

Learning About Mission from the Poor but Expanding Church Overseas

Bob Mitchell, CEO Anglican Overseas Aid

Workshop 2:15-3:15 Thursday 27 July, 2017

Basic concepts

- Development vs. welfare or charity
- Development is long-term, and can involve cultural or behavioural changes
- Development responds to underlying causes
- Development has an exit strategy from the outset

Reasons Christians get involved in development

- God's coming Kingdom
- Christian social ethics
- Liberation theology
- Understanding that salvation has also got something to do with *life before death*
- Living and acting prophetically
- Catholic Social Justice Teaching
 - God's 'preferential option for the poor'
 - the idea of the 'global human family'

Reasons Christians get involved in development – continued.

- Our understanding of biblical justice
- The great command to love our neighbour
- Social Trinitarianism



Mozambique - facts

- 25.2 million people
- Niassa is in the northern and poorest part of the country
- Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world; it is ranked 180/188 on the UN's Human Development index
- Life expectancy is 55
- Diarrheal diseases are one of the highest causes of death in children under 5.
- Over 10% percent of the population in Mozambique are living with HIV.
- Infants often fail to thrive because of poor nutrition

Mozambique - history

- Ex Portuguese colony
- Long history of slavery
- It's been at war more often than not in the last 50 years
- It's flag has an AK47 assault rifle on it
- Famine is a recurring issue
- Water and sanitation is terrible
- Over 10% of people live with HIV





Mozambique – the Good News

- The 'Igreja Anglicana' is rapidly growing
- Over 200 new churches in Niassa Diocese in the last 10 years
- 426 individual churches in the diocese
- 'High church' mode of worship













Church based volunteers – ‘Equipas de Vida’







Church – local and embedded

Churches are embedded, local, grassroots organisations. They have local knowledge and a permanent presence, even in very remote communities

- **Grassroots**
- **Local knowledge**
- **Permanent presence**
- **Remote**



Discussion 1: The Church as Local

- How is local knowledge used to shape the engagement of your church with the community? How is this reflected in your own church's ministry plans?
- What are the most pressing social issues in your local area?
- How close (or distant) is your church to the local community in general? Is it getting closer or further away? How does your church present itself to the local community?
- Do the public actions of your congregation authenticate what Christians believe?
- How does your church express its 'sent' character as the people of God?

Church as volunteer and community-orientated

Churches can mobilise 'spiritual capital' within their community and draw on the resources of church-based volunteers

- 'Spiritual capital'
- Volunteerism and personal engagement
- Church as civic-life
- Gatekeepers

Discussion 2: The Church as Volunteer

- How does your church volunteer/serve in the community?
- Overall, do you see your church more a 'destination' or a 'stepping-off point' for people's mission and service?
- Do you see your church as a repository of spiritual capital? How is your church's spiritual capital invested? Internally or externally?
- How do you build a sense of 'ownership' for the mission of the church?
- Is this possible where the local church is long-established, aging, set in its ways, comfortable, and relatively-privileged? Can the church reimagine itself?

Church as Voice

Churches can access Christian theology as a development asset, challenge popular secular concepts about 'development' and use its voice for social good

- **Persuasive/prophetic voice**
- **Churches espouse practical theology in relevant areas**
- **A corrective to secular models**

Discussion 3: Church as voice

Does your church use its persuasive voice to seek justice, fairness or change? How?

Pick areas of interest to discuss

- *Child rights*
- *Affirming the disabled*
- *Caring for minorities*
- *Gender-based violence*
- *Speaking/acting prophetically*
- *Caring for modern-day 'widows and orphans'*
- *The responsibility of the wealthy*
- *Care for refugees*
- *Peace and reconciliation*
- *Concern for the environment*

Overall Conclusions??

