

**ALICE KIRAMBI**  
**Report #K03**

**SURVEY RESULTS**

Kenya survey respondents listed Alice Kirambi as one of the most influential non-clergy Christian leaders in Kenya (She was number 4 on the list). But while listed frequently, her actual ratings on specific questions related to such matters as good reputation, ethical integrity, efficient use of resources, and contextual wisdom were lower than most others on this list.

**ABSTRACT**

A Roman Catholic widowed mother of three, Alice Kirambi gained her experience working at the ecumenical All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) as an administrative secretary in the research department dealing with women. Based on this experience she formed an NGO Christian Partners Development Agency (CPDA) focused on relief and development. As Executive Director of CPDA she has solicited and received millions of dollars in funding from a wide variety of donor organizations and has administered a wide variety of development projects through such funding. She also serves as Chairperson of the Western Women Empowerment Network (WWENET) that brings together eighty NGOS from Western Kenya She ventured into politics this year but was unsuccessful. The achievements that Alice has made through the NGO are immense as detailed in this report.

**BACKGROUND**

Alice was brought up under very difficult circumstances with her father dying when she was a toddler. Later on, her mother also died. Growing up without both biological parents gave her perseverance that assists her in formation of long-term plans and the passion to assist the community. Alice is a Roman Catholic.

She got married, but her husband died in November 2003. She has three children (two boys and one girl). Two of the children are in the USA, and one is in Kenya. Alice has lived in Canada for six months in St. Francis Xavier University where she studied leadership and development. She has also lived in Swaziland for a year as a student earning a Diploma in Project Management, and Coronado University for one month where she studied introduction to participatory community development.

Alice worked as an administrative secretary at the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). She reports that this gave her a lot of exposure and skills. She initially worked with the youth department, but was then promoted to the research department and specifically dealt with women's issues. This was the busiest department in AACC and her supervisor frequently travelled leaving Alice to manage the whole office. This gave her a lot of experience. She handled all the office work, and organized workshops throughout Africa, and attended most of them. This was her turning point in exposure, skills and career growth.

She first registered an organization known as ‘Widows and Orphans Organization,’ but she was never given the certificate, due to corruption. This motivated her to start Christian Partners Development Agency (CPDA) after resigning from AACC. Alice points to Mr. Mosi Kisare, a former Research and Development Officer at the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) as the most influential leader in her life. She also considers all her life as a testimony: brought up without biological parents, husband died when children were in school, received government threats, partners deserted her when there was no money, but her passion and trust in God kept her moving every step.

## **CURRENT MINISTRY**

### ***Work/Ministry***

Currently, Alice is the Executive Director of Christian Partners Development Agency (CPDA). She supervises the day to day running of the organization to ensure programs are successfully implemented. Also, she is the Chairperson of Western Women Empowerment Network (WWENET) that brings together eighty NGOS from Western Kenya.

### ***Organization***

Christian Partners Development Agency (CPDA) is a non-profit, non-partisan, organization registered as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in 1993 under the NGO Co-ordination Act (1990). CPDA was started as a relief organization during the 1985 drought that led to widespread famine in Kenya. The organization later changed its focus to governance and development activities rather than relief, in order to come up with solutions to factors leading to poverty. CPDA envisions empowered and connected communities, while the mission is to promote democratic governance, gender equality and sustainable livelihoods for communities in Kenya and beyond through advocacy, partnerships and development programmes.

CPDA bases its operation on the following thematic area of focus:

1. Governance and Democracy: Enhancing participatory governance at local, national and global levels through improved mechanisms and strengthening the capacities of grassroots communities.
2. Gender equality promotion: Strengthening the capacity of women in transformative leadership to support Kenya and beyond overall development and the meeting of MDG goals.
3. Sustainable agriculture: Facilitating institutions and structures for improving food security and food sovereignty at the household level.
4. Community health: Reduce communicable/ HIV infections, stigma and disease burden in communities.
5. Water and Environment: Environment, water and sanitation conserved and improved.
6. Partnerships and networking: Strengthening partnership and collaboration networks with diverse stakeholders for effective delivery, organization learning and visibility.
7. Institutional development: Continuously strengthening of CPDAs governance standards, staff capacity enhancement and improving net resource base

CPDA has also adjusted its operation to fit in with the proposed governance structure of Counties. In this respect the organisation intends to operate in at least 16 counties by the end of 2019 with three key folds of organization's programmatic focus:

**1. Governance and Democracy Programme**

- a. Alternative Leadership Project,
- b. Gender and Governance Project (GGP),
- c. National Civic Education Programme (Uraia),
- d. Voter education,
- e. Youth Empowerment, Development and Leadership skills.

**2. Integrated Food Security for Sustainable Livelihood Programme.**

- a. Sustainable Agriculture,
- b. Community Health, Nutrition, Water and Sanitation,
- c. Internal and External HIV&AIDS Mainstreaming.

**3. Institutional Development Programme**

- a. Institutional Strengthening
- b. Monitoring and Evaluation

As the executive director, Alice is actively involved in soliciting for funds from development partners through writing proposals, doing follow-up on proposals, and networking with other organization to solicit funds.

***Finances***

The organization relies on donor funding based on needs identification in the community along the thematic areas and region of operation. CPDA is sourced for funding through proposals to all interested partners in and outside the country.

In 1993, they received funding from Church World Service to address the problem of water in Mbooni. This was after they did a baseline survey in Mbooni area, identified the need and built capacity for the community that led to the formation of Mangelech Women's Group. They also received funding from the Japanese government which was used in developing and running programs for harvesting rain water in Mbooni, and for the development of hand carves. This was based on the need for improving food security in the region. CPDA also received funding from CIDA Canada, and the European Union Commission through the Community Trust Fund under the food security programs.

The current projects are:

1. CPDA with support from UN women is implementing a gender and governance program to contribute towards gender equality as espoused in the Constitution.
2. 2011-2015 Implementing a project in Nyeri County entitled A Fair Cup in collaboration with Trade Craft Exchange. The project is funded by DFID to the tune of £443,368. (US \$7,088,000)

3. 2012-2013 Implementing a project in Vihiga County entitled Strengthening People's Engagement on Constitution of Kenya (SPECK) – Phase II. The project is funded by UNDP-Amkeni Wakenya to the tune of Ksh 4,250,000 (US \$ 49,912).

### ***Partners***

CPDA partners include: European Union (EU), Oxfam Novib, UN Women, National Aids Control Council, Trade Craft, UNDP's Amkeni WaKenya, Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF), USTADI

### ***SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats***

#### **Strengths**

1. Patient. Dealing calmly with challenges of life and making sound decisions.
2. Compassionate. Understanding what others are feeling
3. Focused and determined. Leading the organization, holding other positions in Kenya and also venturing into politics. She has had to fight harder against the status quo, which requires a person to be more focused and determined.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. Equality - Trusting and expecting my fellow human beings to be of the same characteristics as I am.
2. Expectation - Working so hard and expecting everyone to be like myself.

#### **Opportunities**

Women empowerment - With the coming of the current constitution and enactment of various legislation there is hope that women will be empowered more, including myself.

#### **Threats (Challenges)**

Lack of political good will in implementing the constitution so that women of this country can reap the benefits.

#### ***Impact/Success/Assessment***

Since its formation, CPDA has made tremendous growth and progress under the leadership of Alice Kirambi as outlined below:

By 2012; CPDA had entrenched the Alternative Leadership Programme using the Neighbourhood Assemblies (NAs) in the Vihiga and Kakamega Counties. Through a unique mobilization strategy called “the village *bunges*” or Neighbourhood Assemblies (NAs), the project aims at demystifying leadership, promoting principles of transparency and accountability in governance and enhanced gender balance and responsiveness in grassroots development processes. This project was born in 1999 with support from Ford Foundation and has upscaled overtime through continuous support by Oxfam Novib, Ford Foundation, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the European Commission. NAs are now the entry and exit points for engagement in governance processes at the grassroots as well as championing its own development agenda. Over 245 NAs have been established and some

registered as Community Based Organizations (CBOs). Through these Structures, communities are able to participate in governance and development programmes.

2001-2012; CPDA implemented a Gender and Governance Project to support the efforts of increasing women's participation in governance at all levels and influencing government in a way that promotes women's human rights and priorities in Kenya. This project has been implemented in Vihiga, Kakamega, Tranzoia Counties through the support from Women CAUCUS, UNIFEM and UNWOMEN.

2008-2011; CPDA implemented the Western Kenya Community Livelihood Empowerment project in Kenya, Western Province Vihiga County. The objective of the programme was "to improve livelihoods through participatory community-driven development in Kenya". The specific objectives were defined as "to enhance the promotion of good governance, improved livelihood strategies and improved community health among 4,000 households in Vihiga County through capacity building within the framework of Neighborhood assemblies (NAs) Village forums". The program did include goat farming to reduce poverty in Vihiga.

2007- 2010 CPDA empowered communities in Kakamega, Bungoma, Vihiga, Kisii, Busia and Narok Counties to fully participate on government reform agendas that came about after the 2007-2008 post-election violence leading to a constitutional review and the Electoral and Boundaries Reviews, Truth Justice and Reform Commission, National Cohesion and Integration through the support from URAIA (basket funding).

2009-2010; CPDA helped pastoral communities to access water through construction of sand dams, installation of water pumps, protection of water sources and construction of VIP latrines in Narok country through the support from Church World Service (CWS).

2009- 2010 CPDA empowered youth to be self-reliant and engage in entrepreneurial ventures in Vihiga County. At least 300 youth have started businesses due to CPDA interventions through support from The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and the Kenya Community Development Fund (KCDF).

1998-2003; Supported the construction of over 300 shallow wells, 22 water tanks, over 50 water troughs for livestock, over 300 water hand pumps in Makueni County through the support from Church World Service (CWS), Community Development Trust Fund (CDTF), Japan Embassy and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

2002-2012; Forefront in the fight against HIV&AIDS in Vihiga and Narok Counties though providing awareness and material support to youth, women, people living with HIV&AIDS, and their families under the support from Oxfam GB, Oxfam Novib, EC, and National Ads Control Council (NACC). Maintains high accounting and financial standards. CPDA has always maintained projects administrative cost at less than 20%. This has contributed to value for money for all donor support.

2000-2007; implemented the Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Improvement Project in Vihiga County under the support from Oxfam Novib.

2002—2004; implemented an Agriculture Technology Transfer Project in Vihiga under the support from Farm Africa.

2001; mobilised communities in Vihiga, Kakamega and Makueni County on voting for the global campaign on Say Yes for Children under the support from UNICEF.

2000-2003; Mobilised Communities on Cancellation of Kenya Debt under the support from World Association for Christian Communication (WACC).

2005-2007 CPDA hosted the African Liaison Programme Initiative (ALPI) that sort to strengthen tripartite partnerships among African NGOs, US, United States' private Voluntary Organisations and USAID Kenya under the support from InterAction.

2000-2001 Construction of Lumbatania Children Home with support from Japan Embassy.

2000; Appointed Lead NGO in the consultation for Vihiga County Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) through the support from the CENTRE.

2010 Participated in the Global call to action against Poverty (GCAP) as a national platform through the support from Kenya Youth Community and Education Programme (KYCEP).

#### *Plan*

Alice attributes her success to the following;

1. **The grace and love of God to me:** He has been faithful to me and despite the challenges of life he has seen me through.
2. **Passion:** Passion has driven me to work for all these years serving the community that I cherish a lot.
3. **Stepping outside of the comfort zone:** Nothing new ever happens in your comfort zone. Change and growth comes when you take a step outside of what you are used to doing every day and shake up the norm with something challenging and new. That is why I have found myself in the political arena where the society is so patriarchal and hostile to women.
4. **Having a plan.** If you aren't thinking about what direction you are heading, you are likely to get stuck in a rut. Am guided by a plan and that is why I can see CPDA in different countries than Kenya and also as stipulated in our objective, and strategic plan, we want to have offices in other regions.

#### *Future*

##### **Short term goals**

1. Establishment of Value Addition Cottage industry in the Counties that we are working to help the community earn more income.
2. CPDA securing more development partners to implement its programme.
3. CPDA being the best NGO in the Counties that we work in relation to service delivery to the community.

**Long term goals**

CPDA establishing offices in the region where it is not present and implementing its activities in those Counties. CPDA having its own office premises for sustainability

***Report Preparation Information***

Report Prepared By; Michael Bowen

Person Interviewed; Alice Kirambi

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Other sources of information; [www.cpda.or.ke](http://www.cpda.or.ke)