

**‘Poverty Challenges and Solutions for the New Millennium:
A Case Study Approach to examining the Effectiveness of Christian Faith-Based
Organizations (CFBOs) in their Efforts to eradicate Poverty in Urban and Rural
Kenya’**

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Abstract

This thesis explores the effectiveness of a Faith-based holistic approach to poverty in Kenya. The concept of effectiveness is explored through a case study approach to community development activities carried out by four case studies, namely IMANI and K-REP in Nairobi County and Mwenda Andu and KICABA programmes in Kitui County. Four themes have been developed to form a framework for analysing the concept of effectiveness. Within this framework, the study addresses the gap between theory and practice on one hand and, on the other hand, what the people presumed to be poor see as gaps in what is presented by agencies as meeting the poor’s own Most Significant Change needs. Specifically, poverty as a lack of capabilities from a multidimensional approach has been challenged further by testing effectiveness using the Most Significant Change (MSC) needs of the poor in both rural and urban settlements. Despite much support in education, the creation of credit lending facilities, improved sustainable smallholder agricultural production, provision of clean water and health amenities, leadership training fused with Christian Gospel living, poverty has been on the rise in Kenya. Therefore, this project uses the MSC approach to analyse and discuss the missing poverty dimensions regarding how poverty is defined and presented by different communities in their respective cultures. It is argued that if the missing poverty dimensions are understood there could be the desired social transformation within the development agencies at local, regional and international levels by re-thinking the methodologies and approaches used in deciding on the most suitable poverty interventions. The data findings and analysis of this study not only challenge secular development agencies on how to address the poor’s poverty but also FBOs which find themselves pushing forward interventions which may not agree with what the poor see as MSC. I propose that the effectiveness model as a tool for development agencies can be used in bringing about a holistic and transformational approach to poverty in Kenya.

Key words: Capabilities as poverty, effectiveness, solutions, most significant change needs