



The SIM Mission in Nigeria between 1893-1950: The Implications of the Strategies for Mission in Nigeria and the Nigerian Church

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1. PREAMBLE

The ministry of the SIM missionaries did not only benefit the local churches planted in the Sudan, but other church denominations, mission agencies and organization also benefited. The strategies applied for church planting by the missionaries were adopted by the mission agencies. The outcome of these strategies, the impact was felt on the various mission stations, education work, medical work and services, literature and translation work, and the radio ministry. The ministry of these missionaries has brought a lot of enlightenment and transformational changes to individuals, families, communities, and the entire nation.

The establishment of the SIM mission in the Central Sudan came as a blessing for the people. What God used the SIM mission to do was more compared to what other mission agencies came to do in the Central Sudan combined, (1898-1908: n.p.). The missionaries were focused on bringing about the social, religious and human development of the people. The mission fields occupied by SIM missionaries were the largest among any single Christian mission that was working in Northern Nigeria, and only two that had no SIM mission presence, namely Adamawa and Sardauna provinces. The ministry of SIM mission made a lot of impact both spiritually and physically in the following provinces: Sokoto, Kano, Niger, Katsina, Borno, Zaria, Plateau, Benue, Ilorin, and Kabba. Altogether the ministry of SIM had established about one hundred and twenty preaching stations; this was outside many other out-stations not included. The SIM mission had the largest missionary work force when it was difficult to penetrate the Muslims communities in Northern Nigeria. The establishment of ECWA was the outcome of SIM missionary services, (1999:694).

ECWA today has become a national church and the largest indigenous church (denomination) in Nigeria. The ministry of SIM impacted lives because the focus of the missionaries was on the indigenous people also those who lived in the urban areas. But churches of other Christian missions focused primarily on the urban centers with a focus on the Southern people of Nigeria, (1999:694). Therefore, the nature, impact and the implications of these changes in Nigeria and African societies will be examined below.

2. THE IMPACT ON MISSION STATIONS AND CHURCH PLANTING

According to Yusufu, the first 30 years of SIM mission services were years of hardships and struggles and frustrations in an effort to establish mission stations and their out-stations between 1901-1930. The reasons for the struggles were as follows: first, since many people were not sure of what they were coming to face in Africa after the first decade, though they had read about the difficulties, yet still, what caused the struggle was the report from the missionaries coming from Nigeria with real issues of dangers that caused the fears. Therefore, the intended missionaries thought to themselves, should they still go to Nigeria, for they were not sure what they were coming to face in Africa. This was why there was lack of man-power and funds to encourage and support the workers. Second, the climate, diseases, wars, lack of communication gadgets, hostility of the Africans against the whites, suspicion of Western Colonialism, race and culture were some of the reasons. Third, the colonial masters came up with policies that did not allow missionary services among the Muslim communities, (1999:396).

The mission stations that were established by the early missionaries enabled them to live together with the natives. This was until the point when the Colonial Administration came up with a policy titled “the 440-yard rule.” This was meant to prevent Christian missionaries from living with the natives so that they would be forced to stay far away from the natives, 440 yards from the villages or townships. But this rule or policy was not accepted by the Christian missions who were doing missionary services among the people in those villages and towns in Northern Nigeria. The missionaries protested, (1999:157).

The protest was successful. A conference took place in London in 1927 between the Colonial Office, that is, the Colonial Administration and the Christian missions’ representatives that were doing missionary services within the Northern Nigeria. This kind of relationship had never existed that the two bodies came together to discuss issues that border on unity. At that meeting, the representatives of Christian missions were able to voice their anger, frustration, and disapproval of the Colonial regulatory policy. Meanwhile, when there was delay in acting on the observations of the Christian missions, another conference was organized in Miango in 1929. This meeting demonstrated the impatience of the missionaries with the government. This was the time Dr. Bingham, Director General of the SIM, threatened to go and preach in a Muslim market on the market day, risking his arrest. He was allowed to address people at that conference. The thrust of Bingham’s address was simple; he spoke on behalf of the missions’ vehement opposition and total rejection of the government’s regulatory policy. The outcome of that conference was positive. Sir Graeme Thompson, the Governor of Nigeria, made the following remarks on the subject:

That he was prepared to accede in principle to the request that when the Government has satisfied itself that missionary work will be undertaken in a wise and discreet manner and that the native authorities are willing, the opportunity should be given to missions to try through Christian service to win the confidence and friendship of Moslem communities and that the necessary sites should be granted; but that it was necessary to give full weight to the qualifying clause if the native authorities are willing, (1929:25-30).

Therefore, SIM was wise to have adopted establishing mission stations and their outstations as a means to expand and extend the gospel to the unreached people in the Central Sudan and beyond. This approach helped SIM to occupy a large space of land in Northern Nigeria. These mission stations served as bases for out-stations while the field missionaries launched into places where the heathens were located with the gospel of Christ. Again, the mission stations became centers for both missionary and church activities without much stress. The leadership of the church borrowed ideas from the pattern of how mission stations and their outstations were structured, and they adopted the same for the church. For instance, ECWA as a church denomination was incorporated in 1954. The structure of the church was patterned after the leadership and structure of SIM, (1999:691-692).

At this time, the leadership of SIM were still trusting God for where they could establish their headquarters. They came up to Lokoja, but since the place was waterlogged, they travelled up the Niger to Eboji by boat. This was the only means for the transportation, (2013:211). The ministry of SIM pioneer missionaries in their third attempt established the first mission station in 1901 at Patigi near Bida on the Niger. This mission station was established among the Nupe people group. Patigi was 500 miles up the river Niger and was closed to the Benue and Kaduna Rivers, (2015:344). Patigi was a seat of a Muslim-dominated community with few people that had been converted. But Patigi served as a base where missionary activities were taking place and reaching the out-stations with the gospel as the Lord blessed and provided the mission with more funds, (2013:41). It was from Patigi that the gospel penetrated further into the hinterland to Gbagyi land:

Two accounts exist in regard to Christian missionary penetration of Gbagyi land. The first account based on Ethnic Survey of Niger, Kebbi States and Federal Capital Territory (FCT), by CAPRO Research office, notes that the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) opened their first mission station in Gbagyi land at Wushishi (Western Gbagyi) in 1903-04. The pioneers were Dr. A. P. Stirrett and Rev. E. F. Rice, (2009:25).

Dogara asserts that there were two accounts on SIM mission stations and their outstations that were established by the missionaries. First, SIM mission station was established in Paiko Niger Province. It served as a base for the missionaries while they launched out to the surrounding villages and towns

with the gospel of salvation to the Gbagyi people that were idol worshippers. Second, Karu in Nasarawa Province became another mission station which served as a base also. The mission station was established in November 1910. The aim was to present Christ to the Gbagyi people and the villages surrounding it. The missionaries whom God used to open the mission station were Rev. George Anderson and Rev. Charles Dudley. The missionaries were always moving out from Karu with the gospel of Christ to unreached people such as the Gwandara, Koro, Gade, Mada, and Afo. The missionary's services showed that in 1932, Rev. B. Oliver and Yepwi in their evangelistic outreaches visited thirty-three towns and villages with the gospel of Christ for the salvation of the Gbagyi people. They preached the gospel to 3,345 people and trekked for 182 miles just to preach and make sure that the Gbagyi people heard the gospel, (2009:25).

Dogara added the number of people groups that were reached with the gospel of Christ through the ministry of SIM mission: Gbari, Matai, Hausa, Gbari Yamma, Gade, Koro, Ganagana, Bassa, Nupe, and Ageci. There was a record of nine towns that had never heard the gospel before. From Karu, the gospel spread to Dagbadna, Kurape, Apeyi (Garki), Ushafa, Madalla, Diko, Aba, Gadna, and later to Yewu, Rubochi, Tawari, Yerwa and Suleja, (2009:25).

Peter Falk stated that the SIM mission had mission stations and out-stations established in fifty-seven stations around the Central Sudan, and thirty-seven out-stations established to the north, while seven out-stations were established to the south. At least every tribe and language within the region were witnessed to with the gospel of Christ. The records demonstrate how much God used SIM mission through the field missionaries to establish 650 mission stations and out-stations in Nigeria within 1960 with 1,200 field missionaries that were faithfully committed to the ministry, (2015:344). According to D. I. Olatayo, "the first thirty years of SIM mission work were difficult. The ministry did not register any meaningful results until the third attempt between 1908 and 1914; this period witnessed fruits. The field missionaries had learned and were able to speak the local languages of the natives fluently that made the presentation of the gospel much easier," (1993:7). Gary R. Corwin state that the first church was established in Ogga near Egbe, Nigeria, in 1909 by SIM mission. It witnessed thirteen new converts who were baptized after they had gone through discipleship training, (2018:147). According to Philip Bonet, the ministry of SIM mission was expanding. Therefore, the station at Kwoi was established in 1910 by Rev. F. E. Hein, (2009:3).

The strategies applied by the SIM missionaries to approach people through their felt needs had provided acceptance of the missionaries in the eyes of the natives. This opened more doors for evangelism among the Gbagyi people in the land. Therefore, the mission station in Karu, Nasarawa province, was opened in November 1910 by Rev. George Sanderson, Rev. Charles Dudley and Mr. Inusa Samuel, a Hausa man from Niger Republic. Although the Karu Mission station was opened by the trio of Rev. George Sanderson, Rev. Charles Dudley and Mr. Inusa Samuel, the preparatory work was done by Dr. Andrew P. Stirrett, popularly referred to as "Bature mai magani," this simply meant, the white man with medicine. He had first undertaken exploratory visits to Karu, Keffi, Kwoi and other adjoining areas as field superintendent before assigning Dudley and Sanderson to these areas. During these visits, Dr. Stirrett met Mr. Yepwi Idakwo in Karu. It is recorded that Dudley, Sanderson, Hein, Paul Patigi, Umaru Filip and Inusa Samuel had gone to Kwoi from Paiko to establish a mission. On their return journey, Dudley and Inusa stopped over at Karu and started preaching the gospel. Mr. Inusa, who was more proficient in the Hausa language, did the interpretation. The response of the Gbagyi people was positive, and this encouraged the missionaries to establish a station in Zhayipma-Karu. The missionaries were invited to other nearby villages to bring the gospel because the people needed freedom from the service of their idols, (2013:63).

The ministry of SIM was growing; another mission station was established in Minna. This took place in March of 1913, through Rev. James F. Cotton. The construction of railway stations in Paiko and Minna contributed greatly to the growth of the mission station. The railway station drew a lot of ethnic groups such as the Gbagyi, Koro, Gade, Afo, Kaje, Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Tiv, and Igala. Also, there were people from Sierra Leone. These people constituted the membership of the church in Minna. The railway line provided a fertile ground for the preaching of the gospel. The SIM mission headquarters was originally in Wushishi, but the field Superintendent, Dr. Andrew Stirrett, felt that

the headquarters should be moved from Wushishi to Minna in 1917. Not being satisfied with the location of the mission headquarters, the SIM leadership considered the centrality of the headquarters and decided that it should be transferred from Minna to Jos in Bauchi province in 1924, (2013:66-67).

Also, the SIM mission station was established in a village called Idda by Rev. and Mrs. S. E. Boyd in December 1913. Idda was located in the defunct Zaria province. It was recorded that the people of Idda did not accept either the gospel not the missionaries; they resisted both. But the Lord used women in Idda who first got converted to Christianity and later drew their husbands to the faith through their lifestyles (1 Pet. 3:1). Hence, persecution was initially targeted at the female converts. Some of them were beaten for wearing a head tie in obedience to the interpretation scripture given by the missionaries; the unbelieving community considered it an affront to their tradition. It also appears that the mode of dressing of the male converts offended the adherents of the African traditional religion. One of the converts, Mr. Awuza was stripped naked and his clothes were taken away. Consequently, a special song was composed to further humiliate him. These acts of persecution sufficiently intimidated the people, many of whom were afraid to join the faith because they did not want to be disgraced like others. They kept their faith secret, (2013:67).

According to Ian Fleck, to encourage the field missionaries, Bingham took time out within 1915 to visit mission stations where missionaries had spent their lives laboring among different tribes preaching the gospel. Because more missionaries were recruited, this informed more out-stations established within villages, towns and districts as far as Miango on the Jos Plateau. Therefore, the SIM mission saw the need for a rest home where field missionaries and their families could come for a holiday and retreat. This rest home was built in a village called Miango on the western side of the Jos plateau. Other mission agencies used it as a place of rest when they came for their annual vacation. Until today, the rest home is still hosting SIM missionaries and others for their annual holidays. The weather in Miango suits what the missionaries like; the environment is cooler and very refreshing, (2013:220). Ian Fleck stresses that the

SIM mission station was established in Tangale between 1916 and 1917, (2013:221).

The "Geaigi Mission station was opened by Rev. and Mrs. Frank X. Stanley in 1915. Like Idda, that was opened two years earlier, the people in this area were not receptive to the gospel. Ultimately, the station was closed down," (2013:68). The SIM missionaries who were laboring in Karu had a sad experience of one of their disciples who backslid:

In 1917, Mr. Inusa Samuel who was then stationed in Idda, was transferred back to Karu because Mr. Yepwi Idakwo had backslidden and there was need for at least a Hausa speaking Missionary in absence of a Gbagyi speaking Missionary. Mr. Inusa Samuel remained in the Karu Mission station until 1921 when he was again transferred to Kuta. Within this period, he visited villages like Kurape, Jikoyi, Karshi and the numerous Fulani camps that surrounded Karu. He dispensed modern medicine each time he visited these villages. In a short while, Anyitomizayi Tukura Kurape, the late Chief of Kurape village, accepted Christ as his personal Lord and Savior, (2013:68-69).

The SIM mission was extended to a village called Kurmin Musa in Jabaland. The mission station was opened in 1921 by Rev. T. Allen. Also, the mission station in Kagoro was opened on 7th May 1927 by Rev. Thomas Archibald. The mission stations in Kwoi and Kurmin Musa were deeply committed to the itineration, evangelization, church planting, church growth and the growth of the out-stations in places among people groups such as Jaba, Kagoma, Yeskwa, and Koro. The mission station in Kurmin Musa served out-stations of the Jaba of Kachia, Kaje, and the other ethnic groups in Kachia District as far as beyond Kufana, Kataf, Moroa, Kaje, Kaningkon, Kafanchan and others. It was later that the mission established sub-mission stations at Zonkwa and Samaru Kataf, (2017:157).

Peter Falk stated that the SIM mission had opportunity to establish a mission station at Jos, Plateau, in 1923. From the mission stations, other villages were reached with the gospel. Therefore, the Jos station expanded the gospel to Kano in 1925 in the Hausa region. The Central Belt of the region was not left out; there were twenty-seven tribes from six provinces who also benefitted from hearing about the gospel of Jesus Christ. For example, the indigenous church called ECWA was established and was recognized as a church denomination by the government of Nigeria in 1956, (2015:344).

The SIM mission had difficulties penetrating Kagoro with the gospel. The people of Kagoro were known to be very wicked. No mission agency was willing to risk their missionaries to the people of Kagoro that were not receptive to the gospel and the missionaries. But the SIM mission never gave up the people of Kagoro. By faith and prayer, they resolved to approach them with the gospel. Therefore, in 1926, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Archibald decided to approach the Kagoro people through the natives of Kagoro such as Mr. Toro, Mr. Nyam, Mr. Goma, Mr. Gyet and Mr. Barnabas; they left and went to Kagoro through Madakiya. Mr. and Mrs. Archibald and the native colleagues were earlier given a report about the people of Kagoro, that they were wild in nature. they trusted the Lord by faith to visit Kagoro with the gospel for the salvation of their souls and for the mission station to be established in Kagoro. They were allowed to enter Kagoro and also granted permission by the people to establish the mission station on 7th May 1927, (2009:3).

The Lord used Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Archibald to preach the gospel among the people of Kagoro, and many of them came to the saving knowledge of the Lord. But the aftermath of their confession of Christ was severe persecution. The new converts were tortured, beaten, and faced hardships which included rejection by their own people. But those among the new converts who endured the hardships became instruments in the hands of the Lord to facilitate the preaching of the gospel among their own people who were still idol worshippers. From the SIM mission station in Kagoro, Kafanchan benefitted from the gospel, the mission station was also established, (2009:3).

It is on record that before the “arrival of SIM missionaries in Diko in 1928, a native evangelist by name Yepwi had led 850 souls to Christ in Diko and Madalla. Then, an SIM Mission Station was opened by Rev. and Mrs. William Magill on 1st January 1929,” (2013:69). The SIM mission continued to expand; the mission station in Kafanchan was opened in 1930 by Miss G. Cocquerel. This mission station grew to be known as the District Church Council (DCC). This became possible through the policy of the indigenous church as registered by the government of Nigeria in 1954, (2009:5).

The SIM ministry was extended to Izom. It was opened in 1933 by P. C. Lawsey and Miss I. A. Whittle. The first Gbagyi person to convert to Christianity in the area was Mr. Sunday Mamman Izom. It was cleared that Mr. Mamman did two things. First, he was influential in the conversion of Gbouna Bwamba Kwali. Second, he probably influenced the decision of the SIM missionaries to extend their missionary services to Kwali among the Gbari people group in 1933.

Christian missionary activity advanced to Kwali via Izom, Diko and Karu. Rev. and Mrs. William Magill came all the way from Diko via Izom, to preach the gospel of deliverance from idols, bondage to Satan, injustice and shame. Rev. and Mrs. Magill preached the gospel of Christ to prove that there was no truth and life in the idols they were worshipping, (2013:71-72, 75).

The people of Yerwa in Benue Province benefitted from the ministry of SIM mission since the mission station was opened in 1934 by Rev. and Mrs. J. J. Booth and Rev. T. A. Brown

(Nicknamed Awyetu, meaning hope). The station became a center of many Christian activities. Gbagyi people from villages around Yerwa such as Waraka, Nakuse, and Araba benefitted greatly from the ministry of SIM. The people of Nakuse were reached with the gospel in 1949 and had a mission station established among the people. The presence of the church has brought light to the community, (2013:71-72, 75). The lack of understanding of the nature of SIM missionary services among the Hausa communities slowed their acceptance of the gospel:

The SIM established a station at Malumfashi, the central town in an area of pagan Maguzawa in 1936. Twenty-eight years later only about 100 people attended the church services, the same number as were attending the Roman Catholic church after only three years of missionary activity. It has been suggested that the cause of this slow growth of the former is due to the social remoteness of the SIM missionaries, their puritanism and complete prohibition of beer-drinking. The Rev. Fathers not only permit beer-drinking, but beer parties were held to celebrate baptism, (2013:184).

E P T Crampton assert that despite the attitude of the Hausas toward missionary services, God was busy in a mysterious way through the leadership of the Holy Spirit drawing men and women to himself. Therefore, the record available indicates thirty-three SIM mission stations established in

1961 in places such as Kano, Katsina, and Sokoto provinces. In all these mission stations, there were only 403 people who were participating in communion who were mostly not natives of Hausa but non-Hausas. The non-Hausa Christians came to Kano some for business while some came as civil servants. Rev. Miller was in Kano doing pastoral care among the newly converted Hausa believers. Some expatriates joined Rev. Miller in Kano. The missionaries were supposed to be involved in the evangelization of the indigenous Muslim Hausa people in Kano, but the task was left undone, (2013:134). E P T Crampton added that the influence of SIM mission has been credible among the Tangale Waja people; the result was the development of the church, (2013:134).

Philip Bonet gives an idea about how SIM mission was re-structured to fit the growing needs in the various mission stations that had been established. They used the period between 1940 to 1950 to adjust the setup of the mission which was going to affect both the field missionaries and office staff. In this period, some of the missionaries serving in the various offices as administrative staff were going to be reassigned to the mission stations that had no missionary. The missionaries newly reassigned were expected to report to the field supervisors. The supervisors were to post them to the mission stations. The mission stations were divided according to the provinces located in the Central Sudan at that time, (2009: n.p.) This was how the mission stations were divided, as follows: “The spread of Christianity through ECWA in the provinces that existed between 1902 and 1932 were in this order: Ilorin Province-1902, Niger/Nupe Province-1903, Nasarawa Province-1910, Zaria Province-1913, and Bauchi/Plateau Province-1913,” (2009: n. p.).

Philip Bonet added that to allow the indigenous local church established by SIM mission to be self-governing, the leadership of SIM gave ECWA freedom so they could operate on their own; this freedom was given in 1954. To go with the freedom, the SIM leadership gave this name to the church: “The Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa” (ECWA). The freedom was not to say ECWA and SIM leadership cannot relate or work together. On the contrary, the two organizations were still going to relate and work together for the spiritual growth of ECWA which was the largest indigenous local church established not only in the Northern Nigeria but in Nigeria as a whole, (2009: n. p.).

It shows that the mission was really growing faster than normal compared to other mission agencies in the Central Sudan, (1999:396-397). Many factors contributed to the rapid growth of the work of the Mission during this period. Some of the factors were:

First, the fact that the SIM Home Mission Board had matured and had developed an effective leadership and recruitment machinery for both missionaries and resources. Second, Western civilization, especially, education, medicine, and colonial governmental network had somewhat reduced the hostility of the African environment by providing a relative “Pax Britannica”, healthy environment, and easier means of communications. Third, the relaxation of the stringent colonial regulatory and restrictive policies on missionary activities. Fourth, the general acceptance of missionaries and missionary programmes and the apparent success of the missionary enterprise in the Mission Field, (1999:396-397).

Yusufu added the fact that the SIM mission stations were already established, and so in the early years of 1950s and 1960s, the need to establish more mission stations was on the decline based on the following reasons. First, the mission had already occupied a vast territory of the land in Sudan. Second, both the mission stations and out-stations were established to be used as bases to launch out to other mission fields quickly and more effectively in the future, (1999:397).

Third, the mission stations and out-stations established by SIM field missionaries served as a base to strategize how to carry out the next outreach with the gospel to the unreached people in the area as soon as missionaries came back to the mission station. Fourth, it was at the bases that missionaries were able to plan for the evangelization, itineration, church-planting, church growth, educational, medical and translation activities. The mission station also served as a discipleship center where new converts converged to be trained. At the center, they were introduced to the literacy programs designed to help teach them how to grow and know how to read and write. The basic Bible doctrines were taught to them, and they were also taught how to preach and teach the gospel within the mission stations and out-stations in case they were asked to represent the missionaries, (1999:157).

This is why it was expedient for every missionary to carry out the following activities after establishing a mission station. First, every missionary was encouraged to spend time with the natives to learn their language, and to teach the people how to read and write, tell stories from the Bible, and teach basic Bible doctrines. The missionary was expected to do these things repeatedly and to give people an opportunity to ask questions, and then the missionary was to respond to their questions and to give them Bible verses to memorize. Second, the missionary was to go out on a visit to the natives in their villages for encouragement by trekking—this would help him or her interact with nearby villages. Third, the missionary was to learn to translate the written text of the Scriptures that could be used in the vernacular of the natives so that they could appreciate and love the Word of God better, (1999:157-159).

Fourth, the missionary was to assist the local churches established among the unreached people in the following areas: introducing prayer and Bible study, encouraging the converts to learn to build a place of worship for themselves and not depend on anybody, teaching them memory work from the Bible, teaching them how to give tithes, and training local people as teachers who would handle Sunday School classes. Fifth, the missionary was to be practical in all his or her approaches so as to be able to help the converts in areas such as road and bridge construction, church building, electricity, communications, doing some carpentry services, mechanic work or any handcrafts as long as it would help to develop and grow the church in the community where the missionary was serving, (1999:157-159).

Sixth, through the desire to help the natives become literate or educated, the missionary was to establish a school for them. It would serve as an open door for evangelism especially in areas which had previously had closed doors. It is on record that schools began as Sunday Schools; this was how schools such as Religious Instruction Classes started. Then it developed to what we know today as junior and senior primary schools. All the junior schools were taught in the Hausa language, while the senior schools were taught in the English language, though not immediately. The Teacher Training Centers that were in Hausa were meant to encourage the establishment of the existing junior primary schools that were taught in Hausa. The Bible training schools were opened based on the need; the classes were taught in Hausa language because the people could not understand nor speak the English language. The vocational Bible training schools that were established were taught in Hausa and vernacular languages. The classes were organized sometimes in dry season periods or raining seasons. The new converts would come from their villages to be trained, after which they would go back to help the local churches established in their villages except if their services were needed elsewhere as itinerate evangelists or advisors, (1999:157-159).

Furthermore, below are instances the impact of SIM ministry on the church in Nigeria and beyond was greatly felt. In 1953, responsibility for the mission arm of ECWA was transferred from SIM to ECWA. ECWA as an indigenous church was registered by the government of Nigeria in 1954. The name of AMS was later changed to EMS (Evangelical Missionary Society) to fit into the spread of the organization. In 1977, EMS had as a total number of field missionaries 127 couples. By 1980, the number of missionaries had increased to 230 couples. As of 2020, the missionary couples and the singles totaled 1,838 altogether, (1999:157-159).

The ministry of EMS is mostly concentrated among the unreached people groups in Nigeria, Ghana, Republic of Benin, Niger Republic, Chad, England, Burkina-Faso, Mali, Cameroon, Malawi, and Israel. The commitment of SIM and EMS to mission encouraged other mission agencies to consider getting involved in missionary services. For instance, a church denomination known as COCIN (Church of Christ in Nations), UMCA (United Missionary Church of Africa), Baptists, Foursquare Gospel Church, Gospel Faith Mission, Deeper Life Bible Church, and Assemblies of God Church has picked up the challenge and have since started recruiting missionaries and sending them to many unreached people both in Nigeria and beyond. In Nigeria, there are some independent missionary organizations that are deeply involved in missions such as CAPRO (Calvary Ministry); they started in 1975. The organization has recruited over 100 Staff and posted them to different mission fields such as Guinea, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Niger Republic, and Nigeria. Another mission agency, Christian Missionary Foundation, is focused on reaching people groups in several West African countries

including Nigeria. The Nations for Christ Missionary Organization works in Benin Republic. Since all the mission agencies had one common call and vision to the unreached people, the leadership of these agencies agreed to form one organization that would keep them together in unity, (1993:58-60).

There were nine different mission agencies that came together to form what was called NEMA (Nigeria Evangelical Missionary Association) in 1982. From NEMA, a sister mission body was established called NEMI (Nigeria Evangelical Missionary Institute). This institute helps these mission agencies to do mission awareness in local churches and do research on people yet to be reached with the gospel. The institute also helps to train any intended missionary. Nobody goes anywhere until he or she is adequately trained after the call to the ministry. The missionary services in Nigeria through evangelism, church planting and church growth among the unreached people challenged indigenous mission associations in other African countries such as the Ghana Evangelical Missions Association (GEMA). There was another one called the Africa Inland Church with a pioneer missionary training college, in Eldoret, Kenya. Finally, among others was the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM), in Nairobi, Kenya, (1993:58-60).

Ruth A. Tucker explained that the ministry of SIM gained acceptance all over Africa. The mission was effective in Ethiopia. Dr. Bingham gave his life for the service of the people of Ethiopia. He tried to see how the church would be established among the unreached people in Ethiopia. Meanwhile, God used Dr. Thomas Lambie in 1928 to open the mission in the southern provinces of Ethiopia specifically in a town called Wallamo. This was the town where he practiced his medicine, using it to approach the people with the gospel of Christ. There were more SIM missionaries recruited that joined Dr. Lambie. The record available indicates that there were only seventeen converts that were baptized in the Wallamo church. The ministry was not very successful because of the political unrest in Ethiopia at that time, (1985:298).

The SIM missionaries knew they had little time to remain or stay with the new believers in Wallamo, Ethiopia. Since they knew their days were numbered as missionaries, they did all they could to give adequate training in basic Bible doctrines to the new believers in the Scriptures so that they would be able to take the gospel out to their own people. It was not advisable for the missionaries to move out of their compound for security reasons; therefore, they resolved to create time in order to give what was needed and necessary for those trained as leaders so that they would be able to give pastoral care to the church and also so that they would be able to take the gospel out and share with their own people that were yet to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior. The missionaries gave the training to the lay leaders to care for the church until such a time they would return if the Lord gave them another opportunity, (1985:298).

3. THE IMPACT ON EDUCATION WORK

According to Philip Bonet, the establishment of the various institutions of learning helped

SIM achieved her goals and objectives. This was what informed the establishment of nurseries, primaries, secondary's, seminaries, colleges, universities and medical institutions, (2009:15). Peter Falk stresses:

Western education promised to bring quick results in evangelizing and educating the young people of Nigeria and Africa. It seemed likely to produce a literate, Christian laity. Missionaries reflected on the biblical principle of training a child in the way he or she should go and the promise that later he will not depart from this training (Prov. 22:6), (2015:435).

Yusufu add that the quality education that brought civilization and enlightenment to Northern Nigeria was traced to the pioneering missionary services of SIM Mission, Sudan United Mission (SUM), Anglican Church Missionary Society (ACMS), Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA), Student Volunteer Movement (SVM). The nature of the educational activities was literacy programs, organizing classes for Religious Education, and helping with Sunday school materials that would help develop and educate the spiritual lives of the new believers. They developed school programs for junior and senior primary education programs, and Teacher Training and secondary educational programs were introduced. All these schools' programs had a direct spiritual and physical bearing on members of the church and the society at large. Today in Nigeria, some highly placed civil servants

and professionals, including Muslims, had the opportunity to go through SIM mission schools because the education needed from the Colonial Government and the Native Authorities was not provided. It was when the missionaries arrived Nigeria that education became a priority for the nationals, (1999:692). The impact of Western education cannot be over-emphasized:

The mission schools made a most significant contribution in the Westernization of sub-Saharan Africa. They constituted the modern educational system until quite recently. When the British administrators arrived in Nigeria, they found that missions had already developed a system of education. In 1823, there were six thousand recognized mission schools compared to one hundred government schools in Africa under British rule. Those who received their education in mission schools served in the administration of the countries and with commercial enterprises throughout Africa. ...The educational program contributed significantly to the development of Nigeria and provided leadership for the activities of the churches, (2015:439-440).

Yusufu argued that the instrument that brought about quick development of primary education in Southern Zaria was the fact that there was a lot of emphasis for teachers to be trained in the centers established by the mission. SIM opened a Teacher Training Centre in Kagoro while there was another center opened at Kafanchan by the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM). The need for Western education by the leaders of the communities the missionaries was growing on a daily basis. Education made Christianity and the missionaries gain acceptance. The people witnessed social, economic, and religious developments within a short time because of mass literacy for the people, (2017:167-168). However, Yusufu assert that the major contribution of the SIM in the area of education has been the moral and spiritual up-bringing and general social development of the peoples. Education was the most potent tool for the transformation of African societies. In all the mission stations where SIM served, where they emphasized education and developed many educational institutions, there we also find a strong emerging church, (1999:692).

E P T Crampton reveals four areas in which Christianity has affected lives: first, the way natives dressed. Before the coming of the missionaries, the colors of the dress did not matter, one could wear any dress. The children could wear anything to school since there were no uniforms; skirts and blouses, shirt, short and bare feet were acceptable. As soon as they accepted Christ and were given the Western education, however, it immediately changed their thinking and way of life, including their dressing pattern. This was significant because it was all about Christianity, the gospel brought enlightenment, and civilization and to the people. The new faith changed their orientation about their entire lives. Second, their way of farming was influenced. The new believers observed the missionaries and the way they planted their gardens. The fruit trees were planted round the compound and there were vegetables planted within. The missionaries were also involved in keeping pigs and poultry for food and small businesses. The natives saw it and began to copy the missionaries. This improved their lives greatly. Third, the building style of the natives was influenced. Before their conversion, the natives built using mud and sticks and made round huts of every size. But in every settlement of the missionaries, even if they used mud, it must be solid. Other building materials were also used, such as cement and corrugated iron sheets. Missionaries taught and practiced the use of constructed windows in their buildings. It was also meant to help the natives do same, (2013:198-200).

Fourth, the attitude of the new believers toward education was influenced positively. Women in particular who resolved to obey and follow the hygienic principles that the missionaries taught were wiser. The mission hospitals, dispensaries, and maternity clinics assisted greatly on how to control their birth and to live healthily. The woman married to one husband had more pregnancies and the children survived after their birth more often than women living in polygamous families, but many would not keep to the advice of the missionaries since they wanted to keep to their former way of life, (2013:198-200).

E P T Crampton conclude that it was very critical and obvious that in the second quarter of the century, Bible schools and other training schools were necessary. It was to help improve the educational standard of the natives so that they met the spiritual needs of the people in the churches and society. The SIM Mission opened another Bible School called BTS (Bible Training School). This school was lower in standard than the theological seminaries and colleges already established. The

native that could not cope with or meet the standard of the college was advised to be enrolled in BTS. This BTS was established to prepare local evangelists that would be able after training to go to rural villages as church planters to reach the unreached people with the gospel of Christ, (2013:151).

4. THE IMPACT ON MEDICAL WORK AND SERVICES

Ruth A. Tucker asserts that one thing missionaries could not avoid as they continued with their missionary services was the fight against spiritual powers of darkness. In as much as they were engaged in spiritual warfare with Satan and his demons, they were also mindful of meeting the physical needs of people that surrounded them, (1985:298). The Gbagyi people would not forget easily the impact of SIM mission on the people. The missionaries introduced Western medicines against the use of local herbs for treating diseases and sicknesses with more effect, (2013:89). Dogara stresses the impact of medical work in the lives of the natives which was felt very strongly to the point that it would be difficult to forget, (2013:89).

Yusufu stated that the SIM medical services had a lot of impact in Muslim communities such as Kano, Katsina, Borno, Sokoto, Bauchi and Zaria Provinces. Then there were provinces with ethnic groups that were idol worshippers who trusted and depended strongly on traditional herbs for their healing such as Plateau, Benue, Niger, Ilorin and Kabba. The Colonial Administration and Native Authorities did not care so much about the health conditions of the Nigerian people. But when SIM mission launched into these places, the missionaries initiated medical work. The ministry of SIM had the largest medical work compared to other mission agencies that were doing missionary services in Northern Nigeria. The focus of SIM mission in the Muslim Emirates caused them to be accepted. Both the Colonial Government and the Muslim Emirates commended the medical services of SIM mission. In fact, the Muslim rulers and Emirs made the Senior SIM missionaries their personal friends. The entire Northern Nigeria opened their doors for SIM missionaries to preach the message of salvation because of their medical services among their communities, (1999:692-693). This was how hospitals, dispensaries and clinics were established in Muslim Emirates:

On the 4th March 1929, Mr. and Mrs. Magill commenced the operation of the SIM dispensary. The dispensary proved over time to be of immense use and assistance to the community and its environs including Suleja. In July 1935, a Leprosarium was established and some buildings were erected in Diko. This center catered for lepers in Niger, Kabba, Benue, Zaria as well as Gbagyi areas. Miss. Esther H. Anderson was posted to Diko in 1936. She engaged and trained Ynajesni Diko to work in the Dispensary. Mr. Ynajesni benefited from formal training at the foremost missionary training Hospital Kaduna-Vom near Jos, Nigeria. In view of the high standards, efficacy of drugs, commitment of workers and integrity in terms of services rendered, the dispensary attracted clients from far and wide in Abuja District. This remained the case until 3rd March 1969 when General Hospital Suleja was commissioned and came into operation, (2007:46).

Dogara stresses that when the modern medical healthcare was made available by SIM Mission, it became a tool for the easy and quick spread of the gospel in Diko and its environs. Because some people were infected with leprosy and there was no place for treatment, SIM decided to establish another leprosarium in Chanchaga, Minna province, in 1953 to cater to the people with the disease. The establishment of Niger Leprosarium Centre became crucial to the healthcare needs of the growing population of people in Minna. This center became strategic during the colonial era as a tool to reach the people with the gospel of Christ, (2013:70).

The SIM mission was committed to seeing people with leprosy attended to. The SIM mission was first to begin medical work among people with leprosy in Northern Nigeria. And SIM Mission was of great assistance to the Colonial Administration and the Native Authorities just to see that people with the disease were cured and that the disease was eradicated in all of Northern Nigeria. There were fourteen leprosy hospitals located all over Nigeria. But out of the fourteen leprosy hospitals established by the Colonial Administration, the SIM mission were able to establish seven of these leprosy hospitals. The SIM Mission leadership resolved to build centers for people with leprosy throughout Northern Nigeria outside the towns and cities. This was meant to control the spread of the disease since it was contagious. The medical services of SIM mission contributed in no small measure

to the state of health, demography and the social lives of the people of Nigeria. This brought about a good relationship between the Mission and Muslims because of SIM medical services among the Emirates, (1999:693). Ruth A. Tucker stresses the impact of modern medicine:

Leprosy, particularly, was a dreaded African disease, and SIM soon became actively involved in eradicating its awful scourge on the people. The work began among the lepers in the 1920s and by the 1960s the mission was treating more than thirty thousand leprosy patients in Nigeria alone. Many of the Africans who sought treatment were Muslims, and many made their choice for Christ in spite of their early Muslim teaching and their parent's threats, (1985:298).

In addition, Ian Fleck says that medical services were the best strategy to gain access to the Muslims and their communities. Therefore, in the 1940s, the SIM mission focused on providing quality education and healthcare services for the people in Northern Nigeria. The mission leaders were sure the above would bring development to the people and that many would come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, (2013:223).

Dr. Bingham did not live long to see more results of his ministry in Nigeria as the founder of SIM. He died on December 8, 1942. Rev. Playfair took over the leadership. Dr. Bingham's leadership was committed to establishing mission stations and out-stations, including the establishment of schools and medical centers, etc. Therefore, Rev. Playfair was encouraged by seeing great accomplishments within the period of 1945-1955. Rev. Playfair thought of new mission fields to consider and engage with the gospel, including the establishment of more medical centers such as Kano Eye Hospital, Nursing Home, Dispensaries and Clinics. He was going to establish four more Leprosaria Centers and three General Hospitals. All of these were going to be in addition to those already established because they were seen to be very effective and productive in facilitating the preaching of the gospel of Christ amidst difficult areas in Northern Nigeria, (2013:223).

Peter Falk described the importance of Eye Hospital established in Kano by SIM mission; its importance cannot be overemphasized. The greatest beneficiaries were the Muslims that were blind. The testimony behind this Eye Hospital is that the Emir of Kano gave orders that in no circumstance should any Muslim dare desire to destroy the Eye Hospital because it is their own since it is meeting their needs, (2015:344). The need for healthcare in Egbe and its environs was prominent because of the ignorance of the natives. Here is a brief on how the hospital came about in Egbe:

Thomas Titcombe married Ethel McIntosh in 1915. The Titcombes arrived in Egbe two days before Christmas 1915. As they were getting ready to go to the five o'clock service on Christmas morning, a messenger came running from the town calling Ethel to come quickly. There was a woman who had just given birth to twins. At that time Yagbas believed that a woman who gave birth to twins was something less than human and they wouldn't let them live in the village any longer. They believed one of the twins must be an evil spirit and were waiting for the medicine man to come and kill both babies. Consequently, Ethel was able to save the twins and the woman from being put to death. As the people believed in Jesus Christ, the practice of killing twins was gradually abolished from among the Yagba people. Ethel wanted to save more twins; therefore, she decided to start a small maternity room in their house. In 1925, the Titcombes started building a Maternity ward and clinic, the building was completed in 1926, (2013:219-220).

Ian Fleck added that the ministry of SIM was now changing the lives and perceptions of people on modern medicines. The awareness became obvious that people no longer needed the use of herbs because they had accepted Christ; they now discovered and believed that modern medicine was better and more effective than the local herbs. Yes, I had earlier faulted the attitudes of the missionaries how they condemned the use of herbs by the natives upon their arrival. But as they embarked on the teaching of God's Word, it convinced the people to know that it was better to use modern medicine than the herbs they were used to before the coming of the missionaries. The number of Yagba people going to the hospital increased. Mr. Titcombe and one nurse could not care for the large number of patients in need of treatment. This informed the need for more trained nurses to assist to meet the demand. Mr. Titcombe gave leadership at the hospital until 1951 through serving the patients that were coming to the hospital. Dr. and Mrs. George Campion responded to the call for more personnel. After his medical training in Canada, the family moved down to Egbe to join the team of

doctors. His coming changed the narrative of the hospital for good. Today, the SIM Hospital in Egbe has become one of the biggest, most popular and successful hospitals in not only in Kogi State but in all of Nigeria, (2013:219-220).

These statistics indicate steady growth of Egbe hospital. In 1959, “The number of beds was 67, the new patients 6,088, the attendances for the year 50,087, the patients admitted to beds 1,161, the operations performed 811, the laboratory examinations 22,705, babies delivered 332 and those who professed to accept Christ as Savior 134. There was also an excellent Nurses’ Training School with 43 in attendance,” (2013:219-220). Therefore, the importance and role medical services played are emphasized:

Medical work had treated a variety of diseases such as snake-bites, tropical ulcers, ophthalmia, yaws, dysentery, malaria, leprosy, and engaged in teeth extraction. The work had also dealt with epidemics such as measles, small-pox and influenza. Medical work was the most effective means of approaching Muslims with the Gospel. Christian missions found the least resistance from any group, whether government, Muslims, or non-Muslims, to their medical work. Their major medical work in the Muslim areas was with lepers. As Africans began to realize the value and importance of medical services, they flooded the mission stations with more requests for the establishment of dispensaries or provision of medical health services in their areas, (1999:167-168).

Dogara stated that SIM mission was not only interested in seeing the natives who were sick getting well, but also to see that they were won for Christ. The missionaries took time to also teach the natives some basic hygiene such as how to eat good food and drink clean water, how to prevent and avoid diseases and sicknesses by keeping the environment clean, and making sure that they showered after work. The missionaries did well by introducing medicines based on the various diseases and sicknesses diagnosed for future treatment should the sickness return, the patients could visit the hospitals, dispensaries and clinics, and leprosarium already established at the mission stations and out-stations. Every center for treatment of any disease was opened to serve as a base for the preaching of the gospel to anybody or any patient that visited the center. Every treatment center had free medicine to be administered to the patient. The missionaries were aware that they might someday be asked to return home and never to come back. What the missionaries did was to select some locals and to train them as auxiliary nurses, medical workers, and doctors. This was aimed at preparing them to assume leadership responsibility, and also it was to assist the missionaries in their services, (2013:98-99).

5. THE IMPACT ON LITERATURE AND TRANSLATION WORK

According to Yusufu, one thing SIM Mission considered seriously when they arrived in Africa was thinking of what was going to help spread the gospel faster. It was then that they thought of the need of literature and translation. They were the pioneer missionaries in Northern Nigeria among those who felt that progress could not be achieved without having literature. The missionaries were hopeful that if the people were trained and educated, their missionary services among the people would be easier. This was what brought about the SIM Mission getting involved in printing, selling and distribution of Christian literature. The Niger Press and Challenge Bookshops helped to facilitate the objectives of literature ministry. As if literature was not enough, the SIM Mission was in the forefront to start Christian journalism in the late 1940s. They promoted this journalism through the establishment of African Challenge Magazine. The printed page served as a medium to spread the gospel particularly to Southern Nigeria among the educated and political class. Therefore, the SIM mission used literature, counseling, and discipleship as strategies to reach people in the urban environment. The SIM Mission did not invest much in establishing institutions, mission stations and out-stations in Southern Nigeria as they did in Northern Nigeria. But there was a great effect of literature and bookshop ministries all over Nigeria. The simple reason was that people loved to read the African Challenge Magazine and other literature available in the bookshops. The magazine was loaded with information that was beneficial to the people, (1999:693-694).

The SIM Mission had a different approach on how to reach the people of Southern Nigeria with the gospel. They resolved to produce materials on discipleship that would help point the people to Christ; the literature provided was meant to edify and change the way they viewed life and how they were

supposed to see life beyond this life. Finally, SIM Mission focused on how to develop the people on Christian leadership. The purpose was so that they would help to spread the gospel and to also to provide spiritual leadership for the church in the region, (1999:693-694). Graham Cheesman observes:

There is a great hunger for any literature in many parts of the third world. Graham Cheesman added that, literature has become a major tool of evangelism. More than half of those who claim to be born again say that literature played some part in their conversion. Not enough of the evangelistic literature is being produced in the country in which it is distributed, or by Christian nationals of that country, so it often lacks relevance and impact, (2015:63).

Therefore, the challenge is before ECWA as a church in Nigeria to take seriously the writing, publishing, printing and distribution of locally-based materials for our people, (2015:63). Peter Falk and Yusufu wrote that the effort of Rev. A. W. Banfield, the SIM missionary to the people of Nupe, in Niger province is worth acknowledging. He printed gospel materials. He proved to the people that he was there to serve them. This was the reason he was able to accomplish a lot within a short time. He did the following: he learned the language and was able to speak it fluently; he translated the Bible into Nupe language; he compiled and produced a dictionary in Nupe language; and he established the Niger Press that helped in the printing of dozens of pieces of Christian literatures in different local languages in Nigeria. These were means God used to reach with the gospel the people of Nupe and other tribes in the region, (2015:344). E P T Crampton further stated:

Christianity has not caused tribes to disappear completely into a larger unit. Usually, some books and in some cases the whole New Testament of Bible have been translated into the vernacular, and indigenous Christian music and the use of the vernacular in all or part of the services help to preserve the tribal mother tongues, (2013:200).

Ian Fleck added that Dr. Andrew Stirrett found great joy and fulfillment in his life that he was one of the main people that translated the Hausa Bible since he had learned and was able to speak the language. He was excited that he handled a completed copy of the Hausa Bible in his hand and each copy of this Bible was given to people whom he loved and worked for. Today, thousands and millions of people in Nigeria and parts of West African Countries that speak the Hausa language can now access the Bible and read and understand the thinking of God about them. As a result, many have confessed Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Dr. Stirrett until his death was committed to producing Hausa literature for Hausa speaking churches including Hausa hymns. Even when Dr. Stirrett was about to die, he continued to preach and still made his contributions toward translation work because that was his passion. It gave him great joy that the Bible was explained and made available in a simple language for people to read and understand God's mind towards them, (2013:216).

Gary R Corwin, other examples of SIM missionaries, were posted to serve the people of Tangale. They felt that the best approach to the people with the gospel was to work on their language. They spent one year on language learning and after that they were able to translate and reduce the written language into the text. They were fulfilled that their work gave birth to the first Gospel in Tangale language. The people of Tangale when they received copies of the Bible in their mother tongue were excited and experienced joy that had no bounds, (2013:221-222). When Nigeria gained her independence on October 1, 1960, "the SIM managed 20 bookshops with 15 Nigerian managers, 90 Nigeria salesmen and 10 missionary staff. They had also distributed in one year 120 tons of literature, 10,000 Bibles in Hausa, 10,000 Bibles in Yoruba, Ibo and English languages and considerable educational material and Christian gospel recordings," (2013:226).

According to Yusufu, it would be too early to forget the contributions made by Christian missions in Northern Nigeria toward literature. Their services were awesome and great. The missionaries contributed a lot in the area of linguistics as pioneers because they were quick in language learning so that they would produce something modern that would help the people in writing and reading easily. Their efforts introduced the use of Roman Script into Hausa and in the study of Hausa grammar and many other languages. The missionaries took seriously the work of publication because it served as an opened door to evangelism. The new believers were strengthened through the use of Christian

literature and educational work. Therefore, the ministries of SIM and SUM became committed to literature and translation because it assisted greatly in developing the spiritual lives of the believers. This was what informed the opening of bookshops in mission stations, (1999:169).

The SIM Annual Report stated: “The building of the Church of God cannot be done without the written Word of God. Our four mission bookshops and the work of the Niger Press are a great factor in getting the Scriptures into the hands of the people, as well as related Christian literature and school supplies, (1935:4).”Yusufu added that the SIM mission observed that the establishment of mission stations alongside the bookshops was a strategy to meet the spiritual yearnings of people coming from total illiteracy. The people were ignorant of Western Education. The SIM mission saw the need earlier to establish mission bookshops because they greatly assisted in furthering the spreading of the gospel by the missionaries, (1999:169).

One of the SIM Bookshops managers, Mr. Alex M. Dodds, observed that the most effective and efficient means to spread and circulate the gospel of Christ all over the world was through bookshops. These books created impact in the lives of people who bought them. It was believed that the Holy Spirit worked through the pages of those books to change lives, (1938:9).The Bible Society calls it an inexpensive means of Scripture centralization: “Good Christian literature is in great demand both in the vernacular and in English. Scriptures, tracts, booklets, Christian books and magazines numbering millions of pages have been sold or given away. Colportage work promises to be a very fruitful part of our ministry, (1935:4).”

6. THE IMPACT ON RADIO MINISTRY

According to Yusufu, the radio would not be limited by time and location where to operate. God gave the vision and burden to three young men who just graduated from Wheaton College to establish the radio station in order to reach Africa with the gospel. The ministry was started and launched in 1954 with its transmitting station at Monrovia, Liberia. To help facilitate and advance its vision, the ministry opened two studios in Nigeria. One of the studios was established at Igbaja to reach the Yoruba communities with the gospel in their local dialect, while another studio was established in Jos. This was aimed at availing opportunity for the Hausa speaking communities to listen to the gospel, (1999:170).An SIM Jubilee Report stated:

From Liberia, God willing is to go forth the greatest weapon we have yet been privileged to use against the host of wickedness in Africa. Radio station ELWA begins broadcasting this year, and as soon as the experimental stage is passed in broadcasting on long, short and medium wave lengths, funds alone will be the only limiting factor in sending forth longer and shorter signals, carrying the Word of life in many languages, even reaching to Moscow and Mecca, Rome and Jerusalem as well as the tribes of Africa, (1953:15).

Peter Falk wrote that among the mission agencies that had the privilege to start Radio ministry in Monrovia, Liberia, it was SIM which was the only mission who pioneered the operation of a radio station called ELWA (Eternal Love Winning All), (2015:345). Gary R. Corwin add that ELWA as a ministry extended her transmitter power and increased her language programs since the demand was on the increase all over the world. This was what informed the need for the Radio Voice of the SIM. It went into Liberia and all of Africa on the longwave, mediumwave, and shortwave transmitters. At this time, Radio ELWA transmission went beyond the West African coast. Because Liberia as a nation speaks the English language, its government officials helped to facilitate ELWA’s growth. They provided immediate market for ELWA ministry in Monrovia through the prerecorded religious programs that were brought from the United States. Each week, there were about thirty Gospel programs already paid ready to be aired. The gospel programs that were prepared had prominent people that were used of God preaching through the radio such as Charles Fuller, Billy Graham, and Theodore Epp. There were programs ELWA arranged to be airing in her studios using different dialects in Nigeria and the West African Coast. The ELWA studio in Liberia was used to promote the local Liberian musicians, and it also helped to broadcast the Liberian government’s various activities. When the radio station was two years old into her operations, the impact had influenced many people all over the world; therefore, in 1955, the leadership of ELWA received above 11,000 letters of commendations on the ministry from forty-four different countries, including twenty-one countries in

Africa. There were people from European nations and the United States of America who also benefited from Radio ELWA ministry. ELWA had very strong transmitters that helped to air her programs, (2018:123). According to Yusufu, through ELWA:

Gospel broadcasting was done in many major West African languages, including English, French and Arabic. Radio ministry studios were built at Igbaja to serve these ethnic people, Yoruba, Nupe, and English, Kano and later Jos to serve the, Hausa, Fulfulde, Igbo. A Radio Technical Department was built to ensure the repair of radio ministry equipment. While a Bible Correspondence School and Counseling ministry was also established as follow-up to the radio ministry, (1999:411).

Luka Turaki Zazzaga stated that the broadcast of the gospel message through the radio ELWA in 1960 alone used about 25 different dialects to reach people in the West Africa region, (2017:173). The impact of Radio ELWA ministry was stressed:

Missionaries at ELWA rapidly specialized in regional and vernacular broadcasting. Shortly after adding its first shortwave transmitter in March 1955, ELWA launched its first programs in French, Arabic, and the Nigerian tongues of Hausa and Yoruba. Soon listeners could hear over 100 programs per week on each of ELWA's long wave and shortwave services in twenty different languages overall, mostly tribal dialects from Liberia and Nigeria. By the mid-1960s, ELWA was broadcasting in an astonishing forty-nine regional languages, including the principal tongues of Liberia, Guinea, Mali, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Congo, East Africa, North Africa, and the Middle East, (2018:124).

Here is an overview of the impact of SIM missionaries' activities; Yusufu stresses that its nature was going out for evangelism among the unreached people. Moving from one village to another as evangelists, they provided Western education that brought civilization and enlightenment and social development. They were also involved in language learning and putting the language in a written text that was later translated that became literature and was printed for use. Medical services were also provided through the established hospitals, dispensaries, clinics, and leprosarium, and local churches were established among people considered unreached, uncivilized and neglected.

Finally, the SIM mission became committed to the establishment of mission stations and out-stations that helped to spread the gospel in Nigeria and beyond. Therefore, the ministry of SIM brought a lot of social and religious changes in the lives of the people of Nigeria and Africa. Below is the summary of the effect and impact of the SIM ministry in Nigeria and beyond. First, the gospel preached changed the perception of Africans about life and it redirected our attention to God from idol worship. This drew us more closely to Christ and his church. Second, the gospel brought Western education with its civilization. Now, we can read and write. Our lifestyle was changed: we no longer dress like uncivilized people again; we no longer keep a dirty environment as before; we eat and drink clean water; and we have basic knowledge on hygiene.

Third, as Africans, Christianity was never believed and accepted because it was claimed to be a white man's religion. But the gospel changed this concept including our understanding about Western education and its civilization. The missionaries helped to clear our doubts and misconceptions. Fourth, the gospel brought by the missionaries helped to shed light on myths about culture, social and religious problems we held onto as non-believers. The wrong beliefs we faced as Africans in our understanding of Christianity looking at our social values, the missionaries' inability to communicate the gospel and not being able to explain the Christian way of viewing life in the context of our culture, religion and social life were all clarified through discipleship classes organized and taught by the missionaries throughout the mission stations and out-stations which were established, (1999:172).

7. SUMMARY

The impact of these strategies on the church in Nigeria and beyond cannot be overemphasized. It brought salvation, expansion of the gospel, peace, unity and love among the church in Nigeria. It has challenged other church denominations and mission agencies to get involved in establishing mission stations and out-stations also in Nigeria and beyond; this was made possible through the missionaries they recruited and sent to various mission fields.

But one cannot avoid asking the question if it was wise for SIM to maintain her missionaries in a field such as the Northern Emirates that was not responding to the gospel on time despite the strategies the mission employed. As the researcher, I see that as a waste of time by the missionaries and a waste of financial resources. The leadership of SIM should have reassigned these missionaries to other mission stations that were responding to the gospel. This was what Dr. Stirrett and Rev. Banfield did when they discovered that at the early-stage fields such as Bida, Patigi and Wushishi were very difficult and unfruitful as they were Muslim towns; this made them consider turning their attention to other fields. Therefore, the challenge before the Nigerian church is to develop literature that is relevant to our contemporary situation as Christians. Finally, the researcher discovered that SIM pioneers planted indigenous churches based on the homogenous unit principle.

Today, there is a lot of divisiveness, tribalism and sectionalism among members of the church. An implication of planting an indigenous church was that many emerged as leaders even when they were not qualified. I expected them to have put into practice their theology and belief as they came to preach to the people in Sudan. Therefore, the researcher wants to discourage this kind of approach to church planting; mission agencies and church denominations whether in Nigeria or outside Nigeria should try not to plant churches based on tribal or ethnic lines because it could bring divisiveness. Jesus Christ died for all, and by this we have become His sons and daughters if we give our lives to Him. The church is to bind us together, so there should be no difference when it comes to church worship (Galatians 3:26-28). The intention or motive may be to reach the people in a language best understood by the people. As the researcher concludes this summary, it is his desire and hope that readers have seen a reflection of Biblical foundation and basis of mission as demonstrated in the practice, beliefs, principles, philosophy, and theory that constituted the ministry of SIM missionaries in Nigeria and beyond.

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