



Jumuga Journal of Education,  
Oral Studies, and Human Sciences (JJEOSHS)  
[editor@jumugajournal.org](mailto:editor@jumugajournal.org)  
<http://www.jumugajournal.org>  
Volume 8, Issue 2, 2025  
<https://doi.org/10.35544/jjeoshs.v8i2.124>

## **Christian Faith-Based Organizations and Poverty Reduction: A Review of Turkana West Sub-County, Kenya**

Mwangi Ezra Gushita

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1952-6394>

Kenyatta University

&

Cyprian Kavivya, PhD

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1051-8255>

Kenyatta University

&

Julius Gathogo, PhD

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1223-4571>

Kenyatta University, RITR-University of South Africa & ANCCI University

### **Abstract**

This article sets out to explore the role of selected Christian Faith-Based Organizations (CFBOs) in poverty reduction in Turkana West, Turkana County, in Kenya, with a view to fostering a sustainable and holistic approach to the poverty menace in the region. The complexity and multi-dimensional nature of poverty requires integrated and combined efforts of multiple governmental and non-governmental partners to fight against extreme poverty in the County. The spiritual dimension brought about by the CFBOs becomes necessary to give impetus to the fight against extreme poverty. The objective of this article is to establish the theological basis for CFBOs' participation in poverty reduction efforts. It utilizes a Mixed Methods Triangulation Design: Validation model. Random and purposive sampling methods were used. Further, Questionnaires and Interview schedule were used as data collection methods. The main findings of the article reveals that despite the various challenges, CFBOs have played a pivotal role in poverty reduction. Further, the theological underpinnings of the selected CFBOs have significantly motivated them in provision of critical services in Turkana West.

**Keywords:** Christian-Faith Based Organizations, Poverty Reduction and Theology

### **Introduction**

Integrated and combined efforts of multiple governmental and non-governmental partners are necessary in the fight against extreme poverty. Obwoye & Nandi (2017) note that poverty is a complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon and a social construct that demands combined and integral efforts from eclectic partners and disciplines towards its mitigation. They argue that expecting poverty reduction solely by economic policies, financial investments, and politics is unrealistic. There is a great need for holistic, transformative, and sustainable development actions towards poverty mitigation efforts in society (Nthukah & Gathogo, 2015). For this reason, the Christian Faith-Based Organizations (CFBOs) supply the spiritual dimension in the fight against extreme poverty, especially in marginalized areas. As such, CFBO supplements the efforts of the government and other non-governmental, secular organizations engaged in poverty eradication initiatives in the community.

Faith-based organizations have a rich history of involvement in humanitarian initiatives, which stems from the period before the formalization of international law on humanitarianism in treaty law (Ohazulike, 2023). Individuals, in conjunction with faith communities, helped the needy affected by persecution, natural disasters, and wars. The Hebrew

Scriptures underscore the theme of justice for the marginalized, alien, and the poor. The oppressed and persecuted found refuge in the cities of refuge (Joshua 20:2). The monasteries proved to be hospitality centres for strangers during the later medieval periods. The establishment of the Catholic Orders provided medical care to the sick, charity to the poor, hospitality to strangers, and education for children (Ferris, 2005; Ohazulike, 2023). In the Protestant and Orthodox traditions, the establishment of diaconates aided in the execution of Christian services, which is currently central to church welfare activities.

The prosperity of mission societies in North America and Europe, especially in the 18th and 19th Centuries, not only sought to evangelize but also fostered the provision of humanitarian assistance (Ohazulike, 2023). They proved helpful by raising awareness and soliciting support in their respective congregations in their home countries (Ferris, 2005). Notably, there was a dramatic increase in Christian FBOs immediately after the Second World War in response to increased humanitarian needs. The Red Cross, Church World Service, and Christian Aid emerged during the inter-war period but proliferated after the Second World War (Ferris, 2005). In 1948, the World Council of Churches was formed to respond to humanitarian needs, precisely the needs of the millions displaced in Europe (Berger, 2003). In 1947, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) was established to meet the humanitarian needs of the war-displaced Lutherans.

In collaboration with other NGOs, the FBOs lobbied and advocated for the formation of the United Nations Organization and the subsequent inclusion of the Human Rights Charter in the organization's mandate (Tomalin, 2012). Specifically, the Federal Council of Churches played a significant role in drafting the charter and presenting it to the drafting committee of the US representatives (Berger, 2003). The 1950s and 1960s saw the FBOs at the centre stage of the refugee-serving community (Ferris, 2005). It is important to note that in 1962, due to the FBO initiative, the formation of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) attracted the membership of more than 65 agencies by 1965 to provide humanitarian assistance and development. However, the inauguration and development of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), an intergovernmental organization in the early 1960s through the 1980s retarded the further growth of the FBOs as the UNHCR demonstrated more attention towards the refugee welfare internationally (Chemelil, 2018). Also, the period of 1980s saw a reduction in the scope of service among the international FBOs due to the following reasons: First, there was a proliferation of indigenous FBOs and NGOs in developing countries, and secondly, the pressure to decrease the FBOs abroad activities and focus on supporting development of local institutions became insurmountable (Ferris, 2005). In other words, the understanding of development changed during this period as the local and indigenous FBOs were encouraged to thrive by minimizing the activities of international organizations.

In Turkana County, Christian FBOs are also engaged in humanitarian assistance through poverty reduction initiatives. Churches, through their FBOs, engage in programs that help improve the welfare of societies in different ways (Chemelil, 2018). For instance, the Catholic Church has programs under the Cross-Catholic Outreach and Caritas, Don Bosco, and Jesuit Refugee Services; The Anglican church also has programs under the Anglican Relief and Development Funds (ARDF); the Adventist church has programs under the Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA) – Kenya; and the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG)-Kenya also has programs under the Turkana Christian Development Mission (TCDM), among other CFBOs.

Over the years, CFBOs in Turkana County have demonstrated remarkable efforts towards poverty reduction. For instance, the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar, which is comprised of the strongest and largest CFBO in Turkana, has various social programs for poverty mitigation (Chemelil, 2018). The organization initiated Early Childhood Development Centres (ECD) and Adult Education classes and built primary and secondary schools, such as Lodwar High School, where individuals in the community have been empowered. The organization has also drilled boreholes, thus boosting water accessibility in the region. The Christian Children's Fund – Kenya (CCF) 2006, through its programs on Health, Education, and food security, succeeded in boosting girl child access to education, increasing enrollment in primary and secondary schools, as well as creating canal irrigation in Nadapal (Chemelil, 2018). In 1979, the African Inland Church pioneered the 62-hectare South Turkana Morolem Irrigation Scheme. The Canal irrigation scheme provided employment and surplus food for the community (Chemelil, 2018).

In the Turkana West constituency, several CFBOs are currently in operation. The organizations include The A.I.C. Health Ministries, Caritas, Reformed Church of East Africa, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the Water Mission, World Vision, and the Dan Church Aid, among others. The CFBOs carry out diverse poverty reduction programs. For instance, the A.I.C. ministries run the programs of health, agriculture, and Livelihoods, and water projects; Caritas runs the programs of health, agricultural livelihood, education, water, and nutrition; the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) runs the programs of agricultural livelihood and cash transfer. Notably, the A.I.C. ministries, Caritas and

ADRA, have been regional development partners for approximately 45 years, 50 years, and 20 years, respectively (Chemelil,2018).

### **Statement of the problem**

According to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all human beings are entitled to reasonable access to food, housing, clothing, education, and medical care, among other essential social services. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics on the Kenya poverty report indicates that 79% of Turkana County is impoverished; eight in 10 people live in absolute poverty. Also, 82% of the population lacks formal education. In Turkana West Constituency, 82.1% of the population is impoverished, making it the County's leading constituency in high poverty. These statistics are based on socio-economic indicators, including education, social welfare, income distribution, and demography in the County.

Turkana County received the lion's share of the equalization funds from the government, amounting to Ksh 1,203,573,848, where the Turkana West constituency was allocated Ksh 269,847,194 to provide essential services (The Equalization Fund Appropriation Bill, 2023). Despite the deliberate efforts of the government to mitigate poverty through equalization funds in Turkana County, extreme poverty is still evident, and the constituency registers the highest poverty index of 82.1%. It is, therefore, unrealistic to expect poverty reduction solely by economic policies, financial investments, and politics as advanced by the county government over the years. The complexity and multi-dimensional nature of poverty require integrated and combined efforts of multiple governmental and non-governmental partners to fight against extreme poverty in the County.

As such, Christian Faith-Based Organizations (CFBOs) supply the spiritual dimension needed to fight against extreme poverty in Turkana West. The CFBOs are purported to be strategically located to help people experiencing poverty at the grassroots level because of their faith identity and attachment to the communities. The CFBOs establish a long-lasting, trusting relationship and social capital between communities and service providers. Further, it is opined that the faith character possessed by the CFBOs increases their efficiency in social service provision at the grassroots level, more than their secular agencies' counterparts.

For these reasons, this study aims to explore the CFBOs' effectiveness in reducing poverty in Turkana West, with a view to going beyond the issuance of temporal humanitarian assistance to a more sustainable and holistic approach.

### **CFBOs theological basis in poverty reduction**

The role of religion in development has gained increasing acceptability in the contemporary world, especially in the 21st Century. Numerous researchers agree that the former World Bank president Wolfensohn's declaration and popularization of the inseparability of religion from development gave impetus to the unprecedented involvement of FBOs in the world's developmental agenda (Chemelil, 2018; Dasimaka, 2011; Nyahuma, 2020; Rasmussen, 2020; Van Wees & Jennings, 2021). Religion's acceptability and growing interest in development emanate from the diverse motivations and realizations of practitioners and scientists. For instance, Dasimaka (2011) argues that the FBOs play a unique role in achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through moral commitments and support mobilization. Owusu (2017) opines that the aims of FBO in development are much deeper than those of their secular counterparts; they go beyond poverty eradication and socio-economic aims to encompass the spiritual growth of the beneficiaries. The Faith character among the FBOs strategically locates them in an advantageous and effective position to combat socio-economic and religious challenges at the grassroots level of communities (Obwoye & Nandi, 2017; Nthukah & Gathogo, 2015; Owusu, 2017). However, it is unclear how the faith character among the FBOs contributes to their effective service delivery compared to their secular counterparts.

The 'Charitable Choice' legislation in Britain evidences the increased involvement of FBO activities in Britain (Nyahuma, 2020). The executive orders by former presidents Bush and Obama, which saw a conglomeration of religion and development termed 'holistic development,' depict heightened FBO efforts in American society (Khafagy, 2020; Nyahuma, 2020). In this regard, Heist and Cnaan (2016) postulate that FBOs in America lead other non-profit and charitable organizations in providing welfare services to communities in various states. In other places, including Panama, Benin, Georgia, and Vietnam, the efficiency of the FBO networks supersedes that of local government and other service providers (Khafagy, 2020). However, proselytization remains the substructure accusation towards the FBO's aggressiveness in service provision. As such, there is a need for further research to demonstrate the actual motivation of FBO undertakings.

In Africa, FBOs are at the centre stage in poverty eradication, especially in marginalized communities. FBOs such as ADRA, World Vision, Christian Care, and Catholic Relief Service transcend various African countries such as Zimbabwe, Cameroon, and Kenya (Chemelil, 2018; Nyahuma, 2020; Van Wees & Jennings, 2021). Various empirical research studies

have demonstrated the efforts of FBOs in Africa. For instance, Dasimaka (2011) assesses the competencies, effectiveness, and efficiency of FBOs in comparison to their secular counterparts in combating HIV/AIDs in southern Nigeria. Owusu (2017) delineates the concept of FBOs' accountability in Ghana.

In Kenya, various FBOs have significantly contributed to development, specifically toward poverty eradication in various parts of the country. For instance, Obwoye and Nandi (2017) note the significant contributions of FBOs in permeating cultural barriers responsible for perpetual poverty in Vihiga County. Further, Nthukah and Gathogo (2015) delineate the unique roles played by FBOs in promoting holistic and sustainable development, which they term a 'transformational development perspective' in Mbeere land.

Further, Chemelil (2018) elucidates the various efforts of FBOs in Turkana County. It is critical to note that despite the wide range of evidence depicting FBO activities in various parts of the country, there is a research gap on the sustainability of the programs initiated. More studies are needed to assess the sustainability and efficacy of the FBO programs in various parts of the country and determine whether their approach is transformational.

To a large extent, the theology underpinning different denominations determines their effort and zeal in reaching out to the underprivileged in society. The Kingdom of God motif comprises the cardinal philosophy that guides all Christian denominational philanthropic initiatives (Nthukah & Gathogo, 2015; Nyahuma, 2020). For instance, Nyahuma (2020) opines, on the one hand, that the Pentecostals embrace the 'Not Yet' inaugurated eschatological outlook, which implies that the Kingdom of God is here and now. On the other hand, he argues that the SDA embraces the 'Unrealized Realized' theology, which is largely futuristic, emphasizing life thereafter with less focus on here-and-now life. Consequently, the FBOs associated with SDA tend to accomplish less than their Pentecostal counterparts in humanitarian and community service delivery. In addition, Rasmussen (2020) also argues that the vision, mission, and core values associated with various FBOs are fundamental in motivating service delivery in communities.

The Christian teachings enshrined in the Bible justify, motivate, and propel the FBOs toward demonstration of concern and care for the needy in society (Rasmussen, 2020). For instance, the golden rule in Mathew 7:12 opines that Christians should do to others what they would have others do to them. Also, the double command of love in Mathew 22:36-40 gives an imperative to demonstrate love to God and our neighbours. Further, in James 2:17-26, the Bible postulates unequivocally that faith without action is dead. Heist & Cnaan (2016) assert that, as the Bible postulates, human beings were created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26). Thus, it is the transcendent sacredness of life bequeathed to humanity by the creator that demands equal care, justice, and consideration (Chemelil, 2018). Further, the Bible asserts that pure religion, which is undefiled before God, demonstrates compassion to the afflicted, fatherless, and widows in the community (James 1:27). Further, God holds Christians responsible for supplying the basic needs to the disadvantaged in the community (Mathew 25:42).

Obwoye and Nandi (2017) opine that theology is not monolithic. This means that various Christian traditions have independent theological applications. This explains the varied zeal among various CFBOs attached to different faith traditions (Ababio, 2025). As such, this understanding exposed a research gap on the specific theological aspect in various Christian denominations that motivates them to engage in philanthropic initiatives in society.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The article employs a mixed-design method; and specifically, a Mixed-Methods Triangulation Design and validation model in order to arrive at the desired results. However, the qualitative data was utilized to validate the quantitative data collected in order to arrive at a detailed explanation of the phenomenon. The study used descriptive statistics to make conclusion as well as suggestions from the respondents in the qualitative manner.

### **Target Population and Sample Size**

The population of this study was Turkana West, which has 239,627 people and 3000 households (KNBS 2019 census). The target was the household, the CFBO's staff, and some specific church officials. The study analysed the three main CFBOs in Turkana West: Caritas-Lodwar, ADRA-Kenya, and the A.I.C. Health Ministries, accounting for 150, 100, and 50 elements, respectively. The Households constituted 3000 (KNBS, 2021). The Church officials associated with the Catholic, SDA and A.I.C. churches amounted to 100 elements. The study selected a sample size based on the households of Turkana West Sub-County. Thus, it was based on 3000 households, 300 CFBO staff, and 100 church officials. The researcher utilized Yamane's formula to determine a sample size of 97 respondents.

### Sampling Techniques

The research study employed stratified random sampling and purposive sampling to select the respondents who participated in this study. Stratified Random sampling, on the other hand, was used to obtain information from the Households and the CFBO staff. A household sampling frame was obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics, which provided the county population (KNBS 2019 census). Stratified random sampling was also used to collect information from the CFBO's staff. The CFBOs provided a sampling frame that comprised a list of their employees. In this case, household and CFBO staff samples were randomly selected to participate in the study. On the other hand, purposive sampling was used to obtain data from the Church officials to answer the study's first objective. The church officials provided crucial information on the theological underpinnings of the CFBO's participation in poverty reduction in Turkana West.

### Research Instruments

Questionnaires and interview schedules were the research instruments for collecting quantitative and qualitative data, respectively. The questionnaires consisted of questions and prompts for gathering information from respondents. The advantages of using a questionnaire in the study are that the responses are gathered in a standardized way, so questionnaires are more objective. The questionnaires obtained information from the CFBOs' officials and the households, while the interview schedules sourced information from the church officials.

### Validity and Reliability

An attitude scale was considered valid, for example, to the degree to which its results conform to other measures of possession of attitude. The researcher used expert opinion and a piloting approach to assess the validity of the research data collection tools. The research instrument was selected and carefully developed to fit the research design. It also fits the data analysis plan so that the data collected can facilitate answering the research questions. The pre-test was done in Turkana Central constituency, which did not participate in the study since it has similar characteristics. The result yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.826.

### Data Analysis and Presentation

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to process and analyse the quantitative data collected. The data analysis comprised editing, coding, and finally tabulating the results. Frequencies and percentages were employed in the data tabulation. The qualitative data collected through interviews underwent the following process. First, verbatim transcription and thematic analysis were done. Secondly, the coding process was aided by the NVivo software, which allowed for the identification of recurring themes concerning the participants' views on CFBOs' theological underpinning and participation in poverty reduction.

### Results and Findings

#### Socio- demographic characteristics

The article looked at socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, age bracket, marital status, and education level of the respondents to determine how these characteristics influenced their responses.

#### Gender

**Table 1.0 Gender Distribution**

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Male	45	46.3
Female	52	53.4
TOTAL	97	100.0

Regarding the gender of the respondents, 52(53.4%) were females, whereas 45(46.3%) were males. Hence, the study contains more views of female respondents than males, although they are substantively represented.

#### Age bracket

**Table 2.0 Age bracket**

AGE (YEARS)	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Below 25	14	14.4
26 – 35	47	48.5

36 and above	36	37.1
TOTAL	97	100.0

Regarding the age bracket, 47(48.5%) of the respondents were between 26 and 35, followed by 36 (37.1%) who were between 36 and 60, and lastly 14 (14.4%) who were below 25. The statistics imply that the study contains more views of mature people aged 26 and above.

### Marital status

**Table 3.0 Marital status**

STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Single	30	30.9
Married	56	57.7
Divorced	1	1.0
Widow/widower	10	10.3
TOTAL	97	100.0

In relation to marital status, 30.9% of the respondents were single, 57.7% were married, and 1.0% were divorced. This implies that the majority of views were obtained from married people.

### Educational level

**Table 4.0 Educational level**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
No formal education	31	31.9
Secondary	14	14.3
Certificate	32	32.9
Diploma	12	12.4
Degree and above	8	8.2
TOTAL	97	100.0

In relation to educational level, 14(14.3%) of the respondents had attained secondary education, while 32(32.9%) had certificate-level education, 12 (12.4%) had achieved diplomas, 31(31.9%) had no formal education, and 8(8.2%) had a degree and above. This means that the majority 63 (64.9%) of the respondents had a low educational level since they had secondary or no formal education.

### Theological basis for CFBOs engagements

The objective of the study was to establish theological basis for CFBOs engagement in poverty reduction efforts in Turkana West, Turkana County, Kenya. Their responses are presented in this part of the report.

### CFBOs role in holistic transformation

**Table 5.0 CFBOs role in holistic transformation**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	2	2.0
Disagree	11	11.3
Not sure	22	22.3
Agree	40	41.2
Strongly agree	22	22.7
TOTAL	97	100.0

The findings show that 40 (41.2%) of the respondents agreed that CFBOs have played a role in holistic transformation in Turkana West, 22(22.7%) strongly agreed, 22(22.7%) were not sure, 11(11.3%) disagreed, and 2(2.0%) strongly disagreed. These findings imply that the majority, 62(63.9%) of the respondents, agreed that different levels of CFBOs' activities have helped much in promoting holistic transformation for the people of Turkana West, Turkana County. The findings support Gathogo (2015) and Nyahuma (2020), who delineate the unique roles played by CFBOs in promoting holistic and sustainable development, which they term a transformational development perspective. The findings indicate that CFBOs have played a great role in promoting holistic transformation among the people of Turkana West.

### Sustainability of CFBOs programs

**Table 6.0 Sustainability of CFBOs programs**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	7	7.2
Disagree	8	8.82
Not sure	20	20.6
Agree	52	53.6
Strongly agree	10	10.3
Total	97	100.0

The findings indicate that 52 (53.6%) of the respondents agreed that CFBO programs in Turkana West are more sustainable, 20 (20.6%) were not sure, 8 (8.2%) disagreed, 7(7.2%) strongly agreed, and 10 (10.3%) strongly agreed. The findings show that 60(61.8%) of the respondents agreed at different levels that CFBO programs in Turkana West have significantly contributed to sustainable development in the community. In this case, CFBOs are concerned with the welfare of the people by ensuring improved access to better amenities. The findings are unlike those of Kohen and Heuser (2020), who opined that development ensures advancement in political participation and economic prosperity. Incomes tend to be low in Turkana West, and there is a high prevalence of poverty in both the refugee and host communities. According to the 2019 census, 58,378 people in the host community are actively looking for jobs, while Turkana households are among the most financially excluded in Kenya at 29%. The survey established that sizeable proportions (45%) of refugee and host community households in Turkana West are undertaking some business as a source of income. However, while 75.7% of host households indicated that they relied on some form of business to generate income, including livestock sales, all refugee households ultimately indicated their reliance on humanitarian support.

This supports the assumption that there is a relationship between the CFBOs' development programs and the local economy, which is overly reliant on humanitarian financial streams.

### The Effects of CFBOs theological underpinnings

**Table 7.0 CFBOs theological underpinnings and Motivations**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	5	5.1
Disagree	10	10.3
Not sure	16	16.4
Agree	46	47.4
Strongly agree	20	20.6
Total	97	100.0

Concerning whether theology underpins different denominations to determine their effort and zeal in reaching out to the underprivileged people in Turkana West, the findings show that 46 (47.4%) of the respondents agreed, 20 (20.6 %) strongly agreed, 16(16.4%) were not sure, 10(10.3%) disagreed, and 5 (5.1%) strongly disagreed. The result implies that the majority, 66(68.0) of the respondents, agreed at different levels that the theology underpinning different denominations determines CFBOs' effort and zeal in reaching out to the underprivileged people in Turkana West. In this case, the people could benefit more spiritually and physically because of the kingdom of God motif, which comprises the Cardinal philosophy guiding all Christian denominations' philanthropic initiatives (Nthukah & Gathogo, 2015; Nyahuma, 2020). Governments at various UN conferences have committed to what they refer to as the 'spiritual development' initiatives that require a 'spiritual vision' (United Nations, 2019). The spiritual vision is conceived through the theological or the belief system associated with a specified denomination attached to the CFBOs. Addressing spiritual needs and

recognizing that religion, spirituality, and belief play a central role in the lives of millions of women and men will boost the success of CFBOs in development (Hermawan & Abiri, 2025). However, despite a marked trend among international actors to consider the views of spiritual and religious actors in development, CFBOs have been largely ignored.

### CFBOs Theological philosophies and denominational philanthropy

**Table 8.0 CFBOs theological philosophies and denominational philanthropy**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	9	9.2
Disagree	13	13.8
Not sure	16	17.0
Agree	38	39.2
Strongly agree	21	21.6
Total	97	100.0

The findings show that 38 (39.2%) of the respondents agreed that theological philosophies and denominational philanthropy of various CFBOs have been reflected in their initiatives. 16(17.0%) were not sure, 21(21.6%) strongly agreed, 13(13.8%) disagreed, and 9 (9.2%) strongly disagreed. The findings mean that the majority, 59(60.8%) of the respondents agreed at different levels that various CFBOs' theological philosophies and denominational philanthropy have been exhibited in their initiatives. This promotes practical Christianity that meets the people at their very points of need, thus helping them to have faith and hope to manoeuvre through daily difficult circumstances. Additionally, CFBOs' spiritual and relational experiences can raise the self-regard and confidence of the marginalized, thus enabling them to benefit from new life opportunities (Jahani & Parayandeh, 2024). Notably, the training of local religious leaders usually emphasizes theological and ethical issues to the exclusion of applied social and environmental studies, thus focusing less on the day-to-day challenges bedeviling the people (Hermawan & Abiri, 2025). Therefore, it implies that the theological training that informs and shapes the CFBO leadership should also focus on contemporary issues that directly affect the community alongside the dogmatic and ethical issues. The findings contradict the assumption that there is no relationship between the initiatives undertaken by various CFBOs and their theological philosophies and denominational philanthropy in Turkana West.

### The 'Unrealised Realised' theology and CFBOs

**Table 9.0: The 'Unrealised Realised' theology and CFBOs**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	2	2.1
Disagree	11	11.3
Not sure	10	10.3
Agree	37	38.1
Strongly agree	37	38.1
Total	97	100.0

As pertains to whether the CFBOs that embrace the 'unrealised Realised' theology tend to accomplish less as compared to their counterparts in humanitarians and service delivery in Turkana West, the findings show that 37 (38.1%) of the respondents agreed, 37 (38.1%) strongly agreed, 10 (10.3%) were not sure, 11 ( 11.3%) and 2 (2.1%) strongly disagreed. The results imply that the majority, 74 (76.2%) of the respondents, agreed at different levels that CFBOs that have embraced the 'unrealised Realised' theology have accomplished less as compared to their counterparts in promoting humanitarians and service delivery among the people in Turkana West. For instance, Nyahuma (2020) opines, on the one hand, that the Pentecostals embrace the 'not yet' inaugurated eschatological outlook, which implies that the kingdom of God is here and now. On the other hand, he argues that the S.D.A embraces the 'Unrealised Realised' theology, which is largely futuristic, places more emphasis on the life thereafter, thus less focusing on here-and-now life. Consequently, the CFBOs associated with S.D.A, tend to accomplish less than their Pentecostal counterparts in humanitarian and service delivery. The finding shows that the CFBOs associated with the Catholic Church have accomplished much more than the other CFBOs associated with S.D.A and A.I.C churches. The Catholic Church's theological orientation emphasizes the here-and-now life, thus propelling the CFBO's aggressiveness (Ababio, 2025). Further, the denominational choice of 'the engine

of growth' is important for solving poverty directly through increasing sustainable livelihoods and strengthening churches' and CFBOs' capacity to maintain and expand their local participatory and empowering roles in Turkana West.

### The Vision, Mission, and Core Values Motivations

**Table 10: CFBOs Vision, Mission and Core Values Motivations**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	14	14.4
Disagree	14	14.4
Not sure	11	11.3
Agree	26	26.8
Strongly agree	32	32.9
Total	97	100.0

In relation to whether vision, mission, and core values associated with CFBOs are fundamental in motivating service delivery to the people of Turkana West to meet their basic needs, the findings indicate that 32 (32.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 26 (26.8%) agreed, 14 (14.4%) disagreed, 14(14.4%) strongly disagreed, and 11(11.3%) were not sure. The findings imply that the majority, 58 (59.8%) of the respondents, agreed at different levels that the vision, mission, and core values associated with various CFBOs were fundamental in motivating service delivery for the people of Turkana West. These findings support Rasmussen (2020), who argues that the vision, mission, and core values are fundamental in motivating service delivery in communities. The findings contradict the assertion that the vision, mission, and core values associated with CFBOs are not fundamental in motivating service delivery in Turkana West.

### The Christian teachings and CFBOs undertakings

**Table 11: The Christian teachings and CFBOs undertakings**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	17	12.3
Disagree	17	17.5
Not sure	9	9.2
Agree	23	23.7
Strongly agree	36	37.1
Total	97	100.0

Concerning whether Christian teachings from the Bible justify, motivate, and propel the CFBOs to care for the needy people in Turkana West, the results indicate that 36(37.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 23(23.7%) agreed, 17(17.5%) disagreed, and 9(9.2%) were not sure. The findings reveal that 59(60.8%) of the respondents agreed at different levels that Christian teachings from the Bible justify, motivate, and have propelled them to care for the needy people in Turkana West. The Christian teachings enshrined in the Bible justify, motivate, and propel the CFBOs toward demonstrating concern and care for the needy (Rasmussen, 2020). Christian teachings impact people's perspectives regarding a better life. A large proportion of CFBOs report engaging in 'capacity- building' – a few claim it is all their organization does. The findings support that Christian teachings, values, and ethics from the Bible have motivated the CFBOs to care for needy people in Turkana West.

### 'Theology is not monolithic'

**Table 12: Theological uniformity**

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly disagree	3	3.09
Disagree	13	13.40
Not sure	21	212.64
Agree	32	32.98
Strongly agree	28	28.86
Total	97	100.0

Concerning whether theology is not monolithic, the result shows that 32(32.98%) of the respondents agreed, 28(28.96%) strongly agreed, 21(21.64%) were not sure, 13(13.40%) disagreed, and 3(3.09%) strongly disagreed. The findings show that 60(61.9%) of the majority agreed at different levels that theology is not monolithic (Obwoye & Nandi, 2017). This means that various Christian traditions have independent theological applications. This explains the varied zeal among various CFBOs attached to different faith traditions in Turkana West. It is imperative to note that proselytization comprises the end goal of some CFBOs.

In contrast, others emphasize community development, thus supporting the finding that theology is not monolithic or uniform across various faith traditions. Some faiths constitute CFBOs that promote their faith and encourage people to convert. In other words, community development and philanthropy comprise a means to an end, not an end. Religious leaders and religious institutions were the most trusted institutions in developing countries (Owusu & Agyemang, 2025). This implies that donors prefer CFBOs the most in developing countries. However, some CFBOs have consistently proven to foster and enhance sustainable development in the community due to their consistency in attracting considerably large amounts of donor funding compared to their counterparts. The rationale behind such phenomena is that donor funding is usually given based on the CFBO's objectives, where the objectives are informed by the theological orientation associated with diverse CFBOs (Ababio, 2025). It, therefore, means that the CFBO's operations will eventually differ as some will appeal more to individual and institutional donors.

In this case, findings appear to disagree with the notion that theology is monolithic or uniform. Therefore, some of the CFBOs operating in Turkana West demonstrate a departure from proselytization. In contrast, others tend to pay key attention to the growth in the number of religious adherents in the area of interventions.

### Theological interventions and financial support

**Table 13: Theological Interventions and Financial support**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	13	13.40
Disagree	10	10.30
Not sure	8	8.24
Agree	29	29.89
Strongly agree	37	38.14
Total	97	100.0

Concerning whether theological interventions and financial support of the CFBOs promoted income-generating activities in Turkana West, the result indicates that 37(38.14%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 29(29.89%) agreed, 15(15.46%) strongly disagreed, 10(10.30%) disagreed, and 8(8.24%) were not sure. The findings imply that the majority, 66(68.04%), of the respondents agreed at different levels that the theological interventions and financial support made by CFBOs in Turkana West have promoted income-generating activities among the households, which have boosted their sustainable economic development. Income generation and livelihood support are other key activities undertaken by CFBOs. Two current income generation programs in this sub-county are microfinance and agricultural enterprise development. For instance, the respondents repeatedly mentioned beekeeping, MSEs, and livestock sales. Microfinance programs range from lending small and medium sums of money at low interest to creating Rotating Saving and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), common in much of the developing world. The region's dominant form of formal employment is in the humanistic aid sector. The income levels exhibited in Turkana West are affected by levels of education, local economy, pastoralism, and policy framework. Still, findings appear to disagree with the assertion that there is no relationship between theological intervention and the financial sustainability of CFBO programs in Turkana West.

### Theological aspects motivations

**Table 14: Theological aspects motivations**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	10	10.3
Disagree	12	12.4
Not sure	22	22.7
Agree	36	37.1
Strongly agree	17	17.5
Total	97	100.0

The findings show that 36 (37.1%) of the respondents agreed that a specific theological aspect in various Christian denominations motivates them to engage in Philanthropic initiatives in society, 17(17.5%) strongly agreed, 22(22.7%) were not sure, 12(12.4%) disagreed, and 10 (10.3%) strongly disagreed. This means that 53(54.6%) of the respondents agreed at different levels that theological aspects in various Christian denominations motivate them to engage in philanthropic initiatives in Turkana West. The CFBOs have also endeavored to teach and inculcate good virtues and Christian morals as enshrined in the Bible to the beneficiaries of their projects. This has propelled the CFBOs towards demonstrations of concern and care for the needy in society (Rasmussen, 2020). Further, the CFBOs have been sending the people to school and training them on skills that would empower them to survive in society (Owusu & Agyemang, 2025). Some CFBOs also design their programs to resonate with the government's needs to enable government ministries to enact their mandates. Spiritual and relational experiences can raise the self-awareness and confidence of previously excluded poor people, helping them to benefit from new opportunities. The findings contradict the assertion that specific theological aspects do not motivate various denominations to engage in philanthropic initiatives in Turkana West.

## Conclusion

According to the study's findings, Christian Faith-Based Organizations (CFBOs) contribute significantly to poverty reduction in Turkana West. Theological underpinnings comprise a critical substructure in motivating the CFBOs in their efforts to reduce poverty. Theological orientations associated with various CFBOs provide a rationale for their zeal and accomplishments in Turkana West.

## Recommendations

In relation to the study findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. CFBOs need to further impart spiritual knowledge and nourishment for the people of Turkana West to live with hope for life now and what is yet to come. The spiritual knowledge will impart hope for the future amidst harsh socio-economic experience in Turkana West.
2. CFBOs should conduct inter-faith forums to regulate and come to terms with how to carry out their interventions in Turkana West. Whereas achieving theological unity or uniformity among the CFBOs may be difficult, it is important to forge a unity of purpose in meeting the needs of underprivileged in Turkana West.

## Areas Recommended for Further Study

- I. It is essential to conduct a study aimed at identifying the gap between CFBOs that adhere to 'unrealized realized theology,' which is futuristically oriented and tends to achieve less, and those that do not, particularly in Turkana West.
- II. There is a need to investigate the emergence of a dependency syndrome among beneficiaries resulting from community aid provided by CFBOs and its implications on the sustainability efforts of these organizations.
- III. There is need to conduct a study on the effects of diverse Christian theologies on Christian community's unity and whether there is an opportunity for diverse Christian denominations to work together in an endeavour to foster religious ecumenism efforts.

## References

- Ababio, A. G. (2025). From the charismatic pulpit to the community: an exploratory analysis of the involvement of pentecostal/charismatic religious denominations in community development. *International Journal of Social Economics*.
- Berger, J. (2003). Religious Nongovernmental Organizations: An Exploratory Analysis. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 14(1), 15-39. doi: 10.1023/a:1022988804887
- Chemelil, P. K. (2018). The contribution of voluntary, faith-based, and Non-governmental organizations to socio-economic development in Turkana County, Kenya, 1986-2006. *European Journal of Social Sciences Studies*. Available at: <<https://oapub.org/soc/index.php/EJSSS/article/view/452>>. Date accessed: 31 July 2025. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejsss.v0i0.452>
- Dasimaka, D. M. (2011). *Faith and Development Outcomes: A Comparative Case Study of HIV/AIDS Programmes in Southern Nigeria*. Manchester: The University of Manchester.
- Ferris, E. (2005). Faith-based and secular humanitarian organizations. *International review of the Red Cross*, 87(858), 311-325.

- Heist, D., & Cnaan, R. A. (2016). Faith-based international development work: A review. *Religions*, 7(3), 19.
- Hermawan, S., & Abiri, C. (2025). Christianity and social development theory. *Socio-Politica: Jurnal Ilmiah Jurusan Sosiologi*, 15(2).
- Jahani, R., & Parayandeh, M. Y. (2024). The role of faith-based organizations in social service provision. *Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law, and Politics*, 3(3), 12-19.
- KNBS. (2021). Economic Survey 2021. ISBN: 978-9966-102-30-0. <https://www.knbs.or.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Economic-Survey-2021.pdf>
- KNBS, (2019). Kenya Population and Housing Census, Distribution of population by socio-economic characteristics, Nairobi. December 2019; IV.
- Khafagy, R. A. (2020). Faith-based organizations: humanitarian missions or religious missionaries. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 5(1), 13.
- Koehrsen, J., & Heuser, A. (2020). *Faith-based organizations in development discourses and practice* (p. 178). Taylor & Francis.
- Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. G. (2003). *Research methods: Quantitative & qualitative approaches* (Vol. 2, No. 2). Nairobi: Acts Press.
- Nyahuma, B. (2020). The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Development in Northern Zimbabwe. *Religion and development in Africa*, p. 353.
- Nthukah, M. M., & Gathogo, J. (2015). Overcoming Poverty through Faith-based Organizations in Mbeere-land of Kenya. *Online International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 4(2), 34–40.
- Obwoye, H., & Nandi, O. M. J. (2017). Faith-Based Organizations and the Theology of Poverty and Death in Vihiga County, Kenya. *European Journal of Philosophy, Culture, and Religion*, 1(1), 1-15.
- Ohazulike, G. A. (2023). The roles of faith-based organizations (fbos) in community development: a study of Awka South Local Government Area Anambra State. *International Journal of Health and Social Inquiry*, 9(1), 1-10.
- Owusu, C. A., & Agyemang, G. (2025, June). Turning to religion: NGO accountability in a faith-based development organisation. In *Accounting Forum* (pp. 1-25). Routledge.
- Owusu, C. A. (2017). *Accountability in NGOs: Evidence of two Christian faith-based organizations in Ghana* (Doctoral dissertation, Royal Holloway, University of London).
- Rasmussen, R. (2020). Significance of Christian faith-based organizations in the Danish development sector: A case study of Danmission. Unpublished PhD Thesis: Aalborg University, Denmark, [https://projekter.aau.dk/projekter/files/329200605/Thesis\\_Rebecca\\_Rasmussen\\_.pdf](https://projekter.aau.dk/projekter/files/329200605/Thesis_Rebecca_Rasmussen_.pdf) (accessed 30 July 2024).
- Tomalin, E. (2012). Thinking about faith-based organizations in development: where have we got to and what next? *Development in Practice*, 22(5-6), pp.689-703.
- United Nations. (2019). <https://www.un.org/sustainable-development/poverty/>. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/>. Accessed July 23, 2023.
- Van Wees, S. H., & Jennings, M. (2021). The challenges of donor engagement with faith-based organizations in Cameroon's health sector: a qualitative study. *Health Policy and Planning*, 36(4), 464-472.

**Acknowledgement:**

The authors acknowledge the study participants who provided valuable data documented in this article. Further, they appreciate the valuable and swift inputs from article reviewers and the editorial team for successful publication of this article.

**Ethical pledge:**

The researchers confirm that the all data collected was responsibly handled and accurately documented without manipulation of any kind or bias.

**Competing interest:**

The authors affirm that this research was conducted without impartially competing interests of any kind financially, professionally and personally that may have influenced the outcome of biased results or interpretation.

**Author's contribution:**

The researchers are the sole authors of this article.

**Disclaimer:**

The views expressed in this research article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agencies of the authors or the journal itself.

**Ethical consideration:**

Ethical guidelines relating to respect, honesty, anonymity and confidentiality of the participants were observed. The proposal was approved by Kenyatta University Office of the Executive Dean Graduate School and the research permit was obtained from the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).