TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVING: A THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE ON PERIPHERY- CENTRE RELATIONS IN MALAWI

By

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the entirety of the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work; that I am the authorship and not previously in its entirety or in part, has it been submitted in any university for attaining any qualification.

Signature……………………   Date…………………………….

ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents the conscientization of the people in the rural areas, on how the church in Malawi as a community-based organisation can be an effective vehicle in bringing change in their livelihoods. It is an endeavour to answer the question: How can the Church as a community-based organization respond to community challenges in order to be an effective vehicle for community development and sustainable rural living in the light of the problem of urbanization? The researcher argues that, if the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives in responding to community challenges, livelihoods can be positively changed.

Chapter one: The first chapter is an introduction of this dissertation and it presents the goals of undertaking this study. It emphasises the fact that urbanization has become a big challenge in developing countries such as Malawi, leading people to flock to the cities, hoping to find an easy life, where they instead find life very difficult. Many people, who have migrated to the cities, find it difficult to meet their daily basic needs, due to lack of access to income. The church as a community-based organisation has a role to play in helping to bring a positive impact, on the people for the betterment of their own life. If the church can play an active role in unlocking awareness in people in the rural areas to not migrate to squalid urban settings, the desire to move to the cities can be minimized.

Chapter two: The second chapter briefly describes the context of this research. It presents a brief discussion of the historical background of the church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP. It also gives a brief explanation of the country of Malawi and its geographical location. Along with this general historical background, the chapter draws an exclusive attention to the major contributions of the church to the community, and the unique role that it played in bringing change in the developing countries like Malawi. Through its holistic approach the church reached many people in the communities, and also its emphasis on community development made a major contribution to civic life in the rural as well as urban areas.

Chapter three: The third chapter discusses the poverty situation and the Malawian church existence in this context. It further presents the problems that are caused by poverty in the communities, including the challenges posed by the prevalence of HIV/AIDS which Malawi as one of the developing countries is facing due to urbanisation. The church has a huge role to play to the community in regards to community development.

Chapter four: Chapter four deals with the specific role of the Church in sustainable development, and it explores the importance of rural sustainability in sustainable development. The church by nature is missional and has been called to serve the triune God, and it needs to participate in sustainable development which reflects God's reign in the world, for it has the nature of serving God. It has been given the task to take care of the community, and its role is to place itself with the poor in taking the responsibility of identifying and dealing with the forces that are destroying the communities, in order to bring change.

The chapter also deals with how the church can sensitize people living in rural areas, and the importance of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas. The terms like 'Sustainable development', 'Community development' have been defined in order to appreciate on how the church as a community-based organization can indeed be an effective vehicle in community development, and help to create a sustainable rural living. The church has a unique role to play in community development.

Chapter five: This chapter gives a careful contextual analysis of rural-urban areas, the challenges that the people in those communities are facing and what should be done in a sustainable rural living. It also discusses and explores on how the church as a community-based organization can be an effective vehicle to Community Development and sustainable rural living. In order to help raise the level of awareness of rural sustainability in human beings, especially those living in rural areas, this chapter has also carefully investigated the factors which attract people to migrate to urban areas and find out the solutions to these challenges.

Lastly in order to understand how the church in Malawi as a community-based organization can be an effective vehicle in community development, the chapter has developed a theory of the four steps. These four steps are: Conscientization, Empowerment, Participation and Sustainability. In this chapter it has been emphasized as to how the church could/should engage with the people in order to be an effective vehicle to a sustainable rural living and help people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives.

Chapter six: The final chapter summarizes the whole discussion on this study. The study emphasizes the fact that, if the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives, livelihoods can be positively

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changed. If the church in Malawi, Nkhoma Synod, can take part in conscientizing the people in the rural areas to the importance and advantages of living in the rural, the number of the people migrating to cities can be reduced.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie skripsie handel oor die bewusmaking van Malawiërs in die landelike gebiede en oor hoe die kerk in Malawi, as 'n gemeenskap-gebaseerde organisasie, 'n effektiewe voertuig van verandering in hulle lewensbestaan kan wees. Dit is 'n poging om die vraag te beantwoord: Hoe kan die kerk, as 'n gemeenskap-gebaseerde organisasie, reageer op die gemeenskapuitdagings om 'n effektiewe voertuig vir die ontwikkeling van die gemeenskap te word en volhoubare landelike voortbestaan bevorder? Die navorser betoog dat indien die kerk doelbewus kan meewerk om mense te help met self-ontwikkeling wat 'n positiewe impak op hul lewens in landelike gebiede sal hê, dan sal lewensbestaan ten goede verander.

Hoofstuk een: Die eerste hoofstuk is 'n inleiding tot hierdie betoog en bespreek die doelwitte van hierdie studie. Dit beklemtoon die feit dat verstedeliking 'n groot uitdaging is in die ontwikkelende lande soos Malawi. Mense stroom na die stede met die hoop op ' n makliker lewe, maar vind dan dat hulle nie in hul basiese behoeftes kan voorsien nie by gebrek aan toegang tot inkomste. Die kerk, as 'n gemeenskap-gebaseerde organisasie, kan 'n rol speel om te help om 'n positiewe impak te maak en verandering te bring in hierdie mense se bestaan. As die kerk 'n aktiewe rol kan speel in die bewusmaking en ontwikkeling van mense in die landelike gebiede kan die hunkering van mense om te migreer na die stede beperk word.

Hoofstuk Twee: Die tweede hoofstuk beskryf die konteks van hierdie navorsing. Dit behels 'n kort bespreking van die historiese agtergrond van die kerk van Nkhoma Sinode CCAP, ook inligting oor Malawi en sy geografiese ligging. Klem word gelê op die groot invloed van die kerk op die gemeenskap en die unieke rol wat dit in die verlede gespeel het om verandering in die ontwikkelende lande soos Malawi te bring. Deur sy holistiese benadering en klem op ontwikkeling het die kerk baie mense bereik en 'n belangrike bydrae tot die burgerlike lewe in landelike sowel as stedelike gemeenskappe gemaak.

Hoofstuk Drie: Die derde hoofstuk bespreek die armoede-situasie waarbinne die Malawiese kerk himself bevind, insluitende die voorkoms van MIV / Vigs wat Malawi in die gesig staar as gevolg van verstedeliking. Die kerk het 'n groot taak met betrekking tot gemeenskapsontwikkeling.

Hoofstuk vier: Hoofstuk vier handel oor die spesifieke rol van die Kerk in volhoubare ontwikkeling en ondersoek die belangrikheid van landelike volhoubaarheid in volhoubare ontwikkeling. Die kerk behoort van nature missionêr op te tree, aangesien die kerk geroep is om die Drie-enige God te dien. Volhoubare ontwikkeling moet deel wees hiervan. Dit behoort die versorging van die gemeenskap en identifisering van die probleme van armoede in die gemeenskap in te sluit, ten einde die vernietiging van die gemeenskap teen te werk.

Hierdie hoofstuk handel ook oor hoe die kerk mense wat in landelike gebiede woon kan sensitiseer en bewus maak van die belangrikheid daarvan om nie na stedelike gebiede te trek nie. Die terme "volhoubare ontwikkeling" en "gemeenskapsontwikkeling" is omskryf om te bevestig hoe die kerk, as 'n gemeenskap-gebaseerde organisasie, ' n effektiewe instrument in die ontwikkeling van die gemeenskap kan wees om volhoubare landelike bestaan te bevorder. Die kerk het 'n unieke rol te speel in die ontwikkeling van die gemeenskap.

Hoofstuk vyf: Hierdie hoofstuk gee 'n versigtige kontekstuele analise van landelik-stedelike gebiede, die uitdagings wat die mense in daardie gemeenskappe in die gesig staar en wat gedoen moet word met die oog op volhoubare landelike lewe. Dit bespreek en ondersoek ook hoe die kerk, as 'n gemeenskap-gebaseerde organisasie, 'n effektiewe voertuig kan wees tot gemeenskapsontwikkeling en volhoubare landelike bestaan. Ten einde te help om die vlak van bewustheid van landelike volhoubaarheid in mense te verhoog, veral dié in landelike gebiede, is in hierdie hoofstuk noukeurig ondersoek gedoen na die faktore wat mense lok om te migreer na stedelike gebiede. So kan die oplossings vir hierdie uitdagings gevind word.

Ten slotte, om te verstaan hoe die kerk in Malawi, as 'n gemeenskap-gebaseerde organisasie, kan' n effektiewe voertuig in die ontwikkeling van die gemeenskap kan wees, word in hierdie hoofstuk 'n teorie van vier stappe ontwikkel, nl. Bewusmaking, Bemagtiging, Deelname en Volhoubaarheid. In hierdie hoofstuk word beklemtoon hoe die kerk kan / moet betrokke raak ten einde' n effektiewe instrument van volhoubare landelike lewe te wees en mense te help in self-ontwikkeling.

Hoofstuk ses: Die laaste hoofstuk bevat 'n opsomming van hierdie studie. Die studie beklemtoon die feit dat, indien die kerk doelbewus kan deelneem om mense te help in self-ontwikkeling en' n positiewe impak op hul lewens bring, lewens positief kan verander. As die kerk in Malawi, Nkhoma Sinode, kan deelneem aan die bewusmaking van mense in die

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landelike gebiede van die belangrikheid en voordele van die lewe daar, kan die getal mense wat na die stede migreer verminder word.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Rev. Dr Archwells Moffat Katani and Dorothy Katani, who has the heart of serving the Lord. Being the pastor of the church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP my parents have inspired me to love and care for the people, especially the marginalized poor.

To God be all the Glory!!!

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CHAPTER ONE:

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1   PREAMBLE

The Church,[1] as an institution, is called by God to play an important role to serve the needs of the community and respond to God's call. This is the mission that the church has been given to do in the world. Milgliore (2004:265) observes that, "the church is the community called into being, built up, and sent into the world to serve in the name and power of the triune God." It has to explore its unique role in facilitating community development because it has an essential impact in the betterment of a community. Morisy (1997:109) adds that, "the church is called to represent the potential for wholeness and flourishing which is to be made a reality in the kingdom of God. As August (2009: xiii) admits, "But then the church will have to orientate itself with regard to its calling and role in the public sphere in relation to politics, economics, global forces, poverty, health, employment and all other relative issues stemming from the public tide." In support of this, Mhobo (2009:26) emphasises the fact that,

> "If the church were to put into practice it's calling to serve the people of God, people would understand God differently. If a holistic approach to development were introduced, people would gain confidence, trust and hope in God and the Church. .... The Church should address each and every situation faced by the community in a biblical manner. If the church and other organisations, together with government, could work together in fighting poverty, then our local communities could change for the better."

The Church's emphasis should not only be on involvement within itself and its community, it should also extend its scope beyond that, to the rest of the world. In support of this sentiment, (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:70) adds that, "The Church's mission is the proclamation, service and witness to the fullness of humanity." This is further clarified by August (2010: ii) who argues that, Church as a Community-based organization, particularly amongst the poor, can be an effective vehicle for community Development. Hendriks (2004:34) observes that,

> "In many ways, the church in Africa was a missionary church that has become bogged down in a mental and ministry framework that has difficulty in handling transformation and inculturation. Our change is to become a missional church in which congregations grow towards spiritual maturity; in which they are able to discern, independently, the guidance of the triune missional God and become involved in making kingdom principle important."

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[1] This Church Nkhoma Synod is one of the five synods of the CCAP, in southern Africa, and it is the product of the missionaries from the Dutch Reformed Church-Western Cape synod in South Africa. The other Synods are the Blantyre, Harare, Livingstonia and Zambia.

This implies that the Church can be an effective vehicle for community development. This research will focus on the role played by the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) – Nkhoma Synod, as a case study, in building the awareness of the people for the possibilities of sustainable living in the rural areas. It will also discuss and analyse the problems that are confronting Malawi[2] from a theological perspective. In addition to that, it will elaborate on the importance of helping people, especially the marginalized poor to be aware of the problems they are facing, in order to make them appreciate the importance of bringing about change. According to Mhobo (2009:33), the church in its mission should practice its incarnation ministry: to reach people; to listen to them; to give them hope and to love; and care for them.

1.2 RESEARCH MOTIVATION

The researcher is a son of a pastor of Nkhoma Synod Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), and being part and parcel of the family, the researcher is exposed to both urban and rural settings. His father, ministered in three different congregations of which two of them were in the typical rural areas. The congregations were: Rusa CCAP in Kasungu, Mtunthama CCAP in Kasungu, in the rural settings and Kaning'a CCAP in Lilongwe, which is in an urban setting. All of these congregations are in the central part of Malawi. Hendricks (2004:35) observes that, "instant communication and interconnected space have created a new world. In many respects, the church in Africa was a rural church, quite homogeneous within its different denominational or tribal settings."

Due to his exposure, the researcher has observed that people in the rural settings do migrate to urban settings. This is due to the many problems that they encounter in rural areas hoping to find a better life in the cities but when they go there they find things to be on the contrary. Despite this they can't go back to the rural areas due to fear of being laughed at. They therefore resort to forming slums and shanty towns in cities in order to survive. These settlements contribute a lot of problems to cities. Some of these problems are crime, unemployment and overcrowding cost by an influx of people migrating from rural areas. These problems are echoed by Joda-Mbewe (1999:15) who observes that, "As people move from the country into the cities, they continue to practice a rural traditional life-style. They

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[2]" Malawi is a small land locked country, a long, narrow strip of land (560 miles long) lying north to south and bounded by Tanzania to the north, Mozambique to the south and Zambia to the west. To the east lies Lake Malawi, which comprises nearly one fifth of the total area of the country" Joda-Mbewe (1999:1)

build rural houses, raise livestock without adequate grazing fields and brew traditional beer in their tiny dwelling places".

Based on the researcher's observations through his experience of living in both urban and rural settings, the strongly suggestion is made that there is a possibility for people to live and sustain their lives in the rural areas without having to migrate to urban areas. This has provoked the question of what the church can do to overcome this challenge. Therefore, something needs to be done in order to bring about a better change in Malawi. Hence, the researcher is convinced that the Church can be the right vehicle in bringing these better changes. As Corbett & Fikkert (2009:38) write, the task of God's people is rooted in Christ's mission. Marc-Ela (1990:150) notes that, "Africa is changing, Cities are growing; rural development is generally conceived of today as the growing of export crops; and the rural world is reduced to a sector that produces revenue to pay for the consumption of urban minorities."

The aim of this research is to explore the role of the church in sustainable development and how it can help in building people's awareness of the possibilities of sustainable living in the rural areas. In view of this, the researcher by means of this study will also consider why people migrate to town; in what ways they can be empowered and convinced that migration to the city is not necessarily that desirable for dignified and quality living, and how the church as a community-based organization responds to this challenge. According to August (2011:104) argues that, the churches remain of key importance not only because of their prophetic role at a national level, but perhaps more importantly because of their potential to create participatory communities at the grassroots.

1.3   RESEARCH PROBLEM

Malawi as one of the developing countries in the world is facing a lot of challenges. One of such challenges is the percentage rate of urbanization that is increasing rapidly. Hence, the main problem that the researcher has observed in Malawi is the high rate of urbanization. There is a large-scale of people who are migrating to urban areas, rather than staying in the rural areas, and the population in the rural areas is decreasing whilst that in the urban areas is increasing. The people's awareness of the importance of living in the rural areas, and sustaining their life without having the desire to migrate to the cities is at a low level. People are looking for better life, that is what forces them to flock to the cities in a large number, and

this creates a lot of problems in the developing countries like Malawi. Due to urbanization there are more strains on the capability of the cities, and it is not easy for the cities to accommodate all the people migrating from rural areas to urban areas. As Priggis (1998:23 in Joda-Mbewe 1999:3) agrees,

> "The World Development Report (1997) shows Malawi has the seventh fastest urban growth rate of the 20 poorest countries. The urban population grows by 6% each year. In 1987, the urban population density was estimated at being 11%. The end of 1990s has projected the figure to 30%. Major centres of urbanization in Malawi are Lilongwe, Blantyre, Mzuzu, and Zomba".

Hughes (1998:269) writes, "This growth due to migration puts an enormous strain in the infrastructures of cities throughout the world." The rate of urbanization in Malawi is growing very fast and as such it causes a lot of challenges to the country. In addition to this sentiment, Mhobo (2009:36) observes that, "poverty is a huge challenge the church faces in this century in Southern Africa." According to Samuel & Sugden et al. (1987:224), the church's ministry of service promotes humanity, enabling it to develop its full creative potential. In choosing to serve the poorest, most marginal sectors of society, this ministry seeks to redeem both the oppressed and the oppressor. Hughes (ibid: 285) continues by saying that,

> "Christians must also recognize that the migration of people from rural to urban situations puts severe strains on the capacity of cities to provide. Attention should be paid to tackling the factors that force people to leave rural areas. Attention should also be given to the development of cities into places that encourage human flourishing."

Unlocking the awareness of the people in the rural areas to not migrate to squalid urban settings is of vital importance in Community Development. The church needs to have a positive impact on the people for the betterment of their own life. If the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives, livelihoods can be positively changed. In order to bring sustainable rural living and Community Development, the Church as a community-based organization can be an effective vehicle, in helping to eradicate poverty in Malawi.

Joda-Mbewe (1999:17) says that, "People in the urban centres live in difficult circumstances and struggle for survival; desperate economic situations push people into crime and delinquency." O'Donovan (2000:165) submits that, "Poverty is one of the greatest problems in Africa. This problem can be overcome within a local church. The church can even be the means of helping many poor people outside the church." Mhobo (ibid: 16) points out that,

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"because of poverty in the community, people have different diseases, like HIV/AIDS, TB, diabetes, high blood pressure, and so forth." Gillespie (2006:167) adds that, "HIV/AIDS continues to spread throughout the developing world, in transition countries, and among poor and marginalized populations in industrialized countries." According to the report of the UNAIDS 2004, cited in Gillespie (2006:97), between 2001 and 2003 the rural population of Malawi experienced wide-spread hunger. During the same time period, Malawi's HIV prevalence was the eighth highest in the world. In support of this Tienda (2006:257) emphasises the fact that,

> "Africa offers a broad array contexts produce by equally diverse urbanization experiences. The most dominant geographic migration in contemporary Africa involves the rural to urban moves associated with economic development and modernisation, the circulatory moves of refugees escaping various civil and international wars. Urbanization has dramatically altered the pattern of human settlement in Africa during the twentieth century."

O'Donovan (2000:40), when referring to urbanization emphatically stated that "Urbanization is one of the major sociological changes taking place in Africa at the end of the twentieth century." Malawi is one of such African countries that is experiencing the challenges and hardships of urbanization. A lot of people in Malawi are migrating to towns, leaving their home villages to look for a better life. O'Donovan (ibid: 40) further affirms this by pointing out that "Life in the cities sounds far more exciting and interesting than life in the village. They (people) expect to find an easy life, lots of money, new friends and many services not available in the village."

According to Sachs (2005:18), 84% of the population in Malawi lives in the rural areas. The high population in rural areas makes people to move to urban areas. This situation results in problems such as, lack of jobs and the need to be admired, which force people to leave the villages and move to the overcrowded cities. Joda-Mbewe (1999:2) concedes to this by emphasising that, "One of the major challenges facing the developing countries today, including Malawi, is the phenomenon of the urban growth." Nurnberger (1999:20) has suggested that, "population growth increases the pressure on the land, overgrazing, erosion, deforestation, slum settlements, and so on. When the periphery begins to develop in the direction of industrialisation and urbanisation its ecological impact increases."

People who have moved to towns and cities (Centre/Core[3]) seem to be enjoying and having a better life than those in the rural areas (Periphery[4]); therefore, people perceive towns as a magnet of hope. However, research shows that most cities are not a good place to be, because there is trash, disease, crime, and overcrowding. The towns are also impersonal and unfriendly because people don't care about others. For instance, O'Donovan (2000:40) submits that, "City life can lead to major psychological and emotional problems. People moving to the city can lose many of their traditional values and their sense of personal identity."

Life is not easy in urban centres, due to the high percentage of people flocking there, in order to find a better life, yet there is no work available. Therefore; people are forced to fall into corruption, drugs, robbery, and many more crimes that are making the cities insecure. Onwubiko (2001:36) puts it clear that, "Individuals can only be safe in a safe community." Mhobo (2009:35) admits that, "the church is the only institution which can offer a holistic approach to development" It is therefore researcher's intention to discuss and analyse the huge challenges of urbanization that Malawi is currently encountering.

The main problem in this study has been presented that it is the migration of the people from the rural to urban areas (urbanization) which puts the capacity of cities at the severe strains and there is a lot of problems attached to this. Due to these challenges the researcher will conduct his study by comparing and contrasting the lives of the people who have migrated to urban centres to that of those living in rural areas. To achieve this, the researcher will try to analyse the life in the shanty towns and that of rural villages, so as to appreciate the plight of people living in these two settings in Malawi.

1.4   RESEARCH QUESTION

How can the Church as a community-based organization respond to community challenges in order to be an effective vehicle for community development and sustainable rural living in the light of the problem of urbanization?

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3 This term "Core" is used here to mean the towns and cities (urban areas).

4 This term "Periphery" is used here to mean the rural areas

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1.5   HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis in this paper is: *If the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people to self-development and bringing a positive impact on the people's lives in responding to community challenges, livelihoods can be positively changed.* According to August (2011:102) admits that, the church has to understand and educate its members the systemic causes of human misery (e.g. poverty) if it wants to challenge and transform human suffering. The Church needs to conscientize and empower the people in the rural settings so that their awareness on the effects of migrating to urban settings should be raised, and the problems that are confronting Malawi will be eradicated.

Msangaambe (2011:9) admits that, "the church in Malawi has been called and sent into the world to represent God's reign – it has a missional identity." In support of this, August (1999:1) admits that, "rising unemployment, poverty, violence, overwhelming crime-rates, corruption and lack of moral fibre characterise the socio-economic and political context. The church is a central institution ... especially the marginalised Africans ..." Mhobo (2009:5) emphasises the fact that, "if the church does not help the community fight against poverty, then the poor will not realise the purpose of God for their lives. The church should reaffirm the principles and values which recognise the value of human life." August (2010:92) admits that, "the Church is the community called by God for service and for community- forming: for and on behalf of the world, God's created reality – the inhabited world and the environment." In support of this Benedict XVI (2005:16) admits that,

> "The church can never be exempted from practising charity as an organized activity of believers, and on the other hand, there will never be a situation where the charity of each individual Christian is unnecessary, because in addition to justice man needs, and will always need, love."

This study has to do with the issue of Periphery and Centre, where people in the Centre even of those in the developing countries tend to neglect the rural areas with regard to goods and services. As Davids et al. (2009:13) puts it clear when he quotes Frank who argued that; there are two levels, a national level (the urban and rural areas of developing countries) and an International level (between developed "First World" and Less-developed "Third World" countries). Therefore; in this study "Core/Centre" and "Periphery" will mean the national level, which is between the urban and rural areas of developing countries. Therefore in this study the researcher has used Periphery to mean rural areas under a national level where as Centre to mean urban areas still under national level.

The people that migrate from rural to urban areas strive and search for better living conditions, which the majority do not get and eventually ends up in squalor conditions of informal living areas. Therefore this study attempts to understand why people move to cities and what the church can do locally to assist according to their expectations for them to have a dignified life in the rural areas. Msangaambe (ibid: 12) admits the fact that, "unless the church realizes its own potential, launches a deliberate critical review of its structure and mechanisms (operations), and strategically dedicates itself to a move towards transformation, its ministry will have little impact."

According to August (2010:51) argues that, the Church can be a valued catalyst for community development within the social development paradigm due to its incarnational nature, which is complimentary to the people-centred social development paradigm. In support of this, Msangaambe (ibid: 158), emphases the fact that, "the church needs to exercise its faithfulness and trustworthiness in its delivery of diaconal responsibilities. Even more, the church must be sensitive to what the society learns from it." According to Bosch (1991:375), the church is the church only when it exists for others, and it must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving.

1.6   GOALS

1) To find out how the church can sensitize people living in rural areas, about the importance of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas.

2) To explore the importance of rural sustainability in sustainable development.

3) To discuss how the church as a community based organization can be an effective vehicle to Community Development and sustainable rural living.

4) To investigate factors which attract people to migrate to urban areas and find out the solutions to these challenges.

5) To help raise the level of awareness of rural sustainability in human beings, especially those living in rural areas.

1.7   METHODOLOGY

According to Dawson (2009:14 in Msangaambe 2011:13), defines a research methodology as the philosophy or the general principle that guides a research. This is further clarified by

Mouton (2001:179) who defines literature review as, "studies that provides an overview of scholarship in a certain discipline through an analysis of trends and debates." Henning et al. (2004:15) admits that,

> "Methodology is about how we come to know, but is much more practical in nature-it means that we come to know by inquiring in certain ways. Methodology is concerned with the specific ways, the methods that we can use to try and understand our world better."

This study falls directly into a non-empirical study, and the method therefore to be used in this study is a *Literature Review*. The researcher will use 'literature review' in order to find out what other scholars have written in relation to this topic. The researcher strongly believes that, this is very important for it will help in this study to see whether the church as a community-based organization can be an effective vehicle to community development. This study also carefully explores the importance of a sustainable rural living and being able to appreciate the importance of bringing a better change in their communities. In order to have more information the researcher strongly believes that it is important in this research to use the knowledge of what other scholars have written on this challenge of urbanisation and how the church can help to bring change. Henning et al. (2004:28) observes that, "the best way to present your literature review is to advance your argument."

According to Mouton (2001:86-87), the 'literature review', when embarking on study, has as one of its first aims to find out what has been done in the field of the study, by starting with a review of the existing scholarship or available body of knowledge to see how other scholars have investigated the research problem that the researcher is interested in. The interest is therefore, no merely in literature (which sounds as if it refers merely to a collection of texts), but in a body of accumulated scholarship. The aim is to learn from other scholars on how they have theorised and conceptualised on issues, what they have found empirically, what instrumentation they have used and to what effect. In short, the interest is in the most recent, credible and relevant scholarship in the area of the researchers interest.

As such the literature to be reviewed will include theological books from the libraries, mainly those of the Universities of Stellenbosch. In addition to this, the challenges from Malawi both published and unpublished that deals with practical theology and community development will be reviewed. In order to find other information related to the discussion, the researcher will also search on the search engine/internet. Msangaambe (2011:12) admits that,

"Unless the church realizes its own potential, launches a deliberate critical review of its structure and mechanisms (operations), and strategically dedicates itself to a move towards transformation, its ministry will have little impact. At this point, the challenge demands a paradigm shift. A need exists to disengage the old orders and mindsets, and engage a contextual theological point of view."

In giving a clear understanding of how important and what is good of using 'literature review' as the methodology in this study, Mouton (2001:180) points out the fact that, "A comprehensive and well- integrated literature review is essential to any study. It provides you with a good understanding of the issues and debates in the area that you are working in, current theoretical thinking and definitions, as well as previous studies and their results."

Therefore; in this study the researcher will use the non-empirical study, by means of a literature review as his methodology in order to give an overview of a critique on periphery-centre relations in Malawi. This method will be of vital importance in order to develop a theory of the steps the church in Malawi, as a community-based organization could/should engage with, in order to be an effective vehicle to a sustainable rural living and help people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives.

1.8   IMPORTANCE OF STUDY TO PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND MISSIOLOGY

According to August (2010: ii), in order to empower the church to be an effective agent and/or catalyst for social transformation, Theology and Community Development, it has to be based on the challenges of development, the sources of theology in the teaching tradition of the Church, the realities of the context and the principles of the people-centred participatory Development Approach. Swinton & Mowat (2006:6) admits the fact that, "Practical Theology is critical, theological reflection on the practices of the church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world." This is further clarified by Osmer (2008:4) who defines Practical theology in terms of its intention, that it aims at interpreting various situations, by taking into consideration of what is going on, why is this going on, what ought to be going on and how we might respond. With regards to this, the researcher will consider the problems of the people in both urban and rural settings, why are they migrating to urban areas, what they were supposed to do, so that they should not have the desire of migrating from rural to urban areas, and how the church as a community-based organisation should respond to the problem.

Gelder & Zscheile (2011:23-24) defines the term 'Missiology' as, "... a theological discipline that seeks to understand and define both the creating and the redeeming works of God in the world (technically the term refers to the 'study of mission': 'mission,' and 'ology', 'study')." The Church has the task in helping to improve people's lives in both rural and urban settings. The term 'Mission' according to Bosch (1991:1), "presupposes a sender, a person or persons sent by the sender, those to whom one is sent, and an assignment." With this view the church has been given a task to do in this world, and it has to go beyond its limit. It is the mission of God (Missio Dei[5]), sending the church to do God's work, on what it has been assigned. Moltmann (1993:11) admits that, "if the church sees itself to be sent in the same framework as the father's sending of the son and the Holy Spirit, then it also sees itself in the framework of God's history with the world and discovers its place and function within this history."

As Bosch (ibid: 10), agreeing that, "...it is God's revelation as the one who loves the world, God's involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church is privileged to participate." In projecting the church as the vehicle to bring change to those people living in the communities, provides the importance of Practical Theology and Missiology, in this study. Mhobo (2009:6) adds that, "the church as God's agent on earth has to voice its holistic influence and introduce Christian values in fighting against poverty. If it does not do so, it fails its duty as God's representative." In support of this, Swinton & Mowat (2006:5) emphasises the fact that, "Practical Theology takes human experience seriously." Milgliore (2004:265) notes that, "the church does not exist for itself alone any more than God has chosen to exist for God alone. Because the triune God is a missionary God, the church is called to be a missionary church rooted in the Trinitarian missions."

1.9   TERMINOLOGY

In this study the terminology used will be explained, and defined. The terms, Conscientisation, Empowerment, Participation and Sustainability are of vital importance in

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[5] According to Gelder & Zscheile (2011:30), the conception of Missio Dei was further popularized in Georg f. Vicedom's book Missio Dei (translated into English in 1965), which reported his reflections on the willingen conference. Vicedom's understanding of Missio Dei emphasized that mission needs to be understood as God's mission 'from beginning to end'. He included the church in this understanding but made it clear that God is the acting subject. 'The mission, and with it the church, is God's very own work ... [Both the church's mission and the church] are only tools of God, instruments through which God carries out His mission.'

this paper. These four key terms, being explained here will help one to have a clear picture of the situation to be studied.

1.9.1   Conscientization

This term is also an essential part of this study, knowing that putting people as the first priority will help a lot in bringing better change to their situation. Burkey (1993:55) defines 'Conscientization' as "a process in which the people try to understand their present situation in terms of the prevailing social, economic and political relationships in which they find themselves."

The researcher believes that it is when we help the people to be aware of the situation that they are in, and then there can be a better change. In other words the people especially the marginalize poor needs to be helped to analyse for themselves of their situation, and how they can benefit from that change. According to Burkey (ibid: 46) he writes that, "the poor will make changes when they see that such changes are to their advantage."

Sensitizing people living in the rural areas on the effects of migrating to urban areas is of vital importance, and this can only work if these people themselves come to a realization of their real problems, and being aware of their own situation. According to Babbie & Mouton (2001:322) 'Conscientization' is used to refer to raising participants, 'self-awareness' or 'consciousness'. Burkey (1993:48) emphasis that; "these changes must come from within the individuals and groups, and cannot be imposed from the outside."

1.9.2   Empowerment

According to Babbie & Mouton (2001: 322), Empowerment is a very important term in both theological and socio-economic and development studies. Hendricks (2004: 219) has defined Empowerment as "the process of increasing personal, interpersonal and political power, enabling individuals or collectives to improve their life's situation."   Babbie & Mouton (2001: 322), adds that; "Empowerment implies the acquisition of power, or countervailing power, for the poor, oppressed, and exploited groups-the grassroots-and for their authentic organizations and movements." Msangaambe (2011:223) notes that, "... empowerment should seek to change people's lives for the better. Empowerment, driven by kingdom values, should liberate people and give them shalom. ... The emphasis is that empowerment should aim at making a difference in human lives."

The people need to be given an awareness of their situation so that they can be self-determined which will lead them into action. In support of this, Lartey (1997:41 in Msangaambe 2011:21) points out the fact that,

> "the term 'empowerment' is used in more recent discussions to point to the process of revaluing self and personal characteristics together with finding and using available resources outside oneself, in such a way as to enable and motivate persons and groups to think and act in ways that will result in greater freedom and participation in the life of the societies of which they are a part."

August (2010: 11) make it clear that; "Empowerment is viewed as a process that makes power available to communities in order that they could use it for the manipulation of access to and the use of resources in terms of achieving certain development goals." (Hendricks 2004:219) adds that, "Empowerment increases community members' energy, motivation, coping and problem solving skills, decision-making power, self-esteem, self-sufficiency and self-determination." In support of this, Dev Vos (1998:407) emphasises the fact that, "empowerment increases the energy, motivation, coping and problem-solving skills, decision-making power, self-esteem, self-sufficiency and self-determination of community members." Kinlaw (1995:3 in Msangaambe 2011:225) observes that, "Empowerment has become more than a theoretical possibility or experiment. It is now a developmental strategy that organizations must embrace to stay competitive and survive."

1.9.3 Participation

According to Burkey (1993: 56) defines 'Participation' as, an essential part of human growth that is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, and cooperation. Without such a development within the people themselves all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be immensely more difficult, if not impossible. This process, whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems, is the essence of development." In agreeing with him, August (2010:10) says that, "Participation is a complex and multidimensional concept because it is component of the complex process of human growth." If the rural poor are participating in their own development there can be a better change, and Burkey (ibid: 56) calls it as a key factor in the success of projects.

This term 'Participation' according to Babbie & Mouton (2001: 315), "implies that members of the subject of study are integrated in the research by participating fully and actively in the research process, from its outset and throughout most, or all, of its phases." August (2010:10)

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points out the fact that, "Participation should therefore be seen as a continuous learning process." Therefore in this paper, the researcher views participation as an effective process as August (Ibid: 9) puts it, as both the means and end of the process of development, and as a continuous learning process.

1.9.4   Sustainability

The term 'Sustainability', as August (2010:12) puts it, "deals with the continuous flow of benefits." He continues that an important dimension of sustainability is time, and it should be viewed as a long-term concern.

Myers (1999:128) has pointed out that, "we need to be careful how we think about the idea of sustainability." He gives three cautions that lead to ultimate source of sustainable life. Firstly, he says that, there must be recognition of this sustainable life that even the poorest community already has some level of sustainability, and it could not exist if the community were not sustainable before the development agency came. Secondly, Myers says that, the ultimate source of sustainable life is not ours to control, but it is God through Christ who sustains life. Thirdly, it is very important to ask whether the idea of sustainability is enough. He adds that since sustainable simply means things are maintained, then we really seek sustainable growth, learning and continuing transformation. Lastly, Sustainability needs to be defined, that the transformational development process should not be dependent on us and the community needs a different understanding of sustainability.

Sustainability has become a very important term in this study. According to Davids et al. (2009:19), some of the building blocks of development are public participation, empowerment and sustainability and it feature strongly in the integrated, and people centred approach. August (ibid: 12) adds that, "it is important to note that the nature of the relationship between participation and empowerment is a mutual one, as both are the means as well as the ends of each other."

1.10   CONCLUSION

This chapter has pointed out the plan of the entire study on how it will be conducted. The research motivation, research problem, research question, hypothesis, goals and methodology have been outlined in this chapter in order to give a clear picture of what the researcher want to achieve by the end of this study. It has been shown in this chapter what has interested the researcher to come up with this topic on sustainable rural living, as it is due to his background

of staying in both rural and urban areas in Malawi central region of the country. According to Hendriks (2004:19), the church can play a major role in addressing the numerous problems that confront us in Africa, but problems arise when its theological methodology still adheres to the old missionary or clerical paradigm of a deductive theology.

The church in Malawi can be an effective vehicle in bringing about a better change in a community for its betterment change. Making people aware of the situation that they are in, is of vital importance, and people will be able to initiate a change if they only know that it is to their benefit. Corbett S. & Fikkert B. (2009:149) writes, "When the poor have been completely empowered, they are in the 'community initiated' category in which the projects are being directed by the poor themselves, and they determine the role of any outsiders in their initiatives.

According to August (2009: Xii), the church has to rediscover it's being and bear witness to the liberating God of history as the people called by God. Stott (2006:232) adds that; "the church has a great deal to offer in all these areas and indeed, many churches now have schemes which aim to meet many of these needs." In this research, the researcher will attempt to ascertain how the church as a community based organisation can be an effective vehicle for community development. Mhobo (2009:33) adds that, "the church is the most important institution in the community; therefore, its mission should be visible in the community. The church itself is the community of people who are called by God to be His people, in the different forms."

Although a lot of people are migrating to cities, life in the cities is not easy, and this forces people to fall into corruptions and more other bad things in order for them to survive. Hence; life in the cities is very difficult and very dangerous. Cities are becoming not a good place to be, because of a lot of crimes, and problems that people are facing. Davids et al. (2009:38) have suggested that; to survive in an urban area a person needs more money than in a small town or rural area. As mentioned earlier that the hypothesis in this study is that, if the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people to self-development and bringing a positive impact on the people's lives, livelihoods can be positively changed. The researcher believes that if the church can take part in conscientizing the people in the rural areas the importance and advantages of living in the rural areas, the great number of the people migrating to cities can be reduced.

The researcher believes that the people can stay in the rural areas without having the desire of migrating to urban areas. These people need to be helped, by conscientizing them to know the importance and advantages of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas. The church has a task to help these people to understand this, and be able to appreciate the life in the rural areas. Corbett S. & Fikkert B. (2009:38) writes, "The task of God's people is rooted in Christ's mission."

The church as an organization called by God, to the community needs to act in response to God's call to mission that has been given to do in the world. In support of this, Guder et al. (1998:102) emphasises that, "therefore the church's own mission must take its cues from the way God's mission unfolded in the sending of Jesus into the world for its salvation. In Jesus' way of carrying out God's mission, we discover that the church is to represent God's reign as its community, its servant, and its messenger."

CHAPTER TWO:

THE CHURCH AS HISTORICAL CATALYST FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MALAWI

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a careful analysis of the Church's life in Malawi and in doing so it briefly describes the country of Malawi and its location. The chapter also describes the background of the Church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP. This church and its background are significant in the sense that the church is located where the study is undertaken and it is a faith community; it potentially plays a unique role in bringing change in the developing countries like Malawi. In exploring the role of church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP, it is argued in this chapter that, the church as a community-based organisation can be an effective vehicle to community development and be capable of unlocking the awareness of the people in the rural areas on sustainable rural living, due to what it has been doing in the past. According to August (1999:4) ... the conviction that the Church as a community-based organisation amongst the marginalized can be an effective vehicle for community development due to the Church's Biblical commitment to the poor, its capacity in terms of capital and the resourceful members, its understanding and experience of social realities and the holistic nature of its activity. In support of this Joda-Mbewe (2002:330) emphasises the fact that,

> "The church must seek to work in partnership with the poor. This pillar emphasized the need to develop new skills and knowledge through informal educational experiences in which the poor actively participate as subjects, instead of remaining passive objects. This must be done in respect of steps towards empowering people to assume a status of partnership with churches, governments and other agencies. In order to implement this pillar, the church must develop community participation through the processes of: developing principles of self-reliant approaches, Conscientization, partnering with the poor in all stages of development, and a process of replicating biblical examples of empowerment."

2.2   MALAWI AS A COUNTRY

Malawi as a country is one of the developing countries in the world and it is a very poor country, situated in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most of the people of Malawi live in great poverty, and that is the greatest problem in this country. HIV/AIDS is also very widespread in this country. The cities of this country such as: Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu have large shanty town areas which are filled with poor people who lack many of the essentials basic to sustain their own life. Malawians have always been concerned with the issues of Poverty and disease.

According to World Vision Malawi report, Malawians typically live with their extended families in huts that are clustered together and a spirit of cooperation prevails as family members share both work and resources. The people of Malawi pride themselves on their friendliness; so much that Malawi is called the "warm heart of Africa." Ninety percent of this country lives in small villages in rural areas, making their living from agriculture. The land is suitable for farming, but despite this that the soil is rich because of mountains, forests, and rough pastures it is only one-third of the land which is suitable for farming.[6]

In Malawi a high percentage of population lives in the rural areas and a low percentage of population lives in urban areas. Pauw (1980:3) observes that, "it is estimated that not more than 2.8% of the population can be regarded as disassociated from rural living in their day to day lives." Due to the establishing of the nation's new capital in Lilongwe, the population increased tremendously. Many people migrated to the cities including Lilongwe which is one of the cities in Malawi. This is in direct agreement with the understanding of how people's perception is when they think of the cities. People are looking for a better life where they think they can only find that kind of easy life, if they move to the cities rather than staying in the villages. Pauw (1980:3) admits that,

> "The moving of the new capital to Lilongwe, the construction of which was begun in 1969, has not only halted the lopsided economic and industrial development which had been taking place mainly in the Southern Region, but has also given new stimulus for development in the Central and Northern Regions with the provision of a better infra-structure."

Joda-Mbewe (2002:12) observed that, "the cities of Malawi, like other African cities, took root more by default than by design. Cities in Africa are the result of mushrooming towns. Most African cities came from slowly growing towns, well integrated with the surrounding rural areas." Due to urbanization there are diverse problems and challenges that Malawi is facing. Despite this high rate of moving to the cities, Malawian life is mainly a village life and these people in the villages can be improved in order to make their life like that of the cities.

Many people in rural areas are flocking to towns in order to look for opportunities, that they think they can find if they live in town. People in the rural areas are very poor. For instance,

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[6] Sourced from World Vision Malawi http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/sponsor/sponsor-malawi Accessed on 1 July 2011

to grow maize might be easier for them but how to take care of it might be difficult, they cannot afford farming essentials like fertilizer, which is very expensive. The Church in Africa should incessantly set themselves targets for finding means to allow people to participate in solving their own social problems. Msangaambe (2011:23) adds that, "The Church in Malawi, along with other non-governmental organizations, fights ceaselessly for better living conditions."

2.2.1 Geography

Malawi is a landlocked tropical country with Zambia to the west, Mozambique to the south and east, and Tanzania to the north and east, lying between 9° 45' and 17° 5' S and 30 to 36° E. The national borders encompass Lakes Malawi and Chilwa which cover 2,440 km^2 leaving a land area of 9,408 km^2. The Northern region covers 2,690 km^2, the Central region 3,559 km^2 and the Southern region 3,176 km^2. Malawi has 40 percent of the total land area which is suitable for agriculture.[7] In support of this in mentioning about how special Lake Malawi is, Pauw (1980:1) mentions that,

> "Its most outstanding feature is Lake Malawi which, at 8 900 square miles comprises nearly one fifth of the total area of Malawi (45 747 square miles). At 355 miles long and from 10 to 50 miles wide, the Lake is Africa's third largest and eleventh largest in the world. Although much of the economic and agricultural development in Malawi has in the past been in areas away from the Lake, more and more attention is today being paid to the development potentials of the Lake itself and its surrounding areas."

The country of Malawi has three regional capitals, which are Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu, and a lot of people moves to these places. Lilongwe is located in the central region, Blantyre is located in the southern region and Mzuzu is located in the northern region of the country. According to Joda-Mbewe (2002:10-11), Blantyre is the largest commercial city with a population close to two million, Lilongwe was made the capital, due to more accessibility to people from all the regions.

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[7] Sourced from http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPC/doc/Counprof/malawi/Malawi.htm Accessed on 22 June 2011

Figure 1: The geographical position of Malawi[8]

[8] This Geographical Map of Malawi in Figure 1 was sourced From The Central Intelligencse Agency (CIA) World FactBook, http://geography.about.com/library/cia/blcmalawi.htm Accessed on 4 July 2011

2.2.2   Population

An estimation of Malawi's population at mid-2000 was placed at 10,385,849, however, due to AIDS pandemic, Malawi's demographics are complicated which tends radically to skew its statistics. Due to this, the life expectancy at birth of the average Malawian is a very low 37.58 years. The population growth is only 1.61 percent per annum, although a fertility rate of children born per Malawian woman is 5.33. The proportion of the population under age 20 is 57 percent, and infant mortality runs to 122.28 deaths per 1,000, one of the worst in the world (the birth rate is 38.49 per 1,000). An estimation of The United Nations in 1999 was that around 16 percent of all Malawians between the ages of 15 and 49 were HIV/AIDS infected. However, with the urban areas worst affected in the same year, the disease claimed 70,000 lives. The population of the capital city of Malawi, Lilongwe is 442, 000, 1999 estimation; in the urban centres including Blantyre the population is 486,000, 1999 estimation and Mzuzu population is 88, 000, 1999 estimation.[9] In support to this Joda-Mbewe (2002:3) adds that, "population density is also high, leading to a proliferation of communicable diseases, especially AIDS."

According to Brown (2004:110), there are eleven primary tribes and languages in Malawi and these are: Lambya, Ngoni (northern), Chewa, Ngoni (southern) Sena, Lomwe, Mang'anja, Yao, Tonga, Tumbuka, Nyachusa, Nkonde. In addition to this, Msangaambe (2011:44-45) comments that, "Chewa is the largest of the more than ten ethnic groups found in Malawi. Chi-Chewa is the official indigenous language beside English. Malawi has 80% Christian, 13% Muslims, 3% other religions, and 4% of Malawians are said to have no religious affiliation." In Malawi the rainy season begins in October or November and it usually continues until April, the weather is cool and dry from May to August and from September to November, the weather turn out to be hot. Malawi is said to be the warm heart of Africa.

2.2.3   Economy

Malawi as one of the developing countries in Africa rely much on farming, economically is also one of the poorest countries in Africa and the rest of the world. The economy of Malawi

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[9] Sourced from Encyclopedia of the Nations » Africa » Malawi
 Malawi - Location and size, Population, Services, Tourism, Financial services, Retail http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Africa/Malawi.html#ixzz1Q54f1fSE Accessed on 23 June 2011

is predominantly agricultural, with about 90% of the population living in rural areas.[10] The Church therefore in Malawi is among the poor, who for them to find their basic needs is not that easy. The Church and state have a huge task in helping the poor to be able to sustain their own life. Maize is the staple food in Malawian diet. In support of this Msangaambe (2011:45) admits that,

> "Over 55% of Malawians live below the poverty line. Its economy is based largely on agriculture that contributes approximately 40% to GDP[11], and accounts for an estimated 85% of the total employment and 90% of export earnings. The main agricultural export product is tobacco, which contributes up to 60% of the total Malawi exports. Performance in the tobacco industry is a key to the short-term economic growth or decline in the country. The other export commodities in Malawi include tea, sugar, cotton, coffee, peanuts and wood."

Malawi's economy is heavily based on agriculture, with around 85% of the population living in rural areas. More than one-third of GDP and 90% of export revenues come from agriculture.[12] Malawi has a lot of challenges it is facing that need to be dealt with, in order to have a better country. Sachs (2005:18) observes that,

> "If economic development is a ladder with higher rungs representing steps up the path to economic well-being, there are roughly one billion people around the world, one sixth of humanity, who live as the Malawians do: too ill, hungry, or destitute even to get a foot on the first rung of the development ladder. These people are the 'poorest of the poor' or the 'extreme poor' of the planet. They all live in developing countries (poverty does exist in rich countries but it is not extreme poverty)."

Many people lives below poverty line, and it is difficult for these poor to meet their basic needs in order to survive in life. In concluding this Msangaambe (2011:45) notes that, "here, the implication of the picture portrayed is that the Church in Malawi is a church among the poor."

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[10] Sourced from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
Economy of Malawi http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Malawi, Accessed on 19 July 2011

[11] GDP is an abbreviation of Gross Domestic Product.

[12] Sourced from Wikipedia-The free encyclopedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malawi Accessed on 5 July 2011

2.3 A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CHURCH AS A CATALYST IN DEVELOPMENT

The discussion that follows focuses on the Church of Malawi especially of Nkhoma Synod which has been relevant to this study. Understanding its development and origin is of vital importance, as Brown (2005:21) Points out that,

> "The understanding of one's origin and of one's history is absolutely essential to self-understanding today. To be unaware of how one got to the present state is to consign oneself to a perpetual state of amnesia. The transplanting of Christianity into what is to day Malawi required self-sacrifice and great tenacity; the efforts of those responsible for this transplantation must be forever preserved and treasured. The founding of what was to become Nkhoma Synod by the Dutch Reformed Church in South African was to set the stage for conditions that are still in existence today."

2.3.1 The general understanding of the Church

According to August (2011:44), the understanding of the church as the people called to community in the Bible serves this study the best, and the Hebrew word *QAHAL* and the Greek word *EKKLESIA* express the calling of people out from the broader community and together within the broader community of the inhabited world to become the community of God – for God's redemptive purpose with the world. The community of faith in the Bible is the people called, and the church community is not a new community or an accidental product of recent social or historical developments. The church community today is rather the descendants of a four-thousand-year history of God's seeking to form with humans an abiding and blessed relationship. Van Gelder (2000:100 in Msangaambe 2011:147) admits that,

> "The church is God's demonstration plot in the world. Its very existence demonstrates that his redemptive reign has already begun. It's very presence invites the world to watch, listen, examine, and consider accepting God's reign as a superior way of living."

It is very important to understand the definition of the church, in order to appreciate its influence to the community. The term 'church' its origin is from the Greek word, which is *ekklesia*. According to Hughes (1998:72), the translators of the Authorised Version of the Bible used church to translate *ekklesia* rather than follow Tyndale and use 'congregation'. The term 'Church' has a strong flavour of place, while *ekklesia* means a particular group of people gathered together- a congregation. However; in the Septuagint *ekklesia* is often used to translate qahal, the 'congregation' of Israel, 'the nation in its theocratic aspect, organized as a religious community'.

This is further clarified by Lohfink (1985:77) who argues that, "in Greek, *ekklesia* meant a public assembly, the popular assembly of the political community. But in many texts, including some important ones, the Septuagint had used ekklesia to translate qahal, the assembly before Yahweh of the Old Testament people of the covenant." In support of this Msangaambe (2011:138) adds that, "the word 'Church' (*kirche* in German; *igreja* in Portuguese; *kerk* in Dutch; *ecclesia* in Latin and *mpingo* in Chichewa) is generally thought to have its root in the Greek word that means 'belonging to the Lord' or 'the Lord's house.'" August (2010: viii) admits the fact that,

> "The Church is a central institution and location of especially the marginalised, especially the most vulnerable women and children ... It therefore stand in an acknowledged favourable position when it comes to the development of the marginalised and the restoration and healing of community. Within this context, it has the potential for contributing to social transformation as a stable agent."

2.3.2 Historical background of the Church in Malawi

"Christianity came to Malawi on a permanent basis in 1875 when the Free Church of Scotland established a mission later known as Livingstonia Synod." Brown (2005:16). One of the branches of the Christian church in Malawi which come out of the mission is Nkhoma Synod. According to Msangaambe (2011:53), one of the five Synods of the CCAP is Nkhoma Synod; the others are the Blantyre, Harare, Livingstonia and Zambia Synods. Pauw (1980:17) articulates that, "Christian Missions have played no small role in shaping the history of the country and few national leaders today cannot trace much of their history to the work and influence of Christian Missions." Kamnkhwani (1990:74) point out that, "the main task of the church historians was to show how the will of God, which was understood according to the Christian truth and the presuppositions of the writer, is done in history." Pauw (1980:17) observes that, "the Christian community in 1964 was estimated at over one million. This would mean that roughly on quarter of the population adheres to a Christian Church."

According to Pauw (Ibid: 26-29), the greater Church of the Church of Central Africa was developed and with the negotiations with the Blantyre Mission and the Dutch Reformed Church Mission began as early as 1900 and culminated in the formation of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, initially in 1924, with Nkhoma joining in 1926. This was an important development which took place towards forming a greater Church of Central Africa. The mission of Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa arrived of the scene in the person of the Reverend Andrew Charles Murray in 1888, the later other missionaries joined. The

missions which were established by the Scottish from Scotland were Livingstonia and Blantyre Missions. Nkhoma Mission was established by the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. Kamnkhwani (1990: v) admits that,

> "The missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape in 1889, initiated a Nkhoma Synod of the CCAP, and the church was started of the advice and with the guidance of the missionaries of the free church of Scotland who started mission work in Malawi in 1875."

According to Msangaambe (2011:47), the establishment of the Blantyre Mission closely followed that of Livingstonia, and it was opened in response to Dr Livingstone's[13] appeal. Paas (2006:195 in Msangaambe Ibid: 47) points out that, "the Mission is industrial and evangelical, designed to be a nucleus of advancing centuries of Christian life and civilization to the Nyasa and the surrounding region." When the Blantyre and Livingstonia Presbyteries united to form the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in 1924, Nkhoma representatives were present, only awaiting final approval from their Home Church, which was granted the following year, the same year in which the first three African ministers were ordained. In 1926 when the CCAP Synod met for the second time, the Presbytery of Nkhoma became its third constituent Presbytery. Pauw (1980:29)

The church work started to expand from 1889-1899, and more workers from South Africa began to arrive. The workers were as follows: Robert Blake in 1892, in the following year JS Cridland and the first lady worker Miss Martha Murray arrived. Returning from furlough with them was AC Murray who came with his bride and also the bride of Blake. Reverend William Hoppe Murray came in 1894, later he became a Dr, and was accompanied by the first agricultural missionary, Albert WG Van der Westhuizen. The work expanded in various directions with the coming of extra workers. Pauw (1980:70-71)

"Nkhoma became the head station of the Mission in 1912 and in the course of years was built up to become the biggest station of all the Dutch Reformed Church's Mission enterprises in different parts of Africa." Pauw (Ibid: 76) "The headquarters was moved from Mvera to Nkhoma 23 years later. The missionary venture that started at Mvera has, over the years,

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[13] The original purpose in the formation of the Livingstonia Mission was that it should grow into a town, and afterwards a city, to become a great centre of commerce, Civilization and Christianity. Later, they moved to the north and settled at Bandawe, their new headquarters, which eventually, in 1894, moved to the plateau west of Bandawe at a place know as Khondowe. Msangaambe (2011:47)

grown into what is today known as the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP)." Msangaambe (2011:48)

2.3.2.1 *The growth and origin of the Nkhoma Synod CCAP*

The origin of Nkhoma Synod goes back to 1889 when the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries from South Africa started work in the Central province. In due course a church was established with the purpose, inter alia of providing spiritual and social welfare to people. In Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP) together with Livingstonia and Blantyre Presbyteries. In 1956 these three Presbyteries became Synod, together constituting the General Synod of the CCAP. Later two more Synods namely those of Harare and Zambia joined the three Malawi Synod so that the CCAP General Assembly to day comprises of five Synods. Since 1889 Nkhoma Synod has grown spiritually, numerical and in its ministry in Malawi, the neighbouring nations, and to the world.[14] Kamnkhwani (1990:120) adds that, "the General Synod CCAP is made up of five synods, namely Livingstonia Synod (1875) Blantyre Synod (1876) Nkhoma Synod (1889) Harare Synod (1912) and Zambia CCAP Synod (1984)."

According to Brown (2005:17), Nkhoma Synod was founded in 1889 when missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, principally AC Murray and TCB Vlok, arrived in Malawi. The first base of operations was at Mvera, but twenty-three year later (1912) the mission station at Nkhoma became the centre of operations. In addition to this Kamnkhwani (Ibid: v) articulates that,

> "Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), represents a church initiated by missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape in 1889. The church was stared at Mvera on the advice and with the guidance of the missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland who started mission work in Malawi in 1875."

According to Kamnkhwani (Ibid: 65), this church's name of Nkhoma synod was named after the nearby mountain Nkhoma, by the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries who established their mission station at Nkhoma in 1889. Pauw 1980:44) notes that,

> "The Dutch Reformed Church is the Church the Dutch colonisers brought with them to South Africa in 1652. The first congregation was established at Cape Town thirteen years later in 1665. However, this congregation and several more established during the next nearly century and a half, resorted under the Presbytery of Amsterdam in Holland. It was, in other words, a Colonial branch of the Church in Holland. When British Colonial rule was finally established in 1806, Holland reluctantly granted 'autonomy' to the congregations in South

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[14] According to the 2003 Partnership Agreement, PA.2.1 Background, in Brown (2005:17)

Africa and the first Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa took place in 1824 with only fourteen congregations constituting."

2.3.2.2 *The Church of Nkhoma Synod being situated in the central region*

According to Kamnkhwani (1990:10), the three Synods of the CCAP had previously been identified as the Presbyteries of Livingstonia, Blantyre and Nkhoma, and from 1956 they each became a Synod. Msangaambe (2011:53) says that, "the entry to any church resource analysis is the presentation of the most basic information concerning that particular church or denomination." According to Kamnkhwani (Ibid: 84-85), the Presbytery of Nkhoma was divided from 1952 into two sections, and that is the north and south, of which as the full presbytery they met after three years. Later this arrangement was disapproved of by the CCAP Synod for it was not in accordance with Presbyterianism because presbyteries must meet every year. However, these sections existed together until 1956 when Nkhoma Synod was formed, and four presbyteries were formed, the names are as follows: Nkhoma Presbytery, Mvera Presbytery, Malembo Presbytery and Salisbury (Harare) Presbytery. Including Nkhoma presbytery, today the Synod has eleven presbyteries. Nkhoma Synod Church has its mission station in Nkhoma, where there are its administrative offices, and it is a distance of 50 kilometres south of Lilongwe City.

In Malawi, the Church of Nkhoma Synod faced a special challenge when Lilongwe was born as a new city within its territory was squarely when it was turned into a capital. Brown (2005:64) admits that, "in the mid-1970s Lilongwe became the new capital of the country." Pauw (1980:3) adds that, "in 1966 the four largest urban centres were Blantyre (109 795), Zomba (19 616), Lilongwe (19 176) and Mzuzu (8 176)." According to the report of the General synod in 1977, which was minutes of the General Synod held at Chongoni 16th to 17th August 1977 in Brown (2005:64-65) emphasises that:

> "Nkhoma Synod reports with pleasure that since the last General Synod five years ago the *communicant membership* has risen from 105786 to 137899. However, the *number of congregations* has only increased by four to 78, because Nkhoma Synod had placed a restriction on the formation of new congregations in 1970 due to the shortage of ministers. The *growth in the Capital City* is an especially difficult matter as new procedures have to be followed in establishing these congregations and building churches and manses, which procedures differ widely from the established way of doing this. This needs advanced planning and enormous capital, much more than Nkhoma synod can normally expect from Mother church in S. Africa. The Dutch Reformed church is especially thanked for the new Church in the Capital city, and together with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for the two manses built in this congregation. In the immediate future at least five new congregations

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must be established in Lilongwe, each with a church and a manse. This appears to be beyond the financial means of Nkhoma Synod (italics theirs)."

In support of this Msangaambe (2011:53) adds that, "the Nkhoma Synod covers 10 of the 27 Malawian districts; thus the whole of Central Region and one district in the south. The Synod has 144 (August 2010) congregations divided into 15 presbyteries." Having seen the Nkhoma Synod's location in which it exists in Malawi, one can clearly have a picture of how this church can have an influence in the communities since it is situated almost in the whole Central Region of Malawi including Lilongwe. According to Kamnkhwani (1990:10), the Synod of Nkhoma became independent of the Dutch Reformed Church only in 1962 after the necessary ecclesiastical arrangements had been made between the concerned churches, and from this point on African leadership developed more rapidly.

2.3.3   Church's contribution to the community as a faith-based organization

According to Kamnkhwani (1990:78), the Church has been initiated by God in this world for Jesus Christ to redeem this world by the teaching and guiding of the Holy Spirit. August (2009:214) adds that, "the Church is essentially called to function according to the principles and values of the Reign of Jesus Christ in society." According to Msangaambe (20111:179-180), the church is recognized in the organization of community functions, such as funerals and weddings in both settings, and the voice of the church in Malawi receives public attention and respect, even on issues of socio-political nature. The church is more equipped to participate in community development. Serving the God's created world, a theological mandate that the church has been given to do to the communities. It has the responsibility to contribute to the community. According to Bosch (1991:372), the church has been sent by God who is a missionary God, and by nature the church is missionary, a church without a mission or a mission without the church are both contradictions due to its belongingness since the church and mission belongs together from the beginning. In describing how the church and mission relates to each other, Vav Engen's (1996:26 in Chichen 2001:52) admits that,

> "Mission is the people of God intentionally crossing barriers from church to non-church, faith to non-faith, to proclaim by word and deed the coming of the kingdom of God in Jesus Christ, this task is achieved by means of the church's participation in God's mission of reconciling people to God, to themselves, to each other, and to the world, and gathering them into the church through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit with a view to the transformation of the world as a sign of the coming of the Kingdom in Jesus Christ."

According to Bevans & Schroeder (2004:301), Community is not something that a group of individuals contract to make; it is something that exists prior to each individual and happens when people acknowledge the bond that binds them together. Mission in the light of Trinitarian existence is the call to work with God in creating a human community that reflects God's perfect self-giving and self-receiving, a community of equality, mutuality and justice. The church can be an effective vehicle to the community especially to the rural settings.

2.3.4   Church as an effective vehicle for community development

The Missions played a significant role in promoting and developing the communities of where it has been situated. Missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) from South Africa came to Malawi at the end of 19th century, in order to initiate and implement a multiple approach to ministry as the model for the Church of Nkhoma. The Church and the Government in Malawi has been working together in different ways for quite a long time. August (2009:214) observes that, "the missionaries co-operated with the Government in order to enhance the Mission work." As Joda-Mbewe (2002:44) puts it that, "the approach emphasized a holistic approach to the needs of people: proclamation of the Gospel, education, medical work, and industrial and literary work. It later became known as the 'Comprehensive Approach' or 'Multiple Approach'." In addition to this, August (Ibid: 86) points out that, "love, peace and harmony are the building blocks of the Christian of the Christian community." Pauw (1980:50) admits that,

> "While education aims at developing a person's mind and preparing him for the demands of Christianity, civilization and his environment, education should in the first place and above all be in the Christian truths and according to the principles of the Word of God. Where the State carries the cost of secular education the Church should co-operate to guide it in a religious direction. All along it should be kept in mind that education should help a person not to become merely an imitation of the whites, but he is to take up his place in his country and among his own people. As such, education should also be based upon traditional culture."

The church played a unique role in the past and it needs to continue doing this role. The Church can function much more effectively through its members, and the missionaries were able to co-operate with the Government for church to enhance the Mission work, for the betterment of the communities. August (Ibid: 86) observes that, "health and cleanliness are major issues in a community." Pauw (Ibid: 147) adds that,

> "The other services or approaches only have value and meaning in so far as they explain, concretise and emphasize the proclamation of the gospel. Mission is not four-dimensional

but unidimensional, but in that singleness of approach, life is touched upon in all its aspects. Mission and proclamation of the Gospel can therefore never ignore the problems of disease, poverty and ignorance which it encounters, but will be moved by Christian compassion to do something to help people, and not merely to obtain an opening for the preaching of the Gospel."

The Church's approach was indeed a holistic one in the sense that where it was situated development took place, it managed to emphasize in education, and put also interest in medical services. According to August (2009:216) observes that, "the missionaries regarded the mission settlements as Christian centres of learning where people were taught skills and self-reliance." The church can be an effective tool to the community, in order to be able to address the problems of the poor, especially the marginalized poor, those living in the rural settings.

In Malawi the church made a major contribution to civic life in the rural as well as urban areas, through its mission settlements. It was active at all levels approaching those people in need holistically, by proclaiming the Gospel, education, medical work, and industrial and literary work. It even played leadership roles in the communities. Kamnkhwani (1990:49) observes that, "the missionaries were sent by their home churches and missionary societies to proclaim and spread the Gospel in foreign and heathen countries." Some of the things that missionaries contributed to the communities of Malawi were the building of the hospitals, and schools.

The Church as a community-based organization can help to bring change in the communities where people are based in, especially the marginalized poor. Due to its mission settlements the church is capable of providing skills and knowledge to the poor people in the rural settings. It can also create employment to the people living in rural areas especially those situated in the deep rural communities, in order to create a conducive environment to those poor people and help them to reduce having the desire of migrating to the cities. As August (Ibid: 225) points out that, "the aim should be to be to build a strong local civil society in order that the development organisation is able to permeate, and be permeated by, the individuals and social groupings that it serves. People-centred development demands interpenetration." Kamnkhwani (1990:66) emphasises that, "the missionaries of the DRC (Nkhoma Synod) in Malawi played a great role in the development of village schools. In the early years they taught the children the Bible more than arithmetic and other subjects. Their initial aim was to prepare people for church leadership in the villages."

This emphasises the point that the missionaries indeed brought a huge impact to the community, and it can still be effective in the communities. Some of the children who were taught in these village schools continued their education and followed up great opportunities in public life, and several of them were financially assisted by missionaries to attain a higher education. In support of this August (2009:33) admits that, "the church as a unique public relation should regard it as its own calling to promote these things like character formation, identity, virtues, tradition, community, authority, discipline, role-models and examples."

2.4 GROWTH OF THE MISSIONS STATION AS A RURAL CENTRES TO THE COMMUNITIES IN MALAWI

The coming of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission as mentioned earlier arrived in 1888, on the scene in the person of the Reverend Andrew Charles Murray. When Reverend TCB Vlok joined in the following year the first DRCM (Dutch Reformed Church Mission) station was set up at Mvera in the highlands of Central Angoniland. Pauw (1980:37) notes that,

> "One of the more significant features in the life and history of the Church in Malawi is the degree to which Missions, and later Churches, have always shown a willingness to co-operate and to work in relative harmony. This can be seen for instance right from the start when Scottish Missions and the Dutch Reformed Mission agreed to work in different spheres rather than in the same areas. These and other Missions and later the Churches which grew out of their work continued to co-operate in many respects."

2.4.1 The Church and the medical work

Despite the emphasis of the Nkhoma Synod in the preaching, this Church also practices a holistic ministry. In order to give a clear picture of how the Church of Nkhoma Synod is much interest in a holistic approach, discussing the two departments for this Synod which seek to meet the physical needs of its people is of vital importance in this study. Due to this holistic approach the Church established the departments for Medical and Relief & Development. The medical and Relief & Development Departments have the nature of work which is so closely related as they both deal with the physical needs of people in the communities. According to an evaluation of Reverend Ryk van Velden (in Brown 2005:136) admits that,

> "Looking at Nkhoma Synod from this perspective, it is remarkable to notice that while you find a very strong vertical, pietistic and personal ethics (moralistic) trend in the preaching, Nkhoma Synod in practice was always involved in a holistic ministry. Apart from the medical and educational projects, the Synod used to give attention to agriculture in the past. In later years the Synod broaden its holistic approach and understanding of its function by establishing the Department for Relief and Development; the Synodical Committee for

orphan care and the Department for the Environment. Although the Department is struggling, I am not aware of many churches which have a special Department/Synodical Commission only for the environment!"

According to Pauw (1980:90), the medical department was placed under Synod control, at the period when the mission was dissolved in 1962, under the authority of the Synod's General Administrative Committee, with a medical department. Some of the hospitals which the church of Nkhoma has are as follows: Nkhoma Hospital, Mvera Hospital, Mlanda Hospital and Malingunde Hospital, in addition to that the church also has clinics. In the report of Nkhoma Synod concerning its medical department to the General Synod meeting in August 1977, in Brown (2005:138) emphasises that,

> "The medical work is continuing satisfactorily, but some time back there had been much difficulty in obtaining sufficient expatriate staff. An extensive renovation of Nkhoma Hospital with funds received through the CSC will start this year. Shortage funds for the running expenses have become a major problem. The medical superintendent is Dr. CJ Blignaut, and the very able Hospital Secretary/hospital Administrator is Mr. AK Kuleza."

One of the hospitals which provide a wide variety of medical services to its community is Nkhoma Hospital which is in Nkhoma, Lilongwe. According to Brown (Ibid: 142), over the years, many children have been born; many lives have been saved through the work of Nkhoma Synod's Medical Department and the eye department has given a much-needed specialised service; many owe their sight to this work.

Through this remarkable work that the Church is doing, it is just proving that the church can really play a unique role in the communities where it has been situated. In every place where there was a church, the development was taking place, and the church's approach was always a holistic one. The people in the community were able to be assisted in different ways, and as a result they benefited a lot from the work of the church. Brown (Ibid: 143) adds that, "the medical department of Nkhoma Synod has rendered invaluable service to the people of the Central Region of Malawi for decades. It has earned the respect of people outside of the Synod." Pauw (1980:36) notes that, "medical and educational works as well as community development projects were undertaken."

2.4.2   The Relief and Development

The church of Nkhoma Synod places itself living in community, paying attention to all areas of need, and being with the people where they are. Brown (2005:158 observes that, "the establishment of Nkhoma Synod Relief and Development Department was an important

event in the life of the Synod. While many needs arise in many areas, the Synod working through a host of partners, or NGOs, can show that it can still meet the material as well as spiritual needs of its people."

The missionaries from the Dutch Reformed Church from Cape Town in South Africa, taught Community Development, as part of the holistic approach, they introduced schools, hospitals' as mentioned earlier in addition to that they also introduced Agriculture to the communities with the new methods. One of the remarkable activities of these missionaries is that they built churches, primary schools, hospitals in all mission stations and also small farms were opened where local people came to be taught new methods of farming to help improve their communities. Lay training schools were opened in mission centres like Malingunde, Chilanga, Kongwe, Chinthembe, Mphunzi, Mlanda, Mchinji, Mvera and Nkhoma, that helps local people to be helped in different fields which enable the people to bring change to their communities.

Msangaambe (2011:130) adds that, "the Nkhoma Synod is aware of the importance of continuity in the Church's life. It has always struggled to make sure that there are students in the theological college who are drawn from the congregations' youth circles, in order to be prepared for Church leadership." In support of this, Chinchen (2001:192) notes that, "practically every mission organization that entered Malawi between 1890 and 1920 became significantly consumed with the task of educating nationals. This trend continued even after the establishment of the government's Department of Education in the late 1920."

2.4.3   The Church and Education

In order to make an impact to the communities in Africa in the places where the missionaries were staying, one of the things that they emphasised on was education. The missionaries realized the importance of the need of education, and almost all missions stations in Malawi, there was schools established which regarded as one of their first tasks after settling down in a country. Du Toit (2007:146) points out that, "the DRCM never intended to provide purely secular education, but to provide schools in service of the church and integrated with Biblical values and principles." The church made a huge impact to the communities, this shows that the missionaries had a heart of empowering the people living the communities, helping them to be able to rely on themselves. The missionaries reached the people in different ways also through this establishment of education.

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According to Murray (1897:77-79 in Du Toit Ibid: 48), probably the one purpose for establishing schools that all the missionaries and mission organisations had in common in the beginning was that schools should be used for evangelizing the people. It goes like a refrain through the literature. Murray from the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Nyasaland felt very strongly about this. He felt that missionaries are not sent out to civilize people but to convert them. Not to give them a secular education, but to teach them to know and to do everything the Lord Jesus instructed His followers to do. He saw the task of the missionary to teach the people the Word of God and to teach them to read the Bible in their own language. The Missionaries played a big role in teaching the people about the word of God and also to give those skills and knowledge that remains in the people's minds and be able to implement what they have been taught, and through school people became converted to Christianity.

However, the missionaries' main purpose was not to open schools, but they came first and foremost to preach the Gospel to the people. They did establish schools because they realized that education can be one of the means of spreading the Christian faith to the people. The church of Nkhoma Synod through the Dutch Reformed Missionaries, they were able to reach many people through these establishments of schools in the mission stations which helped the church also spread the word of God as a mission sent by God himself. Du Toit (Ibid: 51) points out the fact that,

> "The White Fathers sent missionaries to Africa not only for the purpose of evangelization, but also for assistance in the areas of education, agriculture and health. They believed from the beginning that evangelization required not only the preaching of the Word. Christianity demands the development of the whole personality."

The approach of the missionaries was indeed a holistic approach, this is due to how they were doing their work, and this has helped a lot the church of Nkhoma Synod to have a very good background on a holistic approach to the community. According to the report of a SODAPAX, which was compiled by Dunne et al (1969:6-7), it emphasises that,

> "The church exists for the world-for the whole world. Also, the church is an agent of the love of God revealed in Christ for the world understood as people, as humanity. The Church should be engaged in mission to the world in both senses. It does not exist only for the religious nurture or the pastoral care of its members."

The missionaries began with what the people had, built from that and empower them so that they can develop the skills and have a better knowledge in doing things to be productive in communities. Du Toit (Ibid: 146) points out that, "the whole purpose of school education for

the African parent was to provide an opportunity for his children to escape poverty and the hard life in the village." The church of Nkhoma Synod has a very good background of a community development and sustainability approach to the community. August (2009:216) points out that, "the missionaries regarded the mission settlements as Christian centres of learning where people were taught skills and self-reliance." Du Toit (2007:146) concludes that, "the fact is that education was and is often regarded in developing communities as a vehicle for upward social mobility-the key to a better life."

2.4.4   The Church impact to the communities

The church in Malawi played a major role to the communities through the missionaries who came to this country made a big contribution. Through its holistic approach, the church reached many people to the communities, through schools, medical work, and agriculture and also its emphasis on community development the Church made a major contribution to civic life in the rural as well as urban areas. Through its mission settlements the Church provides skills and knowledge which helped the life of the people in the communities to be improved.

The Church and the Government in Malawi work together in different ways. August (2009:214) observes that, "the missionaries co-operated with the Government in order to enhance the Mission work." The church tried its best to create employment to the people, and especially those in the rural communities, they were taught many things that lead to community development. This is through the mission settlements that things changed for the betterment of the people living in the communities. The missionaries from Dutch Reformed Church made sure that there approach were to be people-centred as part of the holistic approach. In support of this, August (2009:225) admits the fact that, "people-centred development demands interpenetration." Mhobo (2009:36) notices that, "due to the fact that the church played a tremendous role in the struggle indicates that the church has the capacity to help communities fight against poverty."

2.5   CONCLUSION

In this chapter the country Malawi has be presented its population, geographical features, economy and the church as a catalyst in community development. A brief historical background of the church and its contribution to the communities in Malawi has also been presented. The origin and brief historical background of the church of Nkhoma Synod, the growth of the missions have also been explained with the impact that the church made to the

community. Presenting the map of Malawi, its neighbouring countries, and also the diverse problems and challenges that the country is facing due to urbanization was of vital importance. Msangaambe (2011:68) suggests that,

> "On the other hand, the growing population, prevalence of adult HIV/AIDS, and the staggering economy have suggested the urgent need for the Church to regard its prophetic role seriously. It must read the sings of the times and discern God's will for such a situation. Both local and global points of view should help the Church to respond hermeneutically to God's demands for our time. The historical perspective outlined in this chapter bears witness to a struggle for identity that is necessary for doing theology today. If our efforts for self-understanding in theology have to make any sense, we need to know where we come from in order to discover why we do what we now do. It also encourages any serious practical theologian to follow that route of meaningful paradigm shifting."

The chapter has helped to understand that the church has really a huge influence on the community and being a community faith-based organization it has a unique role that it can play in order to bring change. Its background, influence to the community, the establishing of schools, hospitals, and giving skills and knowledge to the people has also helped to observe that the church in Malawi can be an effective vehicle to community development. Its nature of missionary, that has been sent by God to do his mission, has been presented through the works of the missionaries who were able to establish churches in Malawi, and try to develop the areas that they were staying, in addition to that they were able to meet the people's needs in the communities.

This was a holistic approach to the community of the country of Malawi. The church as a community based-organization can indeed be an effective vehicle to the communities in the developing country like Malawi, for the betterment of the people especially the marginalized poor. Throughout its mission history the church played its role, and it needs to continue doing this role. The Church can function much more effectively through its members. Du Toit (2007:53) admits that, "from the beginning the main objectives of all missionary education was to spread the Gospel and to evangelize the people of Africa"

The researcher do acknowledge that the Church did not do well in all areas and this seen due to the problem of urbanization, of which it did not focused much on this challenge. Hence the church need to be part of tackling this problem of urbanization for it has a very good background of community development and it can be much more effective in trying to deal with this problem. As such the church should be involved in helping the people in the rural areas in order for them to be conscientized in of this problem of urbanization.

CHAPTER THREE

UNDERSTANDING POVERTY: A PERSPECTIVE ON URBANIZATION

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present a variety of definitions of poverty, which exist in the current literature. Since it is not wise to deal with the result of poverty a lone, the chapter will also attempt to analyse the causes of poverty that make human beings at its centre to suffer. Bearing in mind that Malawi, like other developing countries, has a lot of people who live in poverty, understanding poverty is of vital importance in order to be able to scrutinize poverty which has become a human condition. Poverty worsens the people's situation and the poor often live in discomfort. Davids et al (2009:37) point out that,

> "The word "poverty" conjures images of starving children, overcrowded informal settlements and ragged street children. These images form the basis of many people's understanding of poverty. Poor people however, have their own understanding and interpretation of their social reality, and this is often removed from the outsider's perspective and the jargon sometimes used by academics, politicians and consultants whose knowledge of poverty often comes from books, television documentaries, newspapers and questionnaire interviews with the poor."

3.2   POVERTY DEFINED

For many years the issue of poverty has not been easy in the world, especially the developing countries, which are, called 'Third World[15] countries'. Malawi as one of these countries is also facing this challenge of poverty. As Christian (1999:1) agrees, "over the years, the issue of poverty has challenged the best minds both at the grassroots level and among academicians. In showing how this is related to the church, August (2010:16) admits that, "the fact of poverty is of real concern to the church. Today the worldwide church seems to be stepping up its fight against this evil."

Poverty is a relative term that generates semantic problems of definition and interpretation of situations, for instance what is called poverty in Malawi cannot be poverty in western world. For ages, the church has taken much deliberation in addressing the phenomenon of poverty in different perspectives. Myers (1999:12) says, "The way we understand the nature of poverty

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[15] Hughes (1998:1) says that, "After a lot of thought we decided to use "Third World" to describe the countries where the majority of the poor live. It is used in contrast to 'the West', the rich industrialized countries that claim the lion's share of the world's wealth. Other contrasting terms considered were "two-thirds World/the West', 'developed/developing countries', North/South'. The final choice was between Third World and Two-thirds World."

and what causes poverty is very important, because it tends to determine how we respond to poverty." In support of this Christian (1999:1) points out that "poverty with all its complexities has remained a major challenge both to the church and to the world. It defies easy solutions and responses." Hughes (1998:1) tells us that,

> "The one central fact that conditions everything that follows is the fact of poverty. It may be difficult to get precise figures but there is a consensus among statisticians that there are at least on thousand million people in the world today who have nothing like adequate food supply, clothing, shelter, medical care or education. The overwhelming majority of these poor people live in the Third World."

Poverty is a very complicated social issue and it involves all areas of life, but despite this sophistication, poverty has been described in many ways. August (2010:1) agrees that, "Poverty is a relative concept which eludes specific definition." Davids et al. (2009:43) also comments, "Poverty can mean a lack of development, and development can mean alleviating reducing or eliminating poverty."

3.2.1   A Phenomenon in Poverty

Poverty is indeed a complex, and many scholars have attempted to define it.   There are different views on the definition of poverty, and this word 'poverty' has been defined differently by different groups of people. Christian (1999:17) affirms that, "Poverty is a complex human phenomenon. It is a value-loaded concept involving evaluative judgements regarding minimum standards, basic needs and desired levels of living."   Davids et al. (2009:40) adds that, "Poverty like development is a difficult phenomenon to measure."

3.2.1.1   Poverty definition according to Stan Burkey

a)   *Basic Needs:* In this view of poverty Burkey (1993:3) defines poverty in terms of basic needs. He says that, basic needs are those things that an individual must have in order to survive as a human being. These basic needs are: clean (unpolluted) air and water adequate and balanced food, physical and emotional security, physical and mental rest, and culturally and climatically appropriate clothing and shelter.

 He also emphasises that, the survival of the human race however, depends not on the survival of a single individual, but on the survival of the communities. Due to his explanation of poverty as the availability of basic needs, Burkey therefore, expand the list of basic individual needs to include those of a community.

b)   *Basic Individual and Community Needs:* In basic needs that deals with individual and community needs, Burkey (1993:3) defines these as sexual regeneration, a system of communication (language), a belief and educational system for cultural continuity, physical and cultural security, a political system defining leadership and decision-making, and systems of health and recreation for maintaining well-being among sufficient numbers to maintain the community.

c)   *Absolute and Relative Poverty:* Burkey (1993:3) also uses what a group of development workers in Uganda found out in defining poverty in terms of basic needs. He articulates that, this group in Uganda defined poverty as lack basic needs in two ways that is absolute poverty and relative poverty. *Firstly*, in defining absolute poverty, they defined as "the inability of an individual, a community or a nation to satisfactorily meet its basic needs." Burkey (Ibid: 3) Secondly, in defining relative poverty, they defined as "the condition in which basic needs are met, but where there is an inability to meet perceived needs and desires in addition to basic needs." Burkey (Ibid: 4)

Burkey (Ibid) adds that, this group of development workers also discussed an expression much abused by development agencies: the poorest of the poor and these were considered those unfortunate individuals who because of serious mental or physical handicaps were incapable of meeting their basic needs by themselves. In this view Burkey (Ibid) observes that, people existing in a situation of absolute poverty, in terms of external assistance, need immediate relief in order to survive while those existing in relative poverty can hopefully benefit from development assistance which ideally should help them to become independent of such assistance.

d)   *Identifying and measuring poverty:* In clarifying basic needs as a measure of poverty, Burkey (Ibid) outline three ways that were developed in the past as a way of identifying poverty.

Firstly he says that, the World Bank annually publishes comparative lists showing low income, middle income and high income countries. This is done to measure the wealth of nations and it is done in terms of the total value of a nation's annual output of goods and services (GNP: Gross National Product). These measurements are usually presented in terms of per capita figures. Burkey criticizes these measurements by saying that, Per capita GNP

figures are aggregate numbers, and might not be accurate, because they are on averages, but averages can be misleading. He makes it clear that, a fair number of very wealthy families in an otherwise very poor country will pull the average higher than observation might expect.

Secondly, another approach that has been developed is to measure poverty as a counterweight to the national economic statistics, and that is the Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI). It is based on the selection and measurement of physical factors which indicate the state of people's health and welfare, and the standard factors are usually life expectancy, child mortality and adult literacy. These factors are measured and averaged on a national basis, and the averages are given relative weights, and an index is produced. Burkey (1993:4) emphasized that, although, Physical Quality of Life Indices (PQLI) gives a better indication of the standard of living for an average person than the national economic statistics, it does not tell the whole story.

Lastly, Burkey (Ibid: 5) introduces a new approach of identifying and measuring poverty which has been developed in recent years, and it is called 'the Basic Needs Approach'. In this method the presence or absence of minimal basic human requirements for life as well as essential services indicate the degree of poverty, in other words it indicates the level of the standard of living. The basic requirements for a family are considered to be adequate food, safe drinking water, suitable shelter and clothing as well as basic household equipment, and the essential services are considered to be sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities.

In conclusion to his poverty measurements and identification marathon, Burkey (Ibid) states, "There are numerous problems involved in attempts to identify and quantify poverty. No one set of measurements will give a complete picture."

3.2.1.2 *Poverty definition according to Bryant Myers*

a) *Poverty as deficit:* With this view people defined poverty to be a lack, in the early days of development thinking. There is two things that this view emphasize firstly it says that, the poor people do not have enough to eat, a place to sleep, or clean water; their land is poor, there is no water for irrigation, roads are inadequate, and there are no schools for their children. Lastly it says that people 'poor' do not have knowledge and skills, which dealt with.

Myers (1999:65-66) argues that the solution to this view is to provide the poor the missing things, and then they will no longer be poor. This view of poverty invites programming that features education and non-formal learning. It assumes that if the poor simply learn enough, they will no longer be poor. This view has been criticized by Myers (ibid: 66) that, limiting one's understanding of poverty to this framework can create some problems, because the poor are seen as passive recipients, incomplete human beings.

b)   *Poverty as entanglement:* This view articulates that the household is poor, physically weak, isolated, vulnerable, and powerless. Myers (1999:66-69)   in explaining poverty as "entanglement" he uses Robert Chambers[16] description, who described the poor as ling in a "cluster of disadvantage", and these dimensions of poverty is known as an interactive system which is called the "poverty trap".

In Material poverty, the household has few assets, in addition to that, its housing and sanitation is inadequate, and it also has little or no land, livestock, or wealth. In physical weakness, the household members are weak; they lack strength because of poor health and inadequate nutrition. In isolation the household lacks access to services and information, often is far from main roads, water lines, and even electricity. They cannot save, and they are vulnerable to cultural demands, such as dowry and feast days that soak up savings. On powerlessness, the household lacks the ability and the knowledge to influence the life around it and the social systems in which it lives.

With apologies Myers (ibid: 69) adds "spiritual poverty" to Chambers explanation of poverty dimensions, and he adds this category in the interest of being holistic. The household suffers from broken and dysfunctional relationships with God, each other, the community, and creation. Its members may suffer from spiritual oppression-fear of spirits, demons, and ancestors, and they may also lack hope and be unable to believe that change is possible. They may never have heard the gospel or have only responded to a truncated version of the gospel that lacks transforming power. Myers (ibid: 69) emphasize that, Chambers system approach to poverty is a powerful tool, and he concludes in this 'poverty as entanglement' by

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16 Robert Chambers is a respected development professional working at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex in England, and is a champion of the Participatory Rural Appraisal (now called Participatory Learning and Action). Myers (1999:66)

saying that, no systems account of poverty is complete without a holistic view of the spiritual and material at the level of people and the social systems within which they live.

c)   *Poverty as lack of access to social power:* This view emphasizes the fact that poor households are excluded and need to be empowered. In defining this poverty as lack of access to social power, John Friedman[17] describes poverty by focusing on powerlessness, and like Chambers, he begins with the household as the social unit of the poor and sees it embedded within four overlapping domains of social practice: state, political community, civil society, and corporate economy. Each domain has a distinctive type of power: state power, political power, social power, and economic power.

According to Friedman, there are eight bases of social power that are available to the poor as avenues for creating social space and influence. These are: social networks, information for self-development, surplus time, instruments of work and livelihood, social organization, knowledge and skill, defensible life space, and financial resources. When the values for these eight dimensions are too low for a household to be able to move out of poverty on its own, the situation is called Absolute poverty. Poverty is lack of social organization and lack of access to the political process. Understanding of poverty brings a more sophisticated understanding of how poverty is related to lack of access to social power, in contrast to simply a lack of things or lack of knowledge.

d)   *Poverty as disempowerment:*   In defining poverty as disempowerment, Myers (1999:72) describes that, Jayakumar Christian[18] builds on Chambers and Friedman and adds the spiritual side of understanding. He also sees the poor household embedded in a complex framework of interacting systems. For Christian, these systems include a personal system which includes psychology; a social system similar to Friedman's; a spiritual/religious system, which is both personal and social' and a cultural system that includes worldview. The poor find themselves trapped inside a system of disempowerment made up of these interacting systems. Each part of the system creates its own particular contribution to

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17 John Friedman is a professor of urban planning at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and a promoter of what he calls "alternative development." Myers (1999:69)

18 Jayakumar Christian is a long-time Indian practitioner and World Vision colleague, codified his development experience in the form of his Ph.D thesis in 1994. Myers (1999:72)

disempowerment of the poor, including what Christian terms "captivity to god-poor, deception by the principalities and powers, inadequacies in worldview, and suffering from a marred identity." Christian's understanding of pervert adds an additional dimension to the work of Chambers and Friedman. He uncovers the internal nature of poverty, created and sustained by the social systems to which Chambers and Friedman are so sensitive.

e)   *Poverty as lack of freedom to grow:* On this view Ravi Jayakaran[19] understands poverty as lack of freedom to grow, where he sees the poor wrapped in a series of restrictions and limitations in four areas of life: physical, mental, social, and spiritual, and his argument develops from the book of Luke. In this chapter it speaks about Jesus when he was young, that he grew in "wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men" (Lk. 2:52-NIV). He points out that behind each of these "bundles of limitations" lies powerful stakeholders, people whose interests are served by the limitations and who have a stake in sustaining the illusion that such limitations can never be changed.

To our understanding of poverty Jayakaran adds two important dimensions: Firstly, he locates the causes of poverty in people, not in concepts or abstractions. In order to make things change, people-the poor and the non-poor-have to change. Secondly he also alerts us to the fact that these stakeholders, the sources of oppression, are often themselves operating within "bundles of limitations" kept in place by still-more-powerful stakeholders.

In his conclusion, Myers (1999:81) affirms that, "we can conclude that poverty is a complicated social issue involving all areas of life-physical, personal, social, cultural, and spiritual. At some level, however, we must also conclude that poverty is in the eye of the beholder. He also warns that it is doubtful if there is or ever will be a unified theory of poverty, and also that there is always more to see and more to learn. In view of this Myers (1999:81) ends by saying that "we must work hard to be as holistic as we can be for the sake of the poor."

3.2.1.3   *Poverty definition according to Jayakumar Christian*
In his book, *God of the empty-handed*, Christian (1999:1-28) gives a thorough yet concise overview of the Christian response to poverty. He argues that for many years experts have

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19 Rav Jayakaran is an Indian expert in the use of the Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) methodology and a colleague of Robert Chambers. Myers (1999:80)

developed many theories to explain poverty, and he also emphasises that poverty is and always will be a human phenomenon. According to Christian (ibid: 17), development theorists and missiologists have sought to better understand poverty by classifying it using different criteria, and there is the concept of relative poverty over against the notion of absolute poverty. In the 1980 report of the World Bank (1980:32 in Christian ibid: 17) defines absolute poverty, "as a condition of life so characterized by malnutrition, illiteracy and disease as to be beneath any reasonable definition of human decency. Relative poverty on the other hand involves maldistribution of assets, income and power."

In order to measure and analyze poverty, the development theorists and missiologists, assumed that by reducing the complex phenomenon of poverty to numbers, the policy-makers, managers of development and politicians could "compare, reduce and control" poverty. Christian (ibid: 19-36), gives "a brief description and analyses of major assumptions about poverty that shaped these different efforts to measure and explain poverty." Christian's four descriptions are as follows:

a)   *The poor lack resources:* This describes that poverty essentially is Lack of resources, and the poor are poor, because they lack capital. In order to measure poverty, per capita income became a variable key, and the early models of development emphasized per capita income, progress, transfer of resources and increase in the level of income. According to World Bank (1978:65 in Christian ibid: 20) suggested that, "development was measured based on its ability to sustain rapid economic growth, modify the pattern of economic growth so as to raise the productivity and income of the poor, improve access of the poor to essential public services, and maintain an international environment supportive of development"

Christian (ibid: 20) admits that, "at macro and international levels[20], nations were categorized as poor if their capital, income and production were low." He continues that "this emphasis on lack of resources, however, did not imply ignoring other needs of the poor. In his analysis, Christian (1999:20-21) point out that, defining poverty as lack of resources ignored other aspects of poverty. Some of the aspects of poverty that was ignored were:

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20 Macro refers to the national community and global refers to international communities. Christian (1999:119)

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Firstly, the economic growth which resulted in increased inequalities and historically economic development has often led to a greater concentration of wealth and power; sometimes an inference is drawn that this result is inevitable, this is commonly observed even by those who are suppers in principle of levelling. The worth thus created, according to this view, would "trickle down" to those in the lower levels of society. However, proponents of this view respond by pointing out that normally economic development strategies do not benefit the poor in the first few years. Secondly, this view of poverty tended to exclude the landless and the "hidden poor". Lastly, structural factors like market influence were not given adequate consideration.

b)   *The Poor Below the Poverty line:* According to Christian (1999:22), this concept of the poverty line was first used by Arthur Young, but it was Charles Booth[21] who first defined the term in his door-to-door surveys. Booth defined the poverty line as "an income level where 'means may be sufficient but are barely sufficient for independent life'".

In analysing this view of poverty line, Christian (ibid: 22-23) emphasises that, by defining poverty using the poverty-line framework, there are four issues that tend to be neglected: Firstly, fixing the poverty line based on average national per capita income ignore the seasonal nature of income in rural areas, a serious problem. Exploitative relationships become stronger in the time between harvests. Secondly, discussion on the poverty line tends to overemphasize measure-ability. Thirdly, use of calorie intake to calculate average expenditure level for a population ignores other non-food expenses, and is also ignores variations in food habits in different regions. Lastly, the professional obsession with numbers and the tendency to reduce poverty to a single variant also reduces the poor to mere statistics. This then allows proponents of the poverty line to shift their attention to whether those statistics are on the rise or diminishing.

c)   Basics for Living: In view, the policy makers and development practitioners began to see that the different models of economic growth were not producing satisfactory results, and growth benefits were not trickling down to the poor. The poor lack the basic needs, and it is

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[21] Charles Booth (1840-1916) was a British business man whose mammoth surveys of poverty, industry and religion were published as life and labour of the people in London (1889-1891). Christian (1999:39)

difficult for them to raise income and contribute to the GNP (Gross National Product)[22], when they do not have food for survival and are unable to keep their life together. Christian (1999:24) says, "the concept of basic needs was first articulated by the International Labour Organization during the World Employment Conference in Geneva, and the World Bank also shifted its focus to basic needs but maintained an economic emphasis."

 The basic needs are categorized in order to cope with the never-ending lists of basic needs. It begins with the "first-floor human needs" which include food, health and education, to which all who are born are entitled. Second level is "second-floor human needs" which include those needs each nation-state can decide for its own people, within the context of the interdependence of all societies.

In his analysis, Christian (ibid: 25-26) says that, if earlier discussions on lack of resources and the poverty line tended to reduce the complexity of poverty, this discussion of basic needs complicated the matter with its multiplicity of variants. Secondly, the basic-needs model lacked analytical rigor, and also the basic-needs model involved a high level of subjectivity. Fourthly, proponents of the economic-growth model pointed out that the basic-needs model took the focus off growth and therefore would subsequently growth. Lastly, the basic-needs approach ignored class analysis and the structural causes of needs. The weakness of this understanding of poverty caused critics to look at the questions of structure and poverty and also of technology and poverty more carefully.

d)   *The poor are backward:* This is another major assumption that shaped development response and it says that the poor are backward in their social and economic practices. Poverty is the result of using traditional techniques. This assumption about poverty shaped the modernization[23] of development. Poor nations and communities lack, "trained educated or experienced technical and administrative talent". At the micro level,[24] this assumption about

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22 GNP (Gross National Product) measurements are usually presented in terms of per capita figures. Burkey (1993:4)

23 Modernization was defined as the influence of the modern sector or "growth pole" (industrial modernized enclaves), gradually radiating until rural, traditional environment (traditional underdeveloped communities) are transformed, economically, politically and socially. Christian (1999:27)

24 The micro level refers to relationships the poor have with communities outside the basic unit. Christian (1999:119)

poverty implied that the poor were recipients of massive technology transfers and modern approaches.

In his analysis Christian (1999:27-28) says that, the modernization approach was on the whole an ethnocentric reading of poverty, and also by unlinking development from underdevelopment, this view also disregards structural causes of poverty, creating regional imbalances. Thirdly, the backwardness framework for explaining rural poverty disregards the "opportunity factor". Lack of technical knowledge and skills raise a prior question that must be considered before branding the poor as backward: that is to find out if the poor have the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge. Finally, the backwardness paradigm and the modernity prescription tend to prefer early innovators and risk-takers, over against the land-less, who do not have the wherewithal to take a risk.

3.2.1.4   *Other views on the definition of poverty*

In continuing examine different views on poverty, it is also vital to see other short definition of poverty. According to Msangaambe (2011:77), a report on the profile of poverty in Malawi was produced by the Malawian government in November 2000, which was as a result of the Malawi Integrated Household Survey (MIHS). This was conducted from 1997 to 1998 with the aim to understand the conditions under which Malawians live. Therefore, the Malawian government (2006:6 in Msangaambe ibid: 77), gives a very broad definition (as the report indicates, and this is how poverty is defined:

> "Poverty is that condition in which the basic needs of a household (or individual) are not met. In order to determine whether or not household is poor, one must do two things. First, one must establish a level of welfare for the household. That level, whether defined subjectively or objectively, will be compared to a level of welfare above which one assumes the basic needs of a household can be met. Establishing this poverty line is the second step needed to ascertain the poverty status of a household."

This really makes sense as Sen (1995 in Narayan et al. 2007:46) puts it that, "poverty means capability deprivation. Relative poverty refers to a comparison with the bulk of a local, regional, or national population, while absolute poverty refers to a comparison with a worldwide standard." Chambers (1997:45) defines poverty as "low income, or often as low consumption, which is more easily and reliable measured." According to De Beer (1997 in August 2010:1) defined poverty by distinguishing it into two forms that is, case and community poverty. Where in Case poverty he refers it to be found in societies that are more affluent where the individual or a family suffers poverty, and it occurs where certain

individuals or families do not share in the general well-being of society. Secondly in community poverty, he says that it manifests itself where almost everyone in a community is poor and where the living conditions of the more affluent individuals or families are more visible compared to most of those living close to them, and he emphasises that community poverty is found mostly, but not exclusively in rural areas and in informal and peri-urban areas like squatter camps. August 2010:1) point it out that, "this type of poverty is usually, but not exclusively found in developing countries."

3.2.1.5 *A summary of poverty definitions*

In discussing the different views of the definition of poverty, a clear picture of the term "Poverty" has been seen that it is a human phenomenon and one should bear in mind that no matter how poverty can be defined, it concerns human beings. Poverty affects a lot of people in communities, and they fail to meet their basic needs in order for them to survive as human beings, things like food, clean water, clothing and shelter. Liebenberg, F.S. & Theron (1997:121-131 in Davids et al. (2009:39) emphasis that,

> "The basic needs perspective is an influential international perspective on poverty, especially in the context of the "developing world" where millions of people live without access to clean (unpolluted) air and water, an adequate and balanced diet, physical and emotional security, and culturally and climatically appropriate clothing and shelter."

August (2010:2) outline the basic needs according to the International Labour Organisation, which are defined into two categories. The basic needs are as follows:

1. First, they include certain minimum requirements for a family for private consumption: adequate food, shelter and clothing as well as certain household equipment.

2. Secondly, they include essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities.

Msangaambe (2011:80) gives a clear picture of what it means to the Malawian, when it comes to talk about basic needs in people's life. He says that,

> "Basic needs in a Malawian context prefer to prioritize food, clothing and shelter before other essentials for life, such as transport, health services, and technology. Of course, the basic needs are interrelated and therefore difficult to be separated without

a loss of balance. For instance, if the community experiences starvation, it is likely to suffer nutrition-related diseases that require immediate health attention."

Todaro et al. (2009:236) suggests that, "the prospect for ending poverty depends critically on two factors: first, the rate of economic growth-provided it is undertaken in a shared and sustainable way-and second, the level of resources devoted to poverty programs and the quality of those programs."

3.2.2 Causes of Poverty

According to August (2010:17) suggests that, the causes of poverty around the world are numerous. Jayakumar (1999:35) adds that, "Poverty like the rest of life, is affected by forces that have influenced life situations over time. Analysis of intergenerational poverty, especially, will never be adequate if we do not consider the time variable. Poverty is a real life experience in both space and time." In support of this Todaro et al. (2009:234) says that, "the incidence of extreme poverty is very uneven around the developing world"

3.2.2.1 Causes of poverty according to Stan Burkey

Stan Burkey[25] (1993:6-11) presents the causes of poverty, and he admits that there are almost as many theories explaining the causes of poverty in the Third World as there are development theorists. In his presentation, he says that, the continued existence of poverty in the Third world has reasons that have been given to it. Burkey (Ibid) creatively has grouped these reasons that cause poverty in the third world under five headings. Burkey's five reasons are as follows:

a)   *Lack of modernisation tendencies:* In explaining poverty in terms of a lack of modernisation tendencies in Third World communities, Burkey (Ibid: 6-7) says that those who do that often group their reasons into two main categories: lack of modern technology, and lack of 'modern' outlooks among the people. Lack of modern technology: In this view it is argued that poverty exists because the poor lack modern techniques of agriculture, fishing, industry, etc. Farmers lack not only modern equipment, improved seeds, fertilisers and pesticides, but also the necessary knowledge to use these techniques.

He emphasises that those who interpret the causes of poverty in this way tend to believe that introducing modern technologies together with the required training and extension

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[25] Burkey is a development consultant. August (2010:21),

programmes will lift the poor out of their destitute situation. He continues by saying that, despite that during the first two development decades, these ideas were widely accepted, however, many more recent researchers have vigorously pointed out the weaknesses in these arguments. They maintain that the development of modern cash-crop agriculture has not led to a generalised improvement of the incomes and living standards of the rural population. It has been pointed out that no amount of modern technology is going to help peasant farmers unless they also have access to land, reasonable credit and fair market prices. Lack of modern outlook: In this the poor people are said to be resist change because they are ignorant, superstitious, fatalistic, traditional, etc. They have a limited world view and are unable to see the advantages of modernisation.

b)   *Physical limitations:* According to Burkey (1993:8) in his explanation relating poverty to the physical limitations of geography, he describes that, many areas of the Third World are subject to long periods of drought; rain, when it comes, tends to come all at once causing flooding and water logging; soils are thin and very delicate; cyclones and earthquakes supplement drought and flooding in a frequent cycle of natural disasters. To him what intensify the physical limitations are poverty and population pressures. Deforestation caused by over-grazing or the need for more land and firewood leads to desertification, soil erosion, flooding and micro-climatic changes. He also admits that, symptoms of poverty become the causes of continued poverty; things like malnutrition, disease, lack of clean water and proper sanitation weaken the poor and often make it physically difficult for them to break the vicious circle.

c)   *Bureaucratic stifling of development:* This third set of reasons that causes poverty, is often proposed by non-governmental organisations, is the stifling of development by bureaucratic heavy-handedness. In this view, the government bureaucrats and politicians are said to be part of elite who are uninterested in or, even worse, antagonistic to the real needs of the poor. Programmes and projects initiated from the top down either never reach the poor or actually make their situation worse; hence there is a widespread conception that all bureaucrats and government officials are corrupt, that their actions and decisions are related primarily to their desire for personal gain and prestige.

d)   *Dependency of Third World countries:* In this section the ideas contained are often espoused by observers with more politically radical tendencies although not exclusively so.

He emphasises that, the Third World countries are dependent on the developed countries for capital, technology and markets, it is suggested that many Third World leaders and bureaucrats are dependent on aid programmes to maintain their positions and lifestyles.

e) *Exploitation of the poor:* In this context Exploitation of the poor takes many forms, it maintained that the immediate causes of poverty lie in the domination of poor people and their resultant dependence on powerful local elites in the form of landowners, merchants and middlemen, moneylenders, corrupt officials and sometimes even religious leaders. Many poor people consciously enter into dependency relationships with wealthy merchants or landowners. Burkey (1993:11) points out that, "any strategy of development, if it is to be successful, must act upon the factors that create dependency without creating a new and unbearable high risk situation."

In conclusion to his explanations of the reasons to the causes of poverty, Burkey (Ibid: 11) points out that, "Technocrats and practitioners are inclined to put their faith in the lack of modernisation, the physical limitations, and the bureaucratic stifling viewpoints." In giving the dangers to this tendency, Chambers (1983 in Burkey 1999:11) warns that, "the dangers in the tendency of both practitioners and academics towards partiality: they tend to concentrate on one or a few explanations and actions and ignore others."

3.3   POVERTY ANALYSIS

After giving the explanations of what continued existence of extreme poverty in the Third World, this section will articulate the analysis of poverty that is affecting a particular people in their own particular situation, in order to assist the poor rural people into the way of development. Hughes (1998: ix) says that, "If poverty were simply an economic problem, money would be the way to solve it. But poverty is not only material. It is also cultural and social, political and structural." In emphasizing this point, Hughes (Ibid: ix in August 2010:17) indicate that "the economy, culture, religion, society, politics and structures (especially governmental) are most often the causes of poverty."

In the poverty analysis, Stan Burkey (1993:13-24) provides four of an important contribution to the general causes of poverty. He elaborate that in analysing the causes of poverty is of vital importance to be aware that some things are symptoms of poverty while others are the real causes of poverty. For example, he says that disease and malnourishment cause poor health and if one is sick, one can't work well in the fields; and if one doesn't work well the

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production is going to be lower than it would have been and the income will also be lower. He gives us a picture of a vicious circle of poverty, because one problem causes another which in turn causes a third, and we keep on finding new linkages until we are right back where we started from and the vicious cycle starts all over again.

3.3.1   Poverty analysis according to Stan Burkey

In the vicious circle of poverty, it is seen that some of the causes are economic, some are social and others are political or physical. For example, lack of clean water can be considered either, physical, social, economic or even political if one thinks it is the government's obligation to provide clean water for its citizens.

Figure 2: A Vicious Circle[26]
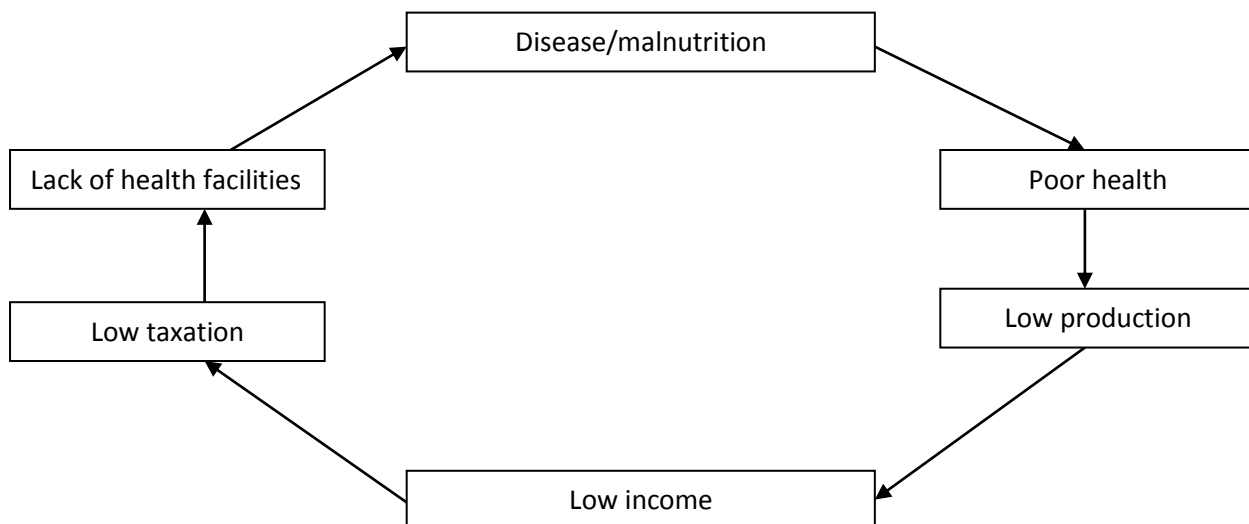
Stan Burkey (1993:17-24) categorizes the causes of poverty as follows:

a)   *Physical causes of poverty:* Here Burkey puts the physical causes of poverty into three categories namely: local, national and international. He gives an example of the things that can be physical to these categories: under Local, the poor soils, Unreliable rainfall, National, the land destruction, Deforestation and International, Tropical disease, and Vectors. He says that a cause such as land destruction, can perhaps more rightly be said to be social

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[26] This Figure 2, was taken from the book, "People First: A guide to self-reliant, participatory rural development" by Stan Burkey. This is a simple drawing of a vicious circle of poverty. The real world, unfortunately, is even more complicated. Burkey (1993:13) The "Vicious Circle" of poverty is also referred to as "cycles of deprivation." Browne (1992:72-73 in Davids et al 2009:3)

since it is more often than not caused by humans, and it can also be political-if the causes were land tenure systems or other government policies. In agreeing with him Msangaambe (2011:81) says that, "these are causes that afflict physical pain on the people due to absence of physical assets needed for survival.

b)   *Social causes of poverty:* Like in physical causes of poverty, Burkey also puts three categories in order to differentiate the Local, National and International. Lack of knowledge, Lack of skills can be under Local, Ethnic differences, Social classes can be under National and Neo-colonialism; Racial prejudice can be under International. Msangaambe (2011:81) adds that, "there are large-scale social practices and a whole system of social roles, often firmly approved by the members of society generally, that cause or perpetuate injustice and suffering among the marginalized."

C)   *Political causes of poverty:* Another good example to this cause are, Corruption, Lack of participation and Lack local participation which is under Local, under National are poor people, Corruption and nepotism, political instability and finally under Intentional are Neo-colonialism, National rivalry and Refugees.

D)   *Economic causes of poverty:* under Local, there is Lack of capital, Lack of savings, Lack of credit, under National, there is Lack of crop finance, Lack of transport and communication, low producer prices for export crops, and lastly under International there is Neo-colonialism, external debt and unfair trade practices.

Burkey makes it clear that although these examples are not rigorous, it show how perceived causes of poverty can be categorised into more manageable groups. This analysis is based on the discussion held in Uganda[27].

E)   *Primary and Secondary causes:* After seeing that some things can be seen as symptoms of poverty because there are more important underlying causes which are producing these symptoms, such as poor housing being caused by low income and misdirected priorities, Burkey divides these causes into two: Primary and Secondary causes.

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[27] Uganda has been independent for over 25 years. Most other former colonies have been independent for 10, 25 years. Yet it is still not uncommon to hear politicians and intellectuals pronounce that 'colonialism is the root cause of our poverty'. Burkey (1993:18)

He says that, a primary is one which, on deeper analysis, turns out to be the real origin of the secondary cause and, more importantly, is an entry point for breaking a vicious circle.

A secondary cause is one which, at first glance, appears to be the immediate cause of the symptom. Once we have identified the entry points we can begin to promote local initiatives for breaking the vicious circles. He emphasises that as part of the analysis process, what might seem to be a primary cause may, with closer analysis, be perceived as a secondary cause or even a symptom. Lastly he says that, once the analysis of secondary and primary causes is completed, these lists can be analysed for elements which keep turning up in the lists of primary causes.

3.3.2   *Poverty, Population and the Environment*

According to Nurnberger (1999:20), human beings are creatures that have material needs. They need space, time and energy to exist. They need protection, food rest, clothing, and shelter. The availability of these resources cannot be taken for granted; they must be secured. A lot of people in Malawi have inadequate sanitation, which can contribute to the waterborne diseases; hence there is a need to improve in the supply of water and sanitation in order to reduce the incidence and severity of illnesses that the poor might experience. Most of the families are struggling to get basic needs like food to survive and this is all due to poverty which is one of the serious outcomes of unemployment. Green & Haines (2002:203) observes the fact that, "with millions of people living in poverty in both urban and rural areas, how to reduce poverty has been a difficult conundrum."

According to Nurnberger (Ibid: 76), the link between poverty and population growth is not inevitable, and the growth rates have recently fallen in many less developed countries. Due to the rapidly growing populations, there are a lot of challenges, there is deficit of land, and water and fuel wood in rural areas and to urban areas there is health crises stemming from lack of sanitation and clean water. Urbanization is contributing a lot of negative implications, which is not pleasing to the developing countries like Malawi. There is a need for the church to take deliberate approach in order to help people to be aware of this alarming situation that the communities are experiencing. As people are migrating to the cities there is an increase of population in the cities. In giving a clear picture of how population growth is very dangerous Nurnberger (1999:33) gives two reasons. The reasons are as follows:

1) Unchecked population growth is bound to outstrip the increase in agricultural production. The volume of agricultural production can still be increased, but the rate of growth of food production is slowing down. Numberger (Ibid) also observes that, "if the growth of the population continues to accelerate, the two lines have to intersect sooner or later. Then food surpluses turn into shortages and famine is the result. This has already happened in large parts of Africa."

2) Population growth leads to increased pressure on the land, and this has ecological consequences. Over-populated areas are vulnerable to soil erosion; grazing is depleted; water resources dry up; rivers are polluted; wild animals are eradicated; forests are chopped down. Flood waters are unchecked and cause erosion. Nurnberger (Ibid) adds that, "progressively the natural basis of human survival is destroyed. This impedes production and leads to further want."

Kiema (2010:147) points out that, "it is clear that we need to preserve and conserve our natural resources." In many areas of the developing countries land is being unsustainably overexploited by the existing populations, and urban environment appears to worsen at a faster rate due to additional growing number of residents that is increasing rapidly. Todaro et al (2009:503) observes that, "Though on average, urban dwellers are likely to have higher incomes, the poorest are frequently at greater risk of being exposed to dangerous environmental conditions."

The environment needs to be taking care of, for it is God who has entrusted it to us, as his stewards. Chambers (1997:24) points out that, "this posits a Population-Poverty-Environment (PPE) spiral which has multiple negative causation. Part of this is a negative link between population and the environment. More people causes environmental degradation which in turn causes more poverty and so a larger population. The church can be an effective vehicle in order to sensitize people on how we can eradicate poverty and reduce the urban migrants so that we can have a respectable environment in our country Malawi. In support of this, Green & Haines (2002:204) notes that, "it is the poor who are most affected by environmental degradation. The poor often do not have access to clean water. Many families use coal to heat and cook with, which results in air pollution and high rates of respiratory illnesses."

According to Hall (1990:148) he summarises that, stewardship implies that we are responsible for the whole earth, together responsible for the whole earth, this responsibility includes the nonhuman as well as the human world, this responsibility must seek to express itself in just and merciful political forms, and this responsibility must be exercised in the light not only of the immediate situation but of the near and distant future as well. The church has the responsibility of encouraging human beings to bring change in their communities, and being able to help them (poor) especially those in rural areas to sustain their own lives and not having the desire to go to the cities.

3.4   THE PRESENT CHALLENGES: A MALAWIAN PERSPECTIVE ON POVERTY

Malawi is facing a lot of challenges that are leading to poverty and poor lives of the people living in the country, especially those in the rural areas. Both urban and rural areas are faced with challenges which in one way or another do affect their way of life. People are struggling with the challenges of inadequate housing and lack of formal employment, which lead to most people depending on piecework. Urbanization has brought a lot of negative implications in African countries like Malawi, there is poverty, and pollution, high populations in the cities due to migration of the people from the rural areas, diseases, crimes, HIV/AIDS and many cities are crowded. In support of this, Gillespie (2006:101) further admits the fact that,

> "HIV/AIDS, unlike famine, is a relatively new menace for rural Malawian households. As a 'long-wave' phenomenon, the AIDS pandemic in Sub-Saharan Africa has been unfolding for only 25 years. In 1985, estimated HIV prevalence was 2 percent, rising to 14.2 percent among adults 15-49 years of age at time of our study. The adult prevalence in urban areas of 23 percent contrasts with a prevalence of 12.4 percent in rural Malawi, although the gap between urban and rural prevalence narrowed from a factor of 5 to 2 during the 1990s. HIV-positive rural dwellers now exceed their urban counterparts by approximately three to one. Malawians have had very little time to develop coping mechanisms in response to this burgeoning epidemic. Over the past decade, HIV/AIDS has spread against a backdrop of depeasantization and food shortages, traumatizing communities and overwhelming local economies."

Many people have died of AIDS in Malawi like other African countries. Many people cannot access treatment for HIV/AIDS. In addition to that, Moltmann (1999:94) notes that, "over-population leads to the consumption not only of all the food stuffs, but of the very foundations from which people live." Moltmann (1999:242) continues that, "over-population means more and more 'surplus people' whom nobody wants and nobody needs. Violence

against life is on the increases, even in the name of religion." In commenting about these challenges, Joda-Mbewe (1999:13) notes, "Urban migration breeds poverty and the consequent social erosion, promoting the gap between the rich and poor. Such a scenario favours human exploitation and unjust working conditions."

According to the report of the World Vision Malawi, for many Malawians family life is difficult and sixty five percent of the population lives in poverty. Many people lack access to safe water, and more than a quarter of all Malawians are illiterate.[28] Christian (1999:132) observes that, "A common phenomenon in poverty is the physical isolation of the poor. Most poor communities, especially those of lower castes, are located away from the main road. Often they are far from the market-place, drinking water sources and transport facilities." Shorter (1991:139 in Joda-Mbewe Ibid: 13) notes, "The migrant becomes a non-person, a surplus individual, an illegal and unwanted intruder in the eyes of the affluent established urban dweller. A situation has developed in the cities and towns of Africa that, if it is not apartheid in a racist sense is analogous to the apartheid."

Deeply entrenched poverty is a major obstacle to Malawi's development and growth. The country depends on foreign aid to shore up its weak economy and overcome food shortages. In the past decade, foreign aid in the form of loans and grants amounted to 14 per cent of Malawi's gross domestic product. Emergency aid helps feed poor Malawians, but long-term poverty reduction measures are the key to future development. About 8 million people, or almost 70 per cent of Malawians, live below the national poverty line. More than 90 per cent of them live in rural areas and depend on subsistence farming for their livelihoods. For the poor people of Malawi, poverty often means hunger.[29] Dixon et al (2010:130) points out that, "caring for AIDS widows, orphans and vulnerable children has become a major challenge: helping them rebuild their lives and find start an income-generation activity, with training, support and encouragement from the local church."

Talking about poverty in Malawi is not just creating a story. Many people are struggling even to find food. Life for them is difficult. Sachs (2005:289) observes that, "African's problems, I have come to understand, are specifically difficult but still solvable with practical and proven

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[28] Sourced from http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/sponsor/sponsor-malawi Accessed on 2011-07-01

[29] Sourced from http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/web/guest/country/home/tags/malawi accessed on 2011-June-22

technologies." Poverty is widespread in Malawi, and the majority of Malawians don't even have access to basic needs, to survive as human beings, especially in the rural areas. According to Msangaambe (2011:89), the poverty situation in Malawi is one of the highest in the world with more than half of the total population living below the poverty line. Leonard et al (2010:319) observes,

> "Poverty is a daily issue for many people in our country who worry about how they will feed their children. We must address poverty not as a theoretical or abstract problem-but as the reality seen is the increasing numbers of street-children, beggars and hawkers. Even those with housing find themselves increasingly impoverished, with less and less money left for essentials. Health and education is being taken as a luxury as households are being forced to make the inevitable choice to cover rent and food."

Marc-Ela (1990:175) indicated that, "the countries of Africa are seeking to emerge from poverty by means of program of assistance that will unquestionably only further enslave them." In support of this, O'Donovan (2000:141) emphasises that, "poverty is one of the greatest problems in Africa today. Many cities have large shanty town areas filled with wretchedly poor people who lack many of the essentials basic to human life."

According to Nurnberger (1999:84), in support of this, the poor communities, struggle to satisfy their daily needs. Todaro et al (2009:244) observes that, "developing countries that aim to reduce poverty and excessive inequalities in their distribution of income need to know how best to achieve their aim." As Narayan et al (2007:187) says, "People are falling into poverty in the developing world even as other people escape poverty. There is a hole in the bucket, and this hole needs to be fixed relatively quickly so that people do not continue falling through." The church should take part to help eradicate poverty in Malawi by responding to the people's needs and its response need to be a balanced biblical response to the needs of the community in both rural and urban areas.

The causes of poverty according to the Malawian government as Msangaambe (2011:82) admits as he comes across to the Malawi Government poverty reduction strategy paper (Malawi Government [c] April 2002), that it contains a long list of causes of poverty in Malawi.

Msangaambe (Ibid: 83) mentioned some of these causes. He says that the first probable cause of poverty in Malawi is the lack of modern skills and knowledge that could help in the production of food and other essential products for human life. This is true because many

Malawians lack creativity and they don't have that skill of developing something new on their own. This might also be the reason why people in the rural areas tend to move from their areas to the city looking for a better life. Secondly, the cause of poverty is implicitly present and is considered as one of the main causes of poverty and this is lack of empowerment. This has provoked as to what the Church as a community-based organisation should do in order to empower the people and be sensitized, so that they can be able to sustain themselves especially the marginalized poor. Lastly, the main cause of poverty in Malawi is the lack of good governance.

Malawi as many other developing countries in Africa is encountering a lot of problems like corruption, oppression of poor, exploitation bureaucracy and many more that leads to the poor governance in the country. In addition to this Matheson (2010:23-24) explains that, "when people live day after day, year after year, without the resources to survive or opportunities to change their lives , sometimes it all just gets too much and hope evaporates." Hughes (1998: ix) suggests that, "people are not poor merely because they lack certain things; rather, they are poor because of a complex combination of factors that often cannot be separated from one another." According to the World Bank (1980:70 in Christian 1999:37), this circle of causes and symptoms of poverty is intergenerational, and if human development is a "virtuous circle," then poverty is a "vicious circle that sentences the children of the deprived parents to deprivation themselves. Myers (1999:82) writes,

> "Like our understanding of the nature of poverty, our understanding of the causes of poverty tends to be in the eyes of the beholder. If care is not taken to understand our unwitting biases, our understanding of the causes of poverty tends to be an outworking of our place in the social system, our education, our culture, and our personality. Our understanding of the causes of poverty also depends on where we start looking at poverty, and more important, where we stop looking."

In conclusion Burkey (1993:25) explains that, "once the root causes of poverty are identified then strategies can be developed and priorities set for helping the people to break their vicious circles of poverty and begin their own process of development." Dixon et al. (2010:125) points out that, "there are many problems in societies today."

3.5   URBANIZATION IN MALAWI

According to Chalira (2011:9) in the Malawian newspaper of the daily times, on Monday of April 25, Urbanization refers to an increase in the concentration of population in cities and a

transformation of land use to urban pattern organization.[30] He continues by commenting that, this is not good news at all for developing nations as this trend will stand to haunt their ambitions and aspirations in the quest of developing the welfare of citizens for the better. In support of this Todaro et al (2009:325) says that, "Sub-Saharan Africa is the world's most rapidly urbanizing region, and almost all of this growth has been in slums, where new city residents face overcrowding, inadequate housing, and a lack of water and sanitation." Malawi like other developing countries in the sub-Saharan Africa[31], has witnessed an alarming urban immigration, and this is due to modernisation in cities and the general economic hurdles, coupled with poor pricing of agricultural commodities for peasant farmers. In giving a clear picture of urbanisation Joda-Mbewe (2002:6) comments that, "urbanisation is accompanied by a number of negative implications, such as secularisation, disorientation, poverty, and pollution. Msangaambe (2011:96) writes, "Urbanisation has exposed a good percentage of the national population to modern facilities and viable markets. Small businesses do thrive better in the urban areas than in the rural villages and service jobs do pay better in the towns and cities than in the rural areas." In the Malawian newspaper of the daily times, on Monday of April 25, Davie Chalira (2011:9) writes that,

> "Demographers around the globe are on record to have projected that a 90 percent human population is likely to occur in the developing countries in less than a century from now. Most of these countries in question are in Asia, Africa and South America. It is further argued that almost all the growth will crop up in large cities of these nations."

Urbanisation possess many challenges which require the attention of the church together with government and non-governmental organisation to help conscientize people the dangers of flocking to the cities, instead of staying in the villages. Joda-Mbewe (2002:12) observes that, "urbanization generates acute, diverse problems and challenges."

For instance, in Lilongwe which is the capital city and Blantyre which is the largest commercial city in Malawi, the need to have a dual carriage highway in Lilongwe's Paul Kagame and Blantyre's Chipembere[32] may have come as disguise due to urbanisation

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[30] This definition of Urbanisation was taken from the Malawian newspaper of the daily times, on Monday of April 25, the point of view by Davie Chalira (2011:9)

[31] The term "Sub-Saharan Africa" refers to the African countries found to the south of the Sahara Desert. Msangaambe (2011:87)

[32] Paul Kagame and Chipembere, are the names of the roads in Lilongwe and Blantyre.

problem which has created congestion of traffic in those cities. This also poses environmental challenges as many cars produce fumes that subsequently pollute air. In supporting this Hughes (1998:269) point out that, "most agree that the world's environment is facing problems that will increasingly lead to poverty and suffering among parts of the population: global warming, ozone depletion, acid rain, topsoil erosion, desertification, ground water supply losses and reductions in ecological diversity."

Space and housing is another factor in addition to the traffic woes, and this is not pleasing to note that the surroundings of the two major cities of Malawi, Lilongwe and Blantyre are losing face faster than rehabilitation. O'Donovan (2000:43) agrees, "Shanty towns commonly spring up as people move to the cities without the means to build or purchase adequate housing. Shanty towns are notorious for environmental pollution, sickness and diseases which accompany such pollution." In support of this in the Malawian newspaper of the daily times, which was produced on Monday of April 25, Davie Chalira (2011:9) observes that, "there are many illegal building structures which have been put up to act as dwelling for urban immigrants, and there is also a large number street kids which has contributed due to movement of many poor families to town."

O'Donovan (2000:43) observes that, "cities are major sources of environmental pollution-from factory smoke, motor vehicle exhaust gases, uncollected garbage, improper or non-existent sanitation and waste disposal, open sewers and general filth. All these present major health hazards." These problems are echoed by Hughes (1998: 269) who observes that, "Many of the problems faced by cities are caused not by population growth, but by large-scale migration from rural to urban contexts. Since many migrants are of childbearing age there will be a rapid increase in population, despite the tendency in cities to have smaller families."

Due to the general unhygienic conditions caused by poor waste disposal including sewer, health wise there is even more danger to people living in the areas. In addition to that, many dwellers hardly own a toilet and end up relieving themselves in nearby bushes if any or along the river banks, which is really dangerous to human beings. Tienda et al (2006:310) notes that,

> "The need to look at social networks and context is particularly pertinent when considering the relation between migration and health in the context of the AIDS epidemic in southern

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Africa. Migration status has been shown to increase the risk of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections."

Nurnberger (1999:108) affirms that, "those who migrate to the cities often end up in slums, where they are exposed to polluted air and water, unhygienic living conditions, noise, filth, lack of living space, delinquency and crime." When migrating from rural to urban, people migrate with poverty and bad things. Hence, there are a lot of problems in the cities, like unemployment, shortage of land housing, high crime rate, and even high prevalence of HIV/AIDS among the people. O'Donovan (2000:58) observes that,

> "Young people come to the cities wanting to escape the hard work of the farm and the boredom of a predictable traditional life. They expect to find a good job, a good salary, new friends and the physical benefits of city life. Instead, what they often find is a poor job or no job at all, no true friends, no familiar life and the indifference or even hostility of other people."

However, it remains with the church and others like government and non-governmental organisations to reinforce or devise appropriate policies towards lowering population growth and make sure that social amenities are available including in rural areas. If the church as a community-based organisation take a deliberate part in responding to community challenges in light of the problem of urbanization there can be a positive impact on people's lives both in rural and urban settings.

In conclusion, the growth of urbanization is due to migration of people from rural to urban areas and this process can be slow or rapid. People do migrate to the cities in order to search for employment and other opportunities due to poverty. Rural areas need to be improved and people living in these areas needs to be helped on how they can sustain their own lives in the rural areas. Mbewe (2002:6 in Msangaambe 2011:96) concludes that, "This situation creates and prepares an opportunity for a holistic hermeneutic practical approach to urban ministry." In support of this Msangaambe (Ibid: 96-97) point out that, "This is a call for the Church to be on the alert to address urbanisation as an opportunity to do effective ministry....the Church should not leave the urbanization challenges to only town planners and politicians."

3.5.1   Periphery-Centre (Rural-Urban) Migration and its challenges

Todaro et al. (2009:343) admits that, "the most important type of migration from the standpoint of long-run development is rural-urban migration, but a great deal of rural-rural,

urban-urban, and even urban-rural migration also takes place." Nurnberger (1999:20) has suggested that, "in the centre, population numbers are low but the impact per person is high; in the periphery, the impact per person is low, but numbers are high" Urbanization is leading to rapid demographic changes. Due to urbanization there is a very great deterioration of the possibilities for employment in most urban centres.

In addition to this, Todaro et al. (Ibid: 343) emphasises the fact that, "Rural-urban migration is most important because the population share of cities is growing, despite the fact that fertility is much lower in urban areas, and the difference is accounted for by rural-urban migration." He continues by adding that, urban-rural migration is important to understand because it usually occurs when hard times in cities coincide with increases in output prices from the country's cash crops. As Nurnberger (Ibid: 106) argues that,

> "In many instances, rural areas have reached their carrying capacity and population growth leads to increasing poverty. The result is migration to the cities. Under urban-industrial circumstances, large families have become an economic handicap. To feed a large family both parents have to seek employment. The children are insufficiently cared for."

In Malawi rural-urban migration is one of the major factors of fast growth of cities and these movements have reduced the sizes of families in the rural areas. According to Todaro et al. (Ibid: 321) he observes that urbanization is happening every-where in the world, although at differing rates. In addition to this Simon (1995:101) says that, "Urban migrants expect an adequate level of facilities to enable them to establish income-generating activities." Hence there is a high rate of people migrating to urban, and this deteriorates the life in the cities.

In adding to this challenge of rural-urban migration, Todaro et al. (Ibid: 342) point out that,

> "Migration worsens rural-urban structural imbalances in two direct ways. First, on the supply side, internal migration disproportionately increases the growth rate of urban job seekers relative to urban population growth, which itself is at historically unprecedented levels, because of the high proportion of well-educated young people in the migrant system. Their presence tends to swell the urban labour supply while depleting the rural countryside of valuable human capital. Second, on the demand side, urban job creation is generally more difficult and costly to accomplish than rural job creation because of the need for substantial complementary resource inputs for most jobs in the industrial sector. Moreover, the pressures of rising urban wages and compulsory employee fringe benefits in combination with the unavailability of appropriate, more labour-intensive production technologies mean that a rising share of modern-sector output growth is accounted for by increases in labour productivity."

In giving a comparison between the periphery (rural) and centre (urban), Nurnberger (1999:112) gives a clear picture that, in the centre the situation is more conducive to the development of initiative than the periphery. Life in the periphery is quiet; whilst in the centre it is hectic. In the periphery social relations are more important than progress; in the centre competition forces people to outperform others. In the periphery initiative is viewed with suspicion; in the centre it is rewarded with success and prestige. People with zeal do not find fulfilment in the periphery, hence they move to the centres where they develop their gifts. Those who remain in the periphery are no longer challenged to excel. Periphery-Centre is also being experienced in Malawi, where in the city sounds far more exciting than in the rural settings.

People need to learn how dangerous it is for urban areas to be highly populated and they need to learn to identify problems and find solutions in order to make improvements in their own communities. This can help to reduce the rapid growth of population in the cities. Nurnberger (Ibid: 386) has come to observe that, "in the periphery the main problems are population growth, ecological deterioration and a level of production which cannot cope with the needs of a growing population." In continuation of his observation Nurnberger (Ibid: 387) also find out that, "in the centre the problem is the growth of productive capacity beyond reasonable needs, the resultant artificially induced growth of demand, and the impact of growing throughput on the resource base and the natural environment."

3.5.2   The causes and effects of urbanization

The high percentage of people migrating from rural to urban areas in Malawi brings a lot of pressure on urban resources. For instance, this rapid urbanization can come due to lack of social infrastructure in rural areas, lack of quality education in rural, high productivity of agriculture products which forces people to search for the source of market. Due to this growth of urbanization in the cities there is poor housing which is due to the development of unhealthy squatter settlements. There is also unemployment, high crime rate and overcrowding in schools, hospitals e.t.c. Chilimampunga (1996:16 in Joda-Mbewe 2002:14) adds that, "Malawians migrate from rural to urban areas to seek education, employment, and other social services."

In order for these people to meet their daily basic needs some ends up in doing drugs and substance abuse, having unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted Infection/diseases

(STIs)[33] and even being infected by HIV/AIDS. As people move from rural areas to urban areas there can be a lot of problems in the cities. Todaro et al (2009:349) observes that, "high rates of urban unemployment are therefore inevitable outcomes of the serious imbalance of economic opportunities between urban and rural areas in most underdeveloped countries." There can be over population in the urban areas and to provide an adequate social service in order to meet the demands of the increasing population in the cities can be difficult. Joda-Mbewe (2002:10) points out that "Malawians who live in the face the challenges of in adequate housing and a lack of employment to generate an income. As a result, most people depend on piece-work, working once or twice a week."

In emphasising that people are moving from their villages/rural (periphery) to urban (centre) areas, in Malawi, Msangaambe (2011:95) says that some reasons for the growth of urbanization can be:

I.   People want a better life in which they can meet their basic daily needs through employment and business.

II.   Some may be escaping from socio-relational problems common in the villages due to a scarcity of resources, such as land.

III.   Some are just looking for a way to make easy money in towns, so that they can invest it in the rural areas.

IV.   The failure of the government and other stakeholders to develop the people in their rural contexts.

In support of this O'Donovan (2000:45) gives a clear picture as to how cities are experiencing a lot of problems dues to the high percentage of people flocking to it leaving rural areas and concentrate in the cities, therefore; he writes,

> "Many of the problems mentioned so far result from overcrowding in the cities. There are too many people and not enough jobs. There are too many people and not enough housing. There are too many people producing too much garbage and trash. There are too many people and too few sanitation and waste disposal systems to care for their needs. There are too many people and not enough schools. There are too many people and not enough water. There are too many taxis, buses and Lorries, so there is too much traffic congestion and too much air pollution. There are too many people and too few health services. There are just too many people in the cities."

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[33] According to Coleman et al (2009:6) "This is an infection that is passed from one person to another during unprotected sex."

Todaro et al. (2009:322) warns that, "the most rapid urbanization in now occurring Asia and Africa; well before 2030, more than half of all people in these regions will live in urban areas." Yet this is not a pleasing report at all for developing nations, as this will just complicate things and more problems can occur.

3.5.3 Urbanizing rural areas

Todaro et al (2009:352) point out that, "every effort must be made to broaden the economic base of the rural economy. The present unnecessary economic incentives for rural-urban migration must be minimized through creative and well-designed programs of integration rural development." Nurnberger (1999:109-110) submits that, "Geographically, a rural periphery has usually more space at its disposal than the centre because, in comparison with other factors of production, there is a lot of land." In support of this Todaro et al (Ibid: 486) says that, "rapid growing populations have led to land, water, and fuel wood shortages in rural areas and to urban health crises stemming from lack of sanitation and clean water."

If the church can realize the factors that are forcing people to migrate to the cities then it can effectively deal with the main problem. Many people are looking for the opportunities that they think they will find it in the cities, and the circumstances are forcing people to move to the cities. The church needs to help in unlocking the people's awareness in the rural areas so that they can come to understand how important it is for them to stay in the rural and be able to sustain themselves for the betterment of their own lives. The church must respond to the specific needs of the people living in the rural areas and it is vital that these needs are thoroughly understood prior to the church. People need to be motivated, and if they see that the change will be for their benefit they will be willing to change.

There are a lot of circumstances that are pushing people to move to town, and some of the things are: people in the rural areas struggle to find their basic needs, source of money, and there is a low standard of education and no good roads. These people want to see that rural areas are developing, and that what they follow in the city is available in the rural, hence it is the task of the church to conscientize these people that it is they themselves who can bring change in their communities.

The church should go to the roots of people's ignorance by totally restructuring living conditions in their society. Life in the city is often difficult compared to that of the rural areas. It is important that the church initiate the change in the people's lives so that they can

live a better life in their communities. Poku (2005:101) point out that, "Agriculture continues to be the primary source of home food consumption and income for those people." Rural livelihood has an impact that most people in Malawi continue to live in, and it has a strong connection to rural areas. According to the 2007 IFAD on Rural Poverty in Msangaambe (2011:89), the Regions which has the highest level of poverty is in the Southern, followed by the Central, then the Northern Regions, and more people are found in the rural than in the urban areas of Malawi. This implies that it is of vital importance to try to urbanize the rural so that high rate of the people who are leaving the rural and migrating to urban areas should be minimized, and the church cannot detached from responding to the people's needs, it is the right vehicle to bring change in the community.

3.6   HIV/AIDS IN MALAWIAN PERSPECTIVE

Malawi as one of the developing countries in the world is facing a lot of challenges; HIV/AIDS[34] is one of the challenges. Msangaambe (2011:91) adds that, "poverty and HIV/AIDS have become interrelated problems in Malawi and the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. This means that the poverty situation has contributed to the rise of HIV/AIDS and, on the other hand, HIV/AIDS has promoted the intensity of poverty in Malawi." Poku (2005:51) admits that, "across the African continent, HIV/AIDS is savagely cutting life expectancy, which is now about twenty years less than it would have be without the epidemic, and below forty years in some countries."

People who are living with the virus are considered as outcasts, segregated in working places and in the communities, this pandemic is sweeping capable and potential leaders to develop the nation, quite a number of people are still struggling to survive with this pandemic. Due to HIV/AIDS, the death rate at which people are dying is quite high. Mash et al (2009:3) echoes

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[34] In defining HIV/AIDS Coleman et al (2009:6) defines HIV as "a virus that has spread all around the world. All countries are affected by this disease. It is also called a pandemic." Coleman et al (2009:7) also defines AIDS as "when HIV is in our bodies, attacking our cells and growing stronger, our bodies get weaker and we then get AIDS. This is a slow process and can take up to 10 years. Almost people with HIV will get AIDS." Finally Coleman et al (2009:6-7) gives the meaning of HIV as Human Immune-deficiency Virus and AIDS as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.   Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, (HIV/AIDS) can be contracted with anyone, even a child, and there are many ways that one can contract this disease. According to Poku (2005:52), "the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a retrovirus transmitted primarily through sexual intercourse, but also through infected blood and from mother to newborn child."

that, "since the beginning of the pandemic, more than 15 million Africans have died from AIDS. ..... The consequences of HIV are often most severe in the poorest sectors of society. A poor family who is coping with a member who is sick with HIV cannot cope with the medical costs." In support of this Joda-Mbewe (2002:114) emphasises that,

> "The most urgent and pressing problem that the Church in Africa faces is the AIDS pandemic. Not a single household, congregation, office, or community in Malawi is unaffected by this deadly tragedy, as is the case in Southern Africa. City congregations in Lilongwe are also struggling with this challenge, as middle-aged people with potential are dying, leaving their children without anyone to care for them."

There is a need for the church to help support people living with HIV/AIDS physically, emotionally as well as showing it through sympathy. The church should clearly articulate its sympathy and solidarity with all HIV/AIDS victim, and demonstrate love to them. In order to clarify how Poverty and HIV/AIDS have become interrelated problems in Malawi and the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, Msangaambe (2011:92) gives a clear picture of this, and it is the following points:

1) Because of poverty, unprotected "commercial sex" has grown, as many women indulge in casual sex to finance their needs. This includes the promotion of child prostitution.

2) Because of poverty, many people have no access to good health facilities to check their HIV status regularly; therefore, HIV/AIDS has continued to grow in silence.

3) Because of poverty, people do not have easy access to good food and ARVs[35], although they know that they are HIV positive, and

4) Because of HIV/AIDS, the society has lost skilled and potential bread-winners and leaves many too weak to fight poverty.

5) Because of HIV/AIDS, people are spending much on essential drugs and highly balanced food to lengthen their lives.

In conclusion, in order to address this challenge to the people especially those people in Malawi, Joda-Mbewe (2002:123) says that, "Christians must commit themselves to organize

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[35] Tutu (2011: xxvii) defines Antiretrovirals (ARVs) as "Medication used to kill HIV. In combination it can be used to treat and prevent HIV infection."

people to address poverty and AIDS-related suffering in the various Southern African communities. The Church in Southern Africa should work hard in order to save the lives of many orphans whose parents have died as a result of the disease." Mash et al (2009:13) point out that, "in more recent times, and especially in Africa, churches have responded to the challenge in many ways. This is seen in the increased care of HIV positive people and orphans that is supported by churches."

According to Mhobo (2009:7), the church is facing great challenges today, with poverty being just one of many issues it faces today. Hendricks (2004:71), further affirms this by pointing out that, "at present poverty, corruption and HIV/AIDS are serious problems all over Africa ..." According to Brown (2005:146), the church as a whole was slow to address the problem of HIV/AIDS, because of its association with sinful activity, and as it became more and more apparent that AIDS was affecting the entire population, including the congregations of the CCAP, church leaders began looking for ways to attend to it. Often time in the rural there are few other services and the church are located in all areas, including rural areas, it has the potential to make a very positive impact in these areas. The church can help to bring an impact on the lessening of HIV transmission and be able to care for those who are infected and affected with this disease.

The church can play a unique role, for it has been called by God to do His mission here on earth. As Brown (2004:104) observes that, "Some churches, such as the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP in Malawi) have realized their error in ignoring this issue until it has become a pandemic and instead of crying over the spilt milk, they have opted to move forward in a positive, proactive way."[36] In presenting what the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Malawi has said on their response to the challenge of HIV/AIDS, Mash et al (2009:14) presents the 'Chongoni declaration of the Nkhoma Synod' in 2000, as follows:

> "We do hereby declare that we as a Church confess and repent before Almighty God that we have not obeyed His Word. We have not been fully involved in addressing the HIV/AIDS

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[36] According to Brown (2004:104), she observed this as one of the resultant effects of this change of mindset in a document that the Nkhoma Synod CCAP issued called 'the Chongoni Declaration of the Nkhoma Synod'. She observed this in a copy of the Chongoni Declaration document which was provided by Rev. Dr. Hennie van Deventer, Principle of Nifcott (Nkhoma Institute for Continuous Theological Training), PO Box 38, Nkhoma Malawi. She observed in

crisis. We ask for God's forgiveness, and from now onwards we will take a stand of prevention, care and support."

According to Dixon et al (2010:128), in many countries you will find churches at the very forefront of HIV care and prevention. Churches are doing this in the same tradition of compassionate, professional healthcare and education that established so many tens of thousands of hospitals, clinics and schools across Africa and Asia over the last 100 years.

3.7   CONCLUSION

In understanding poverty, the views of Stan Burkey, Bryant Myers and Jayakumar Christian, have been taken into account. Poverty in Malawi makes human beings at its centre to suffer. Due to this, understanding poverty is of vital importance as it worsens people's situations that many do live in uneasiness. In support of this, Msangaambe (2011:101) emphasises the fact that, "it ultimately becomes clear that poverty is not a mere contextual reality in Malawi, but is one of the main challenges to the Church today. As if poverty was not enough, HIV/AIDS has also become another giant threat to the Church in sub-Saharan Africa." Due to the challenges in Malawi the number of people migrating to towns is increasing, many people are escaping from poverty side going to the places where they think they will find life easier than in the rural areas.

Basu (2005:242) admits that, "while the state governments are doing what they can about AIDS; the Church has a vital role to play in creating spiritual awareness, as well as addressing the moral dilemmas that present themselves in different cultures and nations." The church has a big role to the communities in Malawi, to bring comfort and hope to the suffering in order to live a better life, despite the challenges that this country is facing that is leading to poverty and poor lives of the people. Brown (2004:106) has pointed out that,

> "HIV/AIDS concerns impacting the church in general, as well as the particular struggles affecting the Malawian church serve to emphasize the continuing need for the church to take necessary measures to work within the framework of her mission to respond in appositive way to these issues."

The country needs to be developed into a comfortable place where people will be able to meet their daily basic needs in order to survive. The number of people flocking to the cities can be minimized if the Church also takes a deliberate part in helping them to be aware of the importance of staying in the rural areas. In rural areas people need to be helped so that they can have skills and knowledge of how they can sustain themselves.

People can be willing to change if only they see that the change is for their own benefits, therefore the Church should help to bring this awareness to the people. Urbanization is a big challenge in Malawi, and there is a need of the church to help so that the factors that forces people to leave rural areas can be tackled. If the church could take a special attention to these challenges that the country of Malawi is facing poverty can be reduced.

According to Basu (2005:242) points out that, "the Church also has the responsibility of caring for the AIDS infected people, who are ostracized and despised." In support of this, Leonard et al (2010:327) adds that, "the church must also take the lead in urging care and love for those who are already living with HIV/AIDS, ensuring that they are not ostracized in the workplace, the home, or the community. They are all ill and should not be condemned for their suffering." Dixon et al. (2010:128) observes that, "Churches are not only providing loving support for those affected by HIV, and saving lives, but are also challenging oppression and fighting injustice, victimisation, prejudice and rejection."

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the church's role in sustainable development, and from several angles the terms, 'sustainable development', 'development', community development' has been defined and discussed in it. It is important to see whether the church have any role to participate in sustainable local and national engage in transformative accomplish, in addressing local and national poverty that the developing countries like Malawi encounter.

It is argued in this chapter that the church as a community-based organisation can be an effective vehicle for community development. As August (2010:51) argues that, "... the Church can be a valued catalyst for community development within the social development paradigm due to its incarnational nature, which is complimentary to the people-centered social development paradigm." The church has a huge role to play in conscientizing the people in the society, and help them live a better life in a community. In support of this Msangaambe (2011:263) argues that,

> "The participation of the church in development is a way of reflecting God's reign in the world. As such, it serves the world as part of its mission while pursuing the quest to discover God's intention in his created world. The nature of the serving church is derived from God's being. In his reign, He creates, sustains and serves his creation."

4.2   CHURCH AND SOCIETY

According to Msangaambe (2011:158), the church needs to exercise its faithfulness and trustworthiness in its delivery of diaconal responsibilities. Even more, the church must be sensitive to what the society learns from it. The keyword for a mutual working relationship is trust in any setting between church and society. August (2009:227) The Church is sent by its Lord into the world under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to "make disciples", "baptizing and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt. 28:19-20) According to Moltmann (1999:135), knowledge and community are mutually related. In order to arrive at community with one another we have to know one another, and in order to know one another we have to come closer to one another, make contact with one another, and form relationships. August (Ibid: 229) The Church has to understand and educate its members about the systemic causes of poverty if it wants to challenge and transform poverty. Without

knowledge there is no community and without community there is no knowledge. Moltmann (1999:67) notes that,

> "Consequently the fear that the disabled, the old and the 'useless' are running into serious danger in our society can no longer be dismissed out of hand. Consequently the rich and the better off live in 'gated communities', in secure areas, and the other districts sink into slums, which is what we see happening in South Africa at the moment."

4.2.1 The calling of the church

The church has been called to serve the triune God, and it needs to participate in sustainable development which reflects God's reign in the world, for it has the nature of serving God. In support of this, Msangaambe (2011:263) argues that, "when the church is involved in development at both local and national level, it demonstrates its missional calling to serve the Triune God and his creation." Leonard et al (2010:356) emphasises the fact that "the mission of the Church is prophetic, to speak the Word of God courageously, honestly and lovingly in the local context and in the midst of daily events."

As mentioned earlier in chapter two when talking about the church contribution to the community, that the church has been sent by God and that the church and mission belongs together, the church indeed is called to the society. In defining the term 'Mission' Bosch (1991:1) articulates that, "the term 'mission' presupposes a sender, a person or persons sent by the sender, those to whom one is sent, and an assignment." It is God who is the real sender and the authority has been vested in the church or in a mission society, or even in a Christian potentate. It is the Mission of God 'Missio Dei'[37].

Bevans & Schroeder (2004:288-289) points out that, "God's very nature therefore, is missionary ..... The church's missionary nature derives from its participation in this over flowing Trinitarian life." In support of this Bosch (Ibid: 10) admits that, "Missio Dei enunciates the good news that God is a God-for-people." God is a missionary God. Gelder & Zscheile (2011:32-33) points out the fact that, "the understanding of church as missionary by nature stems from realizing that God is missionary in God's every being. If the church is missionary by nature, then participating in God's mission is the responsibility of the whole church, involving all of God's people."

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[37] The Missio Dei has always been the gospel, good news about God's goodness revealed in God's Word through Israel's experience, leading up to it climax and culmination in Jesus Christ. .... The Father sends the Son. Bevans & Schroeder (2004:294)

The church cannot separate itself from community development, and it cannot be detached from the state. It must work hand in hand, in order to develop the communities especially the rural areas where many people are suffering a lot. The church has been called to do God's mission to the community by serving the needs of the community and responding to God's call, as the mission that it has been given to do in the world. Msangaambe (2011:263) emphasises the fact that, "the church has a theological mandate to serve God's created world." According to Bosch (1991:10), 'Missio Dei' is God's involvement in and with the world, and it is the proclamation of the good news of God.

4.2.1.1   *The church as a community of stewardship*

The term 'steward'[38] according to Hall (1990:32) refers to one who has been given the responsibility for the management and service of something belonging to another, and his office presupposes a particular kind of trust on the part of the owner or master. The church as a community faith based organisation has been given a responsibility here on earth to take care of the people in the communities especially the marginalized poor. It has to see to it that it is managing properly of what it has been entrusted to take care of and make sure that the marginalized poor in the rural areas are being helped in meeting their daily basic needs as part of stewardship.

According to Hall (Ibid: 41), the Greek word of 'steward' is '*oikonomos*' and "stewardship" is '*oikonomia*', the '*oikonomos*' has responsibility for planning and administrating (putting into order, or *nomos*) the affairs of a household (*oikos*), whilst '*oikonomia*' has a significant part of Christian stewardship, it suggests that it is economics (*oikonomia*) which is more than the term regularly connotes in our vocabulary today. Stewardship has not only to do with money budgeting, and finances, but with the whole ordering of our life, our corporate deployment of God's varied grace in the daily life of the world. Church has a responsibility of taking care of the community as a steward to what God has entrusted to it. In support of this, Samuel & Sugden et al. (1987:225) admits that, "the Church and Christian Organisations are responsible for managing the resources available for ministry according to moral

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[38] The English word "steward" began to appear in manuscripts in the eleventh century. Originally, the word was not "steward" but *stigweard*, *stig* probably referring to a house or some part of a house or building, and *werd* (later, ward) meaning of course "warden" or "keeper." The first meaning offered by the Oxford English Dictionary is this: "An official who controls the domestic affairs of a household, supervising the service of his master's table, directing the domestics and regulation household expenditure; a major-demo." The dictionary also notes that the word came to be associated in particular with royal households. Hall (1990:40)

standards and is such a way as to respond to the felt needs of the most marginal, non-developed segment of society."

Leonard et al. (2010:315) "we must prevent wastage of resources and learn to practice stewardship, in which all people can have adequate access to land and water. People with privileged access to these and other resources have a responsibility to set a lead in careful use, reduced consumption and recycling." According to Onwubiko (2001:356) the church by nature is a community and is by her mission community-building. In addition to this, Hall (1990:45) observes that, "the church is a stewarding community".

4.2.2 The church's task concerning the poor

Moltmann (1999:154) observes that, "the rich live in gated communities-in a gilded prison; the poor vegetate in the slums and ghettos and in prisons of iron. Is there a social contract between rich and poor?" Bosch (1991:3-4) points out that,

> "More than ever before we are today aware of the fact that the world is divided-apparently irreversibly-between the rich and the poor and that, by and large, the rich are those who consider themselves (or are considered by the poor) to be Christians. In addition, and according to most indicators, the rich are still getting richer and the poor poorer. This circumstance creates on the one hand, anger and frustration among the poor and, on the other, reluctance among affluent Christians to share their faith."

Joda-Mbewe (2002:171) notes that, "the task of the Church is to support the poor by advocating the situation of the poor to the rich, and to join with the poor in addressing the forces that are exploiting their community." In support of this, Leonard et al. (2010:303) admits the fact that, "This gap must be a major concern for all Christians. The church is concerned about all people but it has a special concern for the poor and downtrodden, the victims of society." This is further clarified by August (2010:47) who argues the fact that, "being involved in (community-) development by serving the poor is not an option in terms of Christian doctrine, but it is a biblical injunction." Linthicum (1991:10 in Joda-Mbewe 2002:172) emphasises that,

> "Poverty is not so much the absence of good as it is the absence of power-the capability of being able to change one's situation. It is because one is already severely limited in what he or she can do to change one's plight that one becomes impoverished. Marginalization, exploitation and oppression are not simply results of poverty, but its primary causes."

The church must be concerned with the material and spiritual well-being of people as they live their day-to-day life, and help those people, especially the marginalized poor to meet

their basic needs. The church has been given the task to take care of the community, and it needs to place itself with the poor in taking the responsibility of identifying and dealing with the forces that are destroying the communities, in order to bring change. The gap between the rich and the poor is increasing rapidly in developing countries like Malawi. Leonard et al. (2010:303) adds that, "human beings are stewards of creation rather than its owners." Joda-Mbewe (2002:13) observes that, "urban migration breeds poverty and the consequent social erosion, promoting the gap between rich and poor. Such a scenario favours human exploitation and unjust working conditions."

4.2.3   How the church should respond to the challenge

According to Leonard et al. (2010:302), the church must care for those who are being marginalised and exploited by the policies of the powerful. It must focus on viable policies and oppose exploitation and corruption wherever it is found. Marc-Ela (1990:63) adds that, "we must respond to the needs of our communities through innovation. Our churches must always move in the direction of creation. Our task is not to administer the institutions of Christianity but to advance the future. Everything is yet to be done, and nothing is decided in advance." Msangaambe (2011:173) admits that,

> "The church should respond to the challenges of its environment with a theologically informed and hermeneutically sensitive vocation. Eventually, the social challenges that confront the church become its opportunity to make a difference and, as such, reflect the reign of God."

The church can help and respond to the people's human needs, and reach to the roots of people's ignorance, and restructure the living conditions in the rural areas. According Joda-Mbewe (2002:277), the church, in this situation, must once again become a wellspring of the experience of community within the world it serves, being the community of God, and the community for others, it is a living community witnessing to God's love and forgiveness for all; this is the central theme of the service of our worship. Nurnberger (1999:445) emphasises that, "Churches and NGOs can become the voices of the poor, expose corruption and inequitable structures, and challenge the state, the private and sector and even the beneficiaries of development to their moral obligations."

4.3   SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEFINED

According to an article 9 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948-66), states that all people 'should promote sustainable development all over the world to assure dignity, freedom, security and justice for all people'. The term "sustainable development" was popularized in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development. It refers to a systematic approach to achieving human development in a way that sustains planetary resources, based on the recognition that human consumption is occurring at a rate that is beyond Earth's capacity to support it. Population growth and the developmental pressures spawned by an unequal distribution of wealth are two major driving forces that are altering the planet in ways that threaten the long-term health of humans and other species on the planet.[39] Baker (2006:18) adds the fact that,

> "The term 'Sustainable Development' came into the public arena in 1980 when the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources presented the World Conservation Strategy. It aimed at achieving sustainable development through the conservation of living resources."

In support of this, the National Strategies for Sustainable Development (2000) cited in Mawhinney (2002:3) defines sustainable development as, "economic and social development that meet the needs of current generation without undermining the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." According to Mawhinney (2002:5), the key elements of this definition are intergenerational legacy and the need to limit development to only that which is a necessity. It avoids passing problems onto the future and avoids wasting resources.

4.3.1   Church and sustainable development its role

According to Bevans & Schroeder (2004:314), the church is concerned not with itself, but with the world and the future God is working out within it; missionary activity, therefore, needs to strengthen and develop Christian communities 'so that they may become progressive examples of, and forces for, human dignity in their societies. The church has a unique role to play in sustainable development, of which it needs to participate in development.

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[39] Sustainable Development: Definition from Answers.com, http://www.answers.com/topic/sustainable-development Accessed on 06 August 2011

4.3.2   Sustainability

According to August (2010:12), although sustainable development means development that can be sustained for an indefinite period of time, the term has acquired a more comprehensive connotation that should be distinguished from sustained economic growth. The term sustainability can be defined in different ways. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development report 1987 which said to be the known definition of 'Sustainable Development', cited in Davids et al. (2009:22), 'Sustainable Development' is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

According to him (ibid.), it means that sustainable development can be sustained in the long run without adversely affecting the natural environment. August (2010:12) emphasises the fact that, "sustainable development is thus a slow-moving and never-ending process that involves many stages." According to Malunda et al. (2009:14), sustainable development focuses on improving the quality of life for all the people on earth without increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply them indefinitely. It is important to utilize resources such as raw materials for development such as land, water, energy and minerals, as well as through the provision of acceptable living conditions for the people.

4.3.3   Rural sustainability: a sustainable development in rural areas

Msangaambe (2011:177) notes that, "sustainability is considered central, as the development process meets the community's present needs without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." In support of this Repetto (1986:15 in August 1999:27) defines sustainable development as,

> "... a developmental strategy that manages all assets, natural resources, and human resources, as well as financial and physical assets, for increasing long-term wealth and well-being. Sustainable development, as a goal rejects policies and practices that support current living standards by depleting the productive base ..."

According to Burkey (1993: xvii) he realises that all too many development professionals unconsciously believe that rural development will be achieved through the efforts of governments and development agencies, but he (ibid) emphasises that, these development professionals do not reflect on the possibility that sustainable rural development will only be achieved through the efforts of the rural people themselves, working for the benefit of

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themselves, their families and, hopefully, their communities. Governments and agencies can assist this process, but they cannot do it themselves. This does also implies to the church as a community based organisation that it needs to conscientize the people in order to bring change and a sustainable development in the rural communities. There is a need for an adequate and sustainable rate of economic and social development in order to eliminate poverty in Malawi.

Duchrow (1995:127) admits that, "there is an indisputable continuum in the history of all societies in that people have to find a means to sustain their lives." Leonard et al (2010:308) emphasises that, "employment creation is essential" The Church should help in satisfying the basic needs of people in the community especially those situated in the rural areas, and maintain the natural conditions for life, especially for future generations.

Sustainable development is important in developing process because it can help reduce problems that the people in the rural areas are facing, issues such as the eradication of poverty. If this can be achieved, it can help to reduce rural-urban migration which has negative effect on the nation. Sustainable development is important to development in the sense that it considers nation resources as one of the factors that lead to economic growth and development; this includes things like, land, water air and wild life.

4.3.4   Sustainable development in developing countries like Malawi

According to Msangaambe (2011:177), generally, the field of sustainable development is approached in environmental, economic and social-political constituent parts and while placing people as a focus in development, sustainability should be attached more to the community than to mere systems. Leonard et al (2010:315) observes that, "Urban areas suffer from particular types of environmental pollution, such as the careless disposal of sewage and industrial waste and the unrestrained emission of noxious fumes and gases from industrial plants and motor vehicles. Increased environmental pollution threatens the health of all." August (2010:12) declares that, "in essence, sustainability deals with the continuous flow of benefits." Leonard et al (2010:222) points out that, "urban poverty is the most fertile source of crime, disease and instability in any country." Duchrow (1995:110) observes that, "The development regions are turning into areas of risk. The 'Third World' is no longer regarded in terms of development, but in terms of security."

According to Malunda et al. (2009:21), sustainable development is good from the social, economic, and environmental perspectives. It helps in checking population grown by improving the quality of life of human beings. Quality of life is a key to stabilizing population and achieving sustainability. Sustainable development does not replace all previous ideas on development, but it provides us with a new umbrella for development thought with new and sometimes radically different questions and answers, what matters most is the way we approach this challenge. In giving a proper understanding of this term 'Sustainable Development' we can conclude that, it aims at reducing the absolute poverty of the world's poor by providing lasting and secure livelihoods that minimizes resource depletion, environmental degradation, cultural disruption and social instability.

4.4   CHURCH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The church has been given a task in this world to bless the poor for it is visible in the community. It has to realize that it needs to help the poor holistically, and it should not be limited in its work, but extended to even beyond its limit. The church should help in eliminating poverty in developing countries like Malawi. Its concern for the poor should be put into action by blessing them. A lot of people in Malawi like other poor countries, especially in the rural settings, do not have adequate food supply, clothing, shelter, medical care or education. The church needs to care for these poor people as its fundamental task in world. According to Hughes (1998:2), the humanist have put a lot of effort and resources in helping people to live a good life, and the term that they use to describe the process of change required in order to eliminate poverty is "development".

4.4.1   Development defined

The term 'Development' is complex and it is not easy to get the meaning of it, many scholars have defined it differently. Many people understand development in terms of material change or having more things in life. In support of this Davids et al. (2009:2) argues that, "...development is a concept that has different meanings to different people-its meaning is informed by contextual issues such as past and present experiences, circumstances, perceptions, values and beliefs."

This term 'Development' is widely misunderstood; more efforts have been made, in order to bring about development especially in the third world countries like Malawi. Unfortunately, many regions in Malawi and many other developing countries still remains undeveloped with

a lot of people living in poverty affected by diseases, hunger, war, corruption, political instability, lack of housing and many more problems. Therefore, this situation has raised a lot of questions as to what development is, as it means different to different people, as a results people defines development differently. In support of this, Mhobo (2009:22) observes that,

> "The term 'Development' has been seen as an effective tool to reach the marginalised in the community. When we talk about development, certainly there should be a relationship to one another, to love one another, respect one another, share stories with one another, and care for one another, but the bottom line development should centre around people"

However, Msangaambe (2011:173) emphasises the fact that, "nevertheless, the underscoring point is straightforward and clear in the sense that all ideas on development point to change and transformation within individuals and communities." To further support this, Hettne (1982 in Burkey (1993:34) admits that, "development concerns people, it affects their way of life and is influenced by their conceptions of good life, as determined by their cultures." Development should be seen as a multi-dimension which involves the shift or movement of society from a level that is considered as unsatisfactory to the level that offers a better life or good life to the people. August (2011:29) further affirms this by pointing out that,

> "The term 'development' has had many different connotations and given rise to many different schools of development thought over the 20th century in attempts to 'fine tune' the concept, which has led to a growing interest in the term 'transformation' and post-development theorists' call to abandon the term 'development' altogether."

4.4.2 An outline of the perspectives on 'Development'

According to Davids et al. (2009:22) the term, Development has been defined differently by different interest groups and intellectual traditions each of which makes assumptions about what development is or is supposed to be. Development should concern the people living in a community as either individuals or a community. Davids et al. (Ibid: 43) admits that, "poverty can mean lack of development, and development can mean alleviating reducing or eliminating poverty"[40]

4.4.2.1   *Bryant Myers's definition of Development*

Myers (1999:3) defines development in terms of transformational development to reflect a concern for seeking positive change in the whole human life materially, socially and spiritually. According to him (Ibid: 94-110), after giving clear understanding of Poverty, he

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[40] This statement has been reiterated due to the link between poverty and development. It has also been mentioned in the chapter 3, " Understanding poverty: A theological perspective"

gives a helpful review of several different perspectives on what development is and what's involved in causing it to happen. In each view the key identifies the transformational frontiers, and these are those areas at which transformational strategy might be focused to bring about sustainable change in the direction of God.

a)   *Development as transformation:* In explaining this view Myers (1999:95) uses Wayne Bragg's[41] description, which argued that transformation was a biblical term that best fit a Christian view of development, and he called for an understanding of development that went beyond social welfare by including justice concerns, something controversial for evangelicals at that time. The Wheaton '83 consultation entitled "A Christian Response to Human Need" was note-worthy, in the evolution of development thinking of evangelicals. He listed what he called the characteristics of transformation, each a transformational frontier namely: life sustenance which can also mean the meeting of human basic needs, equity which means equitable distribution of material goods and opportunities, Justice within all social relationships, dignity and self-worth in the sense of feeling fully human and knowing we are made in the image of God, freedom from oppression, Participation in a meaningful way in our own transformation, reciprocity between the poor and the non-poor, cultural fit that respects the best in local cultures and that treats them as creative, and finally the ecological soundness.

Myers (Ibid: 95) in his analysis to this view criticized Bragg that his view has some weaknesses; there is a strong redistributionist tone that is no longer viewed as positively as it once was. Bragg like many evangelical working in development at the time (including the author), also underestimated the importance of wealth creation, and in this of the poor tended to be somehow romantic. The poor were not given a space for the contribution, they make to their own poverty; all sin, including the temptation to oppress others, seemed to belong only to the non-poor.

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[41] Wayne Bragg is a former director of the Hunger Center at Wheaton College who wrote a seminal paper in which he argued that transformation was the biblical term that best fit a Christian view of development, and he called for an understanding of development that went beyond social welfare by including justice concerns, something controversial for evangelicals at that time. Bragg (1983:37-95 in Myers 1999:95)

b) *People-centred development:* Korten[42] contrast what he calls people-centred development with the economic growth-centred development promoted by many Western governments. For instance in growth-centred development he mentioned 'wants of the non-poor' contrast it with the people-centred development which is needs of the poor. He emphasises the fact that development is not something arrived at, an end point; it is a continuing process, therefore he gives his key phrases which are: '*process,*' '*capacities,*' '*sustainable and just,*' by this he means that any good development must sustain and nurture the environment whilst by just, the message that he wants to address is that the problem of the social disintegration and disenfranchisement that accompanies (and causes) poverty and the fact that government and social systems are biased in favour of the powerful, who are also the major consumers. The last key phrase that he gives is the '*consistent with their own aspirations'* and this means that the people should themselves decide what the improvements are and how they are to be created.

In his definition of development Korten (1990:67 in Myers 1999:96) defines it as, "a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations" However, Myers (1999:97) commented to this view that, of his understanding of development has indeed helpfully contributed in explaining development as a process and not an end which is an important idea including the critical concerns for just social systems and a sustainable environment. Despite that this is very helpful, Myers (1999:99) observes that, "...there is also something worrisome about Korten's typology of development responses. He develops his four generations of strategy as a story of evolution, a social learning process whereby agencies learn to move from symptoms to causes." Finally he says that, the evidence that people movements create sustainable societal change is limited.

c) *Alternative development: Expanding access to social power:* In understanding the perspective of development this view of John Friedman's[43] follows closely from his definition of the cause of poverty, which is the limited access to social power. In explaining

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[42] David Korten is director of the People-Centred Development Forum and the author of Getting to the 21st Century, an important book on development in the early 1990s. Myers (1999:96)

[43] Cf. (3.2.1.2:43)

an alternative development, Friedman (1992:33 in Myers 1999:99) narrates that, "is a process that seeks the empowerment of the households and their individual members through their involvement in socially and politically relevant actions" This empowerment includes an emphasis on local decision making, local self-reliance, participatory, and social learning. In supporting this, Myers (1999:102) observes that, "Friedman's view of alternative development is very helpful by placing social power-both economic and political-in the centre of the development agenda."

However, Myers (Ibid: 103) noticed that, "Friedman's approach has some blind spots. He essentially takes a Western liberal stance that the good in people will somehow find a way to work in favour of good in social systems." He continues to notice that Friedman's approach to development does not appear to extend as far as the spiritual side of life; spiritual of life is neglected in his alternative development, because life is more than having access to social power despite the fact that Friedman talks of improving the conditions of life and livelihood-and life and livelihood could include spiritual well-being. In order for Christians to have something to offer to the poor in this critical area of life, it is important to develop a truly Christian theology of political engagement on the part of the excluded.

d)   *Development as responsible well-being:* In this view Chamber (1997:9 in Myers 1999:104) presents a framework for the outcome of successful development, whilst taking note that development thinking has undergone a significant shift 'from things and infrastructure to people and capacities'. He gives five remarkable words that he believes describe the current development consensus namely: well-being, livelihood, capability, equity, and sustainability.

   i.   *Well-being:* In this term the objective of development is responsible well-being for all, and he describes well-being as quality of life, and its opposite is ill-being.

   ii. *Livelihood and capability:* In this he claims that there are two things which are basic to responsible well-being. Firstly, is livelihood security[44] and secondly are the capabilities[45] which livelihood security and responsible well-being are achieved.

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[44] Chambers defines livelihood security as, adequate stocks and flows of food and cash to meet basic needs and to support well being. Security refers to secure rights and reliable access to resources, food and income and basic services. It includes tangible and intangible assets to offset risk ease shocks and meet contingencies. Chambers (1997:10 in Myers 1999:105)

iii. *Equity and Sustainability*[46]: Here these two categories of Chambers's interactive systems approach to well-being are the principles that both of which are to guide the process of increasing capabilities and livelihood security.

In his observation, Myers (1999:106) noticed that, "Chambers's well-being framework for development is helpful. It insists on basic needs being met and speaks to transformational training and the importance of sustainability. He also makes space for both spiritual well-being and value change." Myers (199:106) continues to observe that, "Chambers's framework does not address the fear of spirits, oppressive land-lords, shamans, and the like, yet these suppress the will to change. The contribution of worldview to ill-being is not mentioned."

e) *Development as a kingdom response to powerlessness:* This view is taken from Christian's proposal[47] as he sees each area of his "web of lies" as a transformational frontier, and the response to each is to declare truth and righteousness while doing good works. According to Myers (199:107) he gives a remarkable statement that, "Christian proposes that we do our development work in a way that shows the poor that we value them. We need to work as barefoot counsellors, listening, talking and loving. Their history of exclusion and disrespect needs healing."

In his observation Myers (199:110) noticed that in Christian's proposal could be extended in two ways, firstly, it has to do with the vocation of the poor, and he adds that the identity of the poor has to not only be in terms of being, but it has also been marred with respect to their doing or their vocation. Secondly, because of the way the non-poor participate in the disempowering systems that create and sustain poverty when they play god in the lives of the

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[45] Chambers capabilities category is broad and rich. He includes what people are capable of being as well as what they are capable of doing, and thus values formation becomes part of the conversation. People's capabilities are enlarged "through learning, practice, training and education," with the outcome being "better living and well being" Chambers (1997:11 in Myers 1999:105)

[46] Equity, for Chambers, means that the poor, weak, vulnerable, and exploited come first. Equity includes "human rights, intergenerational and gender equity and the reversals of putting the last first and the first last". Sustainability is important as well: "To be good, conditions and change must be sustainable-economically, socially, institutionally and environmentally" Chambers (1997:11 in Myers 1999:105)

[47] Christian's proposal rests on the assumption that the powerlessness of the poor is the "result of systematic socio-economic, political, bureaucratic and religious processes (systems) that disempower the poor". Chambers (1997:335 in Myers 1999:106)

poor, Christian expresses little sympathy for them, because the non-poor also suffer from a marred identity and sense of vocation, only not in the diminished way experienced by the poor. Myers (199:110) concludes that, "living and working in the sinful here and now, while believing in the coming of the sinless kingdom, is a uniquely Christian stance. Care needs to be taken that we understand that we are being asked by God to be obedient, not successful."

4.4.2.2   *Other views on the definition of development*

In defining this term 'Development' Burkey (1993:33) point out that, "There can be no fixed and final definition of development, merely suggestions of what development should imply in particular contexts. Development necessarily involves structural transformation which implies political, social and economic changes" August (2010:5) admits that, "Development at the micro-level involves people of varying social-economic status, because all people live within some form of social framework consisting of social, economic and political structures." There is a need for the change, of the acceleration of economic growth, reduction of inequality and the eradication of absolute poverty in the developing countries.

According to Davids et al (2009:17), the development theorists and practitioners has realised that development should be more human centred and not be studied or brought about by merely concentrating on theories and macro-strategies. Korten (1990:76 in Davids et al 2009:17) defines people-centred development as "A process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations." Davids et al. (Ibid: 17) comments that, "people-centred development puts people at the centre of development by insisting that development should firstly be for people (by creating opportunities for everyone), and secondly by people (which implies that people should actively participate in development initiatives)."

The main point here emphasised is that development is for people and at the same time it is by people. As Chambers (1997:9) gives a remarkable statement that, "a massive shift in priorities and thinking has been taking place, from things and infrastructure to people and capabilities." He continues by giving five words due to this shift, and it is as follows: well-being, livelihood, capability, equity and sustainability. Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:124) notes that, "Development should be seen as a process of empowerment which enables

participants to assume greater control over their lives as in individuals and as members of society." August (2010:70) argues that,

> "Development is about change – a change that affects people and things in the society. Therefore, social change is at the heart of the mission of the church where both men and women, being equally created in the image of God, benefit and are restored to full humanity. Consequently, development is a process of social change in which gender is a strategic marker and partnership is central to any discussion on the mission of the church."

According to Hughes (1998:3) "... 'Development' is a term Western humanists devised to describe the process that a community needs to go through in order to bring about the elimination of poverty." In understanding these views of development it has provoked the question that the church has to understand its task to community to be holistically concerning the whole of human life. The church should understand how it can enable the poor to access to basic needs like good water supply, health care in the remote rural areas and to bring about poverty eradication. In support of this, Burkey (1993:35) articulates that, "Development must therefore been seen as a process evolving gradually over time. Development will necessarily involve the use of physical, financial and human resources."

4.4.2.3 An illustration of the definition of development

Burkey (1993:35-39) illustrates the simplest way of getting understanding the definition of development and he provides a more elaborate coverage. He compiled this after the discussions in the training workshop by several groups of rural development workers in three widely separate rural areas of Uganda. The following definitions of human, political, economic and social development are then presented by him.

Figure 3: Burkey's (1993:38), a model on development[48].
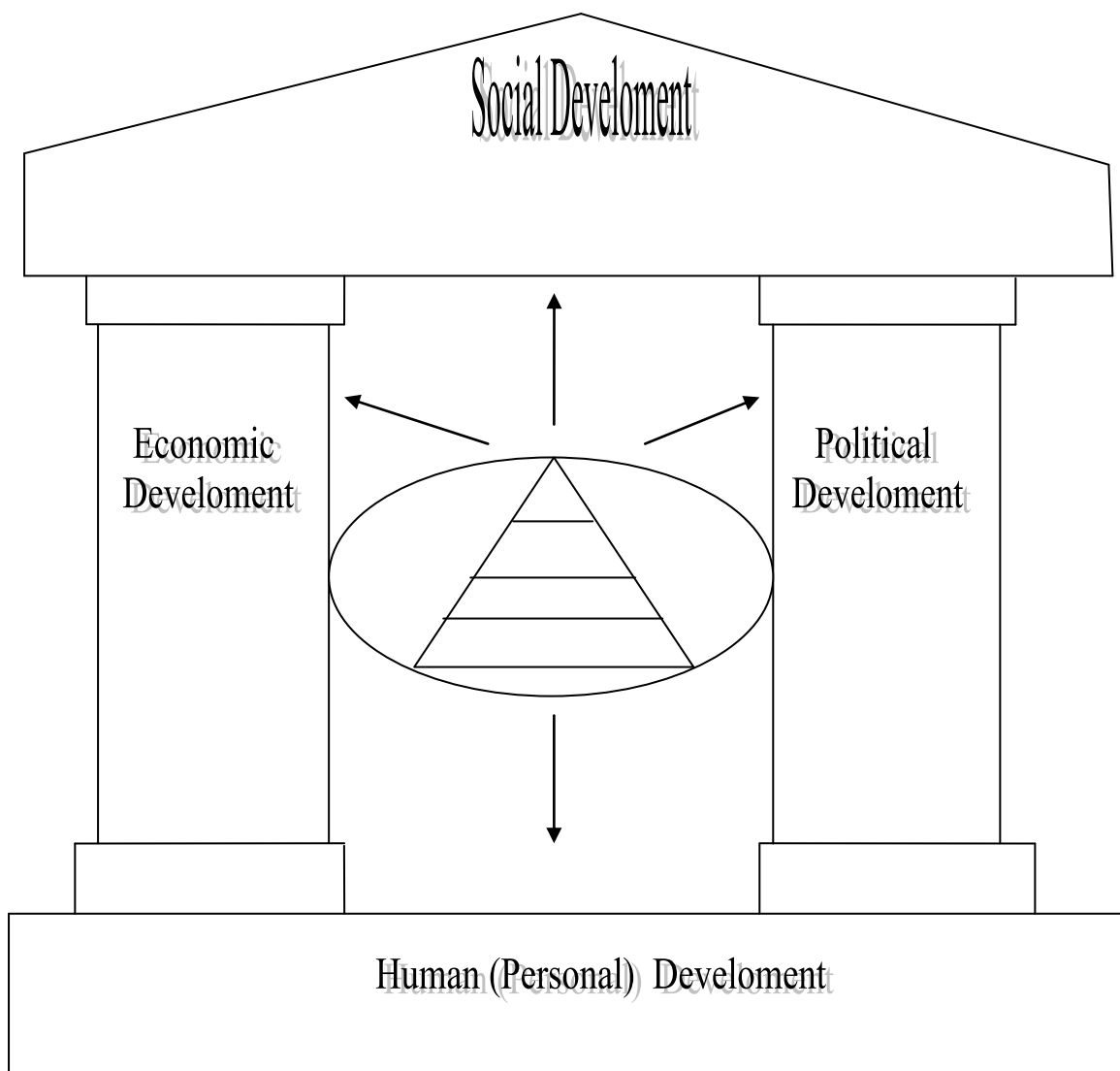
a)   *Human (personal) development:* Here the emphasis is on human beings themselves. According to Burkey (ibid: 35) explains that in any meaningful sense development must begin with, and be within, the individual, and unless motivation comes from within, efforts to promote change will not be sustainable by that individual. He also explains how one group of rural development workers in Uganda defined the term 'Human (personal) development'. Burkey (1999:35) admits that this group defined Human (personal) development as "a

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[48] The figure 3 was taken from Burkey (1993:38) and the diagram in the centre was taken from August (2010:21). The triangle within the oval depicts the triune God with the four arrows pointing at each of the four development levels represents the important "spiritual development" aspect and the positive impact it can have on the rest of a person's development process. In the light of holistic development of people it therefore becomes necessary to consider the vital spiritual aspect of development. August (2010:21-22)

process by which an individual develops self-respect, and becomes more self-confident, self-reliant, cooperative and tolerant of others through becoming aware of his/her shortcoming as well as his/her potential for positive change."

b)   *Economic development:* In Burkey (ibid: 36), economic development is defined as, "a process by which people through their own individual and/or joint efforts boost production for direct consumption and to have a surplus to sell for cash. This requires that the people themselves analyse the problems, identify the causes set their priorities and acquire new knowledge." There is a need for these people to organise themselves so that they can coordinate and mobilise the effective application of all the factors of production at their disposal. Therefore they must plan, implement and manage their own economic activities.

c)   *Political development:* According to Burkey (ibid: 37), another group of Ugandan development workers defined political development as, "a process of gradual change over time in which the people increase their awareness of their own capabilities, their rights and their responsibilities; and use this knowledge to organise themselves so as to acquire real political power...." Therefore; corruption and exploitation may be avoided, realise social and economic development, political stability and peace, and create a politicised population within the context of their own culture and their own political system.

d)   *Social development:* In this context social development refers to those investments and services carried out or provided by a community for the mutual benefit of the people of that community whether as a village, a district or a nation. These might include health services and facilities, education, water supplies, energy, transport systems, communication. Burkey (1993:37) states that, "likewise social development is dependent upon parallel and sufficient economic development to provide the resource base from which investment capital and operating funds are allocated. No social development activity is without cost."

e)   *Spiritual transformation:* In the model of development apart from the four models that Burkey (ibid: 35-39) illustrates above in order to have a clear picture of the definition of development, in Christian perspective August (2010:21) adds that, ".... if people are to experience holistic development (development of the whole person) they need spiritual transformation. God cannot be excluded from the equation because humankind is not only a physical, economical, political and social creature but is also a religious being." He adds that, if the poor do not want the church to discuss the spiritual aspect, church development workers

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should nevertheless still continue to assist with helping to empower these folk to become self-reliant.

4.4.2.4   Summary of development definitions

Despite the difference of defining the term 'Development' as many scholars has explained what it means, the fact is that, there can be no fixed and final definition of this term 'Development' as to what it should imply in a particular context. The term 'Development' helps to describe the process of what the people in the community needs to go through and this necessarily involves structural transformation which implies political, social and economic changes, that helps to bring about the elimination of poverty. Msangaambe (2011:173) points out that,

> "Nevertheless, the underscoring point is straightforward and clear in the sense that all ideas on development point to change and transformation within individuals and communities. It is not meant to describe an event leading to temporal advancement of social status; but a permanent acquisition of a desired livelihood that comes with capacity building. As a social discipline, its main focus is on people."

The advancement of a country's life personally, economically, politically, socially and spiritually all to the dispose of the people, is of vital importance. Human (personal) development can only take place only when a motivation comes from an individual's conviction; change cannot come outside but from within. Economic development aims at increasing a country's wealth, and this growth determines the development of a country.

It should be understood that, political development is a process of gradual change, and the awareness of the people increases gradually to reach at the point of acquiring the real political power on their own capabilities, their rights and their responsibilities. The investments and services provided by a community for the people's benefit in the community are of vital importance for the social development. Spiritual development cannot be detached from the model of development, people needs to experience the holistic development which involves the whole of the person. Development puts first people at the centre of development, because development is for people and by people. People are to be actively participating in development initiatives.

4.5   COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEFINED

The term Community Development has become popular in this world, especially in developing countries. Malawi as one of the poor countries in Africa this concept is also

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supported by many people, the church and state. August (2010:5) notes that, "a community is composed of individuals or groups living in the same geographical area with different and often opposing interests. Communities are therefore not homogeneous entities." In other words, Mhobo (2009:28) echoes that, "community is a place where by people share common things like land, culture, lifestyle, tradition and/or religion." According to Burkey (1993:40) agrees that, community is usually defined in terms of geographic, locality of shared interests or needs, or in terms of deprivation and disadvantage.

The most commonly understood meaning of community development is to strive for the development of the community at all levels, economic, cultural and social. According to the United Nation Organisation defined Community Development as, the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those Governmental authorities to improve the economic social and cultural conditions of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.[49]

4.5.1 Community development

By nature, church is the (faith-based organization) community-based organisation which can be an effective vehicle to community development especially among the marginalized poor. If it can take a deliberate part in development with and through the community there can be a positive change in the communities. Like the term Development, Community development has also been defined by different people.

According to Rubin (1986:6 in Msangaambe 2011:176) points out that, "community development involves local empowerment through organized groups of people acting collectively to control decisions, projects, programs, and policies that affect them as a community."

4.5.2.1 *Definition of Community Development*

August (2010:5) admits that, "in the community development-model, development is described as a process. Most development models claim that they are community development. Although this is intentionally true, it contributes to the confusion in community

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[49] Community Development http://www.preservearticles.com/201105076372/what-are-the-aims-and-objects-of-the-community-development-projects-under-rural-sociology.html Accessed on 07 August 2011

development terminology[50]." According to Cornwell (1987:90) cited in August (2010:5) during the Summer Conference on African Administration community development is "a movement designed to promote a better living for the whole community with the active participation, and if possible on the initiative, of the community." In giving a clear understand of Community Development, August (ibid: 7) presents the binding factor between community development as a method and community development as a process, which brings communities and external development agents together. The following are August's (ibid: 7-9) explanation:

a)   *Community Development as method:* In describing this process of development, community development mobilises resources, which is physical, financial, and human resources in order to address basic human needs by means of combined efforts of outside development agencies and members from within the community. According to August (2010:7) "community development as a method is a unique comprehensive approach which makes allowance for the co-operation of different agencies in order to embody an integrated approach of local development." He concludes that community development as a method creates community organisations.

b)   *Community Development as a Learning Process:* This approach of community development as a learning process according to Swanepoel (1992 in August ibid: 8), "the heart of the matter and most critical characteristic of community development is that it is a learning process ..... The learning process is therefore made viable through participation, initiative and evaluation." This is a very important characteristic of participation by the community in the development process and there cannot be a learning process without these three ingredients. According to Bruwer's model (1994:28-30 in August (ibid) articulates four remarkable process of development as follows:

  i.   The development process starts with what already is happening in communities.

  ii.   The community is Conscientized about what they are busy with.

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[50] Community development is a unique model of development. It is one of the oldest 20th century models of development, and it has its origin assembly in the 1948 Cambridge Summer Conference on African Administration. During this conference, it was suggested to change the name of the British Colonial Informal Training and Community Literacy programme from mass education to community development. Cornwell (1987:90 in August 2010:5)

iii. It is endeavoured to reflect with the community on the described action, in order to make the venture towards transformation an experience owned by the community itself.

iv. The community is exposed to new knowledge. He emphasises that the external stimulus must always be directed to growth and new life.

v. New action is planned. Here, he articulates that in the planning of new action, accountability is important, for in this way reflection on planned action is ensured which in turn will lead to new action.

This model of action training mentioned above is of importance for the learning process in development. Finally August (2010:8) emphasises on the fact of community development as learning process, the shortfalls of development as method that, "when development is only a method, it becomes possible to disregard people in the development process. The point of departure of development as method is that development cannot be sustained by the community itself." August (ibid: 8) concludes that,

> "The process of community development should be viewed as a multidimensional and interrelated process. The three basic interrelated elements that make up the process of community development in its aim to address basic human needs are participation, empowerment and sustainability. By themselves these elements have no real function, but as soon as they are joined within the context of addressing basic human needs, they form the core of the process of the community development order."

4.5.2.2   Goal of development

According to Burkey (1993:12), the goal of development is to eliminate ignorance, disease and poverty, which seems to imply that the remedy is simply books, medicines and money. Joda-Mbewe (2002:155) explains that, "the goal of development is to transform the lives of people through healing the marred identity of the poor." To further clarify this, Liebengerg & Stewart 1997:124) adds that, "it aims to increase the personal and institutional capacities of communities in order to mobilize and manage resources towards meeting basic needs."

Myers (1999:115) emphasises that, "no transformation can be sustainable unless this distorted disempowering sense of identity is replaced by the truth. Healing the marred identity of the poor is the beginning of transformation." In support of this, Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:27) points outs the fact that, "the main goal of development is to eradicate poverty. In other words, it sets out to free people from the poverty trap." According to Max-Neef (1991:16 in

Liebengerg and Stewart 1997:121-122), the best development process will be that which allows for the greatest improvement in people's quality of life. Quality of life in turn depends on the abilities of people to satisfy their fundamental human needs adequately.

4.6 DEVELOPMENT A SLOW PROCESS: BRINGING CHANGE

According to Burkey (1993:48), development is more than the provision of social services and the introduction of new technologies, and it involves changes in the awareness motivation and behaviour of individuals and in the relations between individuals as well as between groups within a society. In order to bring change in the community it is important to understand that development is a slow process, it does take time but still changes will take place. Coetzee (1989:13 in Davids et al (2009: xxii) comments that, "Development is for the people". When people themselves are willing to change they can be capable of driving the process of development and put much effort in bringing change and contribute to the maximum of their own humanity.

4.6.1 Social transformation in rural areas

In order for the people living in the rural areas to be transformed socially, there is a need for the people themselves to be willing to change for the betterment of their life. Burkey (1993:48) add that, "social transformation, and hence development, will not take place unless there is consensus among the group attempting to carry out the transformation." Basu (2005:352) notes that, "The Church has always been involved in social concerns and community development projects." Nurnberger (1999:143) argues that, "without mental transformation, social transformation follows its own structural dynamics, unhindered and undirected by human responsibility and control". Burkey (1998:48) emphasises the fact that, "these changes must come from within the individuals and groups, and cannot be imposed from the outside."

In social transformation for the people in rural areas there is a need for self-reliance[51] which will require a wide variety of knowledge and skills so that they can be able to solve their own problems. Nurnberger (1999:297) suggest that, "there is a need for food, clothing and shelter, and there is the capacity to fulfil that need by taking what nature provides." The Church

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[51] Self-reliance is doing things for one's self, maintaining one's own self-confidence, making independent decisions-either as an individual or within the context of a collective group to which each member has voluntarily allied himself or herself. Self-reliance come from within, but is directed outwards. Self-reliance is based on social relationships. Burkey (1993:50)

needs to be involved in bringing change in the communities especially in the rural areas because it is mandated to do so by the Great Commission of Jesus. Burkey (1993:51) observes that, "This is true self-reliance. It can be learned, but it cannot be given. No government and no development agency is ever going to 'develop' a rural region; it can only be done by the people themselves perhaps with the assistance of government and other development agents."

4.6.2   An absolute transformation of people

In life it is absolutely possible to change and be living a different life, but there is a need for the people to be sensitized and make them aware of the importance of that change. Myers (1999:116) admits that, "the point of greatest transformational leverage is changed people". Chambers (1997:13) emphasises that, "People are complex and diverse. People can choose how to behave and what to do." An absolute transformation of people in development can only take place once the people have ascertain that they are part of the solution to the problems that they face. Burkey (1993:50) notes that,

> "People must have confidence in their own knowledge and skills, in their ability to identify problems and find solutions in order to make improvements in their own lives. This can best be done starting with small groups and small problems. As their self-confidence increases, they can move on to bigger and more complex activities. This evolvement of self-confidence, leading to self-reliance, can be easily destroyed by outside agents pushing the process too quickly."

Wink (1992:85) admits that, "God's will is the transformation of people and society." According to Myers (1999:117), transformational development works to empower people to live out these values in search of their new vision, and this means teaching people to reach to understand and interpret their context, to figure out what and who is contributing to their current situation, and then to decide what they want to do about it, hence; in order for transformation to take place it begins with a changed person. In support of this, Samuel & Sugden et al (1987:39) articulates that, "transformation is to take what is and turn it into what it could and should be."

4.6.3   The poor as agents of transformation

The Church needs to learn how to conscientize the people in the rural areas, especially the marginalized poor, in order to become agents of transformation. The real change comes from within and it's only when the poor, are willing to change, and then they can hardly be always

recipients of transformation. According to Myers (1999:126), everyone is in need of transformation, us, the poor, and the church. We are all on a journey.

Christian (1999:10) emphasis the fact that, "underlying our commitment to do so is the belief that missional involvement among the poor must equip the church to trigger movements with the poor as the key agents of transformation." Burkey (1993:51) adds that, "the development of self-reliance begins within individuals through a process of human development, or Conscientization." Musopole (1997:2 in Myers 1999:116) narrates that, "it is a transformed person who transforms his or her environment." In support of this, Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:28) emphasises the fact that,

> "Transforming efforts do not aim to bring relief to people in the trap, but to free them from the trap so that they can gradually improve the situation themselves as free and self-reliant individuals. Development first frees and then improves. If it improves first, it never frees."

Myers (ibid: 117) admits that, "transformation begins with a changed person" Nurnberger (1999:360) says that, "sensitive people cannot help but be afflicted by the immense human suffering caused by poverty, opulence, conflict and the destruction of the biosphere." Eade (2002:56) points out that, "it is now widely agreed that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, and that economic indicators are not sufficient on their own to measure it." August (2009:214) notes that,

> "The Church is essentially called to function according to the principles and values of the Reign of Jesus Christ in society. Therefore, the Church as the divine proponent of the reconciled, transformed humanity prophetically and sacrificially serves "a broken" society (the public arena) with a view to its transformation according to the values of the reign of God."

Msangaambe (2011:181) emphasises the fact that, "the church has the capacity to be an agent of change in community development. As part of its missional outreach to its social context, it can promote awareness of the community's problems and sensitize the community for action." Nurnberger (1999:399) observes that,

> "There are people who do not have access to clean water and become vulnerable to epidemics. There are people living in fragile environments which area prone to drought, erosion, deforestation and desertification, and who become vulnerable to malnutrition and famine."

Burkey (1993:33) another area of increasing interest is the relationship between development and social transformation. More and more students and practitioners of development are beginning to see a need for changes or transformations in existing economic, social and

political structures and relationships if development is to genuinely benefit the poor and disadvantaged. Christian (1999:10) notes that, "transformation of the church and the grassroots practitioners must take place even as we seek to transform the lives of others. We, too, must be reequipped even as we respond to the powerless poor." Wink (1992:75) emphasises the fact that,

> "Many people need to undergo a change of heart. God must supplant the upstart ego. People do need to be "reborn" from their primary socialization in an alienated and alienating system-though conservatives are generally too acculturated themselves to go that far-and take on the radical values of God's nonviolent commonwealth."

Bediako (1996a:8 in Myers 1999:116) confirms that, "transforming people begins with helping people discover that, their human dignity and identity are intrinsically related to God in Christ through his redemptive purpose in salvation history" According to Samuel & Sugden et al (1987:40), the idea of transformation is not posed as an alternate development strategy but as a Christian framework for looking at human and social change.

4.6.3.1   *The exclusion of the poor*

Many times the people who are poor are regarded to be useless and have nothing to contribute to the community, they are excluded. The rich oppresses the poor, and issues like exploitation does take place, which encourages impoverishing the powerless. According to Samuel & Sugden et al (1987:220), it is a vivid way of describing the ever-growing marginalization of the poor in the economic, social, political, and even religious life of their communities. While it is not secret that poor countries are excluded from the affairs of the world, even within poor societies there is the same stratification. The poorest of the poor are excluded even from such benefits and opportunities as are available to poor communities. They do not count in the affairs of the life of the community and play no part in its decision making. They are considered ignorant and worthless and are treated as outcast-as nonhumans.

Nurnberger (1999:257) points out that, "the poor and powerless tend to see themselves as victims of the avarice and the oppression of the rich; the rich and powerful tend to see themselves as beneficiaries of their own ingenuity and diligence." According to Wink (1992:101), poor people feel nonexistent, valueless, and humiliated. No one takes notice of them, unless their votes are needed by the rich-in which case, likely as not they even vote against their own self-interest. They often have little confidence in themselves, and actually

believe that the rich know what they need better than they themselves. Chambers (1997:7-8) observes that,

> "There are now more very poor and vulnerable people in the world than ever before; and they are more and more concentrated in regions and nations which are themselves weak and more concentrated in regions and nations which are themselves weak and deprived, lacking resources, or the capacity or will to act, or impoverished be debt and declining terms of trade, or racked by civil disturbance, or suffering combinations of these".

Moltmann (1999:21) Equality as a social concept means justice. Without just social and political conditions there is no peace between human beings and nations. The church needs to be an advocate for the poor, and help them to be considered as also an important people. August (2009:246) gives reasons why the congregations shy away from advocacy. The reasons are as follows:

1. When congregations consider engaging the public arena, they think in terms of serving groups of people rather than issues or problem areas. The groups of people they select for help are usually known members of the congregation or people in the immediate area. According to Dudly (1996:56 in August ibid: 246) has found that when a congregation focuses on the person rather than on the issue, it frequently ignores the societal problems that are affecting the persons it seek to serve, at least initially.

2. Some congregations are out of touch with the community. Without building genuine partnership with the target group, it may be paternalistic; even more, it may not address the issues that are influencing the lives of the people the congregation wishes to reach.

3. Congregations shy away from advocacy ministries because they do not really believe that they can make a difference-especially to big problems, such as unemployment and poverty. Churches often feel that it is much easier to work on charitable solutions, than to deal with system change.

4. Congregations shy away from advocacy, because they are uncomfortable discussing and using power. Church members do not want to get involved in public issues, saying, 'politics is not the role of the Church or the Church-based ministry.

5. Congregations shy away from advocacy, because they lack recognised authority to act by the pastors and biblical ignorance about God's desire for justice. If church members know only how God's Word speaks to our individual lives, they will think in terms of ministries to individuals.

August (2009:249) concludes that, "congregations that want to develop an advocacy ministry must begin with the fundamental belief that advocacy ministry is essential and integral to the life and mission of the Church." Moltmann (1999:63) observes that, "Pentecostal movement is drawing the mass of the poor; and this fact is surely connected with this defect in early liberation theology. The poor don't want just to be told what they don't have; they also want to be valued for what they are." Wink (1992:42) notes that,

> "Not only does power tend to corrupt, but often it is the most ruthless and corrupt who tend to gain power. Leaders seem to be chosen by "impersonal and ungoverned forces," "an un-chosen selective process", and they are not usually those whom humanity would prefer to guide its destiny."

The church should be a church of the poor and for the poor, as it exists largely in the poor communities. August (ibid: 232) notes that, "it will have to offer inspiration and vision to the poor so as to empower them to improve their own situation and thus liberate themselves from poverty." Chambers (1997:32) admits that, "it is not 'them' those who are peripheral, poor, weak and vulnerable, who are responsible for these problems of knowing, acting and error. For it is not they who have been wrong, but us"

4.6.4 How poverty constrains development

One of the least developed countries like most other developing countries in the world is Malawi. This country in trying to develop itself, is facing many challenges, this progress is mainly constrained by poverty which is also one of the contributing factors in the developing countries. Poverty constrains development in Malawi in many ways. Those people living in the rural areas are moving to the cities because of poverty trying to escape from it but unfortunately they fail to do so. According to Malunda et al (2009:5) explains that, "the challenges are mostly in the areas of health, education, agriculture and rural development, environment management as well as trade and commerce."

Poverty restrains the poor from participating effectively on helping to development the country, due to lack of modern skills and knowledge that could help in community development. As a result many people due to poverty are marginalized and economically

there are not stable that they can help to develop their countries instead they just depend on the government or the church to feed them. It is difficult for them to meet the basic needs on their own because they lack knowledge. Many people don't work toward the development of the country. Chambers (1997:7) observes that, "the number of people in the world who are defined as in absolute poverty has increased and is increasing." The church can help in studying the constraints to development, and be able to identify the possible actions to remove or lessen the constraints of development.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has endeavoured to find out the specific role of the church in sustainable development to the community. The role of the church in sustainable development is of vital importance, as it is part of the church's task in the community. The church has unique role to play in development of which it cannot detach itself from it, as its participation in development is mandatory missional responsibility. God requires the church as a steward to take care the communities which has been entrusted to it, for development is part of the task given to it. As it has played its role throughout its mission history, it can be much more effect to community development. Development is for people and by people; it is a people-centered. Sustainable development as earlier explained, it is development that not only wants to satisfy the needs of the present generation but also the needs of the future generations. Sustainable development calls for the better living of the people, and attain to meet the needs of the poor, especially the marginalized poor.

Sustainable development is very important in the process of development in the developing countries like Malawi in sense that it ensures growth that continues. The church needs to sensitize people living in rural areas, and help them to understand the importance of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas. The church as a community based organization can indeed be an effective vehicle in community development and help to create a sustainable rural living; it should take a deliberate part in conscientizing the people in the rural areas. The church should help people in self – development, and bring change in people's lives.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF RURAL-URBAN AREAS: THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION AND ITS INFLUENCE TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN A SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVING

5.1   INTRODUCTION

If the church can conscientize the people in the rural communities with the genuine desire to understand people holistically within their social settings, and help them by starting from what they have and build on that, livelihoods might be positively change. Hence, the church can effectively respond to the community's needs. Bevans et al. (2002:59) notes that, "when we venture to the periphery and listen to people's voices, we may discover that they feel insignificant, dishonoured and unnoticed ...." Marc-Ela (1990:63) observes that,

> "We must respond to the needs of our communities through innovation. Our churches must always move in the direction of creation. Our task is not to administer the institutions of Christianity but to advance the future. Everything is yet to be done, and nothing is decided in advance."

5.2   WHY CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Exploring the role of the Church in building people's awareness of the possibilities of sustainable living in the rural areas is of vital importance. According to Hendricks (2004:71), contextual changes have led to new situations and challenges in which Christ, as the Lord, led his people to react in ways that developed into different forms of ministry and led to different priorities. Morisy (1997: vii) admits that, "God is at work, and churches, despite all kinds of difficulties are responding with energy and imagination." The church needs to help in conscientizing the rural people in Malawi, as to what must be taken into account of the challenges that are facing due to urbanization, and how they can do about it.

The church (a faith-based organization) as a community-based organization can be an effective vehicle to community development, and it should not separate itself from community development.   According to an Oxford dictionary, the term 'effective' is producing a desired or intended result. As such, the church can help in the rural areas to have a sustainable rural living and it can be the right vehicle to bring change in the communities. In support of this, August (2010: ii) point out the fact that, "the monograph attempts to provide, as an outcome, the church and theological institutions with a social development purpose by means of a process of theologizing that focuses on the context (micro and macro) and the challenges it poses to the missional church."

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5.3   A SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

Initiating a Sustainable living in the rural areas can be helpful in reducing the high rate of urbanization that is taking place in the national level. In Malawi Urbanization possess a lot of challenges and due to this, there is an increasing of population of the people flocking to the cities. According to Davids et al. (2009:13), using what Frank[52] argues on national level, that human and physical resources are continuously being sucked from rural (periphery) to urban areas (core), leaving the rural areas with a shortage of resources, and urban areas are thus developed at the expense of rural areas. In support of this, Shorter (1991:141) notes that, "urban migrants are ... both culturally and morally disoriented. Culture and morality are closely related facets of the human phenomenon because they both concern human identity and integrity." Gilbert & Gugler (1992:66) adds the fact that "in most countries the urban-rural differential is sufficiently large to suggest a real improvement in living conditions for migrants" Hendriks (2004:121) observes that fact that,

> "Urbanised Malawians find themselves in the predicament of living between two cultural worldviews. The first is the city culture that is a more Western life style that emphasises analytical thought, grouping entities together according to categories; it is more individualistic, and places a very high value on freedom and abstract thought. On the other hand, African traditional culture is more holistic in thought, viewing all things as part of and influencing one another in a collective sense. People think together and decide communally, sometimes in a magical-mystical orientation. Indeed, urban migration uproots people from their homeland. In the cities, this situation further creates a plural community and, if not properly confronted and addressed, it undermines the institutions of family, marriage and traditional community values."

According to Marc-Ela (1990:152), the African church is in the presence of human beings whose hands are empty-men, women, and young people with no future, permanently kept in the dark by newspapers that are monopolized by authorities searching for popular legitimacy. The church as a community based organisation has a role to play in sensitizing the people who migrates to the cities, hence; the church can be an effective vehicle to community development and help to reduce the desire to move to the cities.

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[52] Frank is the best-known protagonist of the dependency paradigm. He supports the views of other *dependistas* (like Raul Prebisch, Fernando Cardoso and Paul Baran) that poverty in developing countries is caused by its exposure to the economic and political influences of developed Western countries, arguing that "Third World poverty is a reflection of its dependency" Webster (1984:85 in Davids et al 2009:12)

5.3.1 Why people move to the cities

There are so many reasons as to why people move to the cities, depending on the people's perceptions. Many people admire the life in the cities than that of the rural. According to Gilbert & Gugler (1992:67), when people are asked why they moved, they usually cite the better prospects in the urban economy as their chief reason. Also, migration streams between regions have been shown to correspond to income differentials between those regions. Most people move to the cities for economic reasons, looking for an employment to the cities. In agreement to this, Marc-Ela (1990:71-72) further notes that,

> "In Africa, in general, the rural economy supports the burden of economic growth by producing cash crops for export, which permits both the collection of taxes at home and the accumulation of foreign currency .... Even in the absence of epidemics, the lack of facilities in slums worsens the health of urban populations."

Shorter (1991:139) admits that, "the migrant becomes a non-person, a surplus individual, an illegal and unwanted intruder in the eyes of the affluent established urban dweller. A situation has developed in the cities and towns of Africa that, if it is not apartheid in a racist sense, it is analogous to apartheid." In addition to this, Gilbert & Gugler (Ibid: 67) points out that, "material considerations are of prime importance to most people. Certainly, poor people who ignore their material circumstances are rapidly threatened in their very survival." Chambers (1997:63) seem to give us what makes people to leave rural areas and settle in the cities, he expresses eloquently that,

> "The more successful a person is, the faster he or she moves away from the rural periphery. The centripetal tendency with age and seniority is also found among politicians, graduating from local to national politics, and academics, moving inwards, from smaller to larger and more prestigious institutes, colleges and universities. In the end power is concentrated in cities, especially capital cities, in the hands of those, mostly men who reach the top."

Many people who migrate from rural to urban areas strive and search for better living conditions, which the majority do not get and eventually ends up in squalor conditions of informal living areas, and in Malawi the evidence is over whelming in the sense that most people move for economic reasons.

5.3.2 A comparison of the people living in urban and rural settings in a Malawian perspective

In Malawi like any other developing countries, people are living in two different areas that are rural and urban settings and they do lead different life according to where they are staying. In this country of Malawi, life is not that easy due to its poor living of the people,

hence; life in rural and urban is not the same like in any other countries in the world. O'Donovan (2000:60) further affirms this by pointing out that, "in many cities there are thousands of homeless people, thousands of street children, thousands of beggars, thousands of thieves and thousands of women who have turned to prostitution to survive. The situation is getting worse every day." Those living in urban areas lead a more western lifestyle while those in the rural lead a rural life (an African traditional lifestyle). Moltmann (1999:14) notes that, "power is no longer a monopoly of the state. The ecological destruction of the countryside is driving people into the slums of the big cities. Malaria and AIDS are turning more and more people into lepers. The plagues are coming back." According to Gilbert & Gugler (1992:56), comparisons of urban and rural incomes are notoriously problematic.

5.3.2.1 *The life of the people living in urban settings*

People living in urban settings are equipped with all the modern amenities and modern-day facilities like the Internet, telephone, television and satellite communication facilities are widely available in the urban areas. A majority of the households of the urban areas are blessed with this technological advancement. In urban cities, the newly developing shopping complexes, theatres, food malls and restaurants, huge constructions, large housing complexes, skyscrapers are found in most of the urban metropolitan cities. Elevators, escalators, storied parking areas and towering constructions add to the magnificence of the urban cities. Due to a greater availability of all the modern facilities along with an increase in the number of educational facilities and career opportunities, people of the urban areas lead an economically more stable and a luxurious life.[53] However; life in the cities is not that easy. Jobs are not available for many and there are a lot of people who are unemployed and just doing nothing in the cities, struggling to meet their daily basic needs. Brown (2004:138) observes that,

> "Many are disillusioned as they find the number of jobs available failing to match the large numbers of people seeking them. Wages area low, so that even those fortunate enough to find consistent and reliable employment struggle to provide their family's basic needs with the income they earn. Theft and crime are high in these areas, so that personal security is a primary concern."

O'Donovan (2000:58) notes that, "one of the greatest of the innumerable problems in the cities is unemployment." Life in the urban settings is not that easy. According to Joda-Mbewe

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[53] Urban vs. Rural Living: http://www.buzzle.com/articles/urban-vs-rural-living.html Accessed on 30 July 2011

(2002:285), the urban community is constantly changing. People move highways wipe out a small neighbourhood; buildings are erected, and then torn down. This phenomenon makes it difficult for stable relationships essential to support and encourage mature Christian living. In the surrounding communities of the cities of Malawi is hygienically extremely poor, that needs the church to be concerned about the stress of city life. Gilbert & Gugler (1992:73) notes that,

> "For those who have climbed the educational ladder, the most attractive career opportunities are in the city. Others, while not so fortunate, have the right connections and come with reasonable assurance that the assistance of their kinsman, fellow villager, or patron will get them a job."

Due to the different kinds of things that are in the cities many people are attracted to move to the cities, which create an increasing population of people in urban cities. The high population in the cities has made the place to turn into not a safe place to stay due to high crime, unemployment, and many more problems in the cities. O'Donovan (2000:42) notes that, "the combination of rapid urban growth and extensive unemployment makes the cities ripe for crime. Crime today is one of the most fearful realities of life in the cities." The slums area located on the outskirts of the cities of Malawi, has many people who have left their own villages in hopes of finding more opportunity in the city, instead they find themselves living in a situation different to that of their home villages. Brown (2004:138) admits that, "aspects of city living bring other changes that threaten the fibre of the rural Malawian as well." Neefjes (2000:59) adds that,

> "… In towns and cities people depend more on markets; housing security is more central to people's lives and livelihoods; there are higher levels of environment and health risks that are at least partly preventable; there is more social diversity and change; and bad government has a bigger impact."

In support of this sentiment, Hendriks (2004:35) notes the fact that, "there is a real need for transformation as the church faces new challenges that require radical changes to the way we minister and witness." Gilbert & Gugler (Ibid: 64) observes the fact that, "cities are centres of power and privilege. This is true throughout the Third world today. Certainly, many urban dwellers live in desperate conditions." O'Donovan (2000:26) submits that, "injustice is just one of the several mega-problems that are destroying the African continent. Other problems are just as bad. There is poverty that is beyond imagination" Due to the increasing of the people migrating towards the urban areas it has resulted in crowding of urban areas which

creates a lot of problems to the city dwellers. Many people prefer to settle in the cities, in order to have a better life.

5.3.2.2 *The life of the people living in rural settings*

In comparison with urban settings, rural settings are not crowded with concrete constructions all over the places, but rather houses are widely spaced with ample room for fields and gardens. Many people in the rural areas live very close to nature, and there is room for pets and grazing animals that help maintain equilibrium in nature. Life in the rural settings is very simple and interesting. In the rural setting normally people do things together as a community, such as sharing the food and care for each other, despite that there may not be much material wealth in the extended families in the rural. O'Donovan (2000:58) notes that,

> "The rural person knows that his or her physical, mental and emotional needs will always be met to the extent that everyone else's needs in the community are being met. The welfare of the individual is simply one part of the welfare of the community. If the community is blessed, everyone shares in the blessings of the community if the community suffers, everyone shares in the suffering. The suffering becomes tolerable simply because everyone shares it. It is difficult to overstate the importance of this sense of security and stability in the lives of rural people of the same clan or tribe."

The rural parts are not overcrowded by people, due to a relatively lesser number of people inhabiting the rural areas, and these areas are blessed to have least amounts of pollution. Due to afforestation and ample space for plantations, rural areas have managed to maintain an environmental balance. Pollution is less also on accounts of very less number of industries in rural areas.[54]

O'Donovan (Ibid: 42) notes that, "life in the cities can be very difficult and very dangerous. Yet in spite of this, people continue to move into the cities in large numbers especially young people hoping to find a better life than they had in their rural homes." As Linthicum (1991:166 in Joda Mbewe 2002:234) agrees that, "health care in the city, therefore, means more than adequate medical care for all; it also means dealing with the variegated stress of the city and with the environmental issues. The Bible indicates that such concern needs to be part of the work of the church in the city." O'Donovan (Ibid: 18) observes that, "many

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[54] Urban vs. Rural Living: http://www.buzzle.com/articles/urban-vs-rural-living.html Accessed on 30 July 2011

problems in African cities are already out of control." Many urban dwellers live in desperate conditions, and there is no employment available.

According to Gilbert & Gugler (1992:72), rural-urban migration continues unabated throughout the Third World. Joda-Mbewe (2002:251) notes that, "The city will not be saved until the church really wants to save it. If anything, the urban congregations are faced with a huge challenge to save the city. The congregations in Malawi have acknowledged the importance of saving individuals in the city." Many people are still flocking to the cities due to its attractive settings and life that seems to be easier than that of the rural. The Church has really a big task in sensitizing the people living in rural areas, about the advantages of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas.

According to Gilbert & Gugler (Ibid: 67), those migrants who are not motivated by the prospect of material rewards are a minority. Hall (1990:171) emphasises the fact that, "The problem of the Third World peoples, to speak now of the fact rather than of its efficient cause, is simply their abysmal poverty. Only, poverty is never simple. It is a complex amalgam of physical and spiritual pain, which robs the person and the community of dignity and meaning as much as it deprives the body of nourishment, shelter, and beauty." Nurnberger (1999:116) suggests that, "where production cannot keep pace with growing need, people are bound to end up in poverty." In support of this, McFague (2001:112) notes that,

> "Money is not the end but a means to an end: the end is the healthy development of human beings on a sustainable planet. By 'development' is meant whatever it takes for different forms of life and the earth's processes to flourish in a sustainable fashion. Development does not mean "progress" but fostering or nurturing. .... Money is for the purpose of realizing possibilities: the possibilities within a human child and within communities of people living sustainably in nature."

Gilbert & Gugler (Ibid: 67-68) "the 'bright lights' theory of rural-urban migration has enjoyed a certain vogue, but the simple fact is that most new arrivals do not have the means to spend much time in bars, dance halls, or movie theatres. Indeed, many people, when the rural environment where they have grown up offers a similar standard of living and equivalent prospects for their children prefer to stay rather than move to the city." Marc-Ela (1990:91) notes that, "solidarity is now the business of the poor themselves, as they learn to be together in a village or a slum and work to solve their own problems and to share their life and their struggles-everything that comprises their essence and their deepest hopes. The most

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striking development is their will to make common cause in a dynamic directed to create a different society." Gilbert & Gugler (1992:72) points out that, "rural-urban migration continues unabated throughout the Third World."

5.4   CHURCH RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNITY CHALLENGES: A REDUCTION AND ERADICATION OF RURAL POVERTY

In order for the Church to be of an effective vehicle in sensitizing people in the rural areas, it needs to recognize the special needs of those people living in the rural areas, and help them to have a sustainable rural living. In so doing the desire to go to the cities will be minimized/ reduced. Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:44) admits that, "When you help the people to identify their felt needs you must remember that your view of their needs and that of the people will differ and their view must receive priority."

The church should realize that poverty is a national phenomenon. The people in the rural should learn how to be creative and do things for themselves, whether with or without anticipation of external assistance, in order to improve their own lives. Mhobo (2009:18) admits that, "people should be taught to develop skills so that they can do things for themselves." In addition to this, Swanepoel (1997:15) points out that, "one of the most important gains for a community is the awareness that community development generates. People become aware of themselves and their environment; of their needs and their resources." Mulwa (1987:46) "the communities have always had the determination which is the important and fundamental requirement for the people's participation in shaping their future." O'Donovan (2000:58) notes that,

> "The rural person knows that his or her physical, mental and emotional needs will always be met to the extent that everyone else's needs in the community are being met. The welfare of the individual is simply one part of the welfare of the community. If the community is blessed, everyone shares in the blessings of the community. If the community suffers, everyone shares in the suffering."

The church should no longer be concerned with the soul alone, but with the growth of a whole human being, and this may help the church to be much more effective to the community. Mulwa (1987:48) "Church development services will usually be found either where government services do not reach or are inadequate." It is the church's role to enable the poor in the rural areas to participate actively in identifying and analysing critically the causes of their problems and uniting with them in finding solutions. In the process the people in the rural areas will themselves be transformed, grow more confident and as they participate

they can be more creative and more critical, which can help them to improve their life. Burkey (1993:63) observes the fact that, "poor people know that it is a lack of knowledge that not only keeps them from developing themselves, but also provides the advantage which the wealthier and more powerful have over them."

5.4.1 The sensitization of the Church to the migrating people from rural to urban areas

Through church's motivation and support to the grassroots communities, the desire that many people have to migrate to the cities can be minimized and it is the church that can be an effective tool for rural transformation. Joda-Mbewe (2002:22) adds that, "Churches have to co-operate ecumenically as well as with municipal councils, medical, social, and educational workers, forest, security and prison services, and the local community leadership. The poor themselves must also participate in addressing the root causes of their problems."

It is possible for the people to develop themselves, if the church can take a deliberate part in conscientizing them, because the people have all the potential to change for better. Tienda et al (2006:36) notes that, "Sub-Saharan Africa, however, still contains several of the least urbanised countries in the world and, despite the rapid rates of urbanisation over the past 40 years, the majority of the population in Africa still lives in rural areas." Nurnberger (1999:120) says that, "because of the widespread poverty, the breakdown of the social fabric and extreme income discrepancies within the population, many Third World countries tend to politically unstable." Mhobo (2009:23) emphasises the fact that,

> "It is the purpose of community development to fulfil people needs, both concrete and abstract; empowering a learning process in which people participate and that initiative from the start; to sustain the economic growth; to make a collective active action, including joint decision-making; needs- oriented and therefore bound to strive for objectives; to be based on assets and resources people have."

According to Mulwa (1987:vii), involving the rural poor in the transformation process, not as development 'tools', but social change 'agents' as they transform their own reality and take active responsibility for their destiny, is of vital importance. If the Church can be involved in sensitizing people about the migration from rural to urban areas in order for them to stay in the rural areas, the desire to move to the cities can be reduced. The church can sensitize them on how to become self-reliant, how to appreciate the resources God has given them and use them wisely. Self-esteem among them (rural people) can be built, and they can be able to believe in themselves. This can help them to be empowered in any way possible so that they

can learn to appreciate who they are and be satisfied with what God has given them. In addition to this, Mulwa (1987: viii) notes the fact that,

> "The rural poor know their conditions, problems and needs. What may not so often be clear to them are the root causes of these problems, the interrelationship of different contributing factors and the national and international connections of exploitative structures. They often choose to remain quiet about their problems, but do so only as a survival strategy before the powerful exploiters often supported by the structures themselves."

It is important for the church to pay attention in tackling the factors that force people to leave rural areas in order to be much more effective to the community.

5.4.2   The church as an effective vehicle to a sustainable rural living

Mulwa (1987: viii) "Rural transformation is basically a process of change that includes and transcends the kind of development whose goal is often limited to economic growth." Hall (1990:182) admits that, "If development means developing the potential of the human beings who constitute the have-not nations, then the primary emphasis must be not upon good, but upon the 'education, organization, and discipline' of the people." According to Pandey (2005:viii), defines rural development as the process of helping rural people to set the priorities in their own communities through effective and democratic bodies, by providing the local capacity; investment in basic infrastructure and social services; justice, equity and security; dealing with the injustices of the past and ensuring safety and security of the rural population. Samuel & Sugden et al (1987:251) emphasises the fact that, "people are willing to take responsibility for the community problem they see. They then have a tendency to volunteer spontaneously to meet community needs-the needs of themselves and their neighbours." Swanepoel (1997:3) points out that,

> "People must progress in realising their inner potential while working to fulfil their physical needs. Development must, therefore, be humanistic. No physical development can be divorced from the person and no human development must have a single focus. That focus is the human being."

Hall (1990:183), gives a great example of how the poor people can be assisted to develop their communities in the rural areas, and he uses what is a supplement of Schumacher's[55]

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[55] Schumacher was a Christian thinker for whom Hall have the greatest respect, and who in Hall's opinion has shown us the way of Christian stewardship as it applies to the rich in a manner more imaginative and more practical than most. It was Schumacher's conviction, as we have already noted that what bedevils our approach to the Third World is our assumption that they should emulate us: 'what is good for the rich must

admirable proposals which is very helpful in bringing development in the communities. The proposal says that, "Give a man a fish and you are helping him a little bit for a short while; teach him the art of fishing and he can help himself all his life. On a higher level: supply him with fishing tackle; this will cost you a good deal of money, and the result remains doubtful; but even if fruitful, the man's continuing livelihood will still be dependent on you for replacements. But teach him how to make his own fishing tackle and you have helped him to become not only self-supporting but also self-reliant and independent." However, in this view Hall (1990:183) notices that,

> "The logic of this, and of the whole approach of intermediate or 'small' technology, seems to me above reproach. But there is one condition that I think Schumacher did not adequately meet. He neglected the fact that for the First World citizens (experts or otherwise) to transmit such knowledge, they must themselves have come to a high degree of self-knowledge concerning the limits, dangers, and undesirable side effects of their own high technocracies. And they must be able imaginatively and passionately to transmit that knowledge to the Third World, whose peoples naturally suppose that big technology alone brings human beings success, and who are very apt to suspect First World citizens who would withhold the great blessings of technocracy of wanting to hoard those blessings for themselves. I am thus in total agreement with Dr. Schumacher that 'the best aid to give is intellectual aid, a gift of useful knowledge."

The church as a community based organization needs to be attached to the poor people , and give them hope, love them, and also care for them, in so doing the church can be much more effective to the rural communities. According to Speckman (2007:45), a community that has taken the process of socialization seriously is seen by its results, namely communal living, in a localized context; voluntary action out of moral persuasion and a sense of responsibility; and self-sufficiency as a sign of independence and maturity. No healthy individual is allowed to be a burden on the community. According to Wink (1992:78), social changes cannot wait until people are made morally perfect. The putting of an end to torture of the weak by the

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also be good for the poor.' This, he said, is the thinking of people (economists and others) who think about problems and populations and gross national products and the like, but not about people. The question that must first be asked, in Schumacher's view, is this: Who are the people who constitute the Third World? The answer is they are poor people. They are the people (as he says the in title of a chapter of one of his books) of 'Two Million Villages.' Thus, the new thinking that is required for aid and development will be different from the old because it will take poverty seriously. It will not go on mechanically, saying. 'What is good for the rich must also be good for the poor.' It will care for people-from a severely practical point of view. Why care for people? Because people are the primary and ultimate source of any wealth whatsoever. If they left out, if they are pushed around by self-styled experts and high-handed planners, then nothing can ever yield real fruit. Hall (1990:181-182)

strong cannot await the moral perfection of the strong, and the weak must be supported by actions which change the structure of society.

Development like promoting development initiatives in rural centres such as provision of water; health facilities; education and other social amenities, can help to reduce the high rate of migration to the cities. There are some of the risks for the people migrating in the cities, and due to this migration, people cannot stand the competition with the city settlers. They therefore face many hardships in the areas of healthy, and employment. It can be easy for them to be tempted into becoming criminals, and find difficult to find shelter.

If the church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP, in Malawi takes a deliberate part in responding to community challenges in light of the problem of urbanization, it can put a huge impact to the community and livelihoods can positively change. Many people in the rural area will be self-reliant, and be able to contribute to the development of their communities. Morisy (1997:129) emphasises the fact that, "helping people to unfold their creativity and competence is a kingdom response because it lessens losers."

5.4.3   Informal settlements in rural and urban areas

In Malawi poverty is real. As Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:12) observes that, "sometimes poverty can be easily detected and at other times not so easily. It is perhaps easier to see the poverty in urban areas than in rural areas. Many people live close together in urban areas. Overcrowding and the problems resulting from insufficient services are very visible." Due to how the settlements of the people living in rural areas are, the places are not overcrowded because they live scattered. It is quiet easier to observe the poverty of the people living in urban areas, because many people who have migrated to urban turn to build shacks in squatter or informal settlements. In urban areas some shacks are built nicely and good looking, in addition to that they seem to be safe to live in, but the problem is on how to survive and meet the daily basic needs whilst staying in town. Many people do not have enough money that can keep them, and it is difficult for people to maintain their dwelling properly due to poverty.

In giving a reason for failing to reduce the level of poverty, according to Stenger & Ratti (2007:7 in Mhobo 2009:18) notices that, it may be in the fact that many programmes aimed at reducing poverty are focused on doing something 'for the poor', rather than 'with the poor'. The gap between the rich and the poor is increasing tremendously. McFague (2001:130)

notes that, "Many poor people want nothing more than to 'advance' into the consumer lifestyle, leaving their needy sisters and brother behind. The standpoint of the poor, then, must be a choice, both for the well-off and the poor (but especially for the well-off)."

In rural areas people build shelters with traditional building materials and it looks good, but it needs a lot of maintenance of which people sometimes they find it difficult to maintain their dwellings properly but fortunately, this is not as those living in urban. The people staying in the rural areas have a lot of advantages of which the church needs to take part and conscientize them. The people in the rural areas can be helped to understand their situation and realize that it is indeed possible for them to live in the rural areas, and still having a good life. In support of this, Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:13) points out the fact that,

> "Because people are poor it is difficult for them to build proper houses in short time. Living in poor and overcrowded conditions affects their health; and it is difficult for an unhealthy person to find-and keep-a job. The rural poor have an added problem: because they are "out of sight", officials and other people who could assist them do not know of their problems. The rural poor are consequently isolated. Though the urban poor (squatters) are less isolated, they are also removed from the centre of activity and suffer from isolation as a result of distance from job opportunities, lack of telephones and little access to resources."

A lot of problems occur due to the high population of people flocking to urban areas, and health wise there can be diseases flourishing and spread in the communities. For instance, due to lack of safe drinking water, people especially children, do suffer poor health. The problems are worse in the urban squatter areas due to high rate of urbanization, compared to that of the rural areas. Poverty contributes a lot to the problems that many people are facing, and as a result many people are vulnerable to disease. Swanepoel & De Beer (Ibid: 15) echoes that, "poverty, isolation and physical weakness leave people vulnerable." O'Donovan (2000:53) notes that,

> "Living in the city and being surrounded by godless people with godless values can bring temptation to adopt materialism, secularism, greed, individualism and selfishness instead of the Christian values of generosity, lying and corruption can lead to cynicism and indifference to the needs of others."

In order to help the people in the rural areas, the church needs to recognize the special needs of those people living in the rural areas, and provide ministry to such people holistically. Due to the isolation of the poor in the rural areas many people encounter a lot of problems with which they need to be assisted. The poor lack a lot of things in order for them to survive. If the Church can participate in taking care of such poor people in the rural areas, then people

themselves can take an initiative to improve their lives and be able to make plan under difficult circumstances. The people in the rural areas through the church need to be taught how to-self-dependent, and discover their own resources, in order to improve their own lives. Church should show love to the people who are suffering and care for them in a holistic way and be able to meet their needs accordingly. Benedict XVI (2005:11)

> "Love of neighbour, grounded in the love of God, is first and foremost a responsibility for each individual member of faithful, but it is also a responsibility for the entire ecclesial community at every level: from the local community to the particular Church and to the church universal in it's entirely. As a community, the Church must practise love. Love thus needs to be organised if it is to be an ordered service to the community."

5.4.4 Unemployment

Unemployment in developing countries is one of the greatest of the immeasurable problems, especially in the cities due to urbanization. Without any doubt unemployment is the great problem in Malawi, especially in disadvantaged communities, and due to this there is no enough food, people may resort to crime in order to meet their basic needs, because they don't have any access to income. Mhobo (2009:16) emphasises the fact that,

> "Due to unemployment, low income, unhealthy eating habits, and lack of adequate housing, peoples' unhealthy can be severely affected. People who do not have gainful employment or who earn low wages often do not have the funds to seek healthcare. They cannot afford healthy and fresh food, and by living in poor sanitary conditions and an unhealthy environment, their lives are affected."

According to Hendricks (2004:119), today, the phenomenon of urban growth is one of the major challenges facing the developing world, including Malawi. The world Development report (1997) rated Malawi as having the seventh fastest urban growth rate of the 20 poorest countries. A lot of people are in the cities but doing nothing, as a result the streets are filled with homeless people, and jobless young people which is a very big problem. O'Donovan (2000:51) notes that, "people move back and forth between the city and the rural village." Many people find it difficult to have an access to income due to lack of job, which shows that unemployment is indeed a big problem in developing countries like Malawi. The poor find it difficult to gain access to employment opportunities; hence, they end up being tempted to do evil things which land them in trouble. Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:16), observes the fact that,

> "Unemployment is both a cause and a result of the poverty situation in which people find themselves. It is a cause, since without a job a person has no income and cannot pay for proper housing, food, medical care, and education for him/her and his/her children. It is a result because poor health caused by an unbalanced diet, poor housing and lack of

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> appropriate education (all on account of poverty) prevents a person from finding and keeping gainful employment."

O'Donovan (2000:42) admits that, "urban research has found that, throughout the world, 40 percent of the urban poor are without jobs." There are a lot of crimes and people feel not secure in the community. Unemployment has a lot of problems attached to it, and it makes the communities to be not a safe place. There are a lot of needs in the communities to be met, and it is important for the people living in a particular community to analyze their needs. In Malawi like any other developing countries, there is a high level of unemployment. As Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:18) supports this that, "the community knows its own needs resources and capabilities." According to Joda-Mbewe (2002:3), unemployment in Malawi is very; typically, people migrate to urban areas searching for work, and most people living in urban areas especially in the townships have no land on which to cultivate crops and work as unskilled casual labourers. Population density is also high, leading to a proliferation of communicable diseases, especially AIDS.

5.5 THE THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVING: CHURCH ROLE AS A CHANGE AGENT

According to Mhobo (2009:34), the church in development should address certain issues theologically so that its language differs from other organisations within the community. The role of the church in the public life of the community should make a huge difference, more than other organisation. The church as a community based organization need to take a deliberate part in community development in order to understand why people move to cities and what it (the church) can do locally to assist according to their expectations for them to have a dignified life in the rural areas.

5.5.1 The role of the Church as a change agent

The church as a community based organization has a unique role to play in the rural communities as a change agent. According to Burkey (1993:76-77), a change agent is a person who initiates a process of change. Change in itself can be either good or bad. Therefore; the direction which this change will take should be decided through interaction with the people with whom the change agent is working, rather than unilaterally by the change agent acting alone or on behalf of outside interests. Organisations using a 'directive' approach to development often use such words as extentionist or instructor, and some agencies use more neutral designations like rural development worker or community development coordinator. In support of this, Hughes (1998:13) admits the fact that,

"To be effective, the education of the poor must, therefore, be a means of empowerment as well as a simple transference of skills. Self-reliance must be the goal from the beginning. What this means for development is that much more attention is given to what the poor want rather than to what they are perceived to need. This means that the development worker becomes a facilitator and encourager rather than a deliverer."

O'Donovan (2000:63) notes that, "the problems of human beings begin right inside the heart and no government can change the human heart. Only God can change the human heart from within by the power of the Holy Spirit. That is why only the church can bring real hope and real solutions, that will work and that will last, to the cities of Africa." McFague (2001:18) notes that, "God is radical relationality, in intimate relationship with everything as the source, sustainers, and goal of every scrap, every quark, of creation. God wishes everything well, is interested in every creature, and wants nothing other than the flourishing of all." Burkey (1993:81) observes the fact that, "change agents can play their role effectively only if they have adequate knowledge and understanding about the community with which they are going to work. They should study and analyse the socio-economic conditions, the value systems and the cultural traditions."

O'Donovan (Ibid: 69) notes that, "it is only transformed individuals who can change a culture and a society." According to Speckman (2007:279), development is not something that happens on a passive individual or community. It is something that the individual of community does. Often, nothing happens because no one wants to do anything. Their attitude is usually that someone else is going to do it for them or to them. According to Bhasin (1979 in Burkey 1993:81), change agents have to integrate with the people. They have to become one of them by living with them. Long-distance operation of organising people does not work. Change agents must listen more than talk, learn more than teach and facilitate more than lead. In support of this, Swanepoel (1997:9) emphasises that, "transforming efforts do not try to bring relief. They attempt to release people from the trap so that, free and self-reliant, they can gradually improve the situation themselves. Development, therefore, first frees and then improves. If it improves first, it seldom frees."

5.6   THE CHURCH AND PARTICIPATION

Mhobo (2009:22) emphasises that, "Participation of people entails active involvement in planning and doing the development. The principle of people centred development, formulated as the building blocks of development-public participation, social learning, empowerment and sustainability-feature strongly in the integrated people centred approach

..." In a better explanation of these blocks, Davids et al (2009:122-125), gives four building blocks of development, as follows:

1. *Public participation:* This is due to the fact that it is a component of the process of human growth. In other words, the process of public participation and its assumptions is as complex as human nature because it is an integral part of human development.

2. *Social learning approach:* This approach extends the principle of bottom-up planning and public participation by arguing that change agents and development organisations should adopt a learning attitude.

3. *Empowerment:* This implies that, the issues of public participation and empowerment in the planning process for service delivery are central to sustainable development.

4. *Sustainability:* As with the other blocks, public participation should lead to sustainable development. The famous definition of the concepts as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

5.7 PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH: IT'S INTENTION AND AS A MEANS OF DOING PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

According to Babbie & Mouton (2001:331), "PAR aims to reduce the social and communicative distance between the researcher and research participants and to ensure that a symmetrical and equal relationship is established." Hendricks (2004:219) agrees that, *Participatory Action Research*[56]. "aims at developing local sustainable communities by empowering people to take responsibility for their situation and future. This is the ideal methodology to use in faith communities." He continues by giving out the important features of Participatory Action Research.

> Firstly, he says that, in participatory action Research, the researcher must act as a facilitator or agent for change, as a team-builder and fellow-learner. The research's purpose is not, firstly, to accumulate knowledge, but to participate in God's mission in making his kingdom visible. Secondly, in doing theology its basic is its praxis methodology, and it implies that there will

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56 According to De Vos (1998:408) "Participatory Action Research, could be defined as a research process where people, involved in the situation being studied, are enabled (in partnership with researchers and other role-players) to become actively involved in collective efforts to address and solve their social problems."

always be a relationship between research and doing theology, even when no academic motives are involved. Thirdly, the goal of this type of research is to facilitate a process where local faith communities can discern God's will and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to suffering.

Fourthly, the normative basis and basic assumption of this processes (Participatory Action Research) is the communion that the faith community with God, and this approach starts with the present resources, in other words it does not impose on them from 'the outside'. The point is to facilitate an honest dialogue between the local culture, the Gospel and the problems faced in the local context.

Babbie & Mouton (2001:314) observes that, "PAR is often employed when working with and for grassroots groups, communities or social classes and their organizations in rural areas in the Third World." This process (Participatory Action Research) is a movement away from the dependency model to a community empowerment model, and it has moved away from the ideology of neutral and value-free research and research paradigms. These features are helpful, and they give a picture of a methodology that symbolizes faith seeking understanding. Babbie & Mouton (2001:331) admits that, "The researcher in PAR is defined first and foremost as a change agent whose primary responsibility is to initiate and facilitate 'emancipatory' change during the research process."

Babbie & Mouton (Ibid: 314), emphasise the fact that, "PAR is a commonly used approach to "grassroots development" interventions and encountered especially in the underprivileged rural settings in the so-called Third World countries." This fact is also affirmed by Laws et al (2003:339) when he says: "Action research is usually about finding a local solution to a local problem-solution which is fully owned by the key participants, because it is seen as a kind of experiment, in a real-life setting."

5.8   THE CONSCIENTIZATION BY THE CHURCH FOR THE PEOPLE ABOUT SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVING

Conscientization is the key word in this dissertation. Rasmussen (1993:12 in Joda-Mbewe 2002:274) notes that, "the word conscience comes from con-sciere, 'to know together.' Conscience is the ethical compass of character, and character is formed in community, as moral convictions themselves are." Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:18) admits that, "when people realise that they have a specific need, they may want to do something about it." The term 'Conscientization' has indeed become an essential part in this study. According to Burkey (1993:55), defines 'Conscientization' as a process in which the people try to understand their present situation in terms of the prevailing social, economic and political relationships in which they find themselves (reiterated). Morisy (1997:126-127) notes that,

"Churches more than any other agency, can help people perceive their lives within a larger historical and cosmic setting, and thus begin to see more clearly which aspects of our lifestyle can be accepted and what needs to be resisted."

5.8.1   The church's four steps of a sustainable rural living

The figure 3 below shows the four steps of a sustainable rural living, which the Church as a community-based organization can follow in order to be much more effective in community development. The four steps that can be followed by the church in the communities where it has been situated are, Conscientization, Empowerment, Participation and Sustainability (CEPS). These steps in this study are of vital importance in order to develop and help the church in Malawi, as a community-based organization how it could/should engage with. As such the church can be an effective vehicle to a sustainable rural living and help people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives. Morisy (1997: xii) admits that, "community involvement by churches can be little more than 'ambulance work' if there is no mechanism to enable people to reflect on the significance of their encounter with the raw, abrasive aspects of life."

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Figure 4: The four steps of a sustainable rural living.[57]

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │  1. Conscientization │
                    └─────────────────────┘

  ┌──────────────────┐        ┌──────────┐        ┌─────────────────┐
  │ 4. Sustainability │       │  Church  │        │  2. Empowerment │
  └──────────────────┘        └──────────┘        └─────────────────┘

                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │   3. Participation   │
                    └─────────────────────┘
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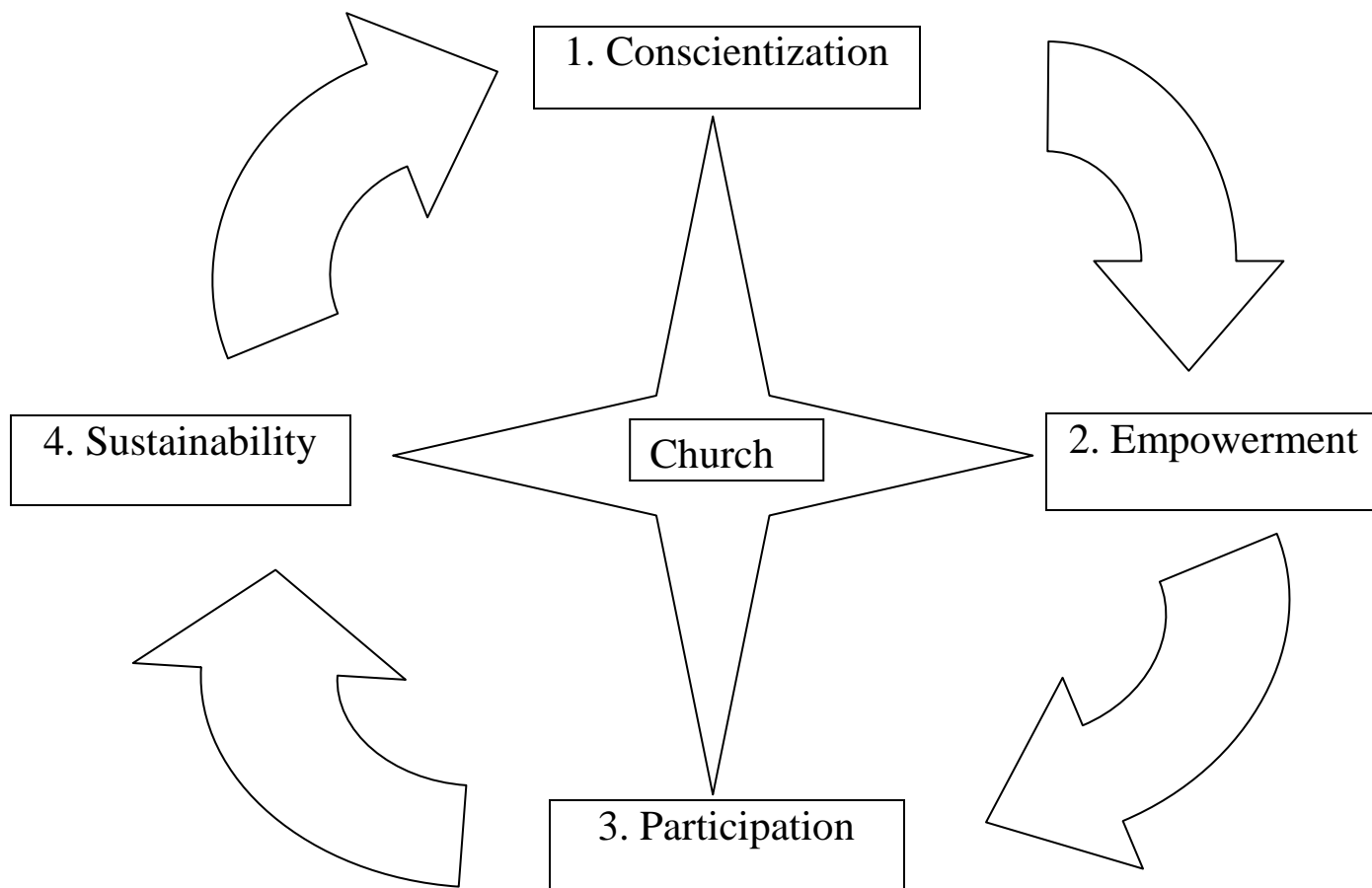
5.8.2   The importance of Conscientization

The diagram above gives a picture of how the church as a community-based organisation can play its role in order to be much more effective to the process of Conscientization. In conscientizing the people, especially those in the rural areas, the church can effectively help the rural people to have a sustainable rural living. They are steps that link to each other in order for the Conscientization to take place in a sustainable rural living. As explained earlier in chapter one, that Conscientization is a process in which people try to understand their present situation in terms of the prevailing social, economic and political relationships in which they find themselves, the church as a community based organisation can be an effective vehicle in this process.

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[57] This diagram in figure 4 has been designed by the researcher himself, in order to give a clear picture of how effective the church can be in community development, as a community based organization. The church is at the centre of everything, it needs to take part in sensitizing the people in the rural areas. They are steps as it relies on each other.

The church being at the centre of the process means that it has an important role to play in order to bring a sustainable rural living. Nurnberger (1999:238) argues the fact that, "the goal of Conscientization should not be the demonization of a social class, therefore, but its humanisation. The insight must dawn that there are neither angels nor devils in the world; there are only humans-and all humans are prone to anti-social behaviour." This is further clarified by Burkey (1993:57) who argues that,

> "It is becoming more and more apparent that the first step in achieving genuine participation is a process in which the rural poor themselves become more aware of their own situation, of the socio-economic reality around them of their real problems, the causes of these problems, and what measures they themselves can take to begin changing their situation. This process of awakening, raising of levels of consciousness, or Conscientisation, constitutes a process of self-transformation through which people grow and mature as human beings. In this participation is a basic human need."

Sensitizing people in the rural areas is necessary and sufficient in light of urbanization. When people come to their conscience and understand their present situation, as to how important it is for them living in the rural areas and the benefits that they can have in sustainable rural living, as a result they can be empowered. It is through empowerment that the people can be able to participate in sustainable development which can help them to appreciate better the importance of Conscientization. According to Swannepoel (1997:6), participation is the natural result of empowerment, and it is not a means to an end-it is the objective of development. In support of this, Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:125-156) point out the fact that, "through the empowerment process people must be enabled to express and assert what development means to them, otherwise development in terms of the manipulation of resources and the fulfilment of basic needs cannot take place." Shepherd (1998:59) notes that,

> "Participation in rural development is not then primarily about inclusion or involvement of the rural poor in development projects, but about the development of organisations and sets of organisations in which the rural poor can articulate their interests, defend what they have, and stake out new fields of promise."

According to August (2010:95) admits the fact that, development is a method but also a process in which the major activity is to learn by means of participation in order that the people may be empowered. People are the subject of their own development. "When people are participating in development, they can understand easily the importance of sustainable rural living due to their contribution. According to El Sherbini (1986:9 in Swanepoel Ibid: 6) emphasises the fact that, power must accompany participation. Participation is an essential

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part of human growth that is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, and cooperation, is an important part of the process of Conscientization. Therefore, due to this process the change will then not be just for now or for season but it will be sustained since the people will grasp the knowledge and skills of a sustainable rural living in a community. August (2011:31) observes the fact that,

> "The participation of the people themselves in their own development is both an essential part of human growth and a process whereby the people themselves becomes aware of and understand their problems and the social reality within which they live in order to affect lasting change themselves at grassroots level ... Through this process of Conscientization where people become aware of own needs and they can embark upon self-reliant ventures where they themselves feel that they are contributing the maximum human, material and financial resources relative to their ability. External agents must be seen not as doing for or giving to, but enabling people by working alongside them."

According to Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:124-125), development should thus be seen as an interdependent, multidimensional process that places very high emphasis on participation and, through participation, empowers those who are the beneficiaries of a sustainable development process. The three basic interrelated elements that make up the process of development are *participation, empowerment* and *sustainability*. Swanepoel (1997:5) adds that, "the huge problem of sustaining development and maintaining facilities instituted by development is resolved if the affected people participate, knowing that they have a stake in the effort and the results."

5.8.3   Empowerment as a means of Conscientization

Narayan D, et al (2007:12) defines Empowerment as, "fundamentally about enlarging the freedom of poor and marginalized people to make choices and take actions to shape their lives." In empowering, it is important that the people themselves take the responsibility for their own development. Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:27) emphasises that, "the people's empowerment is a process fed by information, knowledge and experience, that brings them confidence in their own abilities." In support of this Msangaambe (2011:218) emphasises the fact that,

> "Empowerment is intended to permanently influence the lives of individuals or communities. It should not be carried out without proper planning and strategy. Employment of good principles for using empowerment as a methodology for transformation can help to achieve the intended outcome."

Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:125) note that, "empowerment takes place within the context of social learning, which is a process in which knowledge is acquired by all people in the process of living." Linthicum (1991:25 in Joda-Mbewe 2002:172-173) presents five important Conscientization steps for the empowerment of the poor, as a holistic approach. The steps are as follows:

1) Networking: To visit and befriend the people, identifying key issues and leaders while building trust between the poor and the church.

2) Coalition-building: To gather the poor and the Christians together into coalitions so as to address community needs

3) Acting/reflecting/acting: A process that people will follow in order to identify the root causes of the problems. They reflect, act, evaluate, act again and reflect more deeply. Self-confidence and community trust are built as a result of this process.

4) Leadership empowerment: The leaders of the coalition inevitably surface, are identified, and equipped. This is the leadership that supports networks and coalitions.

5) The birth of community: The members of the community begin to take charge of their situation, as a result of these problem-solving coalitions. This leads to the transformation of the community and a better future.

Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:27) admits that, "the most important outcome of participation and empowerment is the establishment of ownership where it really belongs and that is with the community. The church should help the poor people as its task to gain the ability by bringing them into conscience and sensitize them about the situation that they are in, so that they can improve their lives in the rural areas. According to Oakley (1991:9 in August 1999:26) there are two basic approaches to the concept of empowerment that views empowerment as the development of skills and abilities that enable people to manage and/or negotiate better with development delivery systems, and secondly, empowerment is viewed as a process concerned with equipping people to decide and take action within the context of their own development needs.

Msangaambe (2011:202) notes that, "Empowerment in development is commonly linked to the improvement of the way of life or welfare of marginalized societies. The term usually

becomes a tool for dealing with social dangers, such as poverty, gender inequality, political injustice and oppression." With these views of definitions, empowerment is therefore; viewed as a process that makes power available to communities in order that they could use it for the manipulation of access to and the use of resources in terms of achieving certain development goals. August (2010:11) writes that, "Empowerment must therefore enable people to express and assert what development means to them; otherwise, social development in terms of manipulation of resources cannot take place."

5.8.3.1   *Views of Empowerment*

Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:125) argues that, "empowerment can be viewed as a process that makes power available so that it can be used for the manipulation of access and the use of resources to achieve certain development goals." According to Oakley (1991:9 in Davids 2009:124), identifies two basic views of empowerment. The views are as follows:

1. The first views empowerment as the development of skills and abilities which enable people to manage and/or negotiate better with the development delivery system.

2. The second views empowerment as a process that equips people to decide on and take action regarding their development process.

In order for empowerment to be used to gain access to resources and achieve certain goals, it is a process that makes power available. According to Davids (2009:131), participation offers valuable opportunities to rectify the inequality of past and current top-down, prescriptive development planning approaches and improves the chances of achieving sustainable development. De Vos (1998:407) emphasises the fact that, "empowerment can be described as the process of increasing personal, interpersonal and political power, enabling individuals or collectives to improve their life situation."

According to Msangaambe (2011:202-203), 'empowerment' would mean the process of giving hope to the hopeless by helping them to discover their untapped potential, as well as unlocking their skills and abilities. In such a sense, empowerment should not be confused with handouts or starter-packs that are usually once and-for-all. It refers to the movement of encouraging and developing skills among the needy, towards self-sufficiency and the elimination of any future need for charity. According to Hughes (1998:54), the section of the poor is also very significant in that the main aim is not relief but empowerment. The poor are

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to be loaned what they need in order to be able to stand on their own feet. It is not handouts but handups that the poor need.

5.8.4 Participation as a means of Conscientization

According to August (1991:25), participation should be viewed as both the means and end of the process of development, and in regards to this, participation could be viewed not only as a means in terms of its ability to serve as a catalyst in the process of development but also an end in that it represents the ability of a community to exercise control over its own reality. Participation is an essential part of human growth, and it is the key to sustainable development. It is important for the people after being conscientized and empowered to participate in a sustainable rural development. The poor need to take part in making decisions, and it is necessary for these people to participate fully.

According to Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:26) gives a principle of participation that, every individual adult, whether relatively poor, poor or the poorest of the poor, has the right to be part of the decision-making mechanism regarding his/her development ....and making that the poorest of the poor are present when dictions are made regarding development, and also that they participate actively. In addition to this, Leonard et al (2010:231) admits that, "by nature, human beings have an intrinsic urge to want to belong. One of the most obvious ways of belonging is through participation." Burkey (1993:56) observes the fact that, "participation of the rural poor in their own development has been measured as a key factor in the success of projects."

Rahman (1993:152) notes that, "people's participation has often been generated 'spontaneously'." According to Joda-Mbewe (2002:282), participation is the element through which personal autonomy rudimentary moral agency can be realized, and social participation is noted or realized through rudimentary and essential activities that have to do with life's basic continuities such as child rearing, work, kinship and friendship relations. According to Leonard et al (2010:232) admits that,

> "....when it comes to participation, it must be authentic, meaningful and effective. It is quite possible for people to be cheated through machinations and manipulations into believing that they are participating, but in effect they are not. In such a situation, it will not. In such a situation, it will not take very long before people come to realize that their participation is of little or no consequence, and as a response they will be antagonistic to the system."

In terms of its conceptualisation[58], August (1999:24-25), gives two ways in which participation can be viewed. The two ways are as follows:

1)   Rahman (1993:150 in August) views 'participation' as "... an active process in which the participants take initiative and take action that is stimulated by their own thinking and deliberation and over which they can exert effective control". This viewpoint is in agreement with, ibid. Oakley's (1991:9) which views participation as a means of empowering people by developing their skills and abilities to enable them to negotiate with the development delivery system and/or to equip themselves to make their own decisions in terms of their development needs and reality. August (Ibid: 25) emphasises that, "Participation is a complex and multidimensional concept because it is a component of the complex process of human growth."

2)   The last way in which participation can be viewed is that proposed by Liebenberg (1996:51 in August Ibid) who admits that, "participation also constitutes the important element of development planning. According to August (Ibid), in terms of the people-centred, participatory development paradigm that is used in this study, development planning should include the active involvement of people in the form planning process. The central role of participation within the context of development planning should also be replicated with regard to implementation, and participation should be the centre of the whole process of development.

In this concept of participation Davids et al (2009:118) gives a clear picture as to how participation can be distinguished as a means to an end (passive participation[59]) and as an end in itself (active participation). In view of the comparative analysis on participation as a means and/or an end, Davids (ibid) presents the concept of participation as follows: Firstly, participation as a means implies the use of participation to achieve some predetermined goal or objective, and it attempts to utilise existing resources in order to achieve the objective of

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[58] There is no attempt in this study to absolutise definitions. The attempts at conceptualisation are merely intended to serve as guidelines that are subjective individual constructions of reality. The conceptualisation should serve to facilitate clarity and to avoid ambiguity. August (1999:10)

[59] Passive participation; people "participate" by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. "Participation" relates to a unilateral top-down announcement by the authority or change agent. Information being shared belongs to outsiders and/or professionals. The community remains clueless, frustrated and powerless. Davids et al (2009:117)

programmes/projects. Participation as a means also, emphasises achieving the objective rather than the act of participation itself, and more common in government programmes/projects, where the main concern is to mobilise the community and 'involve' them in improving the efficiency of the delivery system. Generally a short-term process and it appears to be a passive form of participation.

Secondly, participation as an end, attempts to empower people to participate in their own development more meaningfully, and it also attempts to ensure the increased role of people in development initiatives. Participation as an end also, focuses on improving the ability of the people to participate rather than just achieving the predetermined objectives of the programmes/project, and it finds relatively less favour with government agencies. NGOs in principle agree with this view point. Generally a long-term process and it has relatively more active and dynamic than participation as a means. Participation is indeed, an essential part of human growth. In support of this Samuel & Sugden et al (1987:44) emphasises the fact that, "if people participate in the process of their own transformation it becomes meaningful, effective, and lasting."

Participation of the people in the development process is both a means and an end of empowerment. If the people in the rural areas participates in developing their communities, through the church that can help them to develop their skills and abilities to enable them to negotiate with the development delivery system and/or to equip themselves to make their own decisions in terms of their development needs and reality, the desire to migrate to the cities can be minimized. Rahman (1993:150) notes that, "implicit in this concept of participation is the concept of self-reliance." Burkey (1993:57) observes the fact that,

> "Participation is essentially a 'learning by doing' exercise – plans are made, action is taken, results are studied, lessons learned and new plans and action take place. This step-by-step process is often referred to in the literature on participatory development as praxis which means practice as distinguished from theory."

5.8.5 Sustainability as a means of Conscientization

According to Joda-Mbewe (2002:164), by 'sustainability', refers to the meaning of the Oxford Dictionary, which states that, it is to support life in, or to provide for the life or bodily needs to furnish with the necessaries of life, and with this meaning in mind, therefore, the objective of development is to bring about a difference in the lives of people through transformation. This definition of an Oxford points to the fact that any development

endeavour that fails to bring about and impact is bound to be either benefiting the already rich or is a mere welfare organization. In support of this, August (1999:27) admits that, "although sustainable development means development that can be sustained for indefinite period of time, the term has acquired a more comprehensive connotation that should be distinguished from sustained economic growth."

5.8.5.1 *Sustainable rural living*

According to Msangaambe (2011:182), people will not participate effectively in development until they have established their problems and discovered that they are part of the solution. Therefore, the church should be a pacesetter in community development. Bearing in mind that development is a slow process, understanding change can take time is very important but the good news is that once this change occurs it can be sustained for a better living of the people in the rural areas and rely on themselves.

If the church can emphasise on the importance of the fully participation of the rural people, it can be of a real benefit to local people and can be successfully sustained. According to Burkey (1993: xii), upon seeing how effective it is to be self-reliance, he encounters a remarkable prove of this is Sri-Lanka when he was trying to figure out what could be done to the people in the rural communities, he was convinced to see how the people of Sri-Lanka together have tried to improve their lives. He (ibid.) confessed that, "I am convinced that self-reliant participatory development is the only foundation for true development-human, economic, political and social. It is a slow and difficult process..." This is further clarified by Honadle & Van Sant (1985:2 in Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:125) who argues that, "sustainable development deals with the continuous flow of benefits" Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:125) adds that, "this ongoing flow of benefits and resources is a restricted process, especially in terms of the degradation of developmental, ecological and environmental resources." Sustainable development never ends and it is a slow-moving process.

It is of vital importance for the people in rural areas to participate fully in a sustainable rural living, if it is to be of real benefit to local people and sustain their life in the rural areas. The rural people needs to be helped to rise above their situation, and together they can overcome the constraints in their lives, and the people in the scattered rural settlements should share their ideas and experiences that they are facing, and struggle together to improve their own lives in the rural areas. In support of this, Burkey (1993:50) admits that,

> "Field staff must be instilled with the idea that they are not to do things for the people; but their job is to help people to do things for themselves. In no way should promises or indications be given that the project will 'give' anything to anybody. The approach should be one of: we can help you to analyse and understand what your problems are and how they can be solved; we can also help you to acquire the skills and knowledge that you need to carry out what you have decided to do; but, it is you who must decide and act: we can't do it for you. Self-reliance requires a wide variety of knowledge and skills. People need to learn how to form and manage their own organisations.

If the people are conscientized, they can analyse, and understand what their problems are and see to it on how they can deal with those problems, and be able to acquire new skills and adapt new knowledge for a better living in the rural communities. In order for the people in rural areas to change their own lives, the rural people themselves should come to realise the importance of sustainable development, and have the ability to develop themselves.

5.8.5.2 *Going straight to the people in their communities (people first)*

Chambers (1997:14) emphasises that, "the problem is how, in conditions of continuous and accelerating change, to put people first and poor people first of all: how to enable sustainable well-being for all." Nurnberger (1999:319) affirms that, "but handouts are never a good solution. Peripheral groups must be empowered to make greater contributions to the process of production." In support of this, Marc-Ela (1990:7) adds that, "it is not so much a matter of completing a list of tasks, as it is of being and living with the people, of finding them where they are." Burkey (1993:130) notes that,

> "Poor people know they are poor, sick, etc., but often they do not want to confront the situation. Many of them think the problems they face are their individual problems and they can do nothing to change the situation. By getting the people to look at their problems collectively we help them see the commonality of their problems and to understand the structures, which are oppressing them."

James Yen[60] gives a specific approach as a change agent which can be much helpful to the church as community-based organisation especially to the marginalized poor, in the rural communities. In support of this, Swanepoel (1997:50) adds that, "the credo devised by James Yen in 1920s to guide the Rural Reconstruction Movement in China might help to create an atmosphere ..." This approach is also echoed by Burkey (Ibid: ii) as follows:

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[60] According to Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:101), this approach of the facilitator/change agent was summarized by James Yen's 1920 credo to guide the rural reconstruction movement in China.

Go to the People
Live with them
Love them
Learn from them
Work with them
Start with what they have
Build on what they know
And in the end
When the work is done
The People will rejoice:
'We have done it ourselves!'

The Church as a community-based organisation needs to take care of the poorest of the poor, the sick, the marginalised, those who are rejected by society, and those whose lives are broken or who are in real trouble. The church can help to change things and make the people participate and being empowered. It is important for the people to identify their needs themselves and decide what they are going to do about them, and the church can help to enable them to do it.

People will always participate when they see that it will be to their own benefit. Motivation should come from within and not from outside. Swanepoel & De Beer (2004:61) adds that, "motivation is expressed as a form of commitment to the task or the cause. It is only through this commitment that we can hope to achieve the set goals in community development." In order for community development to be successful the people themselves must have an inner strength or conviction (motivation), and then people will be willing to participate. Rahman (1993:207) observes the fact that, "people's power comes ultimately from self-reliance."

5.9   CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed and analysed on how the church as a community-based organization can be effective to community development. In giving a clear picture of the communities in Malawi, a careful comparison between urban and rural settings was presented in order to appreciate the role that the church has to play to the communities in conscientizing the people on the issue of urbanization. It has also discussed on how the church can respond to the community's challenges and help to eradicate poverty in the rural settings. The church can be much more effective to community development, in developing countries like Malawi.

According to Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:127), development as a process must aim at satisfying basic needs, within the context of a process that is participatory, empowering and sustainable in nature. Mhobo (2009:8) admits that, "if the church works together with community development leaders and other institutions, community development can be successful and effective tool in reaching marginalized in the community" If people are conscientized of the importance of a sustainable rural living, there can be an effective sustainable development in the rural communities. In support of this, Speckman (2007:275) points out the fact that, "development requires that the first step be taken by the people who are being helped to develop." In support of this sentiment, Rahman (1993:179) emphasises the fact that,

> "People's self-development implies changing the relation of knowledge, to restore popular knowledge to a status of equality with professional knowledge and advancing 'organic knowledge' as a part of the very evolution of life and not distanced from it. This offers a new role for intellectuals, in initiating 'animation' work with the people to promote their collective self-inquiry and action."

The importance of Conscientization has been argued in this chapter with the church at the centre to give a clear picture of how effective the church can be in community development, if it can take a deliberate part, in helping people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives, livelihoods can be positively changed. In support of this, Liebengerg and Stewart (1997:125) point out the fact that, "once the internal and external knowledge has been generated; it should be used as an integrated and functional tool to assist communities towards reaching their specific development goals." The Church as a community-based organization can play an effective and positive role in the community to assist in bringing about transformation of the Malawian society. According to Burkey (1993:59), participation in this context leads to greater control by the poor over their own life situation, and through the acquisition of knowledge and awareness they become better able to understand the causes of their poverty and are in a better position to mobilise and utilise the resources available in order to improve their situation.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMATIVE CONCLUSIONS OF THE WHOLE DISSERTATION AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The dissertation has been presented on the topic of towards sustainable rural living: a theological critique on periphery-centre relations in Malawi. Throughout the study the researcher has argued that, if the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives in responding to community challenges, livelihoods can be positively changed. It emphasizes much on how the Church as a community-based organization can respond to community challenges in order to be an effective vehicle for community development and sustainable rural living in the light of the problem of urbanization. The church has a unique role to play in a sustainable rural living.

Chapter one: Chapter one has provided an introduction to the entire work, and it has described the goals of undertaking this study. The study attempted to achieve the following goals:

1) To find out how the church can sensitize people living in rural areas, about the importance of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas.

2) To explore the importance of rural sustainability in sustainable development.

3) To discuss how the church as a community based organization can be an effective vehicle to Community Development and sustainable rural living.

4) To investigate factors which attract people to migrate to urban areas and find out the solutions to these challenges.

5) To help raise the level of awareness of rural sustainability in human beings, especially those living in rural areas.

Motivation: It has been explained in this study as to what has motivated the researcher to come up with the topic mentioned above. It is due to the researcher's exposure in both urban and rural settings, of which through his experience has observed that people in the rural settings do migrate to urban settings. Many people who have migrated to town resort to forming slums and shanty towns, yet these settlements contribute a lot of problems to cities.

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Therefore; in this study the strong suggestion has been made that there is a possibility for people to live and sustain their lives in the rural areas without having to migrate to urban areas. The continent Africa is changing, and cities are growing, rural development is generally conceived of today as the growing of export crops; and the rural world is reduced to a sector that produces revenue to pay for the consumption of urban minorities. (cf. 1.2:2-3). Exploring the role of the church in building people's awareness of the possibilities of sustainable living in the rural areas, has been presented as the aim of this research. (cf. 1.2:3, 4.3.1:78) The church as an institution called by God and it has to play its role in community development. (cf. 1.1:1)

Research problem: The research problem has been raised, and emphasised that, Malawi as one of the developing countries in the world is facing a lot of challenges, such as the percentage rate of urbanization that is increasing rapidly. This growth due to migration puts an enormous strain in the infrastructures of cities throughout the world. (cf. 1.3:3-4). The researcher has emphasised the fact that, unlocking the awareness of the people in the rural areas to not migrate to squalid urban settings is of vital importance in Community Development. Hence; the church as a community-based organization needs to have a positive impact on the people for the betterment of their own life. (cf. 1.3:4). Through his exposure in both urban and rural settings, observation has been made that, many people in Malawi are migrating to towns, leaving their home villages to look for a better life.

Research question: In the whole of the discussion the study has endeavoured to answer the question: How can the Church as a community-based organization respond to community challenges in order to be an effective vehicle for community development and sustainable rural living in the light of the problem of urbanization? The study focused much on the impact that the church (Nkhoma Synod CCAP) can bring change in the community on a sustainable rural living and on how it can respond to the challenges that Malawi as a country is currently facing.

Hypothesis: In this study the hypothesis was given as to what the church has to understand and conscientize the people in the rural settings in order to minimize the high percentage of the people migrating to the cities. As such the hypothesis given was that: *If the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people to self-development and bringing a positive impact*

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on the people's lives in responding to community challenges, livelihoods can be positively changed. (cf. 1.5:6-7)

Methodology: The researcher has used a *Literature Review* as his methodology which is a non-empirical study and the method has helped him to find out what other scholars have written in relation to the topic mentioned above. In this study the literature review as methodology, has provided him with a good understanding of the issues and debates in the area that he worked in, current theoretical thinking and definitions, as well as previous studies and their results. (cf. 1.7:8-10)

Chapter two: The chapter has endeavoured to find out on what other scholars have written in relation to what the church (Nkhoma Synod CCAP) as a community-based organisation has done in the past as well as to what is currently doing. This knowledge has been very important and helpful in this study in order to find out what the church did and what it ought to be doing in relation to community development. (cf. 1.8:10). In chapter two the general historical background of the church (Nkhoma Synod CCAP) and its contribution to the community has been presented in order to describe on how effective the church had in the past. It has also given a careful analysis of the Church's life in Malawi and in doing so it briefly describes the country of Malawi and its location.

Malawi as a country is one of the developing countries in the world and it is a very poor country, situated in Sub-Saharan Africa, most of the people live in great poverty, and HIV/AIDS is also very widespread, hence; these are the greatest problem in this country. (cf. 2.1, 2.2:17-18). Many people in rural areas are flocking to towns in order to look for opportunities, that they think they can find if they live in town, and these people are very poor. The country of Malawi mainly relies much on farming, and economically is also one of the poorest countries in Africa and the rest of the world. (cf. 2.2.3:22).

The church as a community-based organization has been playing a unique role in community development as explained in this second chapter, which helped many people in the different communities to be empowered and be able to live a sustainable living. The Church introduced some important skills and knowledge to the rural people allowing them to participate in order for the people to be able to sustain their own life. It was active at all levels approaching those people in need holistically, by proclaiming the Gospel, education, medical work, and industrial and literary work.

Many people in different communities were helped through the church's holistic approach, which made a major contribution to civic life in the rural as well as urban areas. The church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP is involved in a holistic ministry, and through the missionaries it managed to establish the department for Medical and Relief & Development which has a closest nature of work as they both deal with the physical needs of people in the communities. (cf. 2.4.1:32). It also emphasised much on education as part of one of the means of spreading the Christian faith to the people, hence; they realized the importance of the need of education, and almost all missions in Malawi, there was schools established which regarded as one of their first tasks after settling down in a country. The church in Malawi through its holistic approach, reached many people to the communities, and that is through schools, medical work and agriculture. Its emphasis on community development helped much to make a major contribution to civic life in the rural as well as urban areas. (cf. 2.4.3, 2.4.4: 34-36).

The Church and the Government in Malawi worked together in different ways. The missionaries co-operated with the Government in order to enhance the Mission work. The missions played a significant role in promoting and developing the communities of where it has been situated. (cf. 2.3.4, 2.4.4:30-36). The Church and Government should continue working together in order to help eliminate this huge challenge 'poverty'. The church as a community-based organisation amongst the marginalized poor can be an effective vehicle for community development. Due to the Church's Biblical commitment to the poor, its capacity in terms of capital and the resourceful members, its understanding and experience of social realities and the holistic nature of its activity, the church as a community-based organisation amongst the marginalized can be an effective vehicle for community development. (cf. 2.1:17).

Chapter three: The third chapter discussed the poverty situation and the Malawian church existence in this context. The problems that are caused by poverty in the communities, and challenges HIV/AIDS, that Malawi as one of the developing countries is facing due to urbanization, were also noted. Poverty, Urbanization and HIV/AIDS were discovered to be outstanding challenges among the many challenges that Malawi as one of the developing countries and the entire Sub-Saharan Africa is currently facing. (cf. 3.1, 3.2-3.7:38-72). In Malawi poverty is real, and many people have died of AIDS like other African countries, due to lack of access of treatment for this disease. Due to poverty, one of the major factors of fast

growth of cities in Malawi is rural-urban migration which contributes a lot of problems to this country. There are a high percentage of people migrating from rural to urban areas that brings a lot of pressure on urban resources. (cf. 3.4:59, 3.5.1:64-65). The church and has a huge task to play to the community in regards to community development.

The emphasis has been made in chapter three that, if church can realize the factors that are forcing people to migrate to the cities then it can effectively deal with the main problem, and it can respond to the specific needs of the people living in the rural areas and be able to thoroughly understand that these needs are prior to the church. (cf. 3.5.3:67). People want a better life in which they can meet their basic daily needs through employment and business. Some may be escaping from socio-relational problems common in the villages due to a scarcity of resources, such as land. Some are just looking for a way to make easy money in towns, so that they can invest it in the rural areas, and the other factor is that, the failure of the government and other stakeholders to develop the people in their rural contexts. (cf. 3.5.2:66).

Chapter three has also pointed out the fact that, people can be willing to change if they see that the change is for their own benefits, hence; the church should help to bring this awareness to the people by conscientizing them. (cf. 3.7:71). Therefore the emphasis has been made that, the church can be the right vehicle to conscientize these people, and it can play a unique role. (cf. 3.7:71).

Chapter four: The chapter has attempted to achieve the goal number one and two. According to the first goal, the study was to find out how the church can sensitize people living in rural areas, about the importance of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas. The second goal was to explore the importance of rural sustainability in sustainable development. The sensitization of the church to the community is of vital importance in community development.

The emphasis has been made that it is important to explore the church's role and its participation in sustainable local and national engage in transformative accomplish, in addressing local and national poverty that the developing countries like Malawi encounter. (cf. 4.1:73). (cf. 1.6:8). Chapter four has tackled these two goals and explained the role of the church in sustainable development; where it has suggested that the church can help and

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respond to the people's human needs, and reach to the roots of people's ignorance and restructure the living conditions in the rural areas. (cf. 4.1, 4.2.3:73-77)

It has been made clear that the focus of sustainable development is to improve the quality of life for all the people on earth without increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply the indefinitely. It has also discussed on the importance of rural sustainability in sustainable development in order to find out how the church can sensitize people living in rural areas, about the importance of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas. Therefore; the chapter focused on the specific role of the church in sustainable development to the community. It has also explored the importance of rural sustainability in sustainable development.

In this chapter the terms 'Sustainable development', 'Community development' has been defined; and it has been emphasized that the church as a community based organization has a unique role to play in community development. The term 'Sustainable Development' in this chapter has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, and it has also presented other definitions of this term that relates to this study. (cf. 4.3.2:79). It has also been emphasized in this chapter that Sustainable rural living in sustainable development is very important because it ensures growth that continues in the process of development in the developing countries like Malawi. It is church's role to help the people in the rural areas to understand the importance of staying in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas. (cf. 4.3-4.6.1:78-96, 4.6:101). Msangaambe (2011:194) emphasises the fact that,

> "The role of the church in sustainable development is extremely vital at local, national and global levels as there are always kingdom values attached to the concept of development in Christian thinking. Sustainable development is part of the church's task of doing theology."

According to Joda-Mbewe (2002:354), the church should always remember that it is her responsibility to give direction to the world, recognizing clearly that as a Christian community, guided by the Holy Spirit, she becomes a guideline for decision-making. At the same time, she needs to be aware that without the religious element, life is like an engine running without oil-it seizes up. According to August (2010: xiii) emphasizes the fact that, due to the church's capacity in terms of resources, capital, membership, its understanding and experience of social realities and the holistic nature of its activities, the Church as a community-based organisation can be an effective vehicle for community development

amongst the marginalised. Hence; this study, has argued the fact that, if the church can take a deliberate part, in helping people in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives, livelihoods can be positively changed.

The church should take a deliberate part, in unlocking the awareness of the people in the rural areas to not migrate to squalid urban setting in order to help minimise the desire that many people has to move to cities. The church as an institution is indeed called by God to play an important role in order to serve the needs of the community and respond to God's call. Hughes (1998:205-206) admits the fact that, "... 'Conscientization', must not be an individualistic process but means of awakening a whole community so that when there is any move towards improvement, benefits will come to the whole community and not to some select individuals."

Chapter five: The chapter has endeavoured to achieve the third, fourth and fifth goals. The third goal which was to discuss how the church as a community based organization can be an effective vehicle to Community Development and sustainable rural living. The fourth goal was to investigate factors which attract people to migrate to urban areas and find out the solutions to these challenges. The fifth goal was to help to raise the level of awareness of rural sustainability in human beings, especially those living in rural areas.

The effectiveness of the church as a community-based organization to community development is of vital importance. This has been emphasized in chapter five, where a strong suggestion has been made that; the church cannot separate itself from community development. The emphasis has been made that the church as a community-based organisation needs to take care of the poorest of the poor, the sick, the marginalised, those who are rejected by society, and those whose lives are broken or who are in real trouble.(cf. 5.4, 5.8.5.2:102-132).

In this chapter therefore; the contextual analysis of rural-urban areas and how the church as a community –based organization can be an effective vehicle to community development has been discussed. It has been presented that the church can be much more influential to community development in a sustainable rural living. A careful comparison of the people living in urban and those of rural setting in a Malawian perspective has been made in order to establish a clear picture of how effective the church can be in conscientizing the rural people. This has been presented in order to appreciate the plight of people living in these two settings

in Malawi. (cf. 1.3:6, 5.2, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.2.1, 5.3.2.2:102-109). Many challenges are there in the communities due to urbanization. Challenges like unemployment, which is due to poverty that is facing Malawi as a developing country today. (cf. 5.4.4:115).

The third goal: In achieving this goal in this chapter the church's sensitization to the people who migrate to urban areas was presented. A clear picture of a sustainable rural living has also been given through the four steps which stipulates the importance of the Conscientization of the church as a community-based organisation and the role it can play in order to be much more effective. (cf. 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 110-113). The chapter emphasises the fact that the church as a community-based organization can be an effective vehicle to community development, and the church in Malawi should take a deliberate participation in bringing change in this developing country. According to Hughes (1998:206), Conscientization with no doubt have introduced elements into development thinking that have tilted it in a more biblical direction.

The fourth goal: In investigating factors which attract people to migrate to urban areas and find out the solutions to these challenges as fourth goal of this study, was also achieved in part of chapter five as explained above. The emphasis has been made that it is important for the church as a community-based organisation to pay attention in tackling the factors that force people to leave rural areas in order to be much more effective to the community. (cf. 5.4.1:110).

The fifth goal: This goal was achieved in this chapter in order for the church to help raise the level of awareness of rural sustainability in human beings, especially those living in rural areas. This chapter investigated factors which attract people to migrate to urban areas and found out the solutions to these challenges. Rural sustainability is of vital importance in sustainable development. This goal which endeavoured to help raise the level of awareness of rural sustainability in human beings, especially those living in rural areas, has been achieved in this study in two ways.

Firstly, the study has explored and discussed the role that the church (Nkhoma Synod CCAP) played in relation to sustainable rural living and appreciate how it helped to bring a better change in the communities where it was situated. (cf. 1.7:9). The church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP places itself living in community, paying attention to all areas of need, and being with the people where they are. (cf. 2.4.2:33) The church has the capacity to help to bring change

in communities due to the fact that it played a tremendous role in the past, and it can be much more effective even now. It has the high level of awareness of rural sustainability and it can help in conscientizing the people on the importance of sustainable rural living, and help raise the awareness of rural sustainability.

Secondly, it has been discussed in this study that there is a need of the church to help raise the awareness of the people on the importance of sustainable rural living. As such this can help to minimize the high rate of the people migrating from rural areas to urban areas, as this migration puts severe strains on the capacity of cities to provide. High rate of urbanisation contributes a lot of problems to cities, and however, the study has strongly emphasised that the church as a community-based organisation can help to sensitize the rural people by unlocking their awareness in light of this challenge. (cf. 1.2:2-6)

6.2   RECOMMENDATIONS

This study titled 'towards sustainable rural living: a theological critique on periphery-centre relations in Malawi' is aimed at interpreting various situations, by taking into consideration what is going on, why this is going on, what ought to be going on and how we might respond. Therefore, the study considered the problems of the people in both urban and rural settings, why are they migrating to urban areas, what they were supposed to do in order for them to have no desire of migrating from rural to urban areas, and how the church as a community-based organisation should respond to the problem. (cf. 1.8:10-11)

In the literature there is overwhelming evidence that in the past the church (Nkhoma Synod CCAP) has adopted a holistic approach and played a tremendous role in relation to community development. The literature further shows that the missionaries who came to the country of Malawi, put the church of Nkhoma Synod CCAP at the right position of being capable to bring change into the people's lives. Some of the church's most remarkable activities noted were: the building of churches, primary schools, hospitals in all mission stations and also the opening of small farms. In these small farms local people came to be taught new methods of farming in order to help improve their communities. (cf. 2.4.2:33-34, 2.4.4:36)

It has also been observed through this literature study that the church as a community-based organisation is aware of the challenges that the rural people are facing and the people in the country of Malawi in general, in the light of urbanisation. This has been discovered due to its

unique role that the church (Nkhoma Synod CCAP) has played in the past, by its approach of a holistic. The church has contributed much to the communities especially where it was situated, and its emphasis on meeting not only spiritual needs but extending its mission by meeting even the physical needs of the people was observed. (cf. 2.1-2.5:17-37).

Due to its mission settlements the church is capable of providing skills and knowledge to the poor people in the rural settings and it can help bring change in the communities where people are based in, especially the marginalized poor. It can also create employment to the people living in rural areas especially those situated in the deep rural communities, in order to create a conducive environment to those poor people and help them to reduce having the desire of migrating to the cities. Due to church's impact on sustainable rural living as a community-based organization in the communities the researcher strongly made a suggestion that, the church can be an effective vehicle in community development, hence; it has a unique role that it can play in order to bring change. (cf. 2.3.4, 2.5:31-36)

In some other areas such as the challenge of HIV/AIDS, some churches, such as the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Malawi have realized their error in ignoring this issue until it has become a pandemic and instead of crying over split milk, they have opted to move forward in a positive, proactive way. (cf. 3.6:70).

In the same way the researcher recommends this church of CCAP in Malawi, that it can be the right vehicle in bringing changes in the communities as it has been doing in the past. Hence, if the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people to self-develop and bringing a positive impact on the people's lives in responding to community challenges, livelihoods can be positively changed. It has an essential in the betterment of a community; hence it has to explore its unique role in facilitating community development. The church as a community-based organisation needs to respond to community challenges in order to be an effective vehicle for community development and sustainable rural living in the light of the problem of urbanisation. (cf. 1.1:1, 1.5:6, 1.4:6). On top of that, the church as a community-based organisation has the responsibility to contribute to the community, and it is more equipped to participate in community development. It has been initiated by God in this world for Jesus Christ to redeem this world by the teaching and guiding of the Holy Spirit. As such, the Church can be an effective vehicle to the community especially to the rural settings. (cf. 2.3.3:29-30)

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The church needs to participate in unlocking the awareness of these challenge and help to conscientize people on how to deal with these challenges that the country is facing. The church needs to help to conscientize the people in the rural areas particularly the marginalized poor. It needs to help in seeking to change people's life for the better, and help to make power available to communities in order that they could use it for the manipulation of access to and the use of resources in terms of achieving certain development goals. When the empowerment has taken place, then the people can be able to participate. Participation is very important in people's life because it is an essential part of human growth that is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, and cooperation. In order to maintain a better life in the rural communities, the church needs to realize that a sustainable life is very important. As such, the church can help in dealing with the continuous flow of the benefits in the people's life. (cf. 1.9.3, 1.9.4:13-14). The church as a community based organization can be an effective vehicle to Community Development and sustainable rural living. The Church needs to be attached to the poor people, and give them hope, love them and also care for them in order for it to be much more effective to the rural communities in community development. (cf. 5.4.2:83).

In this study it has been emphasized that the people should be taught to develop skills so that they can do things for themselves. One of the most important gains for a community is the awareness that community development generates, and people become aware of themselves and their environment; of their needs and their resources. (cf. 5.5:109-110). The people need to be conscientized by the church on the importance of sustainable rural living. The church needs to take an active role, in helping them in self-development and bringing a positive impact on their lives, so that livelihoods can be positively changed. (cf. 1.5, 5.9:102)

The researcher emphasized the fact that if the church realize its role in community development and help to bring change in the people's lives, the desire of the migration of people from rural to urban areas can be minimized. The people will therefore be able to live and sustain their lives in the rural areas without having to migrate to urban areas. The researcher recommends that it is the church that can help in order to overcome this challenge, in regards to what it has been doing in the past. The church should not separate itself from community development.

The study proves that the church as a community based organization can be an effective vehicle for community development and sustainable rural living in the light of the problem of urbanization. It can also take an active role in bringing people to self-development and bring a positive impact on the people's lives, in order that livelihoods can be positively changed.

6.3   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is a non-empirical one, and in order to complete this dissertation the researcher has used a *Literature Review* as his methodology. This methodology was used in order to find out what other scholars have written in relation to this topic: 'towards sustainable rural living: a critique on periphery-centre relations in Malawi'. The researcher has used this methodology, in order to have enough knowledge as to what other scholars have written on this challenge of urbanisation and how the church can help to bring change. The researcher's awareness was that, the best way to advance and substantiate his argument is to present a literature review that shows reflections and perceptions of other scholars about this subject. (cf. 1.7:8-9).

Although the available literature provided a good insight into the role of the church in Community Development, this study had some limitations. One such limitation is that there was no emphasis on the extent of poverty in Malawi and the indicators of such poverty. This is because there is a death of literature on poverty in Malawi. The other limitation was that, there was not enough literature on the experiences of Malawians who have migrated from rural areas to urban areas, which would have also given more substantial understanding of what should be done in order to reduce this challenge of urbanization. This would have been much more helpful for the researcher in order to explore more on how the church as a community based organization can be an effective vehicle in community development.

6.4   CONCLUSION

This chapter has summarized the whole discussion of this study, and it has also presented the recommendations and limitations to this study. From the literature review which the researcher has done, the researcher concludes that the hypothesises presented in this study that, If the Church can take a deliberate part, in helping people to self-development and bringing a positive impact on the people's lives in responding to community challenges, livelihoods can be positively changed, will be much more helpful to the country of Malawi as one of the developing country. (cf. 1.5:6-7)

The study attempted to explore more on a sustainable rural living, by discussing and analysing the huge challenge of urbanization that Malawi is currently encountering, in order to find out on how the church as a community based organization can be an effective vehicle in community development. As such the study helped a lot on what should be done in the country of Malawi, in order to minimize the high rate of the people migrating from rural to urban areas, of which this situation is putting this country severe strain on the capacity of cities to provide. (cf. 1.3:3-6) This study also pointed as to what the church should do in helping to conscientize the people in the rural areas, and help to bring a sustainable rural living in Malawi. Due to the church's background the study has found that the church as a community-based organization can be an effective vehicle to community development, as it has been doing in the past.

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