in the Division was carried out in order to appreciate the CCS's contribution in the community health sector. It was realized that the Division has the biggest share of government health facilities in the District. Even though these government facilities have been run-down, they are congested if and when they have drugs. However, the introduction of cost-sharing in the Kenyan medical facilities in the last few years has affected attendance because many people cannot afford the charges. Private health centres are under-utilised because of their high charges. Nevertheless, when drugs are lacking in government institutions, attendance in private health facilities increases. The CCS health interventions are focused on maternal/child health and family planning. It was realized that immunization of children under five years of age has been a success since the major diseases

identified as the cause of high child mortality do not feature prominently any more. The Community Health Workers and Community Based Distributors are playing a vital role in the promotion of primary health care in the community. However, their contribution is threatened by a lack of co-ordinated methods of remunerating them for their services. It was suggested that the problem of the repayment of the costs of the equipment they use be settled once and for all.

On the social services scene, it was pointed out that the CCS is doing a commendable job in creating an awareness of the HIV/Aids pandemic in the communities. It was particularly noteworthy that the CCS targets the youth, not only because they are the majority in the church and in the society but also because they are most sexually active and vulnerable. The social welfare efforts of the CCS also include relief services e.g. the distribution of seed and food. But since relief measures are short term, the CCS remains challenged to meet its objective in its mission statement, namely empowering the poor to be self-supporting.

In chapter six, focus was shifted to data analysis and interpretation. This was an attempt to (1) assess the impact of the CCS development intervention on the community, and (2) test the hypothesis that the CCS model of church development might be a fruitful experiment of church involvement in development activities in the community. It was demonstrated that the CCS's interventions against poverty are being felt in the community. This was evident especially in the case of women as they testified that they could meet their financial obligations, e.g., paying school fees, with great ease through funds from their merry-go-round groups. These group activities are supported by the CCS. It was also evident that women are removing their thatched roofs and putting corrugated iron sheets on their houses. The latter roofing provides a surface from which to harvest relatively clean rain water for domestic consumption.

Education facilities at Mwea were found to be inadequate, especially at post-primary and post-secondary levels. Though this presents a herculean task, it was felt that the CCS, the Church and other role players need a joint effort to address the problem, especially in the case of female education. Concerning population growth, it was noted that fertility was lower from age 30 - 34.

This suggested that the CCS's (and other agents') family planning interventions are bearing fruit. Consequently, family life education is vital, especially for women of age 21-24, if the rapid population growth is to be checked. This is because the singular mean age at marriage is 21.6 for women and women in Kenya stay married for most of their productive period. In addition it was indicated that female education not only postpones marriage but also the first birth. Thus the extension of their education could be used as a strategy to curb population growth.

On disease incidence and poverty, malaria remains a major killer in Mwea. This calls for rigorous measures to eradicate mosquitoes. It was suggested that the village health committees be revived and, through them, the communities be mobilized to clear bushes, drain ponds and destroy other mosquito breeding places not only around homesteads but also in all public places such as schools, village polytechnics etc. It was suggested that a research centre be established to work out long-term strategies to reduce insect-borne diseases in the region.

The data analysis further indicated that a considerable number of clergy knew the mission statement of the CCS. This suggested that the clergy do not see themselves exclusively as dispensers of the conventional gospel of spiritual welfare. The attitude of the church towards development seems to have changed. On another level, the data showed that the clergy are likely to participate in CCS development activities. The CCS should take advantage of this willingness to enhance its impact on the communities, because priests are influential people in the parishes.

Through the data analysis it was further revealed that the key personalities, both in the church and in the community, appreciate the work of the CCS in poverty alleviation in the communities. But the progress of these interventions is being hindered by lack of funds to hire qualified staff as well as to sustain some programmes. Donor rigidity was also cited as a bottleneck in the CCS's implementation of projects. In that regard it was suggested that the CCS should be transparent and accountable in order to attract donor confidence, sympathy and understanding.

But in spite of the progress made, especially in the sphere of community health, it became

apparent in the course of our research, that some church resources, such as buildings, were highly underutilised. In some cases the communities were putting up structures from which to operate the CCS services. Much money, time and energy was wasted while church buildings stood empty. It is clear that church buildings have been designed as single-purpose facilities that cannot be used readily for something else. Cochrane points out that “a suspect theology of church buildings combined very often with the desire for a suitable status symbol undergirds this design, and thwarts attempts to construct and use viable multi-purpose buildings” (1991:45). In this context, I would suggest that the church takes up the challenge by putting up buildings which are functional community centres, that is, creatively related to the other needs of the community. The CCS as the development arm of the Church is best suited to spearhead such a campaign.

This study is a theological enterprise. Chapter seven offered a theological reflection. It was an attempt to assess the CCS model of development partly against a historical perspective on church and development, and partly against the roles of the church, theology and women participation in development. Firstly, it was noted that, historically, the church's involvement with social change in relation to the poor was personal. This means that the world and the social order was relativised by the priority given to loving God, rather than the poor. The Reformation, however, seems to have brought a fundamental theological shift in the understanding of the church's involvement in the society, especially in relation to the poor.

In the contemporary age, the church's praxis is challenged to be a paradigm for the civil society. In that context the church should live and demonstrate the liberating power of the gospel and the new possibilities in Christ for a world characterised by such evil as hunger, wars, poverty, marginalisation and gender imbalance etc. Thus I argued that the CCS development activities fall under the general category of 'liberative theology' where liberation is not understood strictly in political categories but as empowering the poor in the society. The CCS and the Church were seen as a 'servant', a 'contrast society', an 'alternative community' and as a 'redemptive community'. These ecclesiologies are not to be understood as excluding each other but rather as indicating similar models of 'being the church for the poor'.



Participation of women in development was highlighted not only for theological reasons but also due to the fact they are the biggest constituency of the church in the community. In this regard it is regrettable that women are grossly under-represented in the decision-making structures of the church and the society. For that reason I called upon the CCS to enhance its programme to empower women for leadership roles in the church in particular and in the community in general.

On its long journey the church has largely been shaped by its context. In our present case, the Anglican Diocese of Kirinyaga, the church has had to break down some of the ineffective theology which still rules so much of the church's life. Hence it set up the Christian Community Services as the church's arm for development. In the process, the church has discerned a new way of embracing the gospel of Christ in all aspects of life. It is a new vitality in sharing Jesus Christ. In my opinion, this expresses a truer love for underprivileged human beings who are also precious to God.

In my view the biggest factor in all this is the will to summon sufficient compassion for the poor, the outcast, the lonely, the stranger, and the fearful. In this, the church demonstrates some of the hallmarks of the Kingdom of God in a way that is visible. For most ordinary people, life is given shape by food, shelter, clothing, security, health and, for many, justice and freedom from oppression. When these things are lacking, people feel crushed. Some believe it is appropriate for the church to do something, to commit itself to social action for the homeless, the poor, the handicapped, and those facing other deprivations. When it so acts, people see the church to be relevant. The Gospel is concerned with economic justice, political freedom, the breaking down of barriers of culture, race, sex, as well as offering hope, drawing people out of a sense of apathy and hopelessness about their condition. However, the Church cannot replace the political goodwill i.e. the governments in development.

On balance, it is apparent that the CCS is committed to empowering the poor and the marginalised in the community to take charge of their own development agenda. The CCS seems convinced that, as a church organisation, it has a special calling and it has turned to theology to verify that because

theology has the practical function of supporting the church in its faith and mission. Praxis is the means by which we attempt to work by faith in God, in anticipation of a new heaven and a new earth.

Praxis, therefore, is a transforming action. Thus the CCS is a fruitful experiment of church involvement in development activities in the community - an experiment that has tremendous potential to shed theological as well as practical light on church involvement in development.

## **APPENDICES**

**Women groups are popular and increasingly transforming the socioeconomic wellbeing of their members**



**Top:** A typical women group meeting with a CCS Extension Agent. The meeting takes place under the shade of a CCS sponsored afforestation project.

**Below:** The CCS Extension Agent discusses a point with women group leaders at a tree nursery project.



**Women groups are popular and increasingly transforming the socioeconomic wellbeing of their members**



**Top:** A typical women group meeting with a CCS Extension Agent. The meeting takes place under the shade of a CCS sponsored afforestation project.

**Below:** The CCS Extension Agent discusses a point with women group leaders at a tree nursery project.



## Appendix 2

### Empowering women to be self-supporting



Top: CCS extension agent instructing women how to maintain an oilseed extracting machine.

Below: “We can now do it on our own”...these women seem to be saying.



## Appendix 2

### Empowering women to be self-supporting



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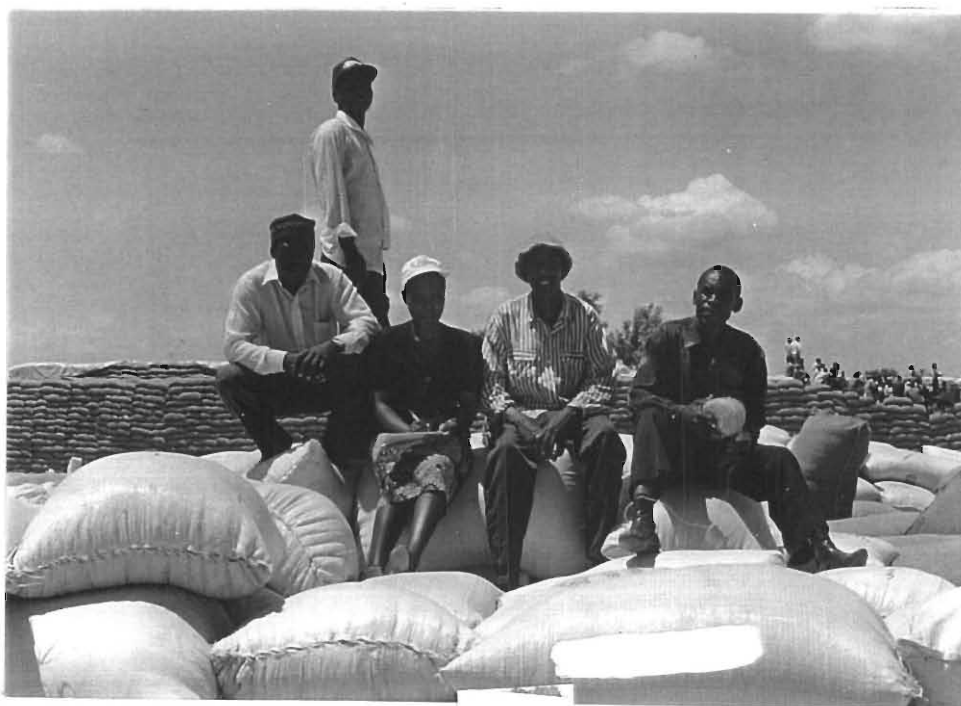
Below: “ We can now do it on our own”...these women seem to be saying.



### The rice crisis



**Top:** “From whither comes my help?”... a rice farmer seems to be pondering after a harvest...as **(below)** hundreds of bags of the grain are likely to go to waste under weather conditions at makeshift storage facilities. Rice farmers were protesting poor prices and ‘inflated’ NIB service charges. They were demanding that they market their own produce and then pay whatever they owe to the Government without interference from the NIB.

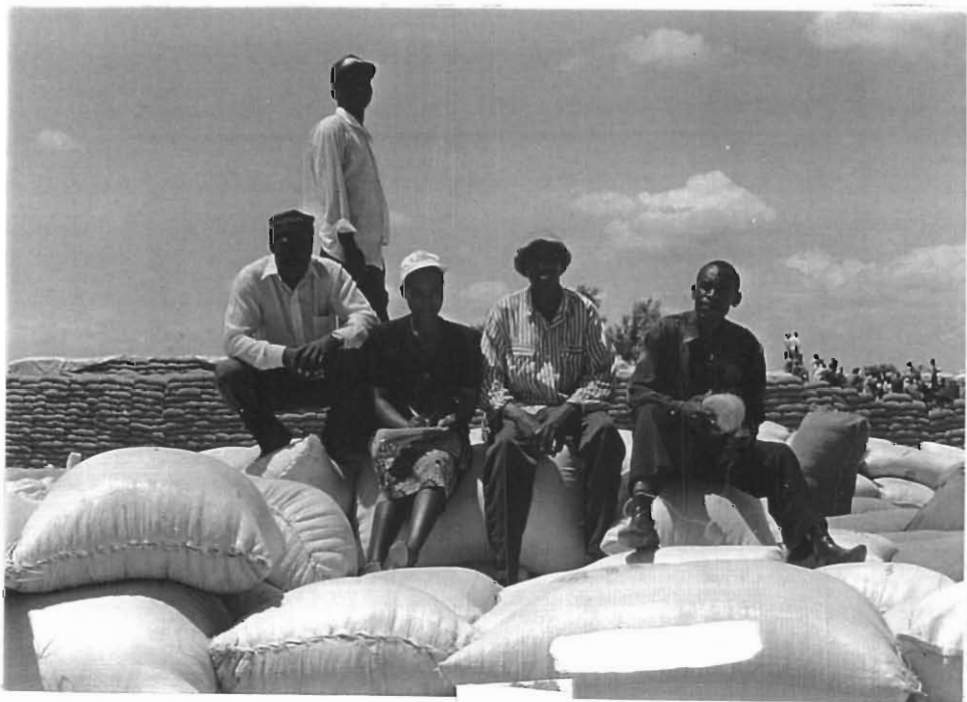




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## APPENDIX 4a

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE CCS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

Your answers will be kept confidential

1. Name .....
2. Sex      (a) Male      (b) Female
3. (i) religious affiliation    (a) Christian    (b) Moslem    (c) Other.  
    (ii) If Christian, denomination    (a) Anglican    (b) Roman Catholic    (c) other
4. Marital status    (a) married (b) unmarried (c) widow    (d) widower (e) divorced.
5. Age  
    (a) 14-19      (b)20-24      (c) 25-29      (d) 30-34    (e) 35-39  
    (f) 40-44      (g)45-49      (h) 50-54      (d) 55+
6. (i) area of residence (a) urban    (b) peri-urban (d) rural.  
    (ii) sub-location/ward.....
7. Dependants    (a) total no of children.....  
                    (b) no of pre-school children...  
                    (c) no of school-age.....  
                    (d) no in primary school.....  
                    (e) no in secondary school.....  
                    (f) no in post secondary institution  
                                (i) vocational training .....  
                                (ii) university.....  
                                (iii) teacher training college.....  
                    (g) no of children employed .....  
                        nature of employment  
                        .....

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Your answers will be kept confidential

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2. Sex     (a) Male       (b) Female
3. (i) religious affiliation   (a) Christian   (b) Moslem   (c) Other.  
    (ii) If Christian, denomination   (a) Anglican   (b) Roman Catholic   (c) other
4. Marital status   (a) married (b) unmarried (c) widow   (d) widower (e) divorced.
5. Age  
    (a) 14-19       (b)20-24       (c) 25-29       (d) 30-34   (e) 35-39  
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  (ii) university.....  
  (iii) teacher training college.....  
                  (g) no of children employed .....  
                      nature of employment  
                  .....

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(h) Do you have other dependants? Yes/No.

How many?.....

Please explain the nature of dependency.

.....

.....

.....

.....

8. (a) What is your main occupation?.....

(b) Have you had any relevant training in this field? Yes/No. Please explain

.....

(c) Monthly income Kshs.....

9. Does your spouse earn own income? Yes/No. If yes please state how much per month Ksh.....

10. (i) Do you live in

(a) Own accommodation or

(b) Rented accommodation. or

(c) mortgaged accommodation

(Please tick as appropriate)

(ii) If you live in a rented or mortgaged accommodation, what is

(a) rent per month Ksh.....

(b) mortgage repayment Ksh.....

(iii) Do you own any land or real estate property? Please give details eg. acreage, freehold title, type of property etc.

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(h) Do you have other dependants? Yes/No.

How many?.....

Please explain the nature of dependency.

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(iii) Do you own any land or real estate property? Please give details eg. acreage, freehold title, type of property etc.

.....  
.....

11. (i) Your source of water for domestic consumption is :-

(a) piped water (b) a treated water connection (c) a borehole (d) a river/stream (e) other.

(Please tick the appropriate.)

(ii) Please estimate the amount of time spent daily by your family on the subsistence chores of fetching water.....

12. (i) Which of the listed is your main source of cooking energy?

(a) fire wood

(b) energy-saving jiko

(c) solar pan

(d) electricity

(e) kerosene stove.

(ii) How do you acquire these resources? Please explain.

.....

.....

(iii) Please estimate the amount of time spent (if applicable) by your family in the subsistence chores of fetching fire wood.....

13. Does your household use:- (Please tick)

(a) a family pit latrine

(b) a family WC

(c) a communal pit latrine

(d) a communal WC

(e) none of the above?

14. Nutrition and Feeding habits

(i) how many meals does your family have in a day? Please tick as appropriate.

(a) breakfast

(b) lunch

11. (i) Your source of water for domestic consumption is :-  
(a) piped water (b) a treated water connection (c) a borehole (d) a river/stream (e) other.  
(Please tick the appropriate.)
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13. Does your household use:- (Please tick)

- (a) a family pit latrine
- (b) a family WC
- (c) a communal pit latrine
- (d) a communal WC
- (e) none of the above?

14. Nutrition and Feeding habits

- (i) how many meals does your family have in a day? Please tick as appropriate.

- (a) breakfast
- (b) lunch

(c) supper.

(ii) What are the main contents eg maize, beans etc of the main meal for your household? Please list them .....  
.....

(iii) which of the above do you grow for yourself? Please list them .....  
.....

(iv) How and from where do you get the rest? Please explain.....  
.....

15. Does the CCS sponsor any communal projects in your local area? If yes, please list them .....  
.....  
.....

16. Please state how each of these projects was identified .  
.....  
.....  
.....

17. Do you know the objectives of these projects? Yes/No. Please explain.  
.....  
.....  
.....

18. Does the community contribute towards the CCS sponsored projects? If the answer is ‘yes’ please explain in which ways the contribution is effected. If no, why please explain.  
.....  
.....



(c) supper.

(ii) What are the main contents eg maize, beans etc of the main meal for your household? Please list them .....  
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.....  
.....  
.....

18. Does the community contribute towards the CCS sponsored projects? If the answer is 'yes' please explain in which ways the contribution is effected. If no, why please explain.  
.....  
.....

.....

19. Do you have extension and other related services (e.g. credit, seminars, workshops, courses, etc.)  
From the CCS? Yes/No. If yes, please give brief details

.....  
.....  
.....

20. How would you assess the impact of the CCS development activities on your household lifestyle since you started benefitting from them? Please tick as appropriate.

- (a) our standard of living has improved significantly.
- (b) Our standard of living is improving.
- (c) our standard of living has not changed.
- (d) I do not know.

21. Does the CCS have any special programmes in your local area for :

- (a) Women
- (b) Children
- (c) the disabled

If yes please list them down.

.....  
.....  
.....

22. Please list all recreational facilities in your local area

.....  
.....  
.....

Does any organisation, including the CCS , sponsor sports and or any recreation activities in your local area? If yes please explain briefly.

.....  
.....

.....

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If yes please list them down.

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.....  
.....  
.....

Does any organisation, including the CCS , sponsor sports and or any recreation activities in your  
local area? If yes please explain briefly.

.....  
.....

.....  
23. Please give your overall opinion on the CCS development activities in your local area suggesting any areas you consider need special attention.

Thank you very much for giving me your time and attention. I wish to reaffirm that all the answers to these questions will kept confidential.

## Appendix 4b.

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CLERGY

Dear Rev.....

Greetings in Jesus name.

As part of my course work I have to undertake a small research project and I would be grateful for your help. I am studying the role of the church in development (Christian Community Services) and especially in regard to empowering the poor, marginalised (eg. women, the disabled and children) in the community. I have taken Mwea Division as the sample representative of the whole Diocese. I would appreciate highly if you would answer the following questions as fully as possible. Please your answers will be treated confidentially.

1. Name.....(optional)
2. Marital status (a) married (b) single . Please as appropriate.
3. Gender (a) Male (b) Female.
4. Place of work .....(parish) in .....(rural deanery) of .....(archdeaconry).
5. Ecclesial office held (a) parish vicar (b) rural dean (c) archdeacon (d) other. Please tick one only.
6. Number of years served (a) in the ministry..... (b) in the DoK. Please remember DoK was created in 1990.
7. How many (a) parishes (b) deaneries (c) archdeaconries have you served in Kirinyaga since 1990? (a)..... (b)..... (c) .....
8. Do you know what the Mission Statement of the CCS is ? Yes/No. If yes, Please write down  
.....  
.....  
.....
9. If your answer in 8 above is “yes”, would you say that in its current form. Please tick one :  
(a) CCS is achieving the goals of its mission statement.

- (b) CCS is likely to achieve the goals of its mission statement
- (c) CCS is unlikely to achieve the goals of its mission statement.
- (d) CCS cannot achieve the goals of its mission statement.

10. How have you interacted best with the CCS Kirinyaga? (Please tick one)

- (a) through its activities in all parishes I have served.
- (b) through its activities in some of the parishes I have served.
- (c) through the occasional clergy/church workers conferences.
- (d) through other people and the CCS officers.

11. In your opinion:

- (a) the parish should be the link between the CCS and the Church.
- (b) the parish minister should have nothing to do with the CCS.

(Please tick one).

Please explain your answer in a short statement

.....

.....

12. How would you describe the relationship between the CCS and the clergy?

- (a) very friendly
- (b) friendly
- (c) lukewarm
- (d) unfriendly
- (e) uncertain.

(Please tick one)

13. Do you think that in dealing with the people, CCS is

- (a) more effective
- (b) less effective

when compared with a government department? Please tick one.

Please explain your answer

.....

.....  
14. Would you say that CCS development activities in the parish have benefitted :

- (a) more women than men
- (b) more men than women
- (c) more people below 35 years old than above..
- (d) all people regardless of their age and gender.

(Please tick one only).

15. As a clergy, how often are you involved with the CCS development activities

- (a) Never.
- (b) once a year
- (c) monthly
- (d) weekly
- (e) daily

(please tick one).

16. According to the CCS’s reports to the Synods, what are the organisation’s main source of funds for its projects?

.....  
.....

17. In your opinion, are the CCS’s development activities:

- (a) sustainable
- (b) unsustainable

Please explain your answer briefly:

.....  
.....

18. Do you have any specific recommendations/comments you would want to suggest to the CCS in its development activities in Mwea in particular, and the Diocese generally?

.....

.....  
.....  
.....

..... ( Please you use an extra sheet of paper  
if this space is not sufficient for your answer).

19. Thank you for spending your precious time on this questionnaire. I wish to re-assure you that  
your answers will be confidential.

Please return to  
Rev Amos Kinyua  
Diocesan Office  
P O Box 95  
Kutus

Every blessing in your ministry

Your sincerely,

Amos .



**(Polluted) water, water everywhere ... for consumption or irrigation?**



Top: On the one hand the slow moving water in canals provides breeding places for mosquitoes but...on the other hand it provides irrigating water to the thriving horticulture industry (below).



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**B. ORAL INTERVIEWS: List of personalities interviewed and date of interview.**

1. The Most Rev. Dr. David Gitari, Archbishop of Anglican Church in Kenya (ACK) and founder bishop of the CCS - 8/2/99.
2. Evalyn Kariuki, Regional Organiser, Woman Guild, Presbyterian Church - 23/12/98. The Rt.
3. Rev. Ben K. Kirikiru, Executive Director, CCS - 29/1/99.
4. Mr J. S. Mathenge, Chairman, Board of CCS - 2/2/99.
5. Rev. D.N. Munene, bishop of Kirinyaga, ACK diocese - 29/12/98.
6. The Hon. J.J. Nyaga, former cabinet minister and a founder member of the CC - 18/1/99.

**C. LIST OF OFFICES CONSULTED AND DATES.**

1. CCS Offices - Kerugoya - 15/1/99; 29/1/99; 5/2/99.
2. CCS Offices - Wang'uru Extension Station - 8&9/12/98; 19/1/99; 28/1/99.
3. Diocesan Offices- Kutus - 29/12/98.
4. District Adult Education Office - Kerugoya - 12/1/99.
5. District Agricultural Office - Kerugoya - 29/12/98.
6. District Education Office -Kerugoya - 12/1/99.
7. District Environment Office - Kerugoya - 23/12/98.
8. District Medical Office of Health- Kerugoya - 17/12/98.
9. District Public Health Office - Kerugoya - 17/12/98.
10. District Registrar of Births and Deaths Office- Kerugoya - 18/1/99.
- 11 . District Social Development Office - 12/1/99.
12. District Statistics Office- Kerugoya - 24/12/98

**D. MONOGRAPHS AND REPORTS.**

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2. CCS Integrated Proposal 1997/99.
3. CCS Joint Appraisal Report 1997.
4. CCS Mission Statement



5. CCS's Reports to the Synods of Kirinyaga of 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998.
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7. District Education Officer's 1997 Annual Report - Kerugoya.
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## **E *NEWSPAPERS***

1. **The Daily Nation on Website**, <http://www.nationaudio.com/>  
Thursday, June 4, 1998, "Churches join hands against major killer".
2. **The Daily Nation on Website**, <http://www.nationaudio.com/>  
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August 24, 1998. "Lobby for property rights, women urged".
4. **The Daily Nation on Website**, <http://www.nationaudio.com/>  
Friday, April 23, 1999 "New effort against Malaria welcome".
5. **The Daily Nation on Website**, <http://www.nationaudio.com/>  
Wednesday, May 12, 1999. "New efforts to curb malaria in Coast"