

Strategies Used By Victory Outreach Church In Alleviation Of Poverty Among The People Of Bungoma County, Kenya.

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Abstract: The central aim of this paper was to investigate strategies used by victory outreach church in alleviation of poverty among the people of Bungoma County, Kenya. The study employed stratified simple random sampling technic to arrive at 384 (n=384) research respondents. The study used questionnaires, focused group discussions, participant observation and interview schedules as primary data collection instruments. Data analysis involved use of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 21 software. Descriptive statistics which included use of percentages was employed in this study. Interview schedules were used to collect qualitative information while questionnaires collected quantitative information from the respondents. Reliability of research instruments was ensured through three step measure. First, the research instrument was piloted to a group of 10 respondents from Busia County who respondent to the questionnaire and necessary corrections were done. Secondly, the piloted instrument was supplied separately 13 respondents from Kakamega County to correct the gray areas. In the third step, Cronbach Alpha of Coefficient using statistical package for social sciences of 0.836 was attained which was way above the recommended 0.7 in social sciences. Victory Outreach Church has partnered with the Government of Kenya to provide free HIV testing and counselling at the areas where the church operates. The church has identified volunteers from its congregation who it sponsors them for training in HIV testing and counselling and later come to offer the services. Secondly, Victory Outreach Church is offering training programs to the community within its reach on how to acquire small loans. The respondents indicated that the church has initiated ‘merry go round’ activities where members come together and form groups and embrace the idea of saving. Majority of the respondents indicated that they are happy with the idea because the church has made joining into the groups open and voluntary even to those who are not original members of VOC. The church has further started schooling for children within the community. The children receive education on week days from teachers who are paid by the church. The findings are important to the Government of Kenya and any other interested parties. It forms a basis for future research work.

Key words: *Poverty, alleviation, Bungoma County, Kenya*

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I. INTRODUCTION

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Kenya (2013), while writing on rural poverty in Kenya say that about seventy nine per cent of Kenya’s population lives in rural areas and relies on agriculture for most of its income. Nearly half the country’s about forty million people are poor, or unable to meet their daily nutritional requirements. The vast majority of poor people live in rural areas. Although in some respects conditions have improved since the early nineteen eights (1980s), the poverty rate has remained steady at about forty eight percent. The rural economy depends mainly on smallholder subsistence agriculture, which produces seventy five percent of total agricultural output.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Kenya (2013), continues to argue that most Kenyans who live in areas that have good to high potential for agriculture, comprise about eighteen percent of the country’s territory and are located in central and western part of the country. However population density in high-potential areas is more than six times the country’s average of fifty five people per square kilometer and constitutes an overwhelming pressure on resources. The poorest communities are found in the sparsely populated arid zones, mainly in the north. Kenya’s poor rural people include: smallholder farmers herders, farm laborers, unskilled and semi-skilled workers, households headed by women, people with disabilities and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) orphans.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, 2013) observed that reasons for the persistence of poverty in Kenya are various; Kenya has one of the world's fastest population growth rates. Over the past thirty years, the population has more than tripled greatly increasing pressure on the country's resources. Together with a widening income gap, this has eroded gains in education, health, food security, employment and income. There are strong linkages between poverty and environmental degradation, particularly poor water management, soil erosion, declining soil fertility and land degradation.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, 2013) argues that the effects of climate change which undermine an already fragile resource base have contributed to declining agricultural yields over the past decades. In recent past and current years, drought has become a perennial problem in parts of Kenya. These episodes in two thousand and nine (2009) and two thousand and eleven (2011) generated food emergencies, while flooding in two thousand and ten (2010) affected parts of the country severely. Tribal afflictions are a source of considerable conflict within Kenya, with the diverse ethnic groups competing since independence for land, financial resources and political power.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, 2013) posits that Human Immune-Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) is most prevalent among young and middle-aged Kenyans, who form the most productive segment of the population. The illness leaves orphans and households headed by women or and young children who lack resource managerial skills making them even more vulnerable to poverty. The burden of waterborne diseases, malaria and HIV/AIDS weighs heavily on both the country and Kenyan families, affecting income, food security and development potential.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, 2013) makes a further observation that life expectancy fell to forty six years in 2006, but has since risen to over fifty five years. Rural women are a particularly vulnerable category to poverty because they do not have equal access to social and economic assets as men do. Subsistence farming is the primary and often the only source of livelihood for about seventy percent of these women. It can therefore be argued that men are advantaged than women when it comes to resource accessibility and therefore men stand better chances of avoiding being victims of poverty than women.

Vinay (2005) posits that the causes of poverty are complex; Political, economic, and social institutions are implicated in the production and perpetuation of poverty. Holistic approaches to poverty alleviation need to be promoted. This is based on multidimensional nature of the causes of poverty. However what is now known as holistic development has been the approach of the church from its inception in Africa. Whenever one thinks of Church mission station in any part of Africa, the following specific features come to mind:- A church, school, health clinic, vegetable garden and / or farm. These are characteristic campaign of the agents of the church against social ills of the time.

Strategic advantage of the church in poverty alleviation includes the several ideal features of the church which give it advantage position in delivery of sustainable development. These include the church is rooted in the community; it is presence not just in urban areas but also in the remote rural areas, including even hostile areas where many other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are unable to operate. It draws its voluntary membership from any or all segments of local population and knows the local situation well. It is familiar with the needs of the people. With these advantages, the church has potential strengths for speedy, effective community mobilization and influence. The church is nonpartisan in serving the whole society, the family, the community and even the government. It serves the rich and the poor. It usually spans ethnic and other dividing lines.

According to Friends of America Foundation (FAF), Bungoma County is an impoverished rural area in North West Kenya, where families face extreme absolute-structural poverty with fifty three percent of its population of her one million three seventy five thousand and sixty three people (1,375, 063) (source 2009 census report) languishing and living below poverty line (FAF, 2014). They lack shelter, clothing and clean water. It is against this understanding that the focus of this study was on absolute-structural poverty research for appropriate solutions to this social menace of poverty. The focus of this research was on the distinctive role of Victory outreach ministry church in the task of poverty alleviation. The emphasis here was that the Victory Outreach ministry Church deserves a front seat in the public arena of economic development and particularly in poverty alleviation. This study presented the Victory Outreach Church as the candidate which should fill the gap. This was in line with what Vinay (2005) observes that, "An effective solution to a problem of poverty must be one based on a good diagnosis of the important place spirituality plays in human development".

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Poverty is a social reality as presented in the background and it is clear that poverty seems a paradox in even well developed countries for example When compared to actual rates in Canada which was twenty nine percent; Finland was thirty three percent; France-thirty nine percent; Germany- twenty nine percent; the Netherlands-thirty percent; Norway-twenty seven percent; Sweden-thirty six percent and the United Kingdom-thirty eight percent, the United States rate is low but slightly higher than that of Norway, leave alone developing

countries in Africa and particularly Kenya which is assumed to have one of the best-developed economies in East Africa. Poverty alleviation in particular is a major concern for all developing countries. The need for poverty alleviation arises from its persistence despite past efforts to combat it through national development planning and special programs, bearing in mind its unbearable effects on human lives. Among the groups hardest hit by poverty are rural populations. Past studies for instance by Nyagwoka (2011), on Strategy for Poverty Reduction among Seventh day Adventist Members in Kenya. The study concentrated on branches in Nairobi County. In another separate study, Vanessa Onguti 2011, did a study on strategies done by City Harvest Church on eradicating Poverty in Nairobi County, Kenya. However, intensified education and awareness and concerted efforts are needed by all the institutions in combating poverty. The present study aimed at answering the question; what were the strategies used by Victory Outreach Church in alleviating poverty in Bungoma County, Kenya?

1.3 Study Objective

To establish strategies used by Victory Outreach Church in alleviating Poverty in Bungoma County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Question

What are the strategies used by Victory Outreach Church in alleviating poverty in Bungoma County, Kenya?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Victory Outreach Church bases its teachings on the premise that they are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. They are responsible to Him for their proper use. They acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellowmen and by returning tithes and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. At creation God shared His possessions with humanity and He continues to be the true owner of the world, its inhabitants and its goods (Psalms 24:1). At the cross, He reclaimed as His own that which man had surrendered to Satan at the fall (1 Cor. 6:19-20). He has now appointed His people to serve as stewards of His possessions (Ministerial Association, 2005:302). A steward is a person entrusted with the management of the household or estate of another. To a Christian, stewardship means a man's responsibility for, and use of, everything entrusted to him by God-life, physical being, time, talents and abilities, material possessions, opportunities to be of service to others and His knowledge of truth. Christians serve as managers over God's possessions and view life as a divine opportunity to learn to be faithful stewards, thereby qualifying for the higher stewardship of eternal things in the future life (Ministerial Association, 2005: 302). At creation, God placed one restriction on human kind. They were not to eat the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This tree provided a constant reminder that God was the owner and final authority over the earth. Respecting this restriction demonstrated faith and loyalty to the creator. Therefore outreach ministry church has to respect the commandments of God and play a role in alleviating poverty in Bungoma County. They still need constant reminder that God is the source of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17) and that it is He who provides them with the power to get wealth (Deut. 8:18), ((Ministerial Association, 2005:303). The victory outreach ministry Church holds that although the returning of tithe is not held as a test of fellowship, it is recognized as a scriptural obligation to every believer and as one of the spiritual exercises in which the giver should have part in claiming by faith the fullness of blessing in Christian life and experience. Malachi 3:10 talks of bringing tithe into the store house and God will open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it. In addition to the tithe, the scriptures emphasize our obligation to bring offerings to the Lord. Great prosperity and blessing have attended the work as a result. God's people are united in generously supporting the course by giving offerings in proportion to their incomes. Every good thing of earth was placed here by the bountiful of God as an expression of His love to man. The poor are His and the cause of religion is His. The gold and the silver are the Lord's and he could rain them from heaven if He chose. But instead of this, He has made man His steward, entrusting him with the means, not to be hoarded, but to be used in benefiting others. He thus makes man the medium through which to distribute His blessings on earth (Ellen 1992: 15).

The church continues to state that it is not wise to give indiscriminately to everyone who may solicit our aid, for we may encourage idleness, intemperance and extravagance but if one comes to your door and says he is hungry, do not turn him away empty handed; give him something to eat. You may not know his circumstances and it may be that his poverty is the result of misfortune. Care needs to be taken because the custom of supporting people in idleness by private gifts or church money encourages them in wrong habits. This course should be consciously avoided. Every man, woman and child should be educated to practical useful work. All should learn some trade. All should be trained to use their powers to some purpose and God is ready to increase the capabilities of all who will educate themselves to industrious habits. (Ellen: 1992; 165). We may err in making gifts to the poor which are not a blessing to them, leading them to feel that they need not to extent themselves and practice economy for others will not permit them to suffer. We should not give countenance to

indolence or encourage habits of self-gratification by affording means for indulgence. While the worthy poor are not to be neglected, all should be taught, so far as possible to help themselves. This informs the outreach ministry church to assess the real impact of poverty in Bungoma County and find out the interventions that can help them in the alleviation of this situation.

From the book of proverbs 29:7, outreach ministry church teaches that, “Good people care about justice for the poor...” Through this, outreach ministry church presents opportunity for the people of all backgrounds to see beyond the face of poverty, recognize God-given talents of every person and act justly towards one another. They have established schools where they provide education to enlighten people in good decision making skills, hygiene, and prevention of diseases. These schools include Kimalewa, Siuna, Chebukwabi, Kibabii and Kamusinde. The Outreach ministry church works in partnership with worldwide churches, ecumenical agencies and local organization; Episcopal Relief and Development (ER-D) to save the lives and strengthen the community members. The church gives farmers farm in-puts such as maize seeds and fertilizers to enable them grow food for their subsistence use. The church hires farms where they grow food crops which they distribute to those who do not have food in an attempt to alleviate poverty. The church has established Saccos and charitable merry-go-round to provide for short and long term loans at low interest rates to the community members. Through ER-D, the church helps in the distribution of mosquito-nets and life-straws in Bungoma County.

Poverty is a major concern of the church, and countless poverty alleviation strategies and campaigns have been developed over time across the region. Poverty is defined as having numerous manifestations and characteristics that include low and unreliable income, poor health, low levels of education, insecurity, disempowerment and isolation from the mainstream of the economic development (Bull 1999). These characteristics are also referred to as indicators of measuring poverty (Ibid). The biblical word on the relation of the community of faith to poverty is clear and unambiguous; because God identified himself with the poor, so too the community of faith is called to special concern for these persons. The rights of the poor are delineated most clearly in the law codes of the Old Testament; here concern for the poor is taken out of the realm of voluntary charity. For instance in Deuteronomy 15:

There will be no poor among you... if you will obey the voice of the Lord your God.. If there is among you a poor man, one of your brethren, in any of your towns within your land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him, and lend him sufficient for his need... You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging... For the poor will never cease out of the land; therefore, I command you, You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor... (Deuteronomy 15).

This passage suggests that if the demands of the covenant were fully embodied there would be no poverty. Christians have assumed that this obedience would lead to the transformation of their physical and social as well as their spiritual lives. Missionaries on the other hand have also implicitly assumed that the reception and living of the gospel would begin to transform both individual and community life. And more often than not, specific steps were taken and institutions or program were established to aid this process (Elliston 1989:1). But according to Galgalo (2005), the scriptures do not contain a blue print for what could be called a biblical or Christian economic system. Despite the fact that the bible could be a valuable resource for providing guiding economic principles, Christians are faced with formidable challenge from the realities of the present day market place. Christians are participants or are members of a market society where the market forces ensure the best competitors and where the cutthroat competition does not always adhere to the principles of fair play.

Vinay (2005) observes that the church is an effective grass root organization in the world which has import implications for the development of the continent. For that reason, the church and its relief and development agencies are called to a holistic mission of Christ to the less fortunate people, displaying his love, compassion and justice. The church projects often have a language of holism, but a practice of dualism. Many development agencies ignore or underestimate the importance of the church for sustainable relief and development. He adds that the gospel is the most significant force for social change. As a result, the expansion of the church in Africa has important implications for the progress of the continent. Consequently, the important place of spirituality in human development is being acknowledged. Secular groups involved in development are beginning to take seriously the religious communities with whom they work. Therefore true development requires addressing the spiritual aspect. Elliston (1989) observes that the mission of the church is to empower through ministry to the poor, not just preach liberation in the future coming kingdom of God. But the power imparted has to be the power of the powerless, the power of vulnerability, the power of Christ. For Elliston (1989: 45)

Poverty means death. It means death due to hunger and sickness, or to repressive methods used by those who see their privilege position being endangered by any effort to liberate the oppressed. It means physical death to that to which is added cultural death, in as much as those in power seek to do away with everything that gives unity and strengthen to the dispossessed of this world. In this way those in power hope to make the dispossessed an easier prey for the machinery of oppression.

Therefore, the church has a duty to proclaim the message and take care of human need, which will then empower the poor. The church should be at the cutting edge of formulating an alternative economic system based on the kingdom principles. Christians should not be satisfied with the current system that consumes inordinately, endangering life on earth, threatening the survival of people and their culture, alienating and mutilating the human kind, and perpetrates a world of extremely rich and extremely poor people. (Ibid: 72)

Bryne (1975) observe that the Christian churches in Africa have more or less accepted progress as a fundamental part of the ministry and office of Christ and consequently required of by apostolate for the betterment and development of the community. He shows the necessary humanitarian impulse implemented in the concern with development trends to make Christians feel this is something they can identify with and should be involved in combating hunger, poverty, ignorance and disease or the adverse effects that the wrong kind of development can have on the society. Mission organization has been involved in various projects. However, Brynes work does not show how the Victory Outreach ministry church has concerned itself in development of the society. This gap is what this study seeks to address.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design to generate data. Descriptive survey involved studying the situation of poverty as it was and attempted to explain strategies used by Victory Outreach Church to alleviate it in Bungoma County. This study used descriptive survey analysis to establish causes of poverty in Bungoma County, Kenya. According to Ssenghor, (1993), this design is also good since it facilitates quick data collection and is cheap, relative to census. In descriptive survey design, two categories of respondents were crucial namely; Informed specialists and consumers or users (Orodho, 2008). Data were collected from each sample of a population at a time to allow for thorough investigation into the causes of poverty in Bungoma County, Kenya.

Purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique in which the choice of sampling units depends on the subjective judgment of the researcher (Ogola-2005), was adopted in choice of study respondents who were subjected to Stratified sampling to ensure homogeneity of the selected sample in ensuring that samples are drawn from each region encompassed in the target population, then followed by simple random sampling technique from each group.

Questionnaire, focused observations and interview schedule were used as data collection instruments. On piloting of the instruments, Hill (1998) proposes 10 to 30 respondents to pilot study in survey research. Ten members of the community from Busia County were randomly selected for pilot testing. After pilot testing of the instrument on the proposed number of people, the researcher looked at the pattern in the feedback and used the data to revise the instrument. A test retests method on sample of at least ten respondents is adequate (Mulusa, 1988). The test retest method helps to point out deficiencies in the instruments and identifies questions that are vague. This enhances the reliability of the instruments. In this study, 15 respondents representing the two categories of respondents from Kakamega County were requested to respond to questionnaires a second time after two weeks and the correlation between the two set of scores were computed by comparing the two scores with Cronbach Alpha Reliability coefficient which ought to be more than 0.7 in social sciences (Kerlinger, 1973). The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient calculated at the third stage and was found to be 0.836 making them reliable enough to be used for data collection.

IV. RESULTS

Kenya has forty seven counties. Bungoma is one of these Counties. It is found in Western Kenya. Bungoma County is a mixture of ethnic groups. It has a population of 1,375,063 (48% male, 52% female and a growth rate of 4.3% per annum) and an area of 2,069 per kilometer square (km²) with population density 453.5 per kilometer (Government of Kenya, 2009). This large population, coupled with rural unemployment has put pressure on land and other natural resources.

Bungoma County has nine constituencies namely Kabuchai, Webuye West, Tongaren, Kimilili, Webuye East, Sirisia, Kanduyi, Bumula and Mt Elgon constituencies. It has five administrative sub Counties namely: Bungoma East, Bungoma West, Bungoma South, Bungoma North and Mt Elgon as indicated in map of Bungoma County. Bungoma County is one of the areas with high population density of 453.5 people per square kilometer (2009 census). This has put a lot of pressure on land and social amenities leading to migration to other places and towns in Kenya. Some of the people have migrated to Kitale settlement schemes and Kakamega (Alembi 2002, 64). Pressure on land has led to many of land disputes (www.bungoma.go.ke).

Less than 50% of the people have clean drinking water. This means that around half of the population is susceptible to water borne diseases such as typhoid and cholera. HIV/AIDS is emerging as a challenge to this county and though it is still shrouded in secrecy, it is already taking a big toll on actively productive population. HIV/AIDS poses a very serious threat to this county due to lack of proper information and secrecy. Taboos, superstition and stigma are still associated with known HIV/AIDS cases (Ayers, 2003). There is not enough information available on systematic statistics that can help multi-sectorial intervention in prevention and

management of HIV/AIDS. Bungoma is a densely populated area with about 53% of the inhabitants living below poverty line (Ayers; 2003).

About 9% of the population in this area is rich while 38% is middle class and the poor who are below poverty line. The Bungoma population is majorly rural with Bungoma, Kimilili, Chwele and Kanduyi town standing out as the main shopping centers. Wepukhulu *et al* (2012) observe that lack of descent environment in qualitative term is paying a hidden cost. With the start of colonial rule in 1885, the area was brought into the world of capitalist economy in a dependent role as a new colonial territory developed an economy oriented towards export of agricultural produce. Colonial rule solidified ethnic identity and associated it with certain areas of the country where only those people with specific identity were supposed to reside (Maxon and Ofcansky, 2003:3, 6, 155).

Areas which do not produce prominent leaders within the government remain economically underdeveloped as key leaders concentrate in developing their areas and those of their friends using government taxes. This is corruption, oppression and exploration which leave the ignored areas in desperate state with the residents languishing in poverty. Bungoma County seem to have suffered from these evils a lot because there are not many people in Bungoma county who have featured in the government regimes since independence (1963). Those who have been and are leaders are in the opposition to the government of the day and therefore the areas where they come from are ignored and under allocated development funds.

Many people in Bungoma County combine cultivating and herding with wage labour and occupational specialization. An outlet for local people specialization is in found on numerous local markets. Some professionals work in towns and cities but keep in touch with their traditional homes where most of them get buried after death. Because of low wages and salaries, most professionals still struggle to meet their needs and wants. It is not uncommon to find a university professor who cannot afford a car. Teachers in public and private schools hardly afford a decent meal leave alone a complete meal per day. The implication is that the people working in urban centers hardly invest in their rural homes. In fact more often than not, what they carry home when they visit during public holidays such as Christmas is far less than the quantities they carry back when they leave for their working places.

Corruption is rampant both in public and private sectors of Bungoma County. The rich are getting richer at the cost of the powerless and voiceless poor who are getting poorer. This and other factors contribute towards excessive brain drain mostly to the west and other counties. The Victory Outreach Church uses cultural practices which are not against the bible to enhance better understanding of the gospel through contextualization by breaking it into four steps. In the first step the church studies the local culture of poverty, uncritically by gathering and analyzing traditional practices, and customs associated with the question of poverty at hand. The church goes beyond phenomenology to ontological evaluations that test the truth claims in the light of the scripture, thus ontological evaluation forms the second step in contextualization. Cultural issues at hand are brought into light of the scripture which enables the translation of the biblical message into cognitive, affective and evaluative dimensions. This step is crucial for if the people do not clearly grasp the biblical messages, they will have distorted view of the gospel. The third step in contextualization involves the people as a hermeneutical community in evaluating their own past customs in the light of their new biblical understanding and make decisions regarding their response to the new found truths about poverty situation.

The fourth and final steps in contextualization which the victory outreach church is involved in is transformative ministries, which aim at helping the poor people move from where they are to where God wants them to be. People can only from where they are by a process of transformation. This is true for individuals as well as social and cultural systems. Victory Outreach Church involvement in matters of physical development is not an optional matter but is part of its mission.

Victory outreach church leaders have opted for the uncontroversial offices of preaching pastoral care and engage in development ministry as a way of participating in the world and working with God to fight poverty. Victory Outreach Church is rooted in the community where NGOs might not be able to operate. It draws its voluntary membership from any and all segment of local population and knows the weak situation of poverty well it is familiar with people's needs with these advantages, it has the potential strength for speedy effective community mobilization and influence.

On matters health, VOC has partnered with the Government of Kenya to provide free HIV testing and counselling at the areas where the church operates. The church has identified volunteers from its congregation who it sponsors them for training in HIV testing and counselling and later come to offer the services in Bungoma County. This is important for the people of the County in providing them with information on their HIV status so that they are able to plan for their future. This was observed by majority of the respondents when they were asked what the church is doing to alleviate poverty.

Secondly, Victory Outreach Church is offering training programs to the community within its reach on how to acquire small loans. The respondents indicated that the church has initiated 'merry go round' activities where members come together and form groups and embrace the idea of saving. Majority of the respondents

indicated that they are happy with the idea because the church has made joining into the groups open and voluntary even to those who are not original members of VOC. The members of the groups meet on weekly basis in one of the houses of Victory Outreach Church member and save 100 shillings. The church has further provided a link to micro financial institutions where they get small loans to start business and become self-reliant.

Thirdly, majority of the respondents noted the church has started preparatory schooling for children within the community. The children receive education on week days from teachers who are paid by the church. The activity has also been made open to include children from members within the community irrespective of their affiliation.

V. CONCLUSION

Victory Outreach Church has partnered with the Government of Kenya to provide free HIV testing and counselling at the areas where the church operates. The church has identified volunteers from its congregation who it sponsors them for training in HIV testing and counselling and later come to offer the services. Secondly, Victory Outreach Church is offering training programs to the community within its reach on how to acquire small loans. The respondents indicated that the church has initiated 'merry go round' activities where members come together and form groups and embrace the idea of saving. Majority of the respondents indicated that they are happy with the idea because the church has made joining into the groups open and voluntary even to those who are not original members of VOC. The church has further started schooling for children within the community. The children receive education on week days from teachers who are paid by the church.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Victory Outreach Church need to engage more people in matters affecting their daily activities and be on the forefront in discouraging people to just attending church programme, Sunday school other church programmes, daily devotion, and have regular pastoral care from an ordained priest or pastor. The church needs to come up with various strategies that will cover political, economic, social, environmental and technological wellbeing of the people of Bungoma County.

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