

Theme 3 - Cultural and Social Influences (Nairobi)

What is the role and place of the church in Nairobi in responding to the crisis of Cultural and Social Influences?

- **Identifying Positive and Negative Influences:** The church's role is to identify both the positive and negative cultural influences. It should promote the positive influences based on God's word and challenge the negative ones, such as superstitions or harmful traditional practices.
- **Building Community:** The church should foster a sense of community, helping people to come together and support one another, especially in times of crisis. It should counter the individualistic tendencies that isolate people.
- **Addressing Misinformation:** The church has a role in correcting misinformation that stems from cultural beliefs, such as the refusal of medical treatment due to spiritual or cultural reasons. It should educate the community about the balance between faith and practical solutions, like seeking medical care.

2. What are three practical steps that the church in Kenya can take to respond to the Cultural and Social Influences?

- **Psychosocial and Civic Education:** The church should provide education on mental health and civic duties, helping people understand their rights and responsibilities. This includes teaching people to recognise their roles in governance and social justice.
- **Create Inclusive Social Structures:** The church should advocate for and help build social structures that provide protection and justice for vulnerable groups such as orphans, widows, and people with disabilities.
- **Influencing Policy and Social Justice:** The church should engage in influencing policies that address social issues, such as early marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM). It can push for punitive measures against harmful practices while promoting positive cultural shifts.

3. What are three practical steps that your church community can take to respond to the crisis of Cultural and Social Influences?

- **Advocating for Social Justice:** The local church community should actively advocate for social justice and accountability, holding leaders and institutions responsible for ensuring equitable social policies and practices.
- **Engaging with Government Leaders:** The church should engage with government leaders on current social issues, addressing them from a position of moral and spiritual authority. This allows the church to bring greater weight to its influence on cultural and social matters.
- **Praying and Acting:** While prayer is vital, the church must follow up with concrete actions. Prayers for repentance and change should be paired with practical steps, such as supporting judicial processes and ensuring that corrupt practices are addressed.

