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The Reincarnation of Missionary Activities in Kenya, the Case of the Inter-Christian Fellowship Evangelical Mission in Kimilili Sub-County

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Abstract:

This paper is an extract from a Master of Arts Degree Thesis presented to the Graduate School of Kenyatta University-Kenya in April 2017. The study interrogated the Impact of the Inter-Christian Fellowship Evangelical Mission (IcFEM) on circumcision rituals among the Bukusu community in Kimilili constituency in a Historical perspective. However, this paper examine done of the research objectives, nature and evolution of IcFEM in the study area from the time it was established in 1988 up to 2012, portraying key activities engaged in by the mission officials such as the establishment of schools, hospitals and the provision of other substantive services to the local community. For this objective to be explicitly realized, the theoretical tenets of the evolutionary paradigm were employed and they were fruitful in analyzing the growth and the development of IcFEM in Kimilili constituency. Purposive sampling was adopted in getting the resource people who were eventually interviewed to generate the findings of this paper. Oral Interview (abbreviated as O.I in the entire text) was a key research instrument that was successfully administered to generate substantive findings (Refer to the list of the informants provided in the references section). That aside, significant information was also gathered from the Kenya National Archives (abbreviated as KNA) to enrich the findings of this research.

Keywords: *Inter-christian fellowship evangelical mission, dreamland medical center, Bukusu circumcision, cultural syncretism*

1. Introduction

Colonial period in Africa came along with new ideas that were received with mixed feelings and reactions of accepting, resisting or combining the two (Tidy & Leeming 1981: 15). Such African reaction can be attributed to the manner in which colonialism was established in the continent. The new ideas, which ranged from socio-political to economic eventually transformed the nature of Africa's face in subsequent decades that followed after independence. Indeed, Bell (1986: 72) argues that Africa's socio-political and economic structures were profoundly changed during the process of colonial transformation. On this account, Hoogvelt (1976: 109) argues that no society can successfully dominate another without diffusing some of its cultural patterns and social institutions nor can any society successfully diffuse all or most of its cultural patterns without some degree of domination.

By 1890, Western Kenya had already received European and Arab visitors (Wafula, 2000: 94). The likes of Joseph Thompson, J. Martin, Bishop Hannington, Frederick Lugard, Bishop Tucker and Sir Gerald Portal had passed through Luhya land (Aseka, 1989: 181). By this time, Christian missionaries had been established at the Kenyan Coast and most of them spread into the interior of Kenya. It is important to note that this new religion had significant impact on many African cultures such as the Bukusu circumcision (Kakai, 1993:173-174). Perhaps it should be observed that these Christian missionaries were also interested in spreading Western civilization that was not in Africa. In Kenya, they established schools and health institutions that were beneficial to the locals. This has however been taken by the Afrocentric scholars to imply that such establishments were only meant to benefit the interests of the colonial regimes. Nevertheless, most Africans valued the outcomes of these social amenities and some of them established their own churches and schools upon fallout with mission stations due to cultural conflicts that arose.

By 1914, missionary groups such as the Friends Inland Africa Mission (FIAM), the Roman Catholic (R.C) mission and the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) had already established their mission centres in Western Kenya. The Friends dominated in the Kavirondo with Kaimosi serving as the mission headquarters in the region (KNA, MISS/54/161: 1915). They also established their mission center at Lugulu, which is presently located along the Misikhu-Webuye road. On the other hand, the R.C established their centres at Yala, Mukumu and Bungoma (Nasambu, 1995: 41-42). One outstanding feature of these Christian Missionary Societies was that they strongly condemned African indigenous methods of initiation, which were regarded as inhuman and barbaric hence perceiving Africans generally as "uncivilized" (Kakai. 1993: 174). Female circumcision, which, was mainly practiced by the Batachoni and rarely among the Babukusu was outlawed in 1925 by the colonial government (Lihraw, 2010: 134). The church in general played key role in catalyzing this ban. Christian Missions argued that the practice was ungodly and that they exposed unnecessary pain and torture to girls. In attempting

to completely discourage the practice, churches went ahead and forced converted Africans to publicly denounce such African cultures.

Among the Babukusu, the Friends Church was widely spread. Many locals received conversion and they quickly acquired Christian doctrines some of which contradicted African cultures (Banda, O.I, 2014). However, notorious Babukusu were not willing to easily part with their cherished circumcision culture. This resulted in cultural syncretism where traditionalists broke away from the main Christian churches to form independent churches and schools that accommodated African cultures. In Bukusuland, the *Dini ya Musambwa* (The denomination of the spirit) was quickly formed by Elijah Masinde Okhwa Nameme and it adopted some Christian concepts into their doctrines but African cultures such as traditional circumcision, polygamous marriage and alcohol brewing and consumption were very vital dogmas (KNA, DE/NN/10/1/5: 1946-1948 and Wafula, 2000: 200-220).

By the end of colonialism in Kenya, Christianity as a religion was well entrenched and established across the country. The resultant outcome of this spread was severe erosion of African cultures that were not incongruent with the demands that were enshrined in the doctrines of many Christian denominations. Indeed, Bell (1986: 72) correctly argued that Africa's socio-political and economic structures were profoundly changed during the process of colonial transformation. However, the newly formed independent government in 1963 was very skeptical regarding the demeaning of African cultures initially initiated by the missionaries. For this reason, initiatives were instituted by respective ministries in Kenya which targeted the preservation of significant native cultures.

Three decades after independence however, the much anticipated initiative of conserving African cultural heritage in Kenya had yielded very meager value. Female circumcision had been criminalized and further measures were already in place whose ultimate effect was the actual derailing of key African cultures. Bukusu circumcision for example received numerous demands from the government insinuating that the traditional surgery lacked standard hygiene. Such demands included the formation of an association comprising traditional circumcisers, compulsory training of traditional surgeons on health concerns, issuance of permits to traditional surgeons among others (Wasilwa, 2006). At the same time, the emergence of HIV/AIDS in 1980's also impacted towards the downfall of this traditional surgery among the Babukusu. It is at this juncture that Inter-Christian Fellowship Evangelical Mission (IcFEM) opted to join the Bukusu circumcision fiasco that was already under immense pressure to abandon its resilience in practicing the ritual in its traditional set up. However, the mission adopted significant features in terms of operations that were almost similar with the colonial period Christian missionaries.

2. Objective of the Study

The main objective in this paper was to examine the nature and evolution of IcFEM in Kimilili constituency from the time this mission was established in 1988 to 2012.

3. Research Methodology

In conducting this study, descriptive research design was used. This design described the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that was studied. It answered the questions about what, when, how and why the characteristics under investigation occurred. This design, therefore, sought to answer questions regarding the establishment of IcFEM in Kimilili constituency. The design was also very relevant in obtaining pertinent information concerning IcFEM operations within the region. Under this design, cross sectional analysis approach, which involved gathering data at sampled out locations within Kimilili constituency was used. The main research instrument that was used in this study was the application of the interview schedules. The researcher interviewed various respondents and informants who were familiar with the Bukusu circumcision and IcFEM. Boys who had been circumcised through traditional method as well as IcFEM medical team were interviewed. The researcher also interviewed traditional circumcisers, Bukusu village elders, married women, IcFEM administrators and local administrative authority.

4. Study Locale

The study was undertaken in Kimilili constituency which is located on the North Eastern part of the larger Bungoma County along the slopes of Mt. Elgon, approximately 450 kilometers from Nairobi, Kenya's capital. It is bordered by Tongareni Division in the East, Webuye town in the South East, Chwele and Sirisia Divisions in the West and Mt. Elgon District in the North. The constituency has a total of four locations; Maeni, Kimilili, Kibingei and Kamukuywa.

5. Origin and the Rise of Icfem in Kimilili Constituency

IcFEM is a local based organization found in Kimilili constituency. It was founded on the Biblical concepts and dogmas hence making it a "Godly" institution. It was established in 1988 by Mr. Solomon Nabie together with Samson Mutuba, Tatwa Mwachi, Esther Ayuma, Elizabeth Nasirutia, Ruth Eshimuli Nabie, Francis Bushebi and Elijah Malenje (Biboko, O.I, 2015). The mission is a legally registered Missionary Society (registration number 19347) and its international Headquarters are based in Kimilili Town, Kimilili Sub-County and Bungoma County, in the former Western Province of Kenya. The Mission officials believed that for any community to achieve sustainable transformation, there was need to first establish solid foundation of value systems upon which all other aspects of developmental structures were to be erected. Eshimuli (O.I, 2015) reasoned that this was one of the reasons why most poverty prevention mechanism in place in the developing countries did not make as much impact as they intended. The menace of corruption and other forms of injustices that was high in developing countries in itself was a clear evidence of missing strong community and national value system (The Daily Nation of 30th March 2015: 4-5). The Mission's officials in their approach used an integral

mission of evangelism, relief and welfare as its model of achieving community development. In the UK, IcFEM was represented through its sister organization, IcFEM Mission (Europe), which was a charitable trust.

The idea behind the establishment of IcFEM in Kimilili constituency came from Mr. Solomon Nabie, a native of Kimabole village in Kabuchai constituency near Cheptais market, Western Kenya. Having been raised up in a humble rural family, Nabie was one of the nine children and many other stepbrothers and sisters. His parents took education as an important approach of giving their children chance to find suitable careers and help support their families (Nabie, O.I, 2015). As a gifted and highly intelligent young man, Solomon became a Christian and eventually trained and became a teacher during the early 1980s. However, he began serious prayers, asking God what he was to do with his life. Soon the answer came to him and this was to change the whole course of his future life in a remarkable way. In 1987 while Solomon was in a prayer meeting at Ng'ya Girls' High School in Siaya County, the preacher, Dan Odhiambo, suddenly stopped and announced that somewhere in the congregation was a man whom God wanted to anoint for His work. One of the accompanying evangelists stepped out among the people and when he came to Solomon, he touched him and said; *"It is you that God is calling for the healing of Kenyan people."*

Deep within, God spoke to Solomon who revealed this calling to him and at the same time, the Holy Spirit was seen anointing him in a still voice;

"Behold, I now set you apart for the healing of my people."

Before this calling, Mr. Nabie had experienced a strange appetite for God's word which prompted him to read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation four times. When he went to attend the prayer meeting at Ng'ya Girls, therefore, he was expecting a miracle to happen. According to Namungu (O.I, 2015), the calling led Mr. Nabie to forego all the security of his esteemed government teaching and agriculture jobs to set up a rural evangelical mission. At the same time, he married Ruth, a secondary school teacher of mathematics from Kakamega and together, they dedicated their lives to God, working first among local youth groups, setting up informal fellowships to quench the real thirst for God's word among the whole new generation of Christian students and young people (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). By 1989, Solomon, Ruth and a small team of brothers were working among nearly 200 different evangelical fellowships across a wide geographical area of Western Kenya and in 1992, he went with his team to work in Kimilili town (Sankey, O.I, 2015). They had realized that in a region bound in rural poverty as well as spiritual darkness, it was not sufficient just to preach the Gospel, but they needed to help the people out of their poverty and administer practical welfare. As the work grew, the name Inter-Christian Fellowships Evangelical Mission (IcFEM) was chosen, thus dropping the name Rural Evangelistic Ministry (REM) after the government had rejected its registration using the latter name (Nabie, O.I, 2015). The organization was then registered in Kenya as a Missionary Society in 1999 with registration number 19347.

By 1992, Mrs. Nabie had been transferred from Kakamega to Maliki Secondary school before being deployed to teach at Friend's School Kamusinga (FSK) in Kimilili (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). However, the house allocated to them in the teacher's quarters of Kamusinga was too small hence it could not accommodate Mr. Nabie's family and other youth who were missionaries. This forced Nabie to rent a house in Kimilili town and it so happened that the owner of the house also owned some land nearby. This man told Solomon that he had been having recurring dreams in which God kept on telling him to give away the land because it was to be used for the healing of the Kenyan people (Nabie, O.I, 2015). As Solomon and the man walked around the land praying, it became so apparent to them that the land was to be set aside for God and the man decided to give it to the Mission. After this, the land was named "Dreamland" and according to Nambilo (O.I, 2014), that piece of land had in previous years been a site of bitter ethnic conflict where much blood had been shed. Amazingly, the land was dedicated to God's work and the Mission was to have a permanent base on it (Biboko, O.I, 2015).

In 1995, IcFEM was launched as a non-denominational mission, under the motto, "Holy Living & Hard Work." It focused in villages, Christian fellowships, churches and church groups in order to reduce hardship and enhance self-development. Since then, this small Christian mission under the leadership of Solomon Nabie, supported by the prayers of many Christian brothers and sisters in Kenya and UK, continued to grow, blossom, and reap a harvest in rural Western Kenya (Nabie, O.I, 2015). On the "Dreamland," a large rural hospital as well as an education centre was built. The Mission was in general at the forefront of providing Christian response to HIV/AIDS in the locality, local agricultural and business enterprises which enabled families to have a livelihood and enjoy benefits of being self-supporting. Through these and many other IcFEM programmes, thousands of lives were touched and reached for the Kingdom of God (Nyongesa, O.I, 2014).

For IcFEM to successfully achieve its remarkable progress among the local people in Kimilili, it formulated a vision, a mission statement and core values which acted as its guiding pillars (Nabie, 2008: 1-11). Its Vision was, "God with His people and their development" while its Mission Statement was "accelerating total community transformation through holy living and hard work." The core values of the Mission were; reading, hearing, believing, memorizing and practicing the Bible as a way of positively transforming human life. Having a living relationship with God through Christ was another core value that guided IcFEM. Other core values include; inter-Christian fellowships, servanthood, righteousness, hard work, integrity, skillfulness and a Holistic community. Being a Kenyan founded inter-Christian mission, IcFEM aimed at accelerating community transformation by smoothly integrating evangelism with community development, relief and welfare activities (Sankey, O.I, 2015).

In order to effectively enhance community development in the region, IcFEM officials re-organized communities at village level through county administrative office into Inter-Christian Fellowships to foster Christian identity. They also trained Inter-Christian Fellowship members and Mission staff with essential skills for guiding community transformation activities. According to Namungu (O.I, 2015), the Mission officials had the mandate of Christianizing communities and villages through knowledge and application of God's word. More fundamentally, they played the vital role of empowering

communities at household levels, especially in rural areas to know how to respond appropriately and with confidence to challenges that confronted them.

Mr. Nabie (O.I, 2015) observed that leadership, development and helping the people to enhance their inner strengths to benefit the community and sustain transformation process was another key agenda of his institution. This was arrived at by providing an enabling environment for everyone to contribute or take part in their community development process. The Mission officials also played the role of stimulating communities towards solidarity for holding their future in their own hands. For transformation to occur, Namungu (O.I, 2015) believed that it was to be seen as an integral between evangelism and social change. Thus, evangelism and social change were inseparable for the Mission to achieve the transformation of the local community.

IcFEM in general had the commitment of changing the world in the direction of abundant life, equity and love, which were principles of practice and theory. The Christian theory and the mission were always based on the local understanding of the community. Nabie (O.I, 2015) claimed that the Christian mission was not all about liberation and empowerment but rather, reconciliation between God, humanity, creation and solidarity in Christ. It was argued that Christian mission and transformation were all about community building and total commitment to social change and discovering where God had already worked (Biboko, O.I, 2015).

After a keen scrutiny of their activities in the region, the Mission officials believed that they had outstanding merits over any other structure in terms of practical and realistic engagements and interventions in community development. The merits of their institution included; grassroots or community based infrastructure, credible leadership that was familiar with the needs of the poor, cultural awareness, histories and contexts of the people, very strong, positive moral and ethical value systems, non-partisanship, ready to serve the whole community and even the government and lack of interest of taking political, economic or social power and non-denominational (Nabie,O.I, 2015). The Mission officials believed in God, in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit (trinity). By doing so, stability was with the people for long time, and had clearly known decision-making mechanisms, which were largely people centred.

The Mission officials were also proud of embracing cultures of volunteerism, where people were willing to offer themselves to God, readily in selfless services to others, giving in cash and in kind, skills, labour and material contributions (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). Salaried staffs also took their work as a calling and were often ready to go beyond normal duty, instilling hope to the poor which had become necessary to propel them towards improvement. IcFEM officials also laid down structures and mechanisms for initiating new activities such as mothers, youth, children, women and retired people's fellowships. These were put in place to serve as effective contacts and vision carriers in the community. The institution also had a wider global linkage and institutional relationships, which in essence provided extensive interpersonal linkages, possible resource sharing and many opportunities for dialogue training.

Development as a concept was defined as a process of improving totally people's living conditions in a holistic manner and for a longer period. Community development, therefore, was a skilled process of developing a broad network of interaction in order to increase the capacity of communities to help them achieve a locally sustainable healthy economy and an improved quality of life (Moi, 1983: 212-213). To achieve this, the Mission officials invoked the services of developmental goal targets in identifying, creating and establishing strong norms, beliefs, networks and linkages that facilitated coordination and cooperation in the community for mutual benefit. It was observed that the reason for the Mission's involvement in development work was because it was and remained the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ as explained in Luke 4:18-19. The verse asserts that "*bringing good news to the poor*". In this context, therefore, development for the local community was not an optional matter for IcFEM but rather an imperative sphere of engagement for all fellowships at all times of their existence and operations (Nyongesa, O.I, 2014).

It must also be noted that IcFEM operated on a number of objectives. According to Nabie (IcFEM, 2004), the overall objective was organizing communities along the Biblically tested values, providing individuals with the democratic space to express their opinions and freely participate in key decision-making processes in issues affecting their day to day life. Other specific objectives included; creating grassroots cell structures for the establishment of Inter-Christian Fellowships, promoting community development as a shared vision based on common values in all Fellowships, providing critical linkages with other development agencies or stakeholders, providing sustainable infrastructures for sharing of skills, knowledge, abilities, innovations and promoting the coexistence and the interdependence to foster unity and cross transfer of technologies and innovations.

The Mission also had the objective of improving governance, through grassroots participation at local, county, regional and at national levels of the government. It also aspired to increase permeating forces of the biblical gospel to influence that corners of the society for positive social transformation. IcFEM also had the objective of providing performance indicator for key areas of development activities in the community, partnering with other agencies, creating forum for discussions and development of local, county and national policies and to overcome the barriers to development (Sankey, O.I, 2015). The mission also endeavoured to create channels for accessing easily technical assistance to the development processes of the community, creating wide and open opportunities for participation in socio-economic research, increasing faster use of findings by the communities and fostering the creation, the development and the growth of effective grassroot organizations and movements.

6. Dreamland

Among other projects IcFEM established in Kimilili constituency, the provision of medical services was leading (Nyongesa, O.I, 2014). By December 2012, IcFEM had constructed a hospital called "Dreamland Mission Hospital," which is within Kimilili town. It was constructed along the border of Kimilili and Mt. Elgon constituencies and near Kamutong'i water supply. The hospital was also located near Kamusinga AC and Khwiroro AC primary schools in the backyard of

Friend School Kamusinga (FSK), Moi Girls' Kamusinga and Kaptola Secondary Schools. However, we need to establish how the Mission acquired the fourteen acre piece of land where the hospital was built and why the hospital was eventually named Dreamland Mission Hospital. The land ancestrally belonged to Elam Murenga Omonya. Isaiah Omonya (Elam's son), who was a teacher at FSK and later on became a District Officer (D.O) is said to have acquired a loan from the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC) using the title deed of the land as the security (Masika, O.I, 2014). However, he failed to repay the loan hence ICDC auctioned the land to get their money back. Abraham Nambilo Wanjala, a native of Bituyu Sub-location within Kimilili constituency was the highest bidder with 20,000 KShs (Nambilo and Wanjala, O.I, 2014).

As a young man in 1940's, Mr. Nambilo had dreamt of a string stretching from the moon to the earth. Along the string, a hoe was brought down to him which he touched. He shared this dream with his mother whose interpretation was that God would enable him one day to get his own land. After completing his studies at Kendu Bay S.D.A mission medical training institute, Mr. Nambilo was employed by the government as a medical officer at Bungoma District Hospital (currently Bungoma County referral Hospital) (Wasike, O.I, 2014). One day, in 1983, as he was passing near the D.O's office, Kimilili Division (present Kimilili sub-County headquarters), Mr. Nambilo was attracted to a crowd that was standing next to the D.O's office. On arrival, auctioning was taking place but what baffled him was that a piece of land was being auctioned as well. He threw his bids and luckily for him, he was the highest bidder with 20,000 KShs (Nambilo and Wanjala, O.I, 2014).

Just before he began processing the transfer of that land to his name, it dawned to him that Isaiah Omonya's wife, Maria, was the sister to the then Member of Parliament for Kimilili constituency, Elijah Wasike Mwangale. Mr. Mwangale was also a cabinet minister during the Moi's regime (1979-1992). The legislator wanted to refund Mr. Nambilo his 20,000 KShs, which he agreed. They both agreed to meet at the D.O's office in Kimilili Division but Hon. Mwangale failed to turn up for two occasions (Wanjala, O.I, 2014). He however, turned up the third time and agreed to refund Mr. Nambilo his money. This was to take place at ICDC's offices in Nairobi. Upon reaching Nairobi, all did not go well because Nambilo sensed foul play and some powerful individuals wanted to defraud him his hard-earned land. After three days of consultations and enquiries in Nairobi, Mr. Nambilo was given the relevant documents proving his ownership of that land. This is after Hon. Mwangale failed to refund him his 20,000 KShs. He then traveled to the D.O's office at Kimilili whose Land Control Board approved his consent of transferring the ownership of the land from Elam Murenga Omonya to himself (Nambilo, O.I, 2014). He then went to Bungoma District land's offices and successfully obtained a title deed of that land bearing his name.

Meanwhile, Mr. Murenga and his family were still staying on that piece of land. According to Mr. Nambilo (O.I, 2014), Mr. Murenga refused to vacate the land, prompting him to seek assistance from the Kakamega Law Courts. During the hearing of the case, Mr. Nambilo claimed the magistrate received instructions from "Big offices" in Nairobi to give back that land to Mr. Murenga. However, the Magistrate handed over the land to Mr. Nambilo. With the defeat in court, Mr. Elam Murenga eventually vacated the land without being evicted, paving way for Mr. Nambilo to settle in together with his second wife Sarah and their children (Wanjala, O.I, 2014). While staying in that land, they operated a private medical clinic because they were all medical professionals. However, their settlement on that land was short-lived. According to Wanjala, (O.I, 2014) Mr. Nambilo had numerous dreams concerning that land. In his first dream, he was shown a foundation of a church having been laid in the far end of that land. Being a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) by faith, he surrendered that piece of land to the said church. A Seventh Day Adventist church called Kaptola Sabbath School was established on that land and it was still intact by December 2012.

Soon after this, he experienced another dream where he saw a green storey building constructed on this land. There was plenty of food in this building and many people entered in and came out while eating and others were singing (Banda, O.I, 2014). By the time this dream occurred to him, the SDA church was set to be established in that piece of land he had allocated to the church earlier. According to his interpretations, God wanted him to give away that land to any Mission that would establish charitable projects for the surrounding people. He knew that he would hand over that land to his SDA church but this never happened (Nabiswa, O.I, 2014). No sooner had the dream passed away than he experienced a third dream in which he was told that even though he had given out land for the church, he did not allocate the land where the pastor would build his house and do his farming. In his fourth dream, he was shown where the pastor's house was to be built and do his farming. The following morning, he instructed his children to demarcate the boundary just as he was shown in the dream (Wanjala, O.I, 2014). Therefore, pastor's farm was set aside and it bordered the church land. Weeks later, he summoned senior church officials and showed them the new land he had allocated to the church. He also told them his wishes of giving his entire land to the SDA church to establish any project for the community. However, he was told to wait as further consultations with other senior church official at the church regional headquarters in Eldoret town were being made (Nabiswa, O.I, 2014).

In 1987, Mr. Nambilo began farming projects on this land. He established a coffee plantation and he also planned to establish a tea plantation. Being along the slopes of Mt. Elgon, the soil is good for tea farming. He, therefore, went to Mt. Elgon District agricultural offices and deposited 3,000 KShs for tea seedlings. As he waited for the tea seedlings, he had another dream in which he met a woman dressed in a black skirt, white shirt and a cap similar to that worn by members of the defense forces (Nambilo, O.I, 2014). It was around 9.00 am in the dream and the woman was holding two fish in her hand and she said that the fish was sweet. Although she spoke to him directly, her voice was heard as if it was coming from heaven. She told Mr. Nambilo to abandon his plans of establishing a tea plantation on that land. She also showed him how the coffee he had planted was unhealthy yet that land was good for coffee farming. She showed him a foundation stone of a storey building that had been laid in his entire land. The woman then disappeared while smiling. When Mr. Nambilo woke up, he was also smiling.

When the time for Mr. Nambilo to pick his tea seedlings came, he went to Mt. Elgon District agricultural office to collect them. He had forgotten the dream in which the woman warned him against his tea and coffee projects. At the District agricultural office in Kapsokwany town, all did not go well. The Sabaot people who had also turned up to pick their tea seedlings were annoyed when they learnt that their seedlings were just about to be given to a person not from their community (Wanjala, O.I, 2014). Mr. Nambilo was forced to renounce his plans of establishing a tea plantation outside Mt. Elgon zone. That is when he recalled the woman in the dream who warned him against establishing tea or coffee plantations on that land. He was, therefore, refunded his advance payment of KShs 3,000 for tea seedlings.

At this time, Mr. Nambilo met Solomon Nabie in 1993, who was the director IcFEM by then (Nambilo, O.I, 2014). He shared with him his endless dreams regarding his land. He expressed his wish of giving that land to any mission organization. By then, IcFEM was still a very small organization and it was unable to raise funds to buy that land (Nabie, O.I, 2015). Mr. Nambilo however, said that in all the dreams he experienced, God did not tell him if he was to sell that land or to give it freely. He, therefore, surrendered the title deed to IcFEM officials without any payment. Later on, the land was fragmented into three plots; one acre for the SDA church, one acre for Mr. Nambilo and the rest was given to IcFEM (Wanjala, O.I, 2014). In 1996, IcFEM officials gave Mr. Nambilo 425,000 KShs which he used to acquire a five acre piece of land within Kimilili constituency. IcFEM also assisted Mr. Nambilo to acquire another seven acre piece of land at Kuburetwa market in Saboti constituency (Wanjala, O.I, 2014). After learning the experiences of Mr. Nambilo and his recurring dreams regarding that land, IcFEM officials decided to establish a mission hospital and named it "Dreamland Hospital."

6.1. Administrative Structure of IcFEM

Like any other organized institution in Kenya, IcFEM had a hierarchical administrative structure with several organs that were integrated to enhance the day-to-day operations of the Mission. However, the mission had unique bureaucracy that was strictly followed and adhered to by all its stakeholders. God was the spinal cord of the Mission's administration. Being guided by the Mission statement "God with people and development," great emphasis was bestowed in God to support transformation of rural communities (Nabie, O.I, 2015). It is also worthy to note that the Mission administrative structure was very complex. This is because decision making involved approval from other officials in United Kingdom and other donor countries. Nevertheless, our focus will be the Mission's administrative structure in Kimilili constituency.

As noted above, God was at the top of the administration of IcFEM. The Mission officials seemingly concurred with Eugene (2009: 5-8) who noted that God is the source of life and the provider of everything. Thus, God was very relevant in offering guidance to the Mission's board of directors and they relied heavily in daily prayers for the success of developmental projects instituted for the betterment of the local people. It was believed that much trust and faith in God was significant for any achievement to be realized. To demonstrate their unquestionable faith in God, the Mission officials conducted daily prayers in the morning before resuming their daily duties (Namungu, O.I, 2015).

After God, there was the Mission's board of directors, which was also called IcFEM limited. It was chaired by a person who was appointed from the board members and the Mission director acted as its secretary (Biboko, O.I, 2015). This board was the overall decision and policy maker and its decisions were final and binding to all. The board comprised a director, deputy directors, managers, coordinators of other directorates and other non-Mission official members who were experts and professionals in various fields. Other liaison offices of IcFEM in Nairobi and Europe were also represented in this board (Nabie, O.I, 2015).

The executive management board was another significant organ of IcFEM. It was based at the Mission's headquarters in Kimilili and it was headed by a general deputy director in charge of operation. This board played the role of financial management. It also had the mandate of sourcing for funds to meet the cost of many projects established by the Mission (Namungu, O.I, 2015). It made the budget of the Mission and it also had a supervisory role of ensuring full implementation of the budget. It, therefore, gave annual account statements to enhance prudent financial management and accountability.

The executive management organ was then followed by a full management organ whose chief role was human resource management (Biboko, O.I, 2015). This docket was under the jurisdiction of a human resource manager or coordinator who recommended to the executive management board to hire more employees as dictated by the demand. The organ was also in charge of attending to and coordinating all matters concerning the Mission's employees. This directorate also conducted volunteer programmes which were aimed at recruiting young people who were willing to offer their services to the local people. More significantly, it conducted capacity building seminars to newly employed people orienting them to their duties and expectations of the Mission management from them (Murutu, O.I, 2014).

The general administration was another organ of IcFEM. It dealt with the daily running of the Mission and its significant duty was the implementation of policies and decisions agreed on by the top organ of IcFEM. It served the same purpose with the secretariat arm of most organizations like the United Nations. It was headed by the deputy directors of evangelism and ministries and programmes sub-organ (Namungu, O.I, 2015). Under evangelism, there were groups that were led by different leaders who facilitated general preaching of the gospel to the local people. Evangelism was guided by the Biblical scripture from Mathew 28: 19;

"Go ye, therefore, and teach to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and the son and the Holy Spirit."

Under the ministries and programmes arm, outreach visitations were conducted targeting various groups of people. To achieve this effectively, this department was organized into youth, adult, children and disabled ministries. Such

ministries were led by enthusiastic leaders who conducted door to door programmes in rural areas, identifying extremely needy cases which they recommended to the Mission for support (Murutu, O.I, 2014).

At the bottom of the Missions' management, IcFEM decentralized its offices to villages whose officials conducted grassroot sensitization to the local people. The Mission established offices at the divisional level which served as the Mission offices in each division (Nambilo, O.I, 2014). Within each division, the Mission also established area or village offices to enhance its linkage with the local people. Local centres were also established and the Mission projects were coordinated in such places at the village level. Within Kimilili constituency, IcFEM established local centres at Sikhendu, Kimilili, Kibingei and Bituyu. Outside Kimilili constituency, the Mission opened local centres at Chesikaki, Cheptais, Misikhu and Ndivisi (Nabie, O.I, 2015).

6.2. *IcFEM and the Bukusu Community*

Having established the origin and the development of IcFEM in Kimilili constituency, it is paramount that we look at how the Mission in general interacted with the local people. IcFEM adopted substantive approaches to reach the local community and to achieve this, the Mission resorted to spreading transformation process to rural areas, encouraging people to pray and to set up intercessory groups, sending out formation teams to give the Mission's vision, setting up village fellowships and establishing local transformation units (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). The Mission operated with an assumption that community development was a skilled process of developing a broad network of interaction in order to increase the capacity of communities to help them achieve a locally sustainable healthy economy, and improved quality of life.

For this to be attained, IcFEM officials argued that bringing people together in fellowship meant that it had a vision for the whole villages and individuals living there to enable them learn to live as God intended (Namungu, O.I, 2015). Various teams of the Mission worked on transforming local people within its vicinity. The teams believed that transformation happened when something was substantially changed in its nature and character (Biboko, O.I, 2015). Relief was not transformation, neither were ten thousand people in a crusade meeting raising their hands to follow Jesus Christ. It was a lifelong agenda that concerned the whole life in which God's Spirit was transforming a disciple's mind and character, and then their life style worked out in families and communities (Nabie, O.I, 2015).

According to Namungu (O.I, 2015), evangelism was one of the avenues through which IcFEM used to interact with the local community. By nature, IcFEM was an evangelical organization and it worked towards growing the person's knowledge and relationship with God. The Mission officials asserted that humanity lived in times when the identity of the church of Christ was not evidently formed authoritatively and relevantly asserting its position in influencing the spiritual and in the value addition to the socio-economic aspects of life (Sankey, O.I, 2015). Most churches waited for people to join them than the church reaching them with Good News.

It was argued that in Western Kenya, if not the whole of Kenya or Africa, the spread of Christianity was too wide yet too shallow hence the Church kept on losing its relevance in the community. This was attributed to the poor discipleship or sometimes none, within the Christian fraternity and this was evident through the adherence and the promotion of retrogressive traditions and customs such as Bukusu circumcision (Nabie, 2008: 2), increase and mushrooming of denominations whose cohesiveness and canonicity was questionable (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). Individual or corporate prayer life was hardly authentic and if any, it was as a mere religious practice, which added no value towards evangelism.

Youth ministry was a very fundamental area through which the Mission officials intermingled with local people (Murutu, O.I, 2014). Many people in Africa lamented the sad disintegration of the spiritual, the moral and the social fabric of the society and the young people were perhaps, the greatest victims of the decay as well as contributors to it. The great challenge noted was how to enable both the young people and the society in which they belonged to become the best that they would be (Moi, 1983: 215). In other words the challenge was to enable both the youth and the society to realize fully their God given potential in every aspect of life, that is, spiritual, moral, intellectual, political and socio-economic.

IcFEM Mission's strategy was through establishing the inter-Christian fellowships that formed the youth committees both at village, community and at the local transformation unit levels (Nabie, OI, 2015). Committee members were trained and mandated to identify the needs of the youth in the community, develop a vision and engage them in holistic transformation. To lure many of them in to this ministry, the youth department was guided by a vision which stated that "God with youth and their development." The ministry had the mission of accelerating total youth transformation through holy living and hard work (Murutu, O.I, 2014). It also aimed at empowering youth coordinators, assistant coordinators and facilitators from local transformation units.

IcFEM also monopolized the Ministry to Senior Citizens which enabled them to win the hearts of the local people (Sankey, O.I, 2014). The Mission's officials maintained that old age was looked on as a minor issue in the society, especially, in extended families where an aged person was taken care of by the clan and other relatives. It was however, argued that things had changed due to the social, economic and the general livelihood constraints (Banda, O.I, 2014). There were also many old people who were becoming a nation on its own in Kenya and IcFEM addressed the needs of such people by using grassroot structures through a program called Ministry to the Senior Citizens. Its target was to identify, assess and support the needy elders who were 75 years and above but the programme also assessed those under the age of 75 years and recommended accordingly (Biboko, O.I, 2015). To achieve this, this ministry adopted the vision that aimed at the well cared for and nurtured senior citizens in the society. It also had the mission which aimed at empowering the society to care for the elderly. Its goal was to improve and dignify life for the elderly in the society (Nabie, 2008: 1-11).

IcFEM also had a ministry that cared for people with disabilities and it was referred to as Bethesda pool. Soita (O.I, 2015) lamented that disabled people were groups within the community that were denied accessibility to basic needs and services. This often made them unable to engage in community developmental activities. It was observed that disability could result from many kinds of medical conditions and congenital deformities. People with disabilities were marginalized in many communities and this often exposed them to challenges such as inaccessibility, inadequate livelihood, lack of ability to grow food to eat, dependency, non-acceptance and isolation (Moi, 1983: 216-217).

However, IcFEM medical team believed that through the community based rehabilitation and medical intervention, their lives could be greatly improved thus restoring their capacity (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). These disabilities in people ranged from physical, including disabilities at birth, from accidents or illness such as club foot, cleft palate and hare lip, polio or spinal injury among others (Soita, O.I, 2015). Like other ministries, this department was guided by the vision of transforming the lives of the disabled persons for sustainable livelihood. It also operated with the mission of empowering these people to participate in productive activities. The ministry was driven by the goal of empowering and assimilating disabled persons in the community.

Among other issues addressed by IcFEM to the disabled people, corrective surgery to deformed parts of the body, initiating income-generating projects for them, conducting community-based rehabilitation and demonstrating the love of Christ towards these persons were dominant (Sankey, O.I, 2015). To offer better services to these people, the Mission's medical team collaborated with institutions that were called upon to assist the disabled people in the community. Such partners included; Sabatia Eye Hospital for eye surgery, Lions Club for physical disability at Kijabe, Bethany Crippled Children's centre for cleft Palate, and hare lip and Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital, Nairobi for wheelchairs. The team also received overwhelming support from UK's charity Wheels who sent teams to visit Kimilili many times and distributed hundreds of wheel chairs to the disabled people (Nabie, O.I, 2015).

IcFEM also interacted with the local people through agriculture and environment conservation. It was argued that for the journey towards achieving food to be realized, nutrition and income security for the rural communities and agriculture were very important factors to a family's survival (Hulme & Turner, 1990: 111-113). Crop failure meant the difference between life and death. If there was no income from the farm then there were no fees to pay for children's education, health care or other necessities of life. Generally, Western Kenya had the highest potential for agricultural growth because it was favoured with reliable rainfall of an annual range of 1000mm-2000mm (Moi, 1983: 14-15) and fertile volcanic loam soils.

Despite this great potential, very little had been done hence the communities suffered poverty in a land that was potentially very much productive (Nabie, O.I, 2015). With this in mind, IcFEM officials aimed at empowering farmers in improving farming techniques that significantly contributed to positive poverty alleviation thus ensuring balanced food self-sufficiency at family level and surplus for sale. For this to be achieved, the Mission officials came up with a goal of encouraging the locals to produce food that was self-sufficient and surplus for sale. IcFEM was, therefore, on the forefront in the formation of rural farmers associations such as Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies Limited that were purposed to sustainably influence the interests of small-scale farmers making them aware of their roles, potentials and best strategies in the private sectors (Nabie, O.I, 2015).

In collaboration with other actors, the Mission officials provided direct training in business skills, cooperative management, institutional development, agricultural technical know-how and training of trainers' course who were in turn expected to offer trainings, extension and other advisory services to the local people. The above skills, according to Nabie (O.I, 2015) were expected to be replicated in other new areas. The training also involved the diversification in farm enterprises, farm planning, management, markets and marketing. These trainings were conducted in IcFEM College and by 2012, plans were underway to establish IcFEM University to enhance the level of such knowledge and skills.

The Mission officials engaged the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Land Development and other research institutions to support capacity building process and the establishment of seed bulking centre (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). This promoted food and nutrition self-sufficiency through increased yields and enhanced trade in surplus produce. The programme worked alongside the Mission's Fellowship Savings and Credit Scheme where farmers' groups accessed credit for the purposes of purchasing farm inputs, organizing marketing and regulating commodity prices thus building emerging structures which linked farmers to new value added market networks (Biboko, O.I, 2015).

Still in agriculture, the Mission involved the local people in crop production and soil conservation. Indeed, Moi (1983: 95) laments that the decline in soil fertility, high rate of population increase and the resultant migration to fragile areas, coupled with overstocking and overgrazing and search for wood fuel dramatized the need for the conservation of soil. Ideally, the larger Bungoma County in Western Kenya had high agricultural production potential but people in this region suffered from the vicious cycle of poverty with a poverty index that was over 56% by 2012. Maize was the staple food crop and yet consumption surpassed the production by more than 40% (Moi, 1983: 79-82). This was attributed to several constraints such as non-availability of quality seeds and inappropriate production technologies especially by small holder farmers.

There were high input prices particularly of inorganic fertilizers but in return low productivity of maize per unit area of land. For example, the maize yield potential was over 50 x 90kg bags per hectare, but most subsistence farmers produced less than 12 x 90kg bags per hectare (Moi, 1983: 80). As an outcome of low food production, malnutrition, especially among pregnant women, children under five years and the aged were prevalent. Their immune system was also low thereby increasing their susceptibility to diseases thus hastening death (Soita, O, I, 2015). Malnutrition and HIV/AIDS were in turn affected through food production resulting to loss of labour force and diversion of meager resources into medical bills. Low food production led to more poverty and the vicious cycle poverty continued.

Still in enhancing food security, the Mission officials played vital role in Livestock and animal production. Ideally, food insecurity contributed to the deepening of poverty in areas that had low crop and animal production (Moi, 1983: 87). Low production of animals was largely as a result of poor quality of livestock reared. Traditionally among the local community, animals kept were cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, rabbits and pigs. Commonly, these animals were kept for special occasions such as circumcision, sacrifices and as a moving bank (Naulikha, O.I, 2014).

Since the demand for animal products was on the increase, Nabie (O.I, 2015) argued that there was need for sourcing best animals to provide the required commodities. Dairy cow keeping was becoming less and less affordable for small holder farmers due to its high demand in capital, labour and space for growing fodder. The Mission officials, therefore, aimed at promoting the rearing of dairy cows, poultry, bee keeping, pigs, rabbits, sheep and goats but it initially started by focusing on dairy goats.

In the regions covered by the local transformation units of IcfEM, agriculture was the major economic activity but marketing of these products was a great challenge (Banda, O.I, 2015). This was attributed to lack of marketing infrastructures within these regions thus farmers lacked substantial market demand in terms of quantity, quality for the supply of their products and as such, they did not know what to produce, when to produce and how to produce. Besides this, there were poor marketing channels and physical structures which contributed to poor pricing of products and hence producers were greatly demoralized as they reaped negative returns.

In matters of health, it was claimed that the greatest contribution to health care of the community came from the public health measures rather than from the provision of secondary health care (Moi, 1983: 187). There was inadequate access to adequate basic services, including clean water, sanitation and localized food insecurity was common which was compounded by the inadequate resources at household level. There was still low immunization coverage and low access to basic health services in terms of health facilities and staff (Soita, O.I, 2015). Also evident was poor knowledge of hygiene, attitudes and practices regarding reproductive health as it was the case of Bukusu circumcision.

It was noted that primary and secondary school children and youth needed to be informed of the risks that came from early age of the first sexual intercourse, the use of contraceptives and also on how to prevent HIV/AIDS diseases (The Standard Newspaper of 3rd September, 2015: 6), malaria and other communicable. Traditional birth attendants needed to be familiarized on issues concerning reproduction, and the use of herbal medicine was to be encouraged but people needed to strictly follow a prescription. The medical team also aimed at setting up grassroot structures in all local units, primarily to allow members of the community to take charge of their own health issues (Soita, O.I, 2015).

It was also observed that in communities around, there were ever emerging needs and every group or individual was faced with the difficult situation of how to deal with such needs. In many circumstances in villages, development agents, whether dealing with spiritual like churches or with other needs like Non-Governmental and charitable organizations came from outside the community and it was evident that they did not provide lasting solutions to the people's needs and problems (Nabie, O.I, 2015).

The team, therefore, came up with reproductive health program which dealt with all aspects of reproduction, including circumcision of Babukusu, traditional birth attendants, family planning and education of primary and secondary school children and the youth in areas such as the biology of reproduction, the dangers of early age of first intercourse, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS prevention (Soita, O.I, 2015). Further on reproductive health, the team greatly dwelt on male circumcision.

Education was another way through which IcfEM used to reach to the local community (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). It was believed that education was an important avenue through which people could be enabled to escape the poverty trap and return with skills to help the local community (Moi, 1986: 41). There was great potential in people but they were not being reached because families did not afford the cost of education. Many primary schools in rural Kenya had few resources and some were in a very poor state of despair. Class sizes were large, often around 100, and this led to a lower quality of education (Moi, 1983: 175). IcfEM officials, therefore, vowed to provide model schools, based on Christian principles and standards, with good basic facilities and small classes, offering sound quality education to the local children.

The Mission officials also provided full financial support to schools. They also helped the local people to improve on the existing ones (Wanjala, O.I, 2014). They worked with other charity organizations such as Harambee Foundation in Holland to build high quality facilities. To substantially achieve this, they worked with the community, parents, pupils and the teaching staff to generally improve the school standards and environment (Nabie, O.I, 2015). Parents and the community normally contributed to the building costs, as it was the case during the colonial period. The Mission officials were also very much involved in improving the quality of education in all educational establishments and they worked with the general community, school community, government agencies, school sponsors and school managements to bring this into reality.

To lead as an example, the Mission established "Dreamland Education Centre" (DEC) which was situated about two Kilometres away from Kimilili town. By December 2012, the site contained an Educational and a Medical Care Centres, which provided maternity and ante natal care, child welfare and other medical services (Eshimuli, O.I, 2014). There was also a Christian Primary school at Dreamland which provided quality education, in a safe and clean environment for children aged between five and fourteen years. This project took place in several phases of development with phase 1, a four-classroom block for Primary school children being completed in March 2001. Phase 2, which initially comprised of a single-storey building, had eight classrooms and some offices and was brought into use for the upper primary education in 2003. Additionally, DEC had a bursary fund for primary and secondary education which helped with fees payment, thus allowing more needy children to attend school. The Mission officials also constructed Khalayi Nursery School situated next to the Headquarters of the Mission in Kimilili town.

On special needs education, the Mission officials argued that it was often difficult to provide for the physically and the mentally disabled children with facilities to deal with either their educational or physical needs in schools or at home. As Moi (1983: 177) rightfully observed, most of the teachers involved with special needs children were very enthusiastic but they had no special training. They normally did this because they had a special interest in taking care of the disabled students and often went into their own pockets to help the children. They were usually expected to teach a normal class of as many as one hundred, as well as caring for the disabled children. In response to this problem, IcFEM officials provided Kimilili BEB Primary School with a special classroom to cater for the special needs students and this provided a model for future projects as and when funds became available (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015). They also encouraged the community to ensure that all schools were physically designed to be disabled friendly, that is, with ramps and disabled toilet facilities, and for those with physical and mental disability to be included as part of the community and its educational establishment.

The Mission officials also established a vocational training programme which supported village Fellowships in encouraging the local community to take an interest in their vocational training establishments. This was aimed at improving facilities and school environment and taking an active role in school management to ensure that there was ownership of these establishments (Sankey, O.I, 2015). More fundamentally, the Mission officials also introduced school sponsorship programmes for poor and needy students. They also arranged for student applicants to be sponsored in other schools for four years of secondary education. Apart from fees payment, they were also helping the needy students in many ways such as clothing, books and even school holiday accommodation. IcFEM staff also frequently visited them in schools and they also attended parent's meetings. The academic achievements of these students was realized with some of them becoming nurses, doctors and teachers, who eventually came back to return to the community (Murutu, O.I, 2014).

The Mission officials also collaborated with Harambee Foundation in Holland and this led to the substantial improvement of educational opportunities for thousands of pupils in the region. Sankey (O.I, 2015) claimed that Harambee Foundation worked with IcFEM to deliver projects which included building and renovation of classrooms, purchase of school desks, sanitary facilities, and books and other educational materials and tools at primary, secondary schools and youth polytechnics. They also ran projects focusing on educational training and development for Early Childhood development (ECD) teachers, head teachers, teachers and managers of polytechnics. Since the start of Harambee Foundation Holland in 2001, large number of projects had been completed in partnership with IcFEM. Schools such as Lutonyi A.C, Buko R.C and Kimingichi primary schools were refurbished after IcFEM's intervention. In ten years' time, twenty seven schools and about thirty two thousand students had benefited from the improvements in their school (Eshimuli, O.I, 2015).

The way in which IcFEM and Harambee Foundation Holland worked together ensured the success of all projects. Both were committed to create circumstances by which people saw their own development in places where they were born (Nyongesa, O.I, 2014). Harambee Foundation Holland used IcFEM's extensive network across Western Kenya to identify schools in need of help. When a school was proposed to qualify for help, series of discussions were held with the school management, teachers and pupils and if possible with the board of governors or the parents association (Chikati, O.I, 2014). Once support had been approved, schools submitted the project details and estimated costs and they were also required to include information on how they thought they would maintain the project after completion.

Perhaps, the most important element of the project proposal was the community's own contribution since the ownership was theirs (Kunusia, O.I, 2014). They had to clearly indicate how they were to contribute to the realization of the project. This was essential for Harambee Foundation Holland and for IcFEM as both partners did not believe in giving cash handouts but wanted to give the community a hand up (Nabie, O.I, 2015). The contribution was about 10 to 15 % of the total project costs which consisted of money, labour in the construction, or building material like bricks or wood (Nyongesa, O.I, 2014).

It was proven repeatedly that when communities invested in their own development, the results of the projects lasted longer because buildings and resources were well cared for and a sense of community ownership and pride was fostered. The Mission officials provided supervisory role for Harambee projects and managed much of the construction required, enabled projects to be realized and resources to be successfully used. Once a project was completed, Harambee Foundation Holland and IcFEM spent time celebrating the community's achievement and thanking those who were involved (Sankey, O.I, 2015).

For many years, IcFEM ran a micro-enterprise scheme which encouraged and trained those with small businesses to be successful. Small loans were made available by IcFEM finance department which increased in size at each loan, following successful repayment of the previous loan. Many small businesses flourished and some had reached their fifth round of loan by 2012 (Biboko, O.I, 2015). The Mission officials maintained that in rural communities, there was great need for providing savings, credit and banking facilities. There were some commercial banks in towns but these were relatively inaccessible to rural populations in terms of time and traveling costs (Moi, 1983: 71-74). The Fellowship Savings and Credit Scheme was thus put in place to bridge the gap and allow the people in villages to start saving in small amounts. The scheme was administered by members in the community and the loans were available not just as money but as seeds or chicks.

Through Fellowship Savings and Credit Scheme, the Mission aimed at bringing communities into fellowship with one another while encouraging them to save their meager earnings bit by bit. This enabled people to build their local capital that they could later borrow to invest in activities that generated more income at household level and improve their lives in line with IcFEM mission and vision (Namungu, O.I, 2015). The scheme was guided by the vision, economic and social empowerment for the community. Its mission was to promote the savings and investment culture of the people

thus increasing household incomes. The objective of this scheme was to encourage communities to be actively involved in saving and form local capital for investment in projects to drive the local economy (Murutu, O.I, 2014).

6.3. Challenges and Weaknesses of IcFEM

All organizations that are found anywhere in the world have challenges and weaknesses that are likely to cripple their normal affairs if the management arm is not keen enough. This is also echoed by Moi (1986: 158) who observe that there are a number of intrinsic African traits that provided solid challenges to Organization of African Unity (OAU). In recent states history, highest offices have become victims and some have succumbed to such challenges (Musikiti, O.I, 2014). IcFEM is not exceptional. From the time it was established in 1988 to December 2012, it went through considerable challenges which made it difficult for the Mission to implement most of its objectives (Soita, O.I, 2015). Being founded and based on bureaucracy and hierarchical structure, it attracted weaknesses and challenges which were detrimental to the accomplishment of its objectives.

Perhaps, opposition from the custodians of the community's culture was a major challenge the Mission encountered (Nabie, O.I, 2015). This was instigated by the Mission's entry into the circumcision culture of the Babukusu, condemning and further introducing medical surgery to the local people. This is similar to colonialism which worked hard to outlaw most African cultures like female circumcision (Lihraw, 2010: 134). IcFEM also engaged its evangelical team in conducting prayer sessions at the mudding places within Kimilili constituency. They began at Nakhobano, near FSK, but then the local people were very bitter about the Mission's behaviour of intruding into their sacred swamps.

This opened a new chapter of disharmony between the Mission officials and the local people and whenever Nabie's men were seen in any village, suspicion and vigilance over the mudding engrossed the minds of the Babukusu (Wambani, O.I, 2014). Bukusu Cultural Heritage Association and its 2,000 affiliate traditional circumcisers strongly opposed the Mission's agenda, urging Mr. Nabie and his team to keep off the community's circumcision affairs (Khalaba, O.I, 2014). For this to be achieved effectively, Manguliechi, the then custodian of the Bukusu culture was involved. He was seen one night in July 2006 going round IcFEM compound while throwing charms and spells at the Mission offices. Eshimuli (O.I, 2015) claims that Manguliechi performed witchcraft at the Mission entrance, in full glare of his compatriots, who were identified as top politicians in Bukusu community by then. Thus, IcFEM did not implement most of its agenda freely without opposition from the local people.

Political interference was one of the hurdles IcFEM had to evade. Nabie (O.I, 2015) notes that the local Bukusu politicians were using traditional circumcision to enhance their fortunes of remaining in power. Because of IcFEM entrance into circumcision, these politicians sensed danger on their part and they used the ministry of health to disrupt the circumcision projects sponsored by the Mission. However, the Ministry of Health did not disrupt these circumcision projects after assessing what IcFEM was doing (Sankey, O.I, 2015). Upon defeat through the ministry, politicians attempted three times to assassinate Mr. Nabie but they were unsuccessful.

Unrealistic expectations by the local people from the Mission coupled with financial constraint was another key impediment to the success of IcFEM in Kimilili constituency. As noted earlier, IcFEM was a non-profit organization and most of its projects were meant to enhance the living standards of the local people. Therefore, the Mission got no fruitful returns from such projects to boost its financial kitty (Namungu, O.I, 2015). Being a charity institution IcFEM depended purely on donations and funding from well-wishers both within and outside Kenya. Sometimes, donors withdrew their funding hence the financial status of the Mission used to fluctuate, depending on the support it received from its donors (Biboko, O.I, 2015). Thus, it was difficult to predict the financial stability of the Mission hence it succumbed to some of the major financial challenges that came its way.

By December 2012, poverty level in the entire Bungoma county was very high and IcFEM endeavoured to change this wanting observation (Nyongesa, O.I, 2014). This translated to more efforts by the Mission to change and enhance the development of the community. As noted before, IcFEM operated not only in Kimilili constituency but it also ventured into the development of other regions neighbouring Kimilili constituency. In all these constituencies, the demand for IcFEM services was high but it was crippled by financial pitfalls (Namungu, O.I, 2015). The demand for more bursary allocations by the local needy students was beyond the Mission's expectations. Many needy cases of physically challenged individuals looked for the Mission's medical support. Food security to the local community was also in limbo and the local community saw their salvation in IcFEM. All these together with other overwhelming demands from the local community were challenges to the normal operations of the Mission.

Human resource management was another major weakness of IcFEM. Being a non-profit and a charity organization, the Mission relied on volunteers to provide services to the local people (Murutu, O.I, 2014). These volunteers received daily allowances which were meant to facilitate their service delivery to the local people but then such allowances were not sufficient to meet their basic needs. Such individuals, therefore, left the Mission upon the availability of greener pastures thus stagnating the implementation of the Mission's projects to the local people. The few local people who were employed by IcFEM received meager remuneration which discouraged others from offering their services to the Mission. As a result, some of the Mission's workers resigned from their positions to venture into other productive income generating projects.

Although most of the Mission's officials were Christians, cases of financial misappropriation and corruption were reported (Kunusia, O.I, 2014). This demoralized the local community in engaging IcFEM in their developmental projects. Local people claimed that the Mission received full funding from foreign donors and other well-wishers for specific community projects such as construction of classrooms in public schools. However, these officials demanded the community to support such projects, by providing relevant construction materials, enabling them to save money meant for

such construction materials for themselves. In one case, a principal of a secondary school in Kabuchai constituency claimed that the Mission officials instructed him to sign a document explaining how KSh1.2 million was used to construct a laboratory yet the Mission officials gave out only KSh300, 000 (Nandabi, O.I, 2014). This left the local people in utmost surprise thus registered their lack of trust in the Mission officials.

7. Conclusion

As demonstrated in the foregoing discussion, it is plausible to conclude that IcfEM is exactly a replica of Christian missionary societies that were established in Africa prior to the inception of colonialism. The establishment and the formation of this mission organization in Kenya heavily borrowed from the principles of the 20th century missionary societies in Africa. Nevertheless it is important to observe that IcfEM was established in Kenya by the locals who were drawn from diverse Christian denominations. This is somehow contrary to the missionary societies in Africa that were established and sponsored by specific denomination in Europe. Similarly, IcfEM engaged in the provision of social-economic and cultural support to the local communities within its vicinity. Arguably therefore, one can correctly reason that this mission is a reincarnation of the 20th century missionary societies in Africa.

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- xxii. Abraham Nambilo Wanjala; 73 years old, interviewed on 3rd August 2014 at Bituyu village, Kimilili Division, Kimilili constituency. A medical doctor by profession.
- xxiii. Ben Nyongesa, 49 years old, interviewed on 23rd August 2014 at Sitabicha Village, Kimilili rural sub-location, Kimilili constituency. Veterinary practitioner by profession.
- xxiv. Dinah Wanjala, 67 years old, interviewed on 3rd August 2014 at Bituyu village, Kimilili Division, Kimilili constituency. She is a retired Primary School teacher.
- xxv. Edward Chikati, 39 years old, interviewed on 6th December 2014 at Sitabicha village, Kimilili rural sub-location. He is the area assistant Chief.
- xxvi. Godwin Masika Makokha, 49 years old, interviewed on 17th November 2014 at Kaptola village, Kibingei location, Kimilili constituency. He is a teacher at Bituyu FYM Primary School and also holds a B.Ed. (arts) degree from Kenyatta University.
- xxvii. Hosea Wasike, 83 years old, interviewed on 20th September 2014 at Kamutiong'i village, Kamusinga sub-location, Kibingei Location, Kimilili constituency. A medical doctor by profession.
- xxviii. Lesley Sankey, 65 years old, interviewed on 26th August 2015 at IcfEM's offices, Kibingei Location, Kimilili constituency. She is a native of the United Kingdom but currently works as the personal assistant to the director of IcfEM.

- xxix. Macdon Namungu Juma, 49 years old, interviewed on 26th August 2015 at IcFEM's offices, Kibingei Location, Kimilili constituency. He is the deputy director in charge of operations and the Mission chaplain.
- xxx. Margaret Soita, 56 years old, interviewed on 28th August 2015 at Dreamland Mission Hospital, Kibingei Location, Kimilili constituency. She is the administrator of the Hospital.
- xxxi. Moses Banda Wafula, 77 years old, interviewed on 2nd August 2014 at Kibisi Village, Sikhendu Sub-location, Kimilili constituency. A former member of Kenya National Farmers Union (KNFU) and currently a peasant farmer.
- xxxii. Musikiti Kusimba, 56 years old, interviewed on 23rd August 2014 at Chetambe estate, Kimilili Town, Kimilili constituency. He formerly worked with the National Intelligence Service of Kenya.
- xxxiii. Patrick Biboko, 49 years old, interviewed on 26th August 2015 at IcFEM's offices, Kibingei Location, Kimilili constituency. He is the assistant director, Mercy and Justice Pillar.
- xxxiv. Rhoda Murutu, 30 years old, interviewed on 13th August 2014 at Buko village, Sikhendu sub-location, Maeni Location, Kimilili constituency. She is a teacher at St. Patrick Boy's High School, Naitiri. She is a beneficiary of full Secondary School and University scholarship from IcFEM.
- xxxv. Roseline Nelima Nandabi, 45 years old, interviewed on 17th August 2014 at Kaptola village, Kibingei location, Kimilili constituency. She is a teacher at Khwiroro AC primary school and currently pursuing a B.Ed. (arts) degree at Kenyatta University.
- xxxvi. Ruth Eshimuli Nabie, 51 years old, interviewed on 28th August 2015 at Dreamland Mission Hospital, Kibingei Location, Kimilili constituency. She is the wife to Mr. Nabie. She is also the Chief Executive Officer of the Hospital.
- xxxvii. Solomon Nabie, 53 years old, interviewed on 27th August 2015 at IcFEM's offices, Kibingei Location, Kimilili constituency. He is the director of IcFEM.