

Working Through the Local Church

Relating to the church type

	Church Type	Example	Role of Bible as Motivator	Role of the Pastor	Discrimination	Discipleship Issues
1a	One well established denomination very dominant in one people group, with majority as members.	KHC in Wolaitta Zone, Ethiopia; ECS in Moru & Kakwa areas of Sudan; COU in Kigezi in SW Uganda.	Very significant – highly respected by almost everyone as God’s Word. Biblical teaching very motivational. Easy to use.	A highly respected member of the community and extremely influential. His views listened to by most people.	Working through the members very relevant, since everyone affiliated to the church. May be misunderstood by secular bodies but if properly communicated not a real one as no one left out. The potential needs to be communicated and not assumed.	Teaching on Behaviour Change very significant. Probably have very good examples from the past (early days of the gospel coming to the area) May need to focus on returning to the distinctiveness of the first generation (first love – Rev 2:4)
1b	One denomination dominant and has spread to the whole people group through recent growth	ECS, Bor Dinka in Sudan. PCOS, Nuer in Sudan.	Respected but not yet well understood so its relevance to daily living may not be clear to members due to little teaching. Can also be misused leading to heresy because of lack of teaching.	A highly respected member of the community who is very influential, but may not be well trained	Working through the church members very relevant as reaches all. Since everyone affiliated to the church no one will be left out.	Much teaching is probably needed on what it means to live as a Christian. An excellent opportunity for link between discipleship teaching and distinctive Bible based development teaching.
2a	Many denominations present, but one particularly associated with the people group. May be well known as the church of this people group by outsiders.	Methodist Church in Meru, Kenya. Church of God in Bunyore, W. Kenya. Lutherans in parts of Tanzania. UCZ in Zambia	Very significant for teaching – highly respected by almost everyone as God’s Word	Influential within own church only, but unless actively seeking to build bridges with others may be divisive.	May be a sensitive issue with ‘things’ but teaching widely accepted. May be the leader in teaching that extends to other churches.	May be need to focus on basic questions of living as a Christian relevant to all and not just to denominational issues. May have good experience to share with other churches.
2b	Christianity dominant but many different denominations, often with very different traditions and loyalties	South Africa. Western Kenya. Central Kenya. Ghana etc.	Very significant – highly respected by almost everyone as God’s Word. May be many interpretations used to reinforce denominational differences. Can be used to divide or unite depending on sensitivity.	Influence likely to be limited to his or her own church, unless there are active inter-denominational fora.	May be a sensitive issue with ‘things’ and denominational type teaching, but other teaching may be widely accepted, and understood by all. Need to look at what can be shared rather than keeping a good thing to oneself.	Emphasis on living as a Child of God may need emphasis over denominational teaching. Common themes in the culture need exploring. Many opportunities for sharing experience rather than fostering competition.

	Church Type	Example	Role of Bible as Motivator	Role of the Pastor	Discrimination	Discipleship Issues
3a	Most Christians belong to one church that is gaining influence but not yet reaching majority of the population	PCOS in Anuak and Shilluk Kingdoms in Sudan. KHC in some southern people groups in Ethiopia	Only valued by part of the population – those in the church. Not speaking to others, and therefore to the people as a whole yet, but small doctrinal differences may be divisive.	May be very influential as a respected educated person, and as such may be a change agent in the society. This may bear much responsibility.	If the church is respected may not be a major issue. May be the leader in change in the community, if it works only with its own members can lead to much misunderstanding.	Teaching on behaviour change is very significant and people want to know what it means to live as a Christian in their own culture. Great challenges in developing a Christian culture in a new area.
3b	Most evangelicals belong to one church in a Roman Catholic dominated area	AIC in Acholi and Madi areas of Sudan	Only valued by part of the population – those in the church. Not appreciated by many others.	May be influential as a respected educated person, but not the status of a Catholic priest	If the church is respected, it may not be a major issue, however competition may be a complicating factor, and temptation to 'buy' rice Christian arises	Being different as a Christian is understood. The opportunities for teaching on distinctive living are very significant, but should not be 'holier than thou'. Distinctive living can be a very significant evangelism tool.
3c	One Evangelical church is sharing significance with either Catholics or Muslims in a non-Catholic and non-Muslim country.	Church of Uganda in Lugbara area.	Has quite a strong influence in society. Conflict comes with those of other religion but does not limit value of the teaching	Well respected member of society with a large following	An issue that needs to be treated with care, but is not a limiting factor.	Very relevant approach to teaching, as the church is significant, and being different from others is a necessity.
3d	Several Different Churches competing for different parts of the people group, but Christianity still not dominant in the people group	Maasai and Turkana areas of Kenya. AIC in North Mara, Tanzania. CEEE and ECS amongst Azande	Only valued by part of the population – those in the church. Its teaching not seen as significant by others.	May be very influential as a respected educated person, and on many committees etc.	If the church is respected and is active in the community, this may not be a major issue. May be cross border competition.	Opportunities very great for teaching about Christian lifestyle. This is a good development opening but may need to be coordinated between different denominations.
4	Church in culturally antagonistic environment	KHC in areas like Chenchu. Protestant churches in Francophone Africa. Any church in a Muslim tribe.	Evangelical use treated with scepticism at best and probably antagonism by the majority. Seen as a threat.	May be respected as being a religious leader but also looked at with suspicion and, especially if a charismatic character, as a threat to the prevailing religion.	A very sensitive issue, being looked out for all the time. This is the situation where discrimination needs to be particularly guarded against.	Distinctiveness and purity are particularly significant issues in this type of situation. Development oriented behaviour change will be clearly noticed and could be an example for others.

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Development Related Issues

	Church Type	Community Mobilisation	Preferred strategy for Development	General Relief Intervention	Partnership Issues
1a	One well established denomination very dominant in one people group, with majority as members.	Easy if based on Biblical motivation. Church is everywhere. No need for complex models of Community mobilisation. Model of Christians being salt and light. (Matt 5)	Practical teaching through the local church based on Biblical motivation. Stewardship of God's creation a good basis for agriculture teaching. Our Bodies being temple of the Holy Spirit a good basis for health teaching. Women's fellowships very strategic.	Very difficult in home area. Jealousy and accusations abound. Can very adversely affect local witness to the gospel. Local knowledge good for advocacy and facilitating others to be more effective. Individual Christians may be involved to great benefit.	May be the obvious entry to the community even for secular organisations. The structure reaches to all corners of the people group and is a very effective existing channel for teaching and awareness raising. Since all the population are affiliated may have the most capable people available
1b	One denomination dominant and has spread to the whole people group through recent growth	Relatively easy if based on Biblical motivation. May lack relevant experience in working through the church, so may need some more assistance to be effective.	Some basic teaching relevant. Deeper teaching may be difficult. Behaviour change from discipleship very relevant and easy to bring out.	Very difficult in home area. Jealousy and accusations abound. Can divert the church from much needed spiritual teaching. Local knowledge good for advocacy and facilitating others.	May be the obvious entry to the community even for secular organisations. May be a serious problem of lack of capacity. Church could easily be diverted.
2a	Many denominations present, but one particularly associated with the people group. May be well known as the church of this people group by outsiders.	Biblical motivation possible in many communities. The dominant church has potential it needs to develop, particularly in relating to others.	Motivational teaching through the main denomination may be very relevant, though needs to build bridges to others.	Very difficult in home area. Jealousy and accusations abound. Local knowledge good, so a key resource for advocacy and facilitating others.	A strategic entry point to the community as has good local knowledge. However could be problems of competition and jealousy. Need a non-denominational strategy for greatest effectiveness.
2b	Christianity dominant but many different denominations, often with very different traditions and loyalties	Although Biblical motivation is very relevant to individuals the society may be very fragmented between different denominations, and any one has a difficult job to mobilise others.	Non denominationally based Bible teaching very relevant. Inter church fora and think tanks relating to development issues very relevant.	Very difficult in home area. Jealousy and accusations abound. Local knowledge good for advocacy and facilitating others. Very open to 'Sheep Stealing' accusations	A non-denominational approach based upon key individuals may be most appropriate. Single denomination links can be very divisive and counter-productive. Environmental issues may be picked up by all.

	Church Type	Community Mobilisation	Preferred strategy for Development	General Relief Intervention	Partnership Issues
3a	Most Christians belong to one church that is gaining influence but not yet reaching majority of the population	The church may be the catalyst in the community. It probably however lacks confidence of experience for this role.	The church needs to be seen to be reaching out to the whole community. Teaching through members is limiting. May be a leader in Biblical teaching, sharing with others. Approaches like CHE very relevant.	The church is probably not having capacity but may be helpful in providing people for assisting other organisations to work in the area	Then church may be a very positive entry point into what is probably a fast changing society. The church probably lacks capacity however, and could easily be diverted from its mission. Links with NGOs may be positive.
3b	Most evangelicals belong to one church in a Roman Catholic dominated area	The church may have little influence outside its members and be looked at with suspicion in the community.	The church needs to be seen to be reaching out to the whole community. Approaches like CHE very relevant.	Can be overwhelming in light of the capacity of the Roman Catholic church. Likely to become very diverting of scarce personnel resources. Honesty of individuals may be a positive witness, but compromise of the church as an institution not easy to avoid.	The church may be trying to compete with the Catholics who have much more capacity. They can easily get out of their depth with too much external input through partnership.
3c	One Evangelical church is sharing significance with either Catholics or Muslims in a non-Catholic and non-Muslim country.	The church has a significant role as catalyst in Christian areas.	A discipleship based approach teaching Christians is as significant as in a majority Christian area.	Relief is a sensitive issue as both Muslims and Catholics are likely to have greater capacity. Care is needed to avoid competition	The church is potentially a strong partner and good entry point into the community, though care is needed to avoid competition.
3d	Several Different Churches competing for different parts of the people group, but Christianity still not dominant in the people group	At the local level the church may have considerable influence, and be able to mobilise through being the link with the outside world, but may find Biblical motivation difficult.	The church needs to be seen to be reaching out to the whole community. Approaches like CHE very relevant.	Local church may not have capacity for useful work. Can very easily lead to 'Rice Christians' when undertaken by missions as often is the case.	The church may be a very positive entry point into what is probably a fast changing society. It may be the catalyst. The church probably lacks capacity however, and could easily be diverted from its mission.
4	Church in culturally antagonistic environment	The church is seen as an alien body, so has little potential for influencing the community.	An approach that reaches to everyone is service is particularly relevant. Approaches like CHE very significant.	Can be a very positive witness of outreach to others when conducted professionally without discrimination This is one situation where church involvement in blanket relief may be relevant.	The church may have value as being more accountable if well taught. Probably more of a welfare than an development approach.