**Turning Highly Dependent Communities toward Self Reliance**

*How can an “outside” Church, NGO, or missionary help a community in need without creating dependencies, stripping dignity, and under minding long-term development?*

1. Beginning with the end in mind
   1. What is the end result we are looking for and let’s work backwards from there
      1. How do we help create communities that can take control and sustain their own development? Spiritual & physical
   2. Building on Assets rather than Needs
      1. To many times the first question we ask a community is “What do you need?”  When we focus on what is wrong, we miss what is right. Our strategies for helping are driven by combating problems rather than strengthening potential.  The poor, no matter how destitute, have enormous untapped capacity; find it, be inspired by it, and build upon.
2. Individual vs. Community Development
   1. FEED A MAN A fish and he’ll eat for a day; teach a man to fish and he’ll eat for a lifetime. It’s conventional wisdom. But what happens when the fish disappear from the lake due to pollution or overfishing? Then it’s time for a change of strategy. Someone has to figure out how to get control of the lake: stop the pollutants, issue fishing licenses, put wildlife-management policies in place. Teaching a man to fish is an individual matter; but gaining control of the lake is a community issue.  – (Dead Aid)
   2. A microloan may help a family buy a cart to haul their produce but it will not pave a road made impassible during the rainy season—that takes community development.
   3. Getting a community to catch this vision
      1. Men of peace, Community leaders, etc.
   4. Once a vision of community is captured what’s next
      1. Capacity building
      2. Processes
      3. Finding local resources for solutions
      4. Finding outside resources for solutions
3. Healthy reciprocal exchange - Appropriately Integrating outside resources
   1. It is delicate work, establishing authentic parity between people of unequal power. But relationships built on reciprocal exchange (Wholistic compassion) make this possible.
   2. The challenge for those of us in service work is to redirect traditional methods of charity into systems of genuine exchange.
   3. Sometimes when we work so hard to develop efficient systems to dispense charity, with clearly posted rules, we overlook the costs in human dignity.
   4. Through a strategic and focused process 1Mission integrates STM teams into a long term development plan.  Houses catalyze community development by recipients earning 200 hours in the community to earn a house.
4. Application
   1. Always measure the cost of handouts. Free isn’t free; It has consequences.
   2. Partner with locals – Do with not for – Empower don’t enable
      1. Including identifying problems/solutions, and cause/effects
      2. Consider sweat equity – reciprocal exchange
         1. Upholds dignity
         2. Pride & responsibility
         3. Often times throughout this process new capacities & trades are found.
         4. Entire communities can benefit from this exchange creating enormous leverage for Churches and other community sectors.