TEARFUND

Partnering with the local church

ROOTS

ROOTS 11

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by Rachel Blackman

Drawings: Bill Crooks, Rod Mill

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Contents

Introduction

This book is aimed at Christian organisations that seek to transform communities through development, relief and advocacy work. These organisations may be church denominations, development departments of denominations, Christian networks, Bible colleges or Christian non-governmental organisations (NGOs). We recognise that in some ways these types of organisations are different. However, as this book is based on the idea that the local church is central to community transformation, we group all these Christian organisations together because we suggest that they can all have a similar role in empowering local churches. We refer to a particular type of Christian organisation when they have a unique role.

In this book we outline what is meant by integral mission and show the central role of the local church in this. We argue that by empowering the local church to carry out integral mission, Christian organisations can influence community transformation to a greater extent than if they work directly in the community and in isolation from the local church.

In order to do this, Christian organisations may have to change their thinking and their role. A key issue is to break away from the idea of only implementing compact, time-bound projects at community level. As integral mission involves local churches reaching out to communities in every aspect of life, we feel that it is helpful to use the word 'initiative' rather than 'project' when relating to local church activities. This is because many integral mission activities may be small-scale and ongoing, to such an extent that they become part of community life. Indeed, poor people often want to participate in community more than projects. The best thing the local church can do is to offer poor people a place of welcome and community. A small community initiative may be one way to do this.

Some integral mission activities carried out by the local church may need to be supported by Christian organisations due to the need for expertise or equipment. These may therefore seem more like traditional projects. However, in this book we make a distinction between projects and initiatives on the basis of who takes the lead. We use the word 'project' to describe work in the community which is led by a Christian organisation. We use the word 'initiative' to describe an activity that is started and owned by the local church, even if it receives some input from a Christian organisation.

One of the biggest challenges for Christian organisations, including Tearfund, in empowering the local church for integral mission, is to give up the power that we have over local churches and communities in terms of our resources, contacts and technical ability. It is tempting to use the local church for our own purposes. We hope that this book will be helpful as we work out how best to serve the local church, and through it, God's purposes in the world.

This book is intended to be thought-provoking as well as practical. There is therefore not enough space to make it into a comprehensive handbook that will enable a Christian organisation to mobilise a local church without reference to other resources. However, we do raise important issues, provide a few practical ideas to trigger further discussion, and provide a list of other useful resources.

The book starts by defining the local church and integral mission. In Section 2 we look at different models of interaction between local churches and Christian organisations. In Section 3 we look at three approaches to working with local churches. Section 4 then draws out key issues to consider when working on a strategy to engage more with local churches.

Section

1

Defining the local church and its role

Before we look at how to work with the local church, it is necessary to define what we mean by the term 'church'. The New Testament uses the word 'church' in the following ways:

■ a meeting of Jesus' followers. This is the most common use of the word.

■ a gathering of believers that meet in a house

■ all believers in a particular locality – the people who belong to a group of believers even when they are not gathered together

■ believers in a particular locality under the care of a group of elders

■ all believers everywhere – the worldwide church.

There are common elements in all the descriptions of the church given in the New Testament. These are:

■ The church consists of a group of people. (Note: the church is not about buildings.)

■ The group of people are followers of Jesus Christ.

■ The church is the community in which God lives by his Spirit.

The church is an expression of the heavenly congregation here on earth. It is God's primary agent of transformation in the world. The key difference between the uses of the word 'church' given above is locality. For example, it can refer to a group of people meeting in a house or all believers everywhere. As the church is a community of people who follow Jesus Christ, it is appropriate that they meet with one another regularly. It is not possible for all Christians worldwide to meet together, as lovely as that would be! Therefore, Christians need to meet together in smaller groups, usually in the area in which they live. The term we use for this grouping is 'local church'.

This term does not only refer to believers who meet together in a building which is constructed especially for that purpose. The 'local church' may meet in a community building, school hall or someone's home. It is usually sustainable and should not be fully dependent on external funding, personnel or resources for its existence. Tearfund's definition of local church is therefore a 'Sustainable community of local Christian believers, accessible to all, where worship, discipleship, nurture and mission take place.' In this book, we use the term 'local church' to refer to such groups and the word 'church' alone to refer to the wider body of Christ.

BIBLE STUDY

Characteristics of the local church

■ Read Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32-35.

- *List all the attitudes and actions of God's people.*

- *Go through each item in the list and discuss their meaning. Some are straightforward, but others may need to be discussed in depth for their meaning and relevance. For example, the word 'devoted' gives a sense of a binding commitment or promise, similar to a wedding vow. In particular, discuss the meaning of these terms – the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42); the 'fellowship' (Acts 2:42); the 'breaking of bread' (Acts 2:42); 'everything in common' (Acts 2:44) and 'in heart and mind' (Acts 4:32).*

- *Is this what our local churches are like? If not, which characteristics are lacking and why?*

- *If we were first-century people who were not followers of Jesus Christ, how might we describe this group of people who met together regularly for worship and gave things away?*

- *Look at Acts 2:47, which says that the followers of Christ 'enjoyed the favour of all the people'. What does this mean? Is that the situation for Christians today? In our local situation, which characteristics of the early church should we follow more closely in order to be the church God wants us to be?*

While recognising that local churches need leaders, the New Testament does not prescribe one specific way in which leaders (such as elders, overseers or deacons) and the churches they lead should relate to each other. As a result, it is not surprising that a variety of church structures or denominations have been formed over the centuries. Denominations and networks can be useful for pastoral accountability, sharing of learning, resources and gifts, and useful for enabling local churches to be heard at national level.

Christian leaders have argued over whether different structures are right or wrong, but history shows us that God can bless people through any Christian structure and that the godliness of the leader is far more important than the position they hold. History also witnesses to the fact that church structures can sometimes come to exist for their own ends. When this happens there is need to refocus the structure on its true purpose of building up local congregations of Christians.

The church is called to demonstrate the kingdom of God as a visible sign of his kingdom in the world. The church is called to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16). The church should influence situations for the better, preserve good things and bring healing.

BIBLE STUDY

The role of the church: pictures of the church

■ Read 1 Peter 2:4-12. Peter uses a number of pictures of the church that indicate the church's role:

A spiritual house (verses 5-8). Peter uses the image of a building to describe God's people.

• *A cornerstone is a large stone supporting two walls at right angles to each other. What would happen to the building if the cornerstone was removed? Who is represented by the cornerstone? Why is it relevant that he is the cornerstone and not just any stone in the walls?*

• *Who do the other stones in the building represent? Notice that without these other stones, there would not be a building. We cannot be Christians in isolation – we must be together in community. The temple was the holiest place for Jews because it was seen as the dwelling place of God. People from all over the known world would travel to the temple to worship God. Likewise, the spiritual house exists so that people can meet with God.*

A holy priesthood (verse 5). In the Old Testament the role of a priest was to act as a go-between between God and the people of Israel. The priests took sacrifices from the people and presented them on the altar to God on their behalf. However, Jesus Christ's death and resurrection as the ultimate sacrifice means that there is no need for the Old Testament type of priest any more. In this passage, we see that all who trust in Jesus are holy priests.

Read verse 5.

• *What is the role of the holy priests described here?*

• *What are the spiritual sacrifices that we are to offer? To answer this question, look at the following passages: Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:2; Philippians 4:18; Hebrews 13:15-16.*

• *Who benefits from these spiritual sacrifices?*

A holy nation (verse 9) Using the phrase 'holy nation' would immediately remind Jews of their own history, when the nation of Israel was saved out of slavery in Egypt. This was a model of what was to come when Jesus came to bring both Jews and Gentiles into God's kingdom.

• *Holy means 'set apart'. What do you think Peter means by referring to Christians as a holy nation?*

A people belonging to God

• *In what ways can we show we belong exclusively to God, who is King over all the earth? (see verses 9-12)*

• *What is the outcome of this? (verse 12)*

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH

• *What does this Bible passage tell us about the role of the church?*

• *Does being different from the world mean being isolated from the world?*

• *How can our local church become more like the community of believers that Peter describes?*

• *How can Christian organisations encourage local churches to become more like the community of believers that Peter describes? Are there ways in which the actions of Christian organisations can actually hinder local churches from becoming what God intends them to be?*

The mission of the church: Integral mission[1]

Poverty is multi-dimensional. It is about lacking basic needs. Often, people think of basic needs as merely physical – such as food, clothes and shelter. But there are other dimensions of poverty, such as social poverty (lack of opportunity to interact with other people), political poverty (lack of ability to influence people in positions of power) and spiritual poverty (lack of relationship with God through Jesus Christ).

By looking at poverty like this, we can say that most people in the world are poor in some way – occasionally, sometimes or all of the time. For example, someone who is materially rich could lack social networks or they may be in spiritual poverty. On the other hand, someone who is materially poor could have a supportive family and be a Christian, and therefore feel socially and spiritually rich.

The church is called to meet people's needs through loving them in the way that God loves them. The church is God's agent of transformation in communities. However, over the years, churches have interpreted their mission to love others in different ways:

■ Some churches have focused only on the spiritual aspects of poverty. Their expression of love to the community has been in proclaiming the gospel.

■ Some churches have expressed love through focusing on people's material needs without giving enough attention to spiritual needs. They demonstrate the gospel without necessarily proclaiming it.

■ Some churches have actively been involved in addressing all types of needs but have failed to make the linkage between them. They have treated proclamation and demonstration of the gospel separately.

In this section we look at 'integral mission'. This term is used to describe the church's mission to meet people's needs in a multi-dimensional way. We argue that proclamation and demonstration of the gospel should not be separated. Integral mission is about speaking of and living out our faith in an undivided way, in all aspects of life. Without integral mission, the degree to which the kingdom of God can be shown and extended in this world can be limited.

Since churches tend to separate proclamation and demonstration of the gospel, we will explain integral mission in this section by showing why the separation should not be made.

1 This section draws strongly on Tim Chester's work in his book *Good news to the poor.*

Explanation of terms used in this section

Proclamation means telling people the gospel, and is sometimes called 'evangelism'.

Demonstration means showing people what it means to be part of God's kingdom, such as through physically helping others to reduce poverty such as physical or political poverty. It is sometimes called 'social action' or 'social involvement' because it involves addressing needs in society.

The term **integral mission** comes from the Spanish 'misión integral' and can also be referred to as 'holistic ministry', '(w)holistic development', 'Christian development' or 'transformational development'.

Case study

Example of integral mission in northeast Brazil

A man in the village of Caroá in northeast Brazil heard about Jesus on radio programmes broadcast by Ação Evangélica (ACEV). He invited two pastors to speak in his village and as a result, 16 people became Christians.

As ACEV began to establish a church there, they saw that people needed access to safe water. Building a well posed a challenge – it was a new venture for ACEV's evangelists. Yet they found that their practical work complemented their spiritual work. One community member commented, 'The well started everything. It shows us that God loves us, and that through brothers and sisters in Christ, he blesses us.'

Since then, there have been many changes in the community, including an animal loan scheme, and government provision of a reservoir after advocacy work by the community. Now around half of the community members are Christians.

A community member collects water from the well provided by ACEV.

Photo: Jim Loring, Tearfund

The need for the church to be involved in demonstrating the gospel

Social involvement is part of what God expects Christians to do:

Social involvement is rooted in the character of God

God is concerned for people's basic needs, whether spiritual or material. Social involvement is part of his character (for example, see Psalm 146:7-9). He opposes those who are responsible for injustice and sides with the victims of oppression. This does not mean that God is biased towards poor people and gives them preferential treatment. All people are important to God, shown in his grace to all people, whether rich or poor. However, in a world where there is bias towards the wealthy and powerful, God's actions will always be seen as an opposite bias.

God's character is most fully revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, who showed and preached concern for the poor (Luke 4:18-19; Matthew 4:23; Matthew 9:35-38; Matthew 14:14; Luke 12:33).

We are called to care for those around us

God expects us to mirror his concern for the oppressed (see Proverbs 31:8-9 and Isaiah 1:10-17). We are to care for those around us (Mark 12:28-34). Jesus told the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), showing that we are to care for people across social and cultural divides.

Case study

Example of integral mission in the UK

In the UK, where the extended family is not as valued as elsewhere in the world, many elderly people feel lonely and isolated. Some are unable to go out due to illness, disability or age and therefore rarely have an opportunity to talk to other people.

Photo: Adele Robertson

The elderly people and their befrienders enjoy Christmas lunch together in the church hall.

Mount Florida Parish Church in Scotland went through Tearfund's Church, Community and Change process, which mobilises local churches in the UK to carry out integral mission. At the end of the process, it emerged that a key issue in Mount Florida was the loneliness of elderly people. The church therefore set up a 'befriending service' where volunteers regularly visit elderly people in their homes and, if appropriate, take them on outings.

This has helped to inspire self-worth and confidence in the elderly people. One person said, 'The rest of the day I am on my own, so it's good to get somebody to talk to … to cheer me up.' Another person, who had been suffering from depression, found that being visited gave him a new interest in living and he began to ask the volunteer about her Christian faith.

The links between proclamation and demonstration of the gospel

There is a natural link between demonstration and proclamation:

- When proclamation of the gospel leads to repentance by those who respond to it, there are social implications. Jesus Christ becomes Lord over every area of their lives, so that there is transformation beyond the spiritual. In recognition of Christ's authority and through a desire to please him, Christians seek to reflect the justice and love of God in their own lifestyle and relationships, and in society as a whole. James 2:15-18 calls us to do good deeds to show evidence of our faith in Christ. Proclamation therefore leads to social involvement.

- This social involvement (demonstration), in turn, has consequences for proclamation as Christians bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ.

We should always be aware of our motivation and what we are witnessing to, and ensure that this is communicated to those around us. Social involvement has to be an integral part of the mission of the church, but it is important that it is carried out alongside proclamation of the gospel. As the box opposite shows, social involvement complements proclamation, and proclamation complements social involvement. Christians are called to do both. We cannot do one in isolation from the other.

There is sometimes a tendency to separate the death and resurrection of Jesus from his earthly life. While his death and resurrection are of central importance, there is much that we can learn from Jesus' life and ministry on earth. His way of life and actions are a model for the mission of the church as much as his preaching. The Micah Declaration on Integral Mission states[2]: 'As in the life of Jesus, being, doing and saying are at the heart of our integral task.'

Proclamation and demonstration are inseparable

Proclamation is reinforced by our social involvement The gospel is interpreted in the context of the lives and actions of the people who share it and their relationships with one another. If a Christian tells someone the gospel, but does not display evidence of being a Christian through caring for others, the perceived value of the gospel to the person who hears it is weakened. Social involvement is an advertisement for God's kingdom where relationships with God and each other are restored (Matthew 5:14-16).

Social involvement acts as a signpost However, if done without communicating the gospel message, it can point people in the wrong direction:

- Rather than pointing to God, it can point to us.

- It can wrongly communicate that salvation is about doing good works.

- It can deny the importance of reconciliation with God by indicating that improving economic and social situations are all that matter.

Social involvement helps people in their earthly lives, but does not bring blessing beyond that.

NOTE: While it is important to proclaim the gospel as well as demonstrate it, people should never be forced to convert. Some religious groups may require people to convert to their religion so that they qualify for receiving aid. We believe that this is totally wrong. It is vital that Christians share unconditional love with everyone, through word and deed. Unwillingness to care for those of a different religion is denying God's grace towards us and towards them.

2 The Micah Declaration was drawn up in 2001 at a meeting organised by the Micah Network, a coalition of evangelical churches and agencies from around the world which are committed to integral mission. For further details see www.micahnetwork.org

Case study

Example of integral mission in Mali

The small town of Diré in Mali has experienced desertification over the last few decades. A local Baptist church has taken action to fight the encroaching desert and ensure that some of the land remains cultivated. The church, with just 15 members, calls this the 'Good SEED' project. The ten-hectare plot of land is shared between eight local people who grow rice, millet, melons and vegetables.

Photo: Richard Hanson, Tearfund

Church and community members cultivate the land together.

In addition to enabling people to feed their families, the church hopes that the project will complement its evangelism by showing local people what Christians are really like. The Project Coordinator says, 'We are happy to share this land with other people because we love them… People believe false things about us… If they can work alongside us in the fields they find out what we are really like and what we really believe.' One community member commented, 'I am not yet a Christian myself, but my impression is that they are very good people, and what they teach is true.'

Case study

Example of integral mission in the Philippines

Peace and order was a big problem in one neighbourhood of Quezon City. Each day there were up to five killings among rival gangs of teenagers. A pastor decided to move into the dangerous area of the neighbourhood and live among the gangs. This was an initiative by the LIFE Project, which is a partnership between the local Batasan Bible Church and ISAAC, a Christian non-governmental organisation.

Photo: Jabez Production

Ex-gang members study for diplomas.

Gradually, as the pastor shared his life with the teenagers, they began to share their lives with him. The lives of many have been transformed. One ex-gang member says, 'The pastor modelled to us a better life. He was a mentor to us, teaching what was good and bad and we were filled with the Word of God.' Many of the teenagers did not attend school. Batasan Bible Church has helped them to study and gain diplomas. Before the project, the local shops would shut by six o'clock in the evening because of gang fighting at night. Now the shops stay open much later because the neighbourhood is so much more peaceful.

REFLECTION

■ Do we agree with the definition of local church given in this book? Does it reflect our own perception of what 'local church' is in our community? If not, what is different?

■ Is integral mission carried out by churches in our community? If not, is proclamation carried out without demonstration, or is demonstration carried out without proclamation?

Summary

■ We have defined the local church as a 'sustainable community of local Christian believers, accessible to all, where worship, discipleship, nurture and mission take place.'

■ We have discussed what integral mission is – speaking of and living out our faith in an undivided way in all aspects of life.

■ We have identified integral mission as an important part of the local church's role.

The relationship between Christian organisations and local churches

As discussed in Section 1, local churches have a role in proclaiming and demonstrating the gospel. However, very often, the role of the church is limited to proclaiming the gospel. This could be because:

■   the church leadership believes that the main role of the church is to proclaim the gospel and may not have heard of, or believe in, integral mission

■   some Christian organisations do not recognise the role of the local church in demonstrating the gospel. Instead, they work directly with the community. As a result, the local church does not take on its responsibility to care for people because it sees Christian organisations doing it instead. The local church may even see itself as a beneficiary.

2.1   The need for both Christian organisations and churches

In many places, there is no relationship at all between Christian organisations and local churches. This is particularly the case for Christian NGOs as opposed to other types of Christian organisation. There is a role for Christian organisations, but their work should not be done in isolation from the local church. They should work together and each should work to their strengths.

Strengths of the local church

GOD'S PRIMARY AGENT OF TRANSFORMATION   The local church is an outpost of God's kingdom and is used by God to transform communities.

CLOSE TO POOR PEOPLE   The local church exists at the grassroots of a community. It is present among poor people and often consists of poor people. The local church is therefore in close contact with local knowledge. It also benefits from relationships with other people and organisations in the community because the membership of the local church usually represents a cross-section of the community. The local church is part of the community, while a Christian organisation may be viewed as an 'outsider'.

PERMANENT PRESENCE   While a Christian organisation may leave a community, the church exists for the people in the community and is likely to be there for much longer than a Christian organisation.

SUSTAINABLE CHRISTIAN WORK   If Christian work is to be sustainable, there is a need for a permanent Christian presence. This is what the local church provides. Without this, when a Christian organisation moves on, the work left behind may start to lose its Christian distinctiveness.

NATURAL CONTEXT IN WHICH FAITH CAN BE EXPLORED   Christian organisations are focused on relief, development and advocacy work, while the local church has a wider agenda, including providing space for those investigating the Christian faith.

NETWORKS   The local church is often a member of a number of networks. There are links with other grassroots groups in the community through church members, and through working with other groups in carrying out community initiatives. There are also links with the wider church through denominations and Christian alliances. Membership of networks facilitates learning.

RESOURCES   The local church contains many members who can be mobilised. This is particularly useful for labour-intensive initiatives. Also, some local churches have buildings which provide a place for community members to meet to discuss local issues. In times of crisis, church buildings can provide safe refuge.

Strengths of Christian organisations

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE   Christian organisations have staff with a good understanding of poverty issues and methodologies. They may have specialist knowledge that no-one in a community possesses, such as knowledge of water engineering or nutrition.

EQUIPMENT   Some organisations may possess technology which is not usually present within a community, such as well-drilling equipment or medical equipment and supplies.

EXPERIENCE   Christian organisations may work in a number of communities, and over time, gain an overview of local, regional and national issues. They also learn about what works and what does not work in the local area and culture.

THE STAFF of Christian organisations are dedicated to relief, development and advocacy work, without competing priorities which staff of local churches may face.

ACCESS TO, **AND ABILITY TO HANDLE, FUNDING**   While local churches and communities should be encouraged to use their own resources to support their initiatives, there will be some initiatives that require external funding, such as borehole drilling and constructing community buildings that are resistant to natural hazards. Christian organisations may have access to funding that cannot be accessed directly by a local church. For example, an NGO or a development department of a denomination is more likely to be successful than a local church in applying for funding from an institutional donor. This is because they are usually registered as organisations and have the expertise to develop proposals, manage funding and write reports.
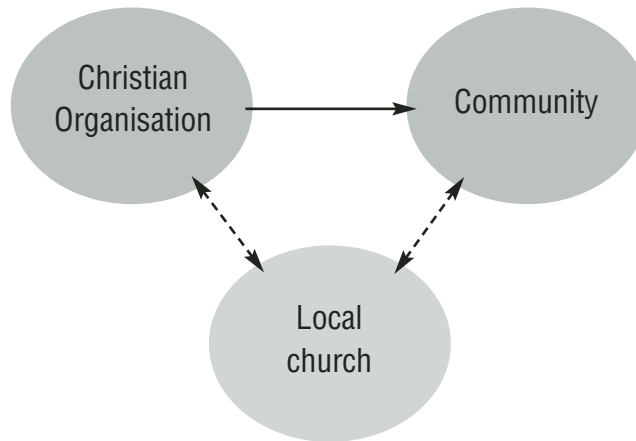
Both Christian organisations and local churches have a lot to offer and could benefit greatly from working together. There are many different ways in which they can interact as the diagrams opposite show.

Isolation model

Christian Organisation → Community
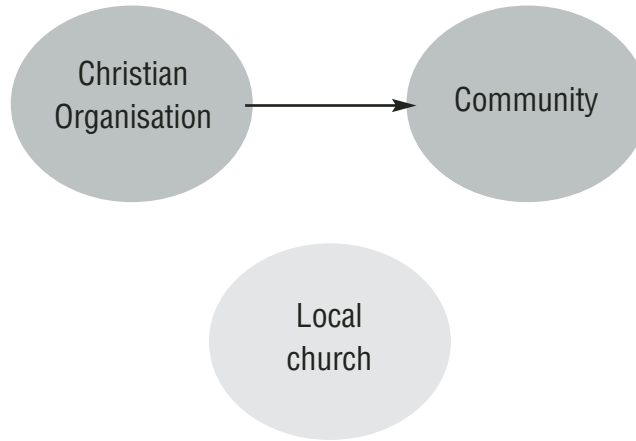
Local church

A Christian organisation works directly with the community. No linkage with local church. The local church may or may not be doing social action in the community.

Involvement model

Christian Organisation → Community

Local church

A Christian organisation works directly in the community but involves the local church in its work by encouraging prayer. It may consult with the local church, since it usually represents a cross-section of the community. The local church may provide volunteers to take part in projects carried out by the Christian organisation. These projects may be relief or development projects. The Christian organisation may encourage church members to take part in advocacy campaigns.

The community makes a connection between the work of the Christian organisation and the witness of the local church.

→ Direct project implementation

◄- - -► Support relationship

Empowerment model

Christian Organisation → Local church → Community

Technical expertise
e.g. from Christian Organisations
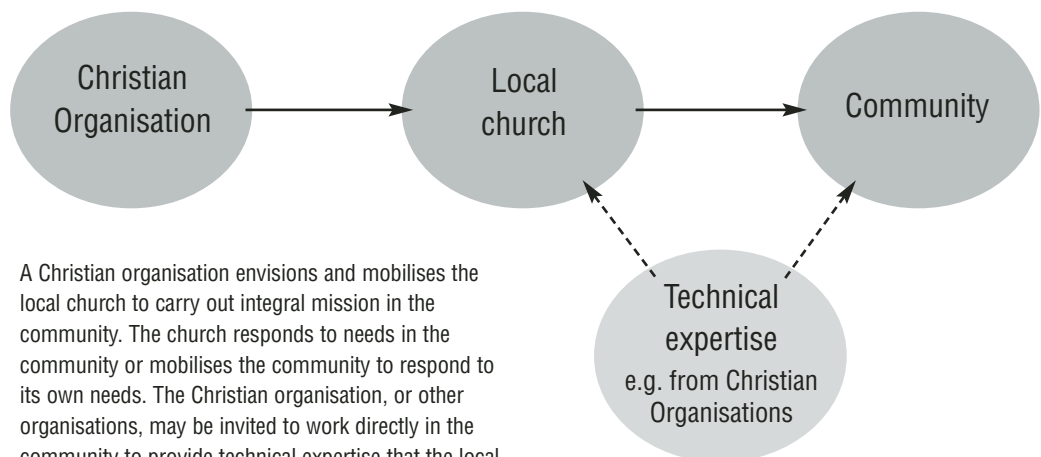
A Christian organisation envisions and mobilises the local church to carry out integral mission in the community. The church responds to needs in the community or mobilises the community to respond to its own needs. The Christian organisation, or other organisations, may be invited to work directly in the community to provide technical expertise that the local church or community lack.

Case study

Example relating to the involvement model

In 2005, the city of Mumbai in India was affected by serious flooding. The relief and development agency EFICOR provided the Christian organisation ACT (Association of Christian Thoughtfulness) with money to respond.

ACT brought together members from different churches in the local area and provided them with around three hours of training. This enabled the local churches to carry out a needs assessment in their communities. Vouchers were given out to households that qualified for aid. The following day, church members took part in the aid distribution and ensured that only those with vouchers received aid.

A month later, the local churches conducted follow-up visits to the households that had received aid. Many of the people were impressed by how the church had responded to their needs with love and compassion in that time of crisis. As a result of the follow-up visits, a new Hindi-speaking local church has been established.

REFLECTION

- Do we agree with the strengths of Christian organisations and local churches set out in this section? Can we think of any more strengths?
- What weaknesses of Christian organisations or local churches may hinder their work together?
- Do we know of any other models of interaction between Christian organisations and local churches that are not mentioned on page 19? If so, what are they?
- Which model is most like our own way of working?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each model?
- Which model would we like to reflect?

Thoughts on the empowerment model

The empowerment model is quite radical and usually requires a change in both the Christian organisation and the local church:

A change in thinking may be needed.

- For the local church, this means understanding the importance of integral mission and recognising the experience and expertise of the Christian organisation.

- The Christian organisation may need to understand the value of work in the community being carried out and facilitated by local churches.

A change in roles is often needed.

- The church needs to become a primary agent of transformation, carrying out initiatives in or with the community.

■ The Christian organisation's role needs to change from being primarily an implementer of projects to being a supporter of the local church as it carries out integral mission. This may involve some implementation at grassroots level by the Christian organisation, but it is requested by the local church, which owns the process.

Potential new roles

> **Role of local church** – to carry out integral mission in the community
>
> **Role of Christian organisation** – to encourage, support and enhance the work of the local church as it carries out integral mission.

Experience has shown that the local church needs to be willing to:

■ be open to learning about integral mission

■ encourage members to discover or rediscover their gifts and resources, and to use them

■ be bold as it goes out to serve the community, particularly if the church is usually inward-looking

■ recognise that it is not a relief, development and advocacy specialist, and therefore be willing to ask Christian organisations for support when necessary.

Experience shows that the empowerment model works best if a Christian organisation:

■ acts as a catalyst where the local church needs envisioning

■ acts as a facilitator to enable the local church to carry out integral mission

■ stands back from the community and allows the local church to do, and be seen to do, the work at community level. The focus should be on the local church. The local church should own the development process, rather than the Christian organisation

■ provides advice, training and support when required by the local church to develop its capacity

■ acts as a pioneer to establish new local churches where there is no local church to work with. Not all Christian organisations have the experience and expertise to do this, but all should at least consider working alongside other organisations that have a focus on establishing churches, where no local church exists. Christian organisations should consider how their work can best provide the environment within which churches can be established and grow.

The table on page 22 shows different types of Christian organisations and how their specific roles may need to change if local churches are to be empowered to carry out integral mission.

Different types of Christian organisation and specific role change if they follow the empowerment model

TYPE OF ORGANISATION	CHALLENGES OF TRADITIONAL APPROACH	POTENTIAL NEW ROLES
Development department of denomination	Temptation to implement projects with little or no contact with, or involvement by, local churches	• Envisioning and training pastors and church members in integral mission • Training pastors in leadership development • Providing advice on design and implementation of community initiatives • Facilitating learning between local churches and between local churches and other development actors • Assisting with funding for large community initiatives. This may involve facilitating transfer of funds from wealthy churches to poor churches, or from donors in the North • Using networks to provide advocacy support to local churches
Evangelical Alliance or Fellowship	Implementing projects, often without the involvement of members	• Envisioning and training pastors and church members in integral mission • Co-ordinating communication between member churches on key themes and issues related to integral mission • Facilitating learning between local churches • Training pastors in leadership development • Advising on where resources (expertise and skills) are available, such as linking local churches to Christian NGOs • Using networks to provide advocacy support to local churches
Theological college	Theoretical rather than practical. Training in using the Bible, but not necessarily in how biblical teaching relates to poverty reduction	• Training students in integral mission • Training students in leadership development • Providing opportunities for students to be placed with local Christian NGOs or churches involved in integral mission as part of the course
Christian NGO	Tendency to implement projects with little or no contact with local churches	• Training local church leaders and members to act as facilitators of change • Training church pastors in leadership development • Providing advice and expertise in support of church initiatives at the request of the church and community, including needs assessments and specific technical advice and good practice • Providing placements for theological students
TYPE OF ORGANISATION	CHALLENGES OF TRADITIONAL APPROACH	POTENTIAL NEW ROLES

2.2   Establishing good relationships

Some organisations may want to pilot working with just one or two local churches to start with. However, it is worth considering the impact that this might have on relationships between those and other churches in the community. Try to avoid causing friction between local churches. As much as possible, try to engage with all of the churches from the start, even if one or two churches are selected as pilot churches for more focused work.

It is not always easy for Christian organisations to find local churches to work with successfully. The following gives examples of common problems that Christian organisations may face. We suggest some responses that can help them to overcome these problems.

CHALLENGE

The local church may not understand integral mission   Many churches separate the spiritual and physical aspects of life. This may partly be due to the influence of missionaries from the North, who many years ago, often adopted a dualistic view of life. Few theological colleges teach integral mission. Many pastors therefore lack the theological framework or practical knowledge to respond effectively to the needs of the poor in their communities.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

Invest time in envisioning local church leaders about integral mission. Use Bible studies, and find local examples of integral mission in practice that can be visited.

CHALLENGE

Local churches may think that the government should do everything and that the church has no role in addressing social or political issues.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

Invest time in envisioning local church leaders about integral mission and showing that the church should try to influence the powerful. The *Advocacy toolkit* (ROOTS 1 and 2) may be helpful.

CHALLENGE

Discipleship may be weak   Social involvement is important because it shows that the gospel is worthwhile. However, if church members are not trying to live distinctive lives, the impact of the church's work can be weakened.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

Identify other organisations that can support local churches in discipleship of members.

CHALLENGE

Many local churches that do respond to needs in the community use a welfare approach This can often be paternalistic and done in a way that causes people to depend on the church for hand-outs. A welfare approach can be useful in addressing immediate and short-term practical needs, especially in times of crisis. However, approaches that address longer term development and empowerment issues are preferable because welfare approaches eventually create dependency.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

Invest time in envisioning pastors and local church members about the benefits of empowering the community to respond to its own problems. Provide training in using participatory tools.

CHALLENGE

Some churches may misuse aid by trying to coerce people to convert to Christianity
For example, they may only include people as beneficiaries of an initiative if they attend church services regularly.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

Challenge local churches about this issue, or do not work with them.

CHALLENGE

Church leadership styles can restrict integral mission If church leadership does not follow Christ's example of servant leadership, the success of integral mission can be limited. For example, some leaders think they alone have a direct link to God and therefore believe that they must make every decision related to the local church. This has many consequences:

- It can slow down the implementation of initiatives, and even stop some initiatives happening at all. The pastor becomes a bottleneck in all decisions.

- Decisions may be made by a leader without any appropriate training or knowledge. Church initiatives may therefore be irrelevant or unsuccessful.

- There is limited accountability, because all decisions are made by one person who is not interested in being accountable to anyone else. If the leader controls funds, they may be tempted to use them for their own benefit and to increase their power.

- The leader believes their role is to be in control, rather than to empower others. This can make them less open to sustainable approaches that emphasise participation and empowerment.

- Some church members may become frustrated, leading to tension and disunity.

- Such leadership can negatively impact the spiritual maturity of church members because they may never be given a chance to use their gifts.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

Provide teaching about good leadership. Since good leadership is more about the heart and character than skills, the teaching should focus on God's grace and the model of the cross.

CHALLENGE

Churches may lack capacity to engage with integral mission For example:

- They may lack skilled personnel, or find it challenging to train their members due to poor literacy or lack of education.

- They may have poor financial systems and ineffective governance. This impacts the church's ability to effectively use, account for and report on external funding.

- Churches are not relief and development agencies. Relief and development work is just one aspect of their wider ministry and therefore may not always be a priority.

- Where Christians are in the minority in a country, they may lack connection with the wider community. Persecution and fear of violence may discourage some churches from raising their profile within the community.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

Provide training to develop their capacity and confidence. For example, Section 4.6 in this book about using local resources may help to address funding issues.

Christian organisations should be aware that their ways of working may not be appropriate for working with local churches. These include:

■ seeking to be professional

■ short time frames for projects

■ inflexible structures and processes

■ tendency to impose their own agendas or donors' agendas

■ requirements for excessive reporting or unrealistic accountability mechanisms

■ staff who may not have commitment to the local church.

Christian organisations should address these issues to ensure that their engagement with local churches is effective. Sections 4.1 and 4.2 provide more insight into how these issues might be addressed.

Some Christian organisations may decide to stop working directly in the community and instead make mobilising churches the focus of their role. These organisations follow the empowerment model outlined on page 19. However, it can be difficult for Christian organisations to find donor funding for such work. It can take time to build relationships with local churches and mobilise them before any action is taken in the community. Christian organisations that want to encourage local churches to mobilise communities to respond to their own problems can find it difficult to obtain funding because outcomes are unknown at the proposal stage.

It is important that Christian organisations do not exploit local churches. For example, Christian organisations may find it attractive that churches can easily mobilise volunteers. It may become a temptation to see the local church only as a source of a free workforce. Any relationship with the local church should be seen within the context of the local church and its mission, and not just in meeting the objectives of the Christian organisation.

REFLECTION

■ **Which of these challenges apply to our local situation?**

■ **How might they be overcome?**

Summary

■ We have looked at the strengths of Christian organisations and local churches.

■ We have considered different models of relationship between Christian organisations, local churches and the community.

■ We have explored barriers to relationships between Christian organisations and local churches, and how these might be overcome.

Section 3

Approaches to working with local churches

In Section 2 we looked at models of interaction between Christian organisations and local churches. In this section we look at different approaches to working with local churches. These are illustrated using detailed case studies of Tearfund's partner organisations. The approaches are as follows:

3.1 Church mobilisation – Christian organisations mobilise local churches to work in the community. This approach fits best with the empowerment model (page 19).

3.2 Church and community mobilisation – Christian organisations mobilise the local church which then mobilises the community to help themselves. This approach fits best with the empowerment model.

3.3 Church empowerment for advocacy – Christian organisations empower the local church to advocate on community issues. This approach fits with both the involvement model and the empowerment model.

These approaches are not distinct options. Organisations may use different approaches with different local churches according to the local context. Over time, it may be appropriate for organisations to develop their work with a local church. For example, they may start off with a church mobilisation approach in response to a crisis and work towards a church and community mobilisation approach. Church empowerment for advocacy could be the only approach used with a particular local church, or it could be used alongside the other approaches.

3.1 Church mobilisation

Church mobilisation is the act of mobilising a local church to respond to needs in the community in which it is based. The focus of this approach is on local church pastors and their congregations. Pastors are envisioned to carry out integral mission (see Section 4.4 about envisioning). The pastors then envision their congregations.

The approach does not mobilise the wider community, but seeks to enable the local church to meet the community's needs. In this sense, it is a welfare approach because the church responds to the perceived needs of the community.

Common elements of a church mobilisation process include:

■ envisioning pastors

■ envisioning congregations

■ setting up a core team to manage the initiative

■ recruiting volunteers

- providing training to volunteers

- supporting volunteers.

In some places, local churches may already understand the need for integral mission, but may not be doing it because they lack confidence or expertise. A church mobilisation process may therefore focus less on the 'why' of integral mission and spend more time looking at the 'how'.

Case study

ZOE (Zimbabwe Orphans through Extended hands)

Due to HIV and AIDS, the number of orphans in Zimbabwe is growing rapidly. There is increasing recognition that traditional orphanages are inadequate, and that the church needs to respond more effectively. ZOE was set up to encourage local churches to care for orphans and to support them in doing this.

ZOE is an organisation with a minimal structure. For the first nine years of its work there were no employed staff and even now there are only eight. This was intentional. The founder did not want ZOE to become an organisation that implemented projects, but instead to be an agency that envisions and facilitates the local churches to act.

A volunteer with some of the orphans he cares for.

Photo: Karyn Beattie

ZOE responds to requests from local church leaders for help in addressing the needs in their community. ZOE gathers together all the church leaders in the local area for a day in order to envision them. Bible studies play an important role in this because they help the leaders to understand the responsibility of the local church. Once the pastors have returned to their congregations to share the vision, many people usually come forward to become volunteers who care for orphans in the community on behalf of the local churches.

Each volunteer cares for no more than five families. The volunteers aim to visit each family at least once a month. The fact that the volunteers come back regularly has a positive impact on the families, especially if the household has been abandoned by the extended family. When they visit, the volunteers seek to identify the needs, look for signs of abuse, listen, help practically, share resources, share something from the Bible and pray with them. Common activities carried out by volunteers include providing feeding advice and advice on seeking medical help. The volunteers keep records of their visits and report on them at a monthly meeting of volunteers and local church leaders. This helps to ensure local church ownership of the work with orphans. It also ensures that the volunteers are supported in their work.

From the beginning of the process, ZOE makes it clear that it will not provide resources other than training, since the work is a church activity and responsibility. The local churches therefore take responsibility for the volunteers and help them to support families by providing regular offerings or practical help. For example, a volunteer might call on other church members to help to repair a roof or to prepare land for a family in their care.

AIMS

- To raise awareness among local churches of the importance of ministering to orphans holistically, and to provide training in how to do this effectively.

- To strengthen the work of churches already involved in caring for orphans through training and support.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1   Envisioning workshop, offered to all local church leaders after an initial request from a few. The workshop:

- uses Bible studies and participatory training approaches to look at the role and responsibility of the church and the needs of local orphans.

- communicates the message that the first need of orphans is not physical resources such as food or housing, but rather love, care, support and nurture. These needs can be met only by local, loving people.

2   Pastors share the vision with their congregations and draw up a list of volunteers and a list of orphans in the local area.

3   Volunteer workshop, facilitated by ZOE staff or a volunteer area co-ordinator, with the venue and logistics organised by the local church. Issues covered include finding orphans, making visits, keeping records, identifying needs and involving existing community structures.

4   Visit programmes implemented by volunteers.

5   Monthly meeting of local church leaders and volunteers to share experiences, learning and problems.

Additional activities facilitated by ZOE include:

- Specialist training to enable local churches to provide greater assistance, such as setting up an income generation initiative, recognising child abuse or providing psychosocial support.

- 'Training of trainers' workshops for volunteer area coordinators, who go on to facilitate envisioning workshops.

- Exchange visits to enable volunteers to learn from each other. ZOE provides some funds for this.

IMPACT

The impact of ZOE's work is extraordinary. Seven years after it started, the programme had led to local churches caring for 15,000 orphans. Then there was sudden growth. In the following year the number of orphans cared for grew to over 40,000. This was partly due to an increase in the number of needy households because of drought and unemployment, but it was also because the number of churches joining the programme increased. The number of volunteers grew from 550 to 1,013 and the number of participating churches increased from 121 to 191 in the same year. Three years later, there were 600 churches involved in the programme and 2,000 volunteers supporting nearly 100,000 children.

Most areas that have started orphan care programmes have seen an increase in church attendance. As the programme shows the local church to be a caring community, it has gained respect.

LESSONS LEARNED

ZOE'S FOCUS ON TRAINING MEANS THAT TO EXPAND ITS WORK, MORE TRAINERS ARE NEEDED
The work has been so successful that there is high demand from other local church leaders for training. Some volunteers were therefore selected to become 'volunteer area co-ordinators', who could help to facilitate some of ZOE's workshops. This approach was seen as more empowering and sustainable than taking on new staff members.

SOME EXTERNAL RESOURCES MAY BE NEEDED The level of need and the number of orphans is so overwhelming that local churches often struggle to offer the most basic care. There is a need for external resources to supplement the resources that churches and volunteers are already contributing. However, this needs to be managed in a way that will not disempower local initiative and cause dependency. The focus needs to be on increasing self-reliance, such as through income-generation initiatives.

AS THE PROCESS IS SIMPLE, IT IS EASY TO REPLICATE ELSEWHERE It can take as little as 3–6 months from the pastor's initial request for help, to volunteers visiting orphans.

At the start of a church mobilisation process, pastors from a variety of local churches could be envisioned together. The pastors could come from churches in the local area, or from churches in a denomination. It can be a good idea to envision denominational staff first, in order to gain ownership at higher levels of the church structure. Many pastors of independent local churches belong to ministers' fraternal networks which provide an excellent means of relating to large numbers of local churches. The networks tend to be locally structured and focused, allowing for good networking, cooperation, unity and sharing of resources.

Case study

Transforma Project: Peace and Hope, Peru

San Juan de Luringancho is a poor district of the city of Lima in Peru. There are over 430 evangelical churches in the district. Peace and Hope, a Christian organisation, set up the Transforma Project to encourage those churches to respond to the needs in the area.

AIMS To encourage and enable evangelical churches to develop actions of transformation in their communities from an integral mission perspective.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1 Relationship-building between Transforma staff and local pastors.

2 Surveys carried out to identify local church attitudes to integral mission.

3 Survey findings presented to local pastors.

4 Identification of five main issues that local churches were interested in addressing.

5 Training workshops for all pastors and church members. At the end of the training, participants took and applied the ideas with their own churches.

6 Intensive accompaniment and facilitation of selected churches in the poorest areas.

Transforma staff made efforts to build relationships with local church leaders. They invited key pastors to form an advisory group. They also invited pastors to lead their staff devotions and they compiled and circulated a monthly devotional guide written by the pastors. Once relationships had deepened, Transforma carried out a survey with the pastors to identify the understanding of integral mission within local churches and the extent to which they practised it.

The following findings were made:

- Local churches rarely focused on meeting needs of those outside the church

- Local churches only tended to provide one-off support to individuals rather than ongoing support

- When churches had tried to meet needs in the community, few had carried out a needs assessment beforehand.

Photo: Ian Horne

When the findings were presented at a breakfast for local pastors, many of the pastors became interested in receiving Transforma training. Training was provided to the pastors on the five main issues that the local churches were interested in addressing. Some of the local churches then worked together. For example, Transforma worked with four churches to carry out a needs assessment in the local community. Providing educational support to children was seen by the community as an important need. The churches therefore decided to provide a four-week holiday education programme for children in the area.

Transforma staff visited the churches regularly, envisioning and providing tools and resources for the church pastors to envision their congregations about integral mission. Transforma helped the pastors to think through ideas and helped to start off initiatives. There was a retreat for ten pastors to promote unity and help them to develop a joint vision for community transformation in San Juan de Lurigancho.

IMPACT

The process is ongoing, but there are already signs of impact:

- Churches have grown in confidence and want to do more in their communities.

- One hundred and twenty children attended the holiday education programme for children. The leaders of the community where the holiday club was run were so pleased with what the churches are doing that they offered land to one local church so that a church could be built in the centre of the community.

LESSONS LEARNED

THE COMMITMENT OF LEADERS TO INTEGRAL MISSION IS ESSENTIAL It has been harder to mobilise churches with leaders who have no experience of working with poor people.

GENDER ISSUES MUST BE CONSIDERED Some of the training workshops were originally carried out on Saturday mornings. This was not an appropriate time for women to attend. Future training will be planned at times that are more accessible to women as well as men.

Strengths of church mobilisation

The approach recognises the values of the local church. It seeks to build on, rather than ignore, the witness, experience and relationships of the local church.

The approach can be more cost-effective in addressing community needs than a Christian organisation implementing projects itself. Once funds have been invested in mobilising a local church, resources can be released by church members which cannot be easily quantified, but which can greatly benefit a community. These resources include

volunteers, gifts, skills, money, love and prayer. If a Christian organisation were to carry out a similar project itself, the project would be more expensive due to paying staff and office costs. It may also have less impact. For example, there may be less prayer support for the project.

The approach is more sustainable than carrying out individual projects. Every time a Christian organisation carries out a project, there are specific project costs such as staff time, materials and so on. When a new project is carried out there is a new set of costs. However, once a local church is mobilised it can respond to a range of community needs, now and in the future. The initial funds invested in church mobilisation therefore have a multiplier effect and can result in greater impact in the community.

The approach can enable local churches to focus on a specific issue which may have been evident in the community before the process started. Once a church is mobilised, it has better capacity to respond to a crisis when it happens, or carry out new initiatives.

The approach can show tangible results in a short space of time.

Weaknesses of church mobilisation

Initiatives that arise from the church mobilisation processes will normally be quite basic because **technical knowledge may not exist among church members.** This lack of specialist knowledge may mean that key issues related to the initiative may not be identified and addressed. This can lead to ineffective work, and at worst, can have a negative impact on the community. While churches can often offer resources that specialist organisations cannot, there may be situations where ill-informed church initiatives could do more harm than good. Therefore Christian organisations have a role in providing specialist knowledge.

There is a risk that local churches will carry out initiatives that are **not relevant to the community.** The local church may make incorrect assumptions about what the community needs.

Since church mobilisation processes tend to have a welfare approach, there is a danger that **community dependency on the church may be created.** While it is good that community members see the church as caring, the approach can result in disempowerment of community members.

As church initiatives tend to be simple and responsive, **they may fail to address the root causes of community problems.** While the church's ability to respond to immediate needs is a strength, there may be little sustainable change as a result of its work. This is unfortunate, since in many countries, the church has the potential and resources to be a strong advocate for change. Christian organisations, at the same time as mobilising the local church for action in the community, could also train the local church in advocacy (see page 42).

The approach relies heavily on the leadership and encouragement of the church leader. However, pastors are not always easy for Christian organisations to work with since they may have different priorities.

Pastors and churches have wider agendas than responding to needs in their community. The demands of church life can mean that at times, **responding to needs outside the church is given less focus and attention.**

3.2 Church and community mobilisation

Church and community mobilisation involves mobilising a local church to act as a facilitator in mobilising the whole community to address their own needs.

This approach is different from the 'church mobilisation' approach because once the local church is mobilised, it becomes a facilitator rather than a provider. The local church seeks to envision and empower community members to identify and respond to their own needs, rather than meeting needs for them. The local church therefore works **with** rather than **for** the community. The community is in control, but it is not necessarily left on its own after mobilisation. The local church can provide ongoing support to the community, and Christian organisations may need to provide technical support at the request of the community if needs are to be met.

Church mobilisation, as we have seen, can be useful in a crisis to respond to a particular need. However, where there is no specific urgent need in a community, but there is ongoing poverty, the church and community mobilisation approach is preferable. This is because it is more likely to be sustainable due to increased community ownership. The initiatives developed are more likely to be priorities for community members because the approach encourages community members to identify their needs and respond to them themselves. Community members will therefore value the initiatives more than if the local church simply acted as a provider.

While this approach and the church mobilisation approach both involve mobilising the local church, this approach involves an additional mobilisation process, as the table below shows.

	CHURCH MOBILISATION	**CHURCH AND COMMUNITY MOBILISATION**
Mobilise church	Envision pastors and members to carry out integral mission	Envision pastors and members to carry out integral mission
Train church	Train church to identify needs and provide some technical training in responding to a particular identified need	Train church to envision and mobilise the community
Church action in community	Church meets a need in the community	Church envisions and mobilises community to meet its own needs
Community action	None, or may work with local church in a limited way	Community identifies needs and responds to them with their own resources where possible

Case study

Wholistic Development Organisation, Cambodia

In Cambodia, many communities were disempowered in the 1970s because the oppressive Khmer Rouge regime reduced people's ability to care for their families, to make community decisions and to participate in community activities. As a result, responses of local churches to need are often relief-orientated, which creates dependency.

Wholistic Development Organisation (WDO), a Christian organisation, wanted to challenge dependency and facilitate local churches to empower communities to take action. They trained Christian facilitators, who then envisioned local churches. The local churches identified six members to form a Christian core group, which worked with the community to identify problems and possible solutions. The facilitators and Christian core group provided support to communities as they addressed their own problems.

AIMS

To establish Christian core groups that have the capacity to implement integral mission through facilitating community initiatives that contribute to food security, income generation and health.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1 Selection and training of facilitators. Committed Christians who are actively involved in their own local church and who have a passion for serving the poor are employed by WDO as Community development facilitators. They receive training in community development, leadership, management, organising people, dealing with trauma, facilitating group meetings creatively, and developing character and values through weekly Bible studies.

2 Selection of target communities. Communities are identified by WDO on the basis of need and the maturity of the local church and its leadership.

3 Formation of community-based Christian core groups. The community development facilitators use Bible studies and discussion with the local church to help members to identify their vision for the future of their community and then how to plan fulfilment of the vision. The local church elects a small group of Christians to form a Christian core group, which acts as the main catalyst and organiser of the process.

4 Community needs analysis and action planning. The Christian core group brings the whole community together to discuss and identify the root causes of community problems and identify possible solutions. They also identify what local resources are available and what contributions members of the community can make in terms of time, labour, materials and money.

5 Taking action. The community takes action to address its problems with facilitation from the community development facilitators and Christian core group. Once the community shows a willingness to contribute its own resources, seed funding to support initiatives is given by WDO in the form of loans. Repayments are kept within the community to act as a revolving fund.

6 Developing the capacity of the Christian core group. The community development facilitators invest time in developing Christian core group members throughout the process so that eventually they can manage initiatives in the community with minimal support.

IMPACT

Trapeang Keh was a poor community with dry land, migration out of the area, ill health and debt. There was little trust or cooperation between members of the community. The church consisted of four members and they were persecuted and marginalised by the rest of the community. After the mobilisation process, the community members began to work together to address their problems, such as through digging improved wells and setting up irrigation systems.

Attitudes and relationships between community members changed. There is less social disruption because men no longer need to migrate. The community discussions encouraged men to listen to women. Men's respect for women has therefore increased. There is less domestic violence and more sharing of 'women's' tasks with men, such as gardening, water collection and cooking. There is less quarrelling and fighting in the village and less alcoholism. Decision-making is fairer and more inclusive.

Photo: Jabez Production

The community comes together to discuss local issues.

Attitudes to the church have also changed. The Christians have grown in confidence to care for their neighbours and share their faith. There is less persecution and more respect for Christians. The church has grown, and all but two households now attend the local church.

LESSONS LEARNED

THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED POVERTY THEMSELVES TEND TO MAKE THE BEST FACILITATORS
The facilitators do not need to have any development qualifications or experience. In fact, those with formal qualifications tend to be less willing to stay in communities or travel to remote areas, and have not stayed long with WDO. Facilitators were willing to spend time in the community, including staying overnight, which many development workers are unwilling to do. This has led to the formation of deep relationships that has enhanced the success of the mobilisation process.

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING HELPS TO OVERCOME COMMUNITY DEPENDENCY At the beginning of the process, communities were often resistant to participatory approaches and the emphasis on the importance of community involvement and responsibility. WDO overcame this challenge by investing time in each community, building relationships and sharing the vision of the work.

EXISTING POWER STRUCTURES CAN FEEL THREATENED BY THE PROCESS Local power structures, such as village development committees, sometimes felt threatened because the process empowers poor people and gives them a voice. The process often achieves far more in a community in a few months than village development committees achieve in years.

THE PROCESS WORKS BETTER WITH WELL ESTABLISHED LOCAL CHURCHES If churches were too young and immature, they were unable to take on the responsibility of being a catalyst for the mobilisation process. They saw the process as an opportunity to grow the church by offering aid as an incentive for people to convert, rather than as an opportunity for the local church to show that it cares about the community.

Case study

Participatory evaluation process (PEP), Uganda, Tanzania and Sudan

The Participatory evaluation process (PEP) has been carried out in a number of places in East Africa. It has been used for a number of reasons. For example:

■ In Soroti, Uganda, staff of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG) had become frustrated that existing programmes had struggled to gain local ownership and that local energy and resources had remained underused.

■ The Diocese of Ruaha in Tanzania had become dissatisfied with traditional development approaches.

■ In North Sudan, the Fellowship for Africa Relief wanted to build capacity at local church and community levels.

■ In South Sudan, ACROSS wanted to build up the local church rather than implement projects.

PEP involves envisioning and mobilising local churches to enable communities to respond to their needs. After envisioning local church leaders and denominational staff, church leaders are equipped to share the vision about integral mission with their congregations. Bible studies play a key role in the envisioning process, sometimes taking place over three to four days. Another key aspect is the need for the local churches to see that they have the capacity to catalyse change in their communities. This is partly about recognising the local resources that the church and community possess, and partly about having confidence in one's own abilities.

Once a local church is envisioned, contact is made with community leaders and the possibility of working together to mobilise the community is discussed. The community is then envisioned and taken through a number of stages which involve identifying local issues that need to be addressed and the resources the community can use to address them. Various church and community members are selected to help to facilitate the process, which enhances local ownership.

AIMS

To engage the local church with the theology and practice of integral mission at all levels so that it becomes envisioned and mobilised to act as an agent of community mobilisation, enabling communities to identify and address their needs.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1 Envisioning workshop for denominational staff and pastors about integral mission. The participants select five or six pilot churches and appoint 15–20 people who will be trained as facilitators.

2 Training of facilitators. The facilitators are trained to envision local church members about integral mission.

Photo: Isabel Carter

An envisioning workshop for pastors in Ruaha, Tanzania.

3 Local church envisioning.

4 Local church resource mobilisation. Facilitators are trained in skills to help churches mobilise and make use of their own resources. They then implement the training in the local churches.

5 Relationship building between church and community. After training, facilitators arrange meetings between the pilot churches, community leaders and community members. At the meetings, three people from the local church and three people from the community are

selected to lead and shape the mobilisation process. Community members decide what these people will be called. In Soroti these were known as 'Church and Community Resource Persons'. In South Sudan they were called 'Awakeners'.

6 Community information gathering. Facilitators and Awakeners are trained in gathering information and then work with the community and a community-appointed Information Gathering Team to find out detailed information about the community.

7 Community needs analysis. After training, facilitators work with the community to analyse the information collected and decide which issues to address.

8 Community goal setting and action planning. After training, facilitators help the community to develop realistic goals and action plans.

9 Community implementation and monitoring. After training, facilitators equip community leaders and Awakeners to set up community development committees, implement action plans and monitor progress.

10 Renewal of denominational level ownership of the process. A workshop is run for the participants of the envisioning workshop that took place at the beginning of the process. Learning and outcomes from the process so far are shared with them to encourage ownership and support for the next stages of the process. They are encouraged to plan for replication of the process in other parts of the local area.

11 Ongoing training and support to the community development committees. Staff of the Christian organisation meet with the community development committees to identify their ongoing training needs. These might include training in financial management, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, project cycle management, community action planning and disaster management.

12 Replication. The whole process is repeated with more local churches and communities. The workshops are run by the facilitators from the first process, rather than an external consultant or member of staff from the Christian organisation.

The process has resulted in transformation in various aspects of community life. Transformation is most easily observed in the visual evidence, such as new buildings or wells, and more people attending church. But there is evidence that deeper, personal transformation has occurred in people's lives as a result of the process, as the box below shows.

'We were asleep before, but now we have a vision.' *Community member in North Sudan*

'PEP has helped us to know who we are.' *Church member in South Sudan*

'If we would be left alone now and everyone were to desert us, we would be able to continue right to the end.' *Pastor in South Sudan*

'Our eyes have been opened and everyone is more able to express themselves.' *Community members, North Sudan*

'We should come together to face problems; my problem today will be someone else's tomorrow.' *Pastor in North Sudan*

'Before our pastor heard of PEP we knew the word 'cooperation', but did not put it into action. Now we do!' *Community member, South Sudan*

'The biggest change that the process has brought to me is the realisation that **I can do it,** but also that I must plan – things just don't happen themselves.' *Pastor in Ruaha*

IMPACT

The process has had a significant impact at church level. For example:

■ The local churches in Soroti that have completed the process, report a change in attitudes in church members. People see that their role is to give and not to get. The financial and in-kind offerings have increased dramatically. The churches have seen significant growth, both spiritually and numerically. The General Superintendent of PAG Uganda would like all districts to adopt the church and community mobilisation process in their local churches.

■ In Ruaha, local people are becoming more involved in the day-to-day activities of the local church and taking part enthusiastically in its mission, which before they would have seen as the pastor's responsibility.

■ In South Sudan, the process has led to increased unity. Local churches communicate better with each other and men and women work together more effectively.

At community level, many changes have taken place:

■ One mobilised community in Soroti decided to take action against a community leader who had stolen the community's funds. The whole community gathered together and went to his house to successfully demand the money back. This has greatly encouraged the community.

■ In one community in Ruaha, members of the church and the community provided the materials and labour needed to rebuild the house of a community member which had burned down. Before the process, local people would have helped her to put out the fire, but would then have expected her to reconstruct her house herself. In another community, the church has started income-generating groups involving rearing poultry and beekeeping. Another community identified the need to construct a teacher's house. They collected so many materials that they realised there was enough for the construction of three houses and not just one.

■ In North Sudan, the process has brought Christian and Muslim communities together, which previously had no contact at all. Together they have addressed their need for drinking water by raising US $5,000 and installing pipes to supply 1,400 homes. They also started other initiatives such as income-generation work, adult education classes, a kindergarten and buying a generator to bring electricity to a community. Some people would like to repeat the process with their new communities when they return home to South Sudan.

■ In South Sudan, community initiatives include building a church and primary school, digging latrines and building a permanent bridge.

LESSONS LEARNED

THE PROCESS CAN BE EXPENSIVE AND TAKE A LONG TIME The process is high-input because it requires many workshops with mentoring support from the trainer in between. The process can be affected by people moving away and by external influences. It may be too slow to be effective in areas of instability and in urban areas where people move around more often.

THE PROCESS HAS HIGH EXPECTATIONS OF CHURCH AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS Facilitators and Awakeners have to give a lot of time to the process through attending workshops and mobilising the church and community. This may require staying away from home. An average facilitator may work half-time on the process for 18 months. There is a danger that Awakeners might move away or step down, which puts an additional burden on the remaining Awakeners. Community members are expected to attend community meetings and help to gather and analyse community information. These meetings may not be at an appropriate time, particularly for women.

PEOPLE ARE NOT PAID FOR THEIR TIME OR EXPENSES, SUCH AS TRAVEL COSTS The fact that the process has been carried out successfully in different places shows that there is considerable commitment to the process by all involved. There may be a need for the Christian organisation to fund the costs of facilitators at the early stages of the process so they do not run out of money. However, once the process has started to mobilise people, the church or community may begin to value the input of the facilitators or Awakeners and raise money to pay for food, accommodation and transport costs. For example, one community in South Sudan built a house in the church compound for people such as the facilitators to stay in when they visited. Another way to support the facilitators and Awakeners is to excuse them from contributing materials or money to community initiatives.

Community members with teachers' houses which are being built without resources from outside the community.

Photo: Nick Burn

SUFFICIENT TIME SHOULD BE INVESTED IN WORKING WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS as their support is key to ensuring that a large proportion of the community attend meetings and become mobilised.

IT CAN BE CHALLENGING TO CARRY OUT THE PROCESS IN REMOTE RURAL AREAS Staff of the Christian organisation have to be able to travel to the community regularly, a training venue is needed, facilitators need to be able to travel to the pilot communities, and there need to be enough educated people in a community to act as Awakeners.

IT CAN BE VERY DIFFICULT TO USE THE PROCESS IN A COMMUNITY WHERE THERE ARE ALREADY NGO PROGRAMMES because it is difficult to break through the dependency syndrome. It is possible that NGOs may come into the community during the process and offer quick solutions.

SPIRITUAL ATTACK IS REPORTED AS A CHALLENGE TO THE PROCESS This is not surprising since the process builds and equips the local church. Prayer support for the process is therefore vital.

Strengths of church and community mobilisation

The approach changes attitudes at various levels. The attitude of the local church to the community becomes more positive as church members discover their calling to serve the poor. The attitude of community members to the church improves as they see the church looking outward and seeking to make a difference in the community. Attitudes among church and community members improve as people begin to listen to each other and work together.

The approach encourages communities to rely more on their own resources and depend less on Christian organisations and other institutions.

Since the approach encourages greater use of local resources and changes attitudes, **it is more sustainable than other development approaches.** Since it is the local church that

mobilises the community, there is less contact between the community and external facilitators. The majority of the approach is therefore facilitated and monitored within the community.

The approach encourages replication. Once a local church has mobilised one community, it can share its learning with other local churches in the surrounding area so that they can mobilise their communities. If there is support from denominational level staff at an early stage, the approach is more likely to be replicated beyond the pilot churches and communities because there is ownership at a higher level. There is evidence that once other communities see the positive changes in a community, they are inspired and envisioned to make changes in their own community.

The approach can result in improved leadership at community level. As community mobilisation encourages people to be more involved in decision-making about community issues, community leadership becomes more accountable and transparent. The process may result in corrupt leaders being challenged or removed. In addition, the process may produce new community leaders as it usually involves training local facilitators who gain skills, confidence and experience to become able leaders.

Since it is the local church that mobilises the community, **the community begins to see the church in a more positive light.** As a result the local church may grow in terms of numbers. Since the approach should bring unity within the community, people are less fearful of being seen going to church and the church becomes a natural meeting place. The approach also encourages discipleship as church members are encouraged to study the Bible and are given responsibility for the work. The use of Bible studies to mobilise the local church encourages the approach to be a way of life rather than a one-off process.

Traditional development work involves organisations offering resources to the community, and perhaps asking the community to make a small contribution. Church and community mobilisation processes are different. **Communities and local churches are encouraged to consider their own resources first** and then approach Christian organisations for what is lacking. This is more sustainable and empowering than other approaches.

Weaknesses of church and community mobilisation

Church and community mobilisation can take time. It takes time to change attitudes and overcome church members' unwillingness to interact with the community.

The work can lose momentum. It is sometimes difficult to gain full ownership by the local church. Once processes start to focus on community mobilisation, some church members may lose interest and enthusiasm.

This approach can involve **a lot of workshops and a large investment of people's time** and Christian organisations' funds.

Church and community mobilisation processes take a long time – anything up to three years. There is a long time before there are tangible results in the community. The quality of the work can therefore suffer as people lose interest or move away. It is more vulnerable to external factors, which may result in changing needs at community level and abandoned initiatives.

One of the strengths of the approach is that it focuses on needs identified by the community and therefore brings sustainable change. However, by depending only on the perspectives of the community in identifying needs, **some key issues may be missed.** For example, the community may not identify hygiene improvements as a need, though it may identify safe water. If the community addresses the issue of safe water by digging a well but does not also focus on improving hygiene, there may not be such noticeable improvements in health. HIV and AIDS is another development issue that may be missed during needs identification due to lack of knowledge or stigma, but which, after being addressed, can have a great impact on community life. Another important issue is disaster risk reduction. Disaster risk reduction involves taking action to avoid future disasters or make them less destructive. This may not be identified by the community because community members are too focused on dealing with current problems. However, lack of attention to it may result in widespread suffering in the future if a hazard hits an unprepared community. A good facilitator can make sure that such issues are raised at the needs identification stage.

The approach usually relies on skilled facilitation. Facilitators should have good theological understanding, excellent participatory facilitation skills and a humble and servant-hearted attitude with commitment to empowering others. Facilitators provided by the Christian organisation usually mobilise local churches. Local church facilitators usually then mobilise the community. These local facilitators may have the necessary skills already, or may require training by the Christian organisation.

The approach may result in strained relationships within a denomination. As local churches are empowered, they may start to ask for more participatory and accountable decision-making within the denomination's hierarchy.

Christian organisations may find it **difficult to obtain funding for this approach,** since its outcomes in terms of community initiatives are undefined until towards the end of the process.

The approach may unrealistically raise expectations. While communities are encouraged to use local resources to carry out community initiatives, external support may be needed for some priorities. Christian organisations do not always have the funds or expertise to support such initiatives.

3.3 Church empowerment for advocacy

Advocacy is about speaking out against injustice. It is about mobilising communities to analyse their context, empowering them to become involved in political processes and helping them to defend their human rights. The local church is usually in a good position to carry out advocacy work:

- Church leaders carry influence, even in secular environments. In many countries they are recognised as having a legitimate role to speak out on moral issues. Church leaders often have a more powerful voice than leaders of Christian organisations.

- Local churches often consist of large numbers of people. Some types of advocacy work benefit from strength in numbers.

- Local churches exist at grassroots level. This enables them to understand the issues really well and to represent communities effectively. It also enables them to work with communities to carry out advocacy work.

Local churches that are part of a denomination may be in an even more strategic position to bring about change, since denominations benefit from strength in numbers and a variety of external linkages at each level of the hierarchy.

Case study

Pastors carrying out advocacy work in Malawi

Eagles, a Christian organisation in Malawi, envisioned a number of pastors to carry out integral mission. The pastors formed a group called 'Love in Christ' and together they identified the most needy people in their communities and took action to care for them. Over time, through working together in the community and being trained by Eagles, the pastors decided that they should be involved in advocacy work. They realised that some issues needed more than a practical response.

A farmer and church leader standing on land they helped to prevent being sold.

For example, the group heard that local leaders had signed an agreement with a sugar company which would force local farmers to grow only sugar on their farms. The local leaders had not consulted the farmers, and the farmers were not happy about the agreement. The group of pastors therefore organised the community to form a committee, which would discuss the farmers' concerns with the community leaders. The negotiations were successful and the sugar company was unable to carry out its plans.

A local church may carry out advocacy work:

■ **to support its practical work.** It can be helpful to encourage local churches to carry out advocacy work linked to their practical initiatives as most problems at community level have structural and political roots. Practical initiatives may only tackle the symptoms of the issue. Advocacy can be used to tackle the causes and leads to more sustainable development.

■ **independently of the practical work it does.** For example, it could be part of an advocacy network and take part in protests and letter-writing campaigns for justice on one issue, while carrying out a practical initiative in the community on another issue.

Case study

Advocating for change in Zimbabwe

When thousands of people were displaced from their homes in Zimbabwe as a result of a government 'clean up operation', the local churches in the city of Bulawayo were the first to respond. They opened their buildings to provide shelter for the affected families and with help from a Christian organisation, they provided some emergency items such as food and blankets.

The Christian organisation took the opportunity to mobilise the local churches to speak out on behalf of the people who had been displaced. The church leaders came together and refused to allow the authorities to move families to holding camps until the facilities in the camps were acceptable. They also ensured that the impact of the 'clean up operation' was clearly documented so that the United Nations and media around the world could be informed.

The result was that this group of advocates from the local churches grew and became more vocal in defence of the poor. A year after the forced evictions, the local congregations went on a march to protest against the lack of government efforts to re-house those who had been displaced and to ensure that they were not forgotten.

The number of churches who are engaging in advocacy work has now grown into a national body for advocacy. The Christian organisation provides training to groups of local churches around the country. Once trained, the local churches work individually, together at community level and at national level to advocate on various issues of concern.

Methods of advocacy that local churches could be encouraged to use include:

NETWORKING – encouraging local churches to engage more with contacts and networks or to build new alliances to create a movement for change. These may be local church networks, national or international church networks or networks with secular agencies.

LOBBYING – encouraging people to speak directly to people who have influence to improve the situation. Members of the church may carry out this kind of advocacy work on behalf of the community.

RAISING AWARENESS – encouraging local churches to inform their congregations and the wider community about the situation so that they are aware of the issues. This can be done in church services, community meetings, public events or through giving out leaflets and providing training.

MOBILISING – encouraging local churches to persuade as many people as possible to contact decision-makers and call for change. This can be done through organising marches to show strength of feeling or encouraging people to write letters to those in power.

PRAYER – encouraging local churches to ask God to intervene, since injustice can be a result of spiritual forces and powers.

For more details about carrying out advocacy work, refer to *Advocacy toolkit* (ROOTS 1 and 2).

Some methods of advocacy may not be appropriate for churches to carry out in certain situations:

■ In countries governed by oppressive or corrupt regimes, churches may decide that open methods of advocacy are not appropriate. However, subtle, non-confrontational advocacy work could be an option. For example, bishops and well known local church leaders could build personal relationships with people in government in order to persuade them to change policies. In some places the church may have a degree of protection to enable it to speak out, which other groups may not have. However, the church needs to be careful that it does not become too associated with those in power, particularly if they are unjust. Another example of non-confrontational advocacy work is educating local people about their rights as citizens to empower them to speak out. It could be helpful for local churches to make links with international Christian organisations who can lobby at international level against oppressive regimes on their behalf.

■ In countries where the church is a minority or persecuted, churches need to be very careful about the extent to which they engage in advocacy. There is a danger that they may further antagonise the state and put their status at greater risk. However, building alliances with other minority groups could be beneficial and provide strength in numbers.

■ While local churches can be a force for change due to their ability to represent the grassroots and strength in numbers, they may lack specialist knowledge to make advocacy effective. If churches do not show that they fully understand complex issues, they can lack credibility with decision-makers. Churches are generally better at speaking out on issues of general principle than they are at proposing solutions for policy issues. Networking and gaining support from organisations specialising in advocacy can improve local churches' ability to advocate effectively.

Case study

Mobilising the local church for advocacy in Honduras

As part of its Deborah programme, which aims to reduce domestic violence in the central zone of Honduras, the Christian organisation Proyecto Aldea Global mobilised local churches to carry out advocacy. The main targets of the advocacy work were those committing domestic violence.

March to protest against domestic violence.

A pastors' manual was produced, which contains tools to help pastors to raise awareness of domestic violence within their congregations. Among other things, the manual contains sermon outlines, youth talks, and advice about counselling victims of domestic violence. Pastors were invited to attend seminars where the manual was used and given out. Posters were also distributed, which pastors could put up in their church buildings, and they were encouraged to wear purple ribbons to show that they support the campaign.

A march and rally to promote 'Peace in the family' was organised, which church members and pastors were encouraged to attend. Four hundred people marched through the town of Siguatepeque to raise awareness of domestic violence, to show local people that it is unacceptable and to enable people experiencing domestic violence to know where to go for help. The march was covered on Christian radio and television. As a result the number of women coming forward to report domestic violence and seek support has risen dramatically.

REFLECTION

- **Which of these approaches would be most appropriate in our situation?**
- **What structures would need to be put in place before we could carry out this kind of work?**
- **What research would need to be done?**

Summary

In this section we have looked at three ways of working with local churches:

- Church mobilisation
- Church and community mobilisation
- Church empowerment for advocacy.

Section 4

Key issues to consider

We have looked at the local church and its central role in integral mission. We have also looked at the ways in which Christian organisations can work with local churches to release their potential.

This section looks at key issues for Christian organisations to consider if they want to work more closely with local churches.

To start off with, it may be helpful for a Christian organisation to ask whether it needs to fundamentally change its vision, focus and structure to enable more effective partnership with local churches. Section 4.1 explores this issue and provides some helpful guidelines.

Secondly, a Christian organisation may find it helpful to consider what partnership really means before it engages more closely with local churches. Section 4.2 provides some guidance on this.

Thirdly, at an early stage in church mobilisation, a Christian organisation will need to think about how it will influence church leaders, as church leaders are central to the process. Good leaders can make a huge difference to the outcome. Section 4.3 provides models and tools for helping Christian organisations contribute to the development of good leaders.

Fourthly, a Christian organisation that wants to partner with local churches needs to think through how it will envision those churches for the task of integral mission. Section 4.4 provides guidance, case studies and tools on this.

A fifth key area for a Christian organisation to consider is how to facilitate church mobilisation and community mobilisation. Section 4.5 provides important insights and tools for this.

A sixth key area, which is crucial for sustainability and empowerment, is how a Christian organisation can encourage local churches and communities to use local resources to support their activities. Section 4.6 gives guidance on this.

Finally, a Christian organisation, for purposes of accountability and quality of initiatives, needs to think about how it will monitor and evaluate its work and its partnerships with local churches. Section 4.7 provides some ideas about this.

There is not enough space in this book for detailed discussion about these issues. Each issue deserves a whole book itself. However, we feel it may be helpful to provide a few initial thoughts and tools. Section 5 contains examples of other resources, should organisations wish to consider the issues in more detail.

4.1 Changing the focus of Christian organisations

Some Christian organisations may have to change substantially before they can start to work with local churches. This is particularly the case for Christian organisations that want to follow the empowerment model (page 19). They may need to change their values, mission and structure, among other things. There are two main options for initiating change:

■ **One part of the organisation pilots working with a local church.**

■ **Change the whole organisation at once, usually from top to bottom, through an organisational change process.**

4.1.1 PILOTING WORKING WITH A LOCAL CHURCH

Sometimes one or two people who are enthusiastic can influence the way a whole organisation functions, by modelling new attitudes and piloting new practices. Members of staff with commitment to equipping the local church for integral mission could therefore start to engage with a limited number of local churches and find new ways of working together that use the strengths of both churches and organisations. The rest of the organisation continues as usual. If successful, these staff should share the achievements with the rest of the organisation. This may be all that is necessary to motivate the organisation as a whole to change its focus and way of working. If not, other staff may at least be open to going through an envisioning process. The model developed could then be used by the whole organisation. This evolutionary structural change is usually smoother than an organisational change process.

4.1.2 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE PROCESSES

Commitment to working with local churches may require a fundamental reorientation of the organisation's mission and vision, a new structure, and a strategic plan that recognises the role of the local church. If only a few members of staff have the vision for working with the local church, an organisational change process can be a good way to envision other staff. Without such envisioning and change within the organisation, any efforts to work with local churches by a few committed staff are likely to be under-resourced, ineffective, unsustainable and cause division within the organisation.

An organisational change process can be particularly helpful for a denomination which needs to reassess the way it does its work in the community (see case study on page 51). Very often, such work is carried out by development departments and does not involve local churches. Instead the denomination can empower local churches to carry out integral mission. For an NGO, the organisational change process could enable it to work more closely with local churches. Whatever the result, the process of organisational change can be the same for both denominations and NGOs.

Organisational change processes vary according to the facilitator, the type of organisation and the organisation's current situation (often such a process will happen when the

organisation is in crisis). However, after looking at a number of organisational change processes, we have identified some common elements:

■ Review of the organisation.

■ Reviewing and re-writing vision and mission.

■ Reviewing the organisation's strategy and re-writing the strategic plan. A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis is one tool that can be used to do this review.

■ Training provided for staff members at different levels of the organisation.

■ Specific skills training for staff who will implement work with local churches. This training may include envisioning and facilitation skills, and how to envision and work with church pastors.

Organisational change processes in large organisations usually require at least two facilitators. Since the process takes a long time, it is unrealistic to think that just one facilitator will be able to take the organisation through the whole process. At certain points of the process different skills will be needed, from skills to address high-level structural and capacity issues to skills in community mobilisation at the grassroots. It therefore makes sense to have a facilitation team, the members of which can be brought in to facilitate the process at relevant points.

Facilitators should be independent and therefore neutral. This neutrality is important, since organisational change can be a sensitive and painful process for staff and uncover or cause conflict. A facilitator from outside the organisation should be unbiased. Staff members are more likely to be open about their feelings and opinions with someone who is not involved in the workings of the organisation. Independent facilitators can also improve the quality of the review since they have a fresh view of the organisation and permission to challenge. They can ask appropriate questions related to the organisation as a whole. Someone who is already involved in the organisation may only be concerned with the issues related to their own work and would therefore not be an appropriate facilitator for such a process. On the other hand, outside facilitators may lack under-standing of the organisation and have different values. Facilitators should therefore be selected carefully.

> The commitment of senior leaders to the change process is critical. Without this, no amount of facilitation will help.

Strengths of organisational change processes

Change processes should create an organisation that is committed to, and structured around, the outworking of its mission. This makes it **more focused and effective in bringing about real change.**

Such processes can be particularly appropriate for a church denomination since the **structures are already present to enable the renewed vision** and training to cascade easily

downwards to local churches. Once the change process is complete, the impact at grassroots level can be felt after a relatively short time.

Although expensive, **change processes are cost-effective,** since they address issues at the core of the organisation and ensures that all staff members are working towards the same goal. Once issues at the core have been tackled, the positive impact of a change process can trickle down to the grassroots.

Weaknesses of organisational change processes

Organisational change processes are vulnerable to failure:

- **Processes can take years rather than months to complete.** During this time, commitment to the process of the organisation, the leadership and the staff members can fluctuate. Key staff could leave the organisation and the external environment may change. The process can be frustrating for those involved because it is only at the end of the process that there are tangible results.

- **Processes are reliant on staff members having time to participate.** It can be difficult for senior staff in particular to give the process their full attention or make it their top priority.

- **Processes rely on the presence of skilled staff members** who can develop, implement and manage the change plan. Often an organisational change process is needed because there is a lack of skilled staff to begin with.

- **Processes may challenge power relationships** and can therefore easily lose the support of senior staff members.

- All staff within the organisation need to be committed to the process. If owned only by a small team within the organisation, t**he process can lack effectiveness and impact.** It is not enough for the leadership to simply invest resources and personnel in the process. They need to be personally involved.

- **Processes model top-down change.** While this is a strength of such processes because it makes them effective and efficient, this can also be seen as a weakness because such an approach does not model good development practice. In a denomination there is a danger that the denomination sets the agenda and the local churches follow. It is important that the local church owns the work and takes the lead.

In the case of a denominational change process, there is a **danger that the impact stops at the local church.** The hope is that once the church is changed, the community will benefit. However, local churches often look inwards rather than outwards. The link between the church and the community should be investigated and addressed as part of the change process.

Since organisational change processes involve training staff with the intention that they then pass the training on, the **quality of the training could deteriorate** by the time it reaches local church members, who may be receiving training second- or third-hand.

Case study

Project Gilgal (Kale Heywet Church, Ethiopia)

Kale Heywet Church (KHC) is a denomination in Ethiopia. It consists of 6,000 churches and over 5 million members. KHC was becoming a divided organisation where staff members at head-quarters were losing contact with local churches. KHC was regarded as bureaucratic, with decision-making having to be passed up the hierarchy. This tended to restrict initiative at local level.

It was decided that an organisational change process was needed to unify the denomination and ensure that local churches were better represented within KHC structures and better supported by those structures. It was hoped that the process would result in local churches engaging more in meeting the needs of poor people in their communities.

After a review of KHC's ministries at national and zonal levels, a consultant was brought in to work with key KHC representatives to develop a Strategic Change Plan. The main aspect of this Plan was envisioning and training all members of the denomination about issues such as teamwork, decision-making and project planning. To ensure that everyone received training, a cascade model was used. Four trainers trained 300 leaders at zonal level, who in turn trained two trainers in each church. The two trainers in each church then trained their congregation. Another aspect of the Plan was training staff members in managing organisational change.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1 Review of ministries at national and zonal levels.

2 Strategic Core (consisting of representatives of the board, some staff from headquarters and some zonal level leaders) trained by a consultant in change management and strategic planning over the course of five workshops.

3 Development of an Organisational Change Plan.

4 Implementation of the Plan, including training all members of KHC. The consultant regularly visited over a three-year period to train and mentor the trainers. Staff members of KHC were trained to manage organisational change.

5 Mobilisation of local churches to carry out integral mission in the community.

IMPACT

The process lasted six years and is ongoing. It has used large amounts of funds for consultancy input, the employment of four full-time staff and the production of training materials. However, there are some promising signs of impact:

Impact on KHC leadership

■ The attitudes and style of many leaders at KHC headquarters have improved. People now feel able to put forward their ideas and opinions during debates and discussions without feeling embarrassed or attacked.

■ At zonal level, leaders use a more facilitative style of leadership. Financial accountability has improved.

■ At district level, more care is taken over the selection of leaders and there is greater willingness to work as a team.

■ At local church level, leaders are more committed to integral mission, better at strategic planning, more concerned about the welfare and views of church members, including women and youth, and more accountable to their congregations.

*Impact on
organisational
structure*

There were significant changes in KHC's organisational structure. For example, a Capacity Building and Community Empowerment Programme was formed. Other programmes were set up to address issues such as HIV prevention and treatment, and promoting literacy and education.

*Impact on
local churches*

Churches are starting initiatives without waiting for permission from higher up the hierarchy.

*Impact at
community level*

Many initiatives were started and have had a positive impact on local communities. For example, there was a 40 percent decrease in typhoid, malaria and child mortality rates in four communities where a dispensary was built.

*Impact on
church growth*

In one community consisting of a marginalised tribe, most of the 5,000 members became Christians as a result of reconciliation work inspired by the process.

**LESSONS
LEARNED**

SENIOR LEADERSHIP'S OWNERSHIP OF THE PROCESS IS CRUCIAL Although senior leadership initiated the process, as the process went on, it became more difficult for some of them to engage with it. At all stages, there needs to be clear leadership and vision for the process.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO DEVELOP THE CAPACITY OF THE TRAINING TEAM in order to meet realistic expectations. Failure to do so can lead to exhaustion of key staff and bottlenecks in the process.

THE PROCESS NEEDS TO BE FLEXIBLE in order to cope with local churches that begin to implement their training before all support structures are in place. Otherwise, local church initiatives may be poorly designed or badly managed.

CONSIDER HOW TO KEEP TRAINING AT A HIGH STANDARD This includes the motivation and support of trainers, and preventing over-reliance on written materials.

GENDER ISSUES NEED TO BE EXPLICITLY ADDRESSED It is not enough to assume women will participate in the training. They may not attend due to lack of funds, low literacy rates or because, throughout the denomination, women are not usually encouraged to participate in leadership or church activities.

REFLECTION

- **What new role could our organisation take on?**
- **Would our organisation need to change substantially before we can take on this new role?**
- **If so, which option would we choose – the piloting option or the organisational change process option? Or can we think of a better option?**
- **Why have we chosen this option?**

4.2 Working in partnership

Christian organisations may want to consider setting up partnerships with local churches. This makes relationships more formal and can form the basis for working together more effectively.

Case study

ACT (The Association for Christian Thoughtfulness), India

ACT exists to motivate local churches to carry out integral mission. This case study is about just one local church that ACT works with.

The pastor approached ACT because it wanted to work in partnership. ACT asked the pastor to put aside some time during the Sunday service for ACT to share about its work. ACT used this time to envision the church members about the need to take responsibility for their community. People who caught the vision then became involved in carrying out a survey in the community to find out what the needs were.

The local church and ACT had a verbal memorandum of understanding which involved discussion of financial and technical issues.

ACT facilitated workshops for people from the local church who were to be 'animators'. These workshops involved training on a number of development issues, and provided an opportunity for the animators to share their experiences and learn from one another. ACT also facilitates four meetings each year where pastors from various local churches can discuss successes and failures, and then pray about them.

The local church has been involved in educating the community about HIV and AIDS. As a result, people's attitudes and behaviour have changed. A pre-school was set up, with 90 percent of the children going on to formal schooling. Relationships have been built between the local church and the community. Many Hindi-speaking people started attending the Tamil-speaking church, and have since established a Hindi-speaking church.

Some thoughts about partnership

Partnership is a relationship between two people or groups, which exists for a common purpose. The groups enter a partnership because they can achieve more together and can fulfil a purpose more efficiently.

True partnership does not involve exploitation. Both partners have something to offer to the relationship and something to gain from it. Sometimes the partnership involves sharing of resources, such as expertise, knowledge, equipment, connections, prayer or volunteers. Unfortunately, where exchange of money is involved, the donor is sometimes perceived to have more power than the recipient. True partnership requires that both partners take part in decision-making. If only one partner has a decision-making role, the other partner becomes more like a contractor who is brought in to carry out a particular task, but has no responsibility for the direction of the work as a whole. That is not partnership.

Partners do not do the same tasks together all of the time. The best partnerships happen because the partners have different strengths in terms of what they can do. They have roles that are complementary to each other. They may only work to their strengths and therefore may not carry out many tasks together at all.

Partnerships require transparency. The intentions and actions of each partner should be made clear to the other. The partners are therefore accountable to each other. Yet partnerships also require trust, so that each partner can trust the other to use their strengths responsibly, for the benefit of the purpose that the partnership is trying to achieve. As partners need to be committed to working with each other, perhaps over a long period of time, the partnership is usually based on shared values. The relationship is as important as the purpose that the partners want to achieve. Otherwise the partnership could fail before the purpose is fulfilled.

Alan Fowler has studied NGOs for many years and has identified some important issues that should be considered when developing successful partnerships[3]. While his advice is aimed at partnerships between NGOs in the North and South, it also applies to partnerships between Southern NGOs and local churches:

■ Be clear about why the relationship exists. Each partner should be clear about why they want the partnership and be realistic about what they can and cannot contribute to it.

■ Apply the principle of interdependence – If each partner is not dependent on the other in some way, then they are not really in partnership.

■ Adopt a relationship focus rather than a project focus – a project is a vehicle to explore relationships, but it is not a basis for a partnership.

■ Create a process for shared control – work against the imbalance of power that often happens in relationships, particularly those involving transfer of funds. Establish joint processes and structures that produce shared control.

■ Invest in your own reform – for the partnership to work well, it may be necessary for one partner to invest in the development of the other at the beginning of the relationship. Otherwise there may be a power imbalance in the relationship because one partner is too dependent on the other.

REFLECTION

■ **What partnerships do we have already, such as with other Christian organisations, government departments, etc?**

■ **What have we learnt from these that could be helpful when seeking to build partnerships with local churches?**

■ **If we already partner with local churches, do we consider this to be true partnership? What currently works well in these partnerships? What does not work well?**

3 Source: A Fowler (2002) 'Beyond partnerships: getting real about NGO relationships in the aid system' in Fowler A and Edwards M (Eds) *The Earthscan Reader on NGO Management*, London 2002

Setting up partnerships

Different Christian organisations have different types and depths of relationships with local churches:

- They may have no contact with local churches at all.

- They may have some contact with local churches, but perhaps only in order to raise money from church members.

- They may involve local churches in their work through requesting prayer.

- They may consult with local churches about various issues related to the community.

- They may invite churches to provide volunteers for projects.

- They may support the local church as it carries out integral mission in the community.

REFLECTION
- **Which types of relationship mentioned above could be described as a partnership? Why?**

In all the types of relationships except the last one, the Christian organisation is in control and sets the agenda. The last type of relationship is a partnership where there is joint ownership and decision-making. This requires a major shift from Christian organisations involving local churches in their work to local churches involving Christian organisations in their work.

Partnerships can take years to be built up and become meaningful. They may need to move through a process of increased interaction. For example, at the start, a local church may be involved in praying for, and possibly funding, the work of a Christian organisation. Gradually the local church may show more commitment to the organisation through providing volunteers for the organisation's work. As the relationship deepens, the church may want to take ownership of the work carried out by the Christian organisation in the community, and ask the organisation to support it.

Partnership is difficult at times, but can be rewarding and fruitful. The box on page 56 outlines some tips to consider when considering partnering with local churches.

Tips on partnering
with local churches

- Partnership is not just about working together to change the world outside. It also changes the people who are in the partnership. Be prepared for this and learn from each other. Ensure that the local church understands the implications of working with the community – that the process will transform the church's own thinking and behaviour and not just that of the community.

- Be prepared for the process to take a long time. It may be many months before the local church is ready to work with the community and some time after that before there is change at community level.

- Try to understand each local church's culture, structure, ethos and way of working.

- Avoid working with just one group within a local church if it risks causing division. Where possible, try to work with the local church as a whole.

- Avoid working with churches with weak leadership or power struggles. Leadership has been identified as a key factor in churches successfully carrying out integral mission (see Section 4.3).

- Recognise that the local church has more on its agenda than relief and development work.

- Ensure that the focus is on the local church and not the Christian organisation. Christian organisations should be wary of imposing their own agenda. The local church usually knows the community better than the Christian organisation does.

- Be prepared to give financial support where needed. While the church and community should be encouraged to meet needs with their own resources, some needs may require more funds than the community can mobilise.

Practical ideas

Here we give some practical ideas of how Christian organisations can start up partnerships with local churches:

- To start with it may be best to identify local churches in the area which are already carrying out integral mission. This will enable the Christian organisation to observe how churches carry out integral mission, to identify the kinds of support it can provide and to learn about partnership. Later on, when the organisation has gained confidence in this new way of working, it could seek to envision other local churches to carry out integral mission.

- Partnerships should be based on the same core values and a common purpose. Initial discussions with the pastor, and possibly some others in leadership of the local church, should establish whether there are shared values and a common purpose.

- Look at the benefits of the potential partnership for the mission of each partner. The primary focus should be the kingdom of God.

- Consider together the strengths and weaknesses of each partner. Where one partner has a weakness that may limit what the partnership wants to achieve, investigate how to work together to overcome that weakness.

- Discuss what each partner has to contribute to the partnership and what each partner expects of the other. It may then be helpful to write this down in a partnership agreement.

■ The partnership may be a simple relationship at the beginning, based around a specific task, but as time goes on the partnership should develop. As partnership is about relationships, both partners should be prepared for a long-term relationship from the start, even if they are initially working towards a simple goal.

■ Start off with a pilot initiative to build confidence in the new roles and in the partnership.

■ Communicate often. Be open with each other and learn from each other.

Case study

Partnering with the local church in Mumbai, India

The Christian organisation Inter-mission Cares in Mumbai, India, has a strong commitment to working with the local church. It will never start a community development project in an area without local church support. It will map the area, identify the churches, and meet with the pastors.

Once they have found a pastor who is interested in partnering with Inter-mission Cares, they will ask the pastor to write a letter requesting that Inter-mission Cares comes to work with their church. The purpose of requiring this letter is to ensure that the church committee has discussed and agreed to work with Inter-mission Cares, that the relationship is formalised, that the church has ownership of the work and that Inter-mission Cares is accountable.

The minimum involvement that Inter-mission Cares asks of the local church is that it provides a building and that it prays for the work. However, church involvement is usually much more than this.

When Inter-mission Cares begins its work in the community with a local church, it always aims to hand over its work to the local church it is partnering with. This means that the local church has a higher profile in the community than Inter-mission Cares. An evaluation of Inter-mission Cares' community work found that people in one community had not heard of the organisation. They only knew of the local church's involvement in the project.

REFLECTION

■ Should we consider setting up partnerships with local churches?

■ If so, which local churches in our area would make good partners?

■ What issues should we consider before approaching them?

4.3 Good leadership

Good leadership is key to the success of a local church's ability to reach out to the community.

- Since the church leader or pastor has authority within the local church, their support for integral mission can have significant impact on the practice of integral mission among church members. Pastors need to give integral mission their support, even if they are not personally involved in mobilising church members to carry it out.

- If the pastor delegates responsibility for leading the local church's integral mission work to a church member or group of members, it is important that they are chosen on the basis of their leadership ability or potential. Without good leadership, efforts to envision and mobilise church members to carry out integral mission will probably fail, even if they are successful initially.

Initiatives carried out by the local church usually require focused leadership, which, with so many other responsibilities, the pastor may not be able to provide. However, when other church members are leading the work, pastors should be kept informed about progress. Where possible, pastors should be involved in the work, even in a minor way, as a model to others. Pastors play a key role in the church's proclamation of the gospel, and if the church is to show it is serious about integral mission, the pastor should also play some role in demonstrating the gospel. There may be times when pastors need to use their position in a strategic way as the best people to act on behalf of the local church and community. For example, a local church may wish to engage in advocacy work to change government policy. Pastors could use their networks and their influence as a recognised, legitimate moral voice on public issues.

Where local churches are part of a denomination, denominational leaders have a role to play in providing pastoral care for local church leaders, in modelling good leadership and in providing support to local churches as they carry out integral mission.

What is good leadership?

Good leadership is more about character than skills. There are skills that are useful for leaders to possess, such as ability to delegate, facilitation skills and decision-making abilities, but these alone do not make someone a good leader. For example, someone may have skills in delegating, but their character may not command the respect necessary for people to take seriously the responsibilities they have been delegated.

It is important not to confuse leadership with management. The general distinction is that leaders have vision while managers manage tasks to achieve the vision that has been set for them. Not all good leaders are good managers and not all good managers are good leaders.

The Bible passage 1 Timothy 3 outlines the key characteristics of a good Christian leader:

GOOD EXAMPLE (verses 2-8, 11)   Leaders have influence, so those they are leading will look to them for guidance. They will be guided as much from a leader's actions as from their words. Paul talks about the qualities of good church leaders within the culture of those times. The rest of the Bible shows us that God desires that all Christians have these qualities – not just leaders. However, Paul mentions these qualities in his letter to Timothy with regard to leaders because he recognises that leaders inspire the people they lead.

ABLE TO TEACH (verse 2)   Good leaders should be able to clearly and faithfully teach the Bible to people.

HUMILITY (verses 3 and 6)   A good leader serves those around them, including the people they are leading. They recognise their leadership responsibility, but their motivation is service and not personal gain.

FAITH IN GOD (verse 9)   Good leaders should keep hold of the truth.

BIBLE STUDY

Servant leadership

It is tempting for leaders to abuse their responsibility. The worldly view of leadership is that leaders should be served by the people they lead. However, a God-centred view of leadership turns this idea upside-down.

■ Read Matthew 20:25-28. Jesus knows he is about to die. He has spent the last few years teaching his disciples in order to equip them to make followers of Jesus after he has died and gone to heaven.

• *How should the disciples be different from other leaders?*

• *What should be their motivation (verse 28)?*

• *Think of some real local examples of each type of leadership.*

• *How can we become better servant leaders?*

• *How can we encourage each other to be servant leaders?*

■ Read John 13:1-17.

• *What is remarkable about Jesus' leadership style?*

• *How would we feel if we were one of the disciples? The disciples would probably have felt quite overwhelmed because washing other people's feet is not a pleasant job, and Jesus was their Teacher and Lord (verse 13).*

• *What does Jesus command?*

• *Is serving others always a pleasant job? Notice that Jesus washed all his disciples' feet, including those of Judas, who was about to betray him.*

• *In what ways can we lead by example?*

REFLECTION

■ **What characteristics do we look for in a good leader?**

■ **Is there a danger that we look for characteristics that are not important?**

■ **Is leadership a gift that can be developed or a calling from God?**

Jesus is the role model for good leaders. He had more power, wisdom and insight than any leader could hope for, yet his ministry was always one of service and encouragement. Although his disciples made a lot of mistakes and often disappointed him, he continued to encourage, support and challenge them. Among other things, Jesus:

- had deep knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures

- spent time in prayer because he wanted to be guided by God

- shared the burden of leadership through delegation and training others to take on leadership responsibilities.

The most effective Christian leaders take time to identify gifts and potential in people, and then encourage them to develop as individual Christians and put their faith into action. A good leader ensures that everyone is given an opportunity to participate – whether they are male or female and young or old.

Godly leaders

- Godly leaders influence others towards Christ, rather than to themselves (1 Corinthians 11:1).

- Godly leaders influence others to use their gifts, rather than to admire their leader's gifts (Ephesians 4:11-13).

- Godly leaders influence others towards maturity, rather than towards dependence (Ephesians 4:11-13).

- Godly leaders know it is God who influences people, rather than their own abilities (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

- Godly leaders influence their followers to serve others (Mark 10:42-45).

Adapted from *Servant leadership facilitator manual* by Sila Tuju for the Chalmers Center for Economic and Community Development

Leadership is not always easy, and it is not a gifting that everyone has. People in leadership are in a position of power, which is easy to abuse. With power comes the responsibility to use it wisely, for the good of everyone. Leaders are in danger of taking on too much responsibility and not delegating some responsibilities to others, which can make them less effective through tiredness or illness.

Just because someone is a good leader does not mean that they are the right person to lead a particular initiative:

- Different leaders will have different leadership styles. For example, some might involve people when making decisions, while others may consult people and then make the decision themselves. Some leaders set boundaries to guide the people they lead, while others give them freedom to act. Some leaders may be very vocal while others remain quiet and lead through actions. Different situations call for different styles of leadership. Leaders may need to adapt their style or identify someone else to lead.

■ A leader may have commitments that prevent them from taking on new leadership roles. For example, they may already be in a leadership role elsewhere and lack the time or energy to take on other leadership responsibilities. Or at one particular time, they may have personal matters, such as family issues, which they need to prioritise.

To overcome some of these leadership concerns, it can be helpful to ensure that the person leading the work has a team of people to help them. This has the following advantages:

BETTER DECISION-MAKING through discussion of issues by the group, even though the leader may be responsible for making the decision.

BETTER MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVITIES   The leader may not have management skills, but team members could provide such skills. Team members may also bring other helpful knowledge and skills to the work.

SUPPORT FOR THE LEADER   As leadership is not easy, the team could provide emotional, spiritual and practical support to the leader. The presence of the team provides the leader with an opportunity to delegate responsibilities to people that they trust.

Leadership development for integral mission

Christian organisations that wish to work with local churches should be aware of the need for good leadership and seek to support the church in leadership development. There are a number of leadership development needs or options which may be relevant:

TRAIN PASTORS WHILE AT BIBLE COLLEGE so they are equipped to mobilise churches and support practical initiatives carried out by the church. This involves educating and empowering pastors to understand, teach and implement integral mission. In addition to teaching the theology of integral mission, practical training might include envisioning and facilitation skills, and development methodologies. Leadership development is another area in which students should be trained. Pastors need to be able to identify potential leaders in their congregations and provide them with training and leadership opportunities.

ENVISION AND TRAIN PASTORS WHO ARE ALREADY WORKING IN LOCAL CHURCHES   Pastors may first need to be envisioned so they understand the need for the church to demonstrate the gospel.

■ Often church members have a vision for integral mission, but they struggle to take action because the pastor does not understand the need for integral mission.

■ Where neither church members nor the pastor are aware of the need for integral mission, pastors are the best people to envision for practical and strategic reasons. Pastors can be easiest to target, since they often meet regularly to discuss other issues in the local area, district, region or country. One envisioning meeting or workshop for pastors can have a far-reaching impact, since they will often return to their churches and pass the training on. Strategically, pastors are the best people to envision because they hold authority within the local church and are key in influencing the values and

beliefs of others. Once convinced of the need for integral mission, they are likely to convince church members, and initiatives are more likely to happen.

■ If local churches are part of a denomination, it can be useful to also envision denominational leaders, since they can provide valuable support to local churches carrying out integral mission.

Once pastors are envisioned, they may envision church members through:

■ envisioning church members themselves using sermons, meetings and example

■ bringing in a facilitator from a Christian organisation

■ sending potential leaders off for training in integral mission, who then come back and envision and train other church members.

SUPPORT THOSE WHO LEAD INITIATIVES Whether it is the pastor or other members of the church who lead initiatives, they will require considerable training and support. Training could include leadership-related skills, such as effective team working, motivating others and delegating responsibilities. Training may be needed in issues related to initiatives, such as fundraising, needs assessment and monitoring and evaluation. When delivering training, Christian organisations should avoid being too technical because some church members may have received little school education. The content of the training should be based on a biblical framework and be supported by materials that are relevant to the audience. For example, written materials may not be appropriate if people are not literate. Materials should be produced using the local language. The training should include opportunities for personal reflection and opportunities to learn by seeing and doing. This could involve visits to other local churches that are carrying out integral mission. Leaders should be given ongoing mentoring by the Christian organisation and church pastor, where applicable.

Case study

Union Biblical Seminary Intern Programme, India

Many Bible colleges in India only train pastors to teach the Bible. They do not necessarily train pastors in pastoral care for church members and in social action in the community. Most theological students do not come from poor families and therefore may not have been directly exposed to poverty issues.

The Union Biblical Seminary wanted to enable students to understand what integral mission is about. To do this it set up a programme to offer students a seven-month placement with a Christian organisation. These placements aim to develop the skills, vision and understanding of the students. The students may find themselves working with people such as commercial sex workers, children who live on the streets, or slum communities. The activities that students carry out may include giving basic education to children who live on the streets, counselling people with HIV and AIDS, and doing basic administration in slum clinics.

AIMS

To provide theological students with the opportunity to work in poor communities in order to encourage them to adopt an integral mission approach to their future Christian ministry.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1   Between nine and fifteen of the second year students are selected by Seminary staff. The number of students selected is based on the interest and capacity of local Christian organisations who offer placements.

2   Students are then allocated to an organisation with whom they live and work for the next seven months. Students are encouraged to keep a daily journal of their experiences and learning.

3   Every month the students meet together with a mentor for half a day to share their experiences and to reflect on how their placement is shaping or challenging their theological understanding. The sessions are also used to provide further input on the biblical basis for integral mission.

4   At the end of the placement, the students return to the Seminary where they share their learning with the other students through devotions and presentations.

IMPACT

Students involved in the programme have reported changes in their attitudes and thinking. On graduating, many want to motivate their church to engage in integral mission. One student went to work for their placement organisation in a role specially created to encourage churches in Mumbai to carry out integral mission. Another student is actively involved in a network of churches in Mumbai responding to HIV and AIDS.

After the placement, the influence of the students on the faculty and other students has also been very positive.

The host organisations have also benefited from the programme. Having volunteers for seven months has enabled them to expand their work and they have benefited from the theological knowledge of the students.

LESSONS LEARNED

PLACEMENTS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY SELECTED AND MATCHED TO EACH STUDENT   Sometimes students lack appropriate skills for working with the organisation they are placed with. For the placement to work to the advantage of both the student and host organisation, there should be thorough consultation with students and host organisations before students are allocated placements. Before the placement, orientation should be given to the student by the college and the host organisation.

THE ROLE OF THE MENTOR IS VITAL   Some mentors want to do too much teaching in their mentoring sessions. Students need good support and space to raise personal concerns and identify key issues that will need exploring on return to the college.

THE PLACEMENT SHOULD BE STRUCTURED TO ENABLE BOTH THE STUDENT AND THE HOST TO GAIN REAL BENEFIT FROM THE PROGRAMME   For example, at the beginning of the placement the host organisation should develop with the student a set of goals and a timetable of activities. They should provide supervision through regular review meetings to assess progress and reflect on learning. The host organisation could ask the student to carry out a small piece of applied research that can benefit the work of the organisation.

FORMAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PLACEMENT SHOULD BE AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE PROGRAMME
Both the student and the host organisation should produce a written report after the placement.
This encourages both personal and organisational learning that can shape the future development
of the programme.

**STAFF SHOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO GAIN EXPERIENCE OF WORKING WITH POOR PEOPLE
THEMSELVES**, such as through working alongside the students in their placements for a week or
two. This can greatly increase the ability of staff to support the students before, during and after
the placements.

REFLECTION

■ **Can we think of local church leaders who model good leadership? In what ways
are they good leaders?**

■ **What aspects of leadership need to be developed in churches in our local area?**

■ **Are local church leaders committed to integral mission? In what ways could we
envision and train them?**

4.4 Envisioning for integral mission

Envisioning is the process of passing a vision to other people. The result is that the other
people begin to own the vision. This encourages them to pass the vision on further and
to take action.

The difference
between envisioning
and mobilisation

Envisioning is about changing hearts and minds through motivating and inspiring others.

Mobilisation usually comes after envisioning and is about people acting on the vision and making
it happen.

Christian organisations that seek to work with local churches will usually find that local
churches are at different stages in their attitude towards, and practice of, integral mission.
A few local churches may already be practising integral mission successfully and may not
feel they need to work with a Christian organisation. However, most churches have yet to
consider the need for integral mission, and those that understand it may lack the
confidence to carry it out. In order for relationships with local churches to be
worthwhile, Christian organisations may therefore need to envision them.

Identifying the current vision

Before any envisioning process, it can be helpful to find out what the current vision is. This will enable the envisioning process to be tailor-made to the church's current situation. It is possible that a local church has no vision at all, or has never identified a jointly-owned vision. Or its vision may be about inward change, with little consideration of the church's mission in the community. The vision could be limited by what the church thinks it can achieve, given its current resources.

The exercise below could be carried out with only the pastor or the church leadership team. However, since successful integral mission involves the commitment of the whole church, this exercise should, where possible, be carried out with all church members. Church members could discuss the vision together or each member could be asked to complete a simple questionnaire. The method used to identify the vision should be chosen according to the age and literacy of the members and their attitude towards gender issues.

In most cases, the best method may be to divide members into small discussion groups to answer the questions and then to write down and present their conclusions. However, children or people who are not literate could be asked to draw their understanding of the church's vision on large sheets of paper and then explain it to the other members. In churches where women's views are not given so much priority as those of men, it may be necessary to divide groups according to gender and ensure that women are given the same opportunities as men to feed back their conclusions. When analysing the conclusions, take time to consider the similarities and differences in vision between the groups. The similarities are likely to represent the church's current vision as a whole.

Key questions to ask

> **1** What do we want our church to be like in five, ten or twenty-five years' time? Issues to consider include people (such as number, gender, age), worship, unity, mission (what the church does) and spiritual maturity.
>
> **2** What do we want our community to be like in five, ten or twenty-five years' time?

The purpose of asking the second question is to understand the church's attitude towards integral mission:

- If the response to this question **does not** include material and spiritual improvements in people's lives, the envisioning process should focus on the importance of integral mission.

- If the response to this question **does** include material and spiritual improvements in people's lives, check to see whether the church sees its role in this. If the church does not see its role in transforming the community, the envisioning process should focus on the importance of integral mission.

If the responses to questions 1 and 2 are in line with integral mission, it may still be helpful to look briefly at integral mission as part of the envisioning process as it is important that all church members are committed to the vision. However, this will probably not be the focus of the envisioning process. At this stage, identify the extent to which the local church has put its vision for integral mission into practice.

- If the church identifies barriers to taking action, such as perceived lack of resources and capacity, the envisioning process should encourage the church to discover the gifts and potential that exist among church members.

- If the church is already carrying out integral mission, the envisioning process should help members to identify the successes and failures, and strengths and weaknesses. Find out whether the church might benefit from working with a Christian organisation. Envisioning may not be necessary in this case, but working together may be helpful.

Envisioning is not only about motivating the local church to take action by helping members to consider the need for integral mission. It also involves inspiring the church about the approaches it will use when carrying out integral mission. The envisioning process could therefore encourage the local church to consider biblical values that can improve the quality of its work in the community. These may include:

- **Valuing people as made in God's image, regardless of gender, age, ability, ethnicity, etc.** This results in inclusive initiatives that may have a powerful impact on people who have not been treated as equals in the community before.

- **Communicating with God.** Prayer should support the whole process. We need to ask God for his grace, strength and guidance. It is also important to listen to God through studying his Word and reflecting on what we are learning about God as he works in the lives of church members and community members throughout the process.

- **Releasing people to use their gifts.** This relates to discovering gifts within the church's membership. It also relates to releasing potential in the community. Otherwise there is a risk that people will become dependent on outside help and they may be denied opportunities to reach their God-given potential.

- **Unity.** Reaching out to the community is very demanding. If there are splits already within the church, these may become wider during implementation of initiatives in the community. Yet in order for the work to have a positive impact, the church needs to be seen as a model. Therefore churches need to be united, both within each individual church and between churches in a local area.

The envisioning process should model these values. Often, people need to experience the values themselves to understand their importance, before they use and promote them in the community.

Envisioning methods

First, it is necessary to consider who needs to be envisioned and who should facilitate the envisioning process.

■ Rather than starting the process at local church level, if the local church is part of a denomination, it may be beneficial to first envision leaders at district, diocesan or even national level. Unless such leaders give their support to integral mission, local churches may be unable or reluctant to take action when envisioned. This envisioning could be carried out by a Christian organisation.

■ At local church level, it can be helpful to envision pastors first, since without their commitment, church members' efforts to carry out integral mission may fail. Pastors from a local area could be brought together for an envisioning workshop facilitated by a Christian organisation or by committed staff and senior leaders of the denomination.

■ It is important that all church members are envisioned as they should all be encouraged to own and be involved in integral mission. Social action needs to be part of what churches exist to do. This envisioning could be facilitated by denominational leaders, the pastor or a Christian organisation.

Tearfund has produced a PILLARS Guide called *Mobilising the church*. This Guide contains discussion-based material for church groups and could play an important part in envisioning local church congregations and mobilising them for action. The Guide covers 23 topics, such as the role of the church, servant leadership, the value of small Bible study groups, facilitation skills and planning for growth. Use of the Guide does not require trained leaders. See Section 5 for details of how to access the Guide.

It is vital that envisioning processes with the local church involve Bible study. If work carried out by the church is to be fruitful it needs to be motivated and informed by God's Word. The Bible studies in Section 1 of this book may be helpful. The following Bible passages may also be helpful in addressing a number of envisioning needs: Unity (1 Corinthians 12:12-31); Gifts (Romans 12:3-8); Valuing people (John 4:1-26); Communicating with God (Luke 11:1-13).

BIBLE STUDY

Salt and light

■ Read Matthew 5:13-16. This is a passage from Jesus' 'Sermon on the mount'.

• *What are the natural characteristics and uses of salt?*

• *What did Jesus mean when he said, 'You are the salt of the earth'? (verse 13)*

• *In what ways could we lose our 'saltiness'?*

• *What does it mean for the church to be 'the light of the world'? (verse 14)*

• *If we are salt and light, what impact should we be having in our community and church?*

• *What things could we do to have more impact on our community and church?*

Different people have different learning styles. Some learn by listening, others learn by seeing and others learn by doing. It is important to consider these different learning styles during the envisioning process:

■ When looking at what the Bible says:

• It can be helpful for the pastor to teach about integral mission in sermons, because pastors have authority and are generally well respected. However, there is no guarantee that all church members will allow what the pastor has to say, to sink in and speak into their lives.

• It is important that church members themselves are able to discover and discuss what the Bible says. Bible study in groups, which enables all participants to discuss the passage, is therefore a good idea. This can be a more effective method than sermons if people are to apply what the Bible says to their own lives. This method may need to be adapted if working with church members who are not literate. For example, one member of the group could read the passage out loud two or three times. They could then ask a question which leads to discussion, re-reading the relevant verses to the group where appropriate.

■ Some people may not fully engage with the envisioning process until they can see its impact. It can therefore be helpful to set up meetings with, or visits to, other local churches that are already involved in integral mission.

■ At the end of the envisioning process, some church members may still not be convinced about the need for their church to demonstrate the gospel. It may be only when the church is mobilised and takes action that they begin to understand the church's important role.

At the end of the envisioning process, bring church members together to identify a new church vision. It is important that all church members know and understand the church's vision. The pastor can refer to the vision when necessary, as there may be times in the future when the church needs to be re-energised.

Case study

Envisioning local churches in Kyrgyzstan

Christianity is quite young in Kyrgyzstan. Many churches place the main emphasis on preaching the gospel and are less concerned with the needs of poor people. Until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the approach of the political system was to prevent people from taking initiatives to improve their lives. This affected the process of decision-making, the ability of people to take part in public life, the quality of leadership, and the well-being of the people. The church did not participate in social and political matters because it did not have the motivation, skills or knowledge to do so.

Suiuu Bulagy (Centre of Initiatives), a Christian organisation, encourages and equips local churches to play a bigger part in society. This involves envisioning local churches, and providing training, information and networking opportunities.

It was difficult at first to make links with local churches. They were not interested in interacting with each other because they did not trust the teaching of the other churches. At the first training

workshop there were only ten people from different churches. When the participants went back to their churches, the pastors and church members would not support their wish to carry out initiatives in the community. The pastors only wanted them to pay attention to spiritual growth.

Suiuu Bulagy decided that the local church pastors needed to be envisioned about integral mission. They held a conference for the pastors and invited a well known person to speak. This person could speak with authority and their presence at the conference encouraged the pastors to attend. The pastors started to understand Suiuu Bulagy's work and wanted to cooperate with it.

The following year, there was a pastors' conference about the church's role in protecting human rights. A well known speaker came to the conference and helped Suiuu Bulagy to conduct training in advocacy with the pastors. The pastors were so excited that they established an alliance. Another conference is planned, and Suiuu Bulagy is now able to mobilise the local churches to participate in events, such as cleaning the streets of the city.

Case study

Mobilising pastors in Mozambique

HIV and AIDS are of increasing concern in Mozambique. Yet many local churches did not want to respond. They thought it was immoral to talk about HIV and AIDS because many considered HIV and AIDS to be a punishment from God.

Kubatsirana, a Christian organisation, was set up in the town of Chimoio to mobilise and train pastors to respond to HIV and AIDS. Since Kubatsirana was started by pastors, it has been relatively easy to envision other pastors. In the local culture, people are more likely to listen to messages from their peers. A pastors' committee was set up in order to envision other pastors in the area. They visited local churches on Sundays and presented Kubatsirana's vision, mission and programmes. This encouraged pastors and church members to attend training. Kubatsirana has encouraged mobilised churches to visit initiatives implemented by other local churches so that they can learn and strengthen their own activities.

Volunteers from a local church run this community garden in order to provide vegetables for people living with HIV and AIDS

Photo: Jorge Cambinda

As a result of Kubatsirana's work, many churches are now working together to address issues related to HIV and AIDS. Local churches are caring for those who are sick. There is less discrimination by local churches against those living with HIV and AIDS. More church members are now going for voluntary testing and counselling. Churches are providing home-based care for the sick and finding foster families to care for orphaned children. Some churches are offering vocational classes for those affected by HIV and AIDS, such as carpentry, tailoring and literacy.

Envisioning the community

The church and community mobilisation process involves the church envisioning and mobilising the community. In order for sustainable change to happen, the community needs to own and contribute to the process. Envisioning is therefore very important. Communities usually need to be envisioned in two key areas:

■ helping community members to understand that they themselves are agents of change

■ helping community members to understand that they have the capacity and resources to transform their community.

The exercises on page 70 and 71 can be used to envision community members in relation to these issues.

A secret in a box

AIM To encourage community members to realise that they have the best knowledge about their local area.

Find a large cardboard box without holes. Place a number of different items in the box that have been found in the local area. These could include a bag of seeds, some stones, a hammer and some nails. Close the box so nobody can see inside.

At a meeting with local people, divide participants into four groups and set them each a different method of identifying what is in the box (see below). Start with group A and finish with group D. They must be clear about the details, such as colour, shape and size. Each group should carry out their assigned activity in front of the meeting. They should decide what they think is in the box as a group and share their ideas with everybody.

■ Members of group A are allowed only to walk around the box before deciding what they think is inside.

■ Members of group B are allowed only to pick up the box and smell or shake it.

■ Members of group C can blindfold one person who can put their hand in and feel the objects inside without taking them out of the box. The others must not look inside.

■ Members of group D are allowed to take out the objects one at a time and describe them.

Then ask participants what happened in the exercise:

• Why did group A know so little about what was in the box? What helped each of the other groups to understand more about the 'secret'?

• If the 'secret' in the box is made up of all the important knowledge and resources in the local area, who knows most about the 'secret' and who knows least?

Source: *Mobilising the community* PILLARS Guide

Dream plan

This exercise is usually used after the community has had an opportunity to discuss the problems it faces. Ask whether they want to continue in this situation. The answer will usually be 'no'!

Ask the question: what should our better future look like? Encourage people to close their eyes and dream about what they would like their community to be like in 10 years' time, then 20 or even 30 years' time. After five minutes bring everyone together and discuss what people saw in their dreams. List some of the aspects. Then ask community members to draw the dreams on a very large piece of paper or a sheet. This might involve drawing a map of the community with pictures of all the changes they want, such as a dam, vegetable gardens, a school or even a university! This picture is a dream which is owned by the whole community.

The picture can be referred to during the rest of the mobilisation process, both for encouragement and to identify which issue to next address. Alternatively, encourage community members to make a list of the key issues raised in the picture. This list can then be referred to while planning.

Based on *Mobilising the community* PILLARS Guide
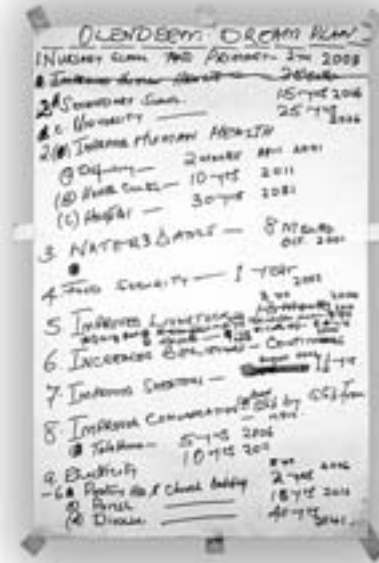
REFLECTION

- **Which of the envisioning ideas in this section excite us most and why?**
- **Try some of the tools in this section as a group. Could these be used effectively with pastors and local church congregations in our area?**

4.5 Facilitating mobilisation

Facilitators play a vital role in developing relationships between Christian organisations and local churches, and in the outworking of integral mission. They have a role in the following areas:

At Christian organisation level:

- envisioning staff within a Christian organisation and church leaders about the benefits of working together

- building relationships between Christian organisations and local churches

- providing ongoing facilitation and support.

At local church level:

- envisioning pastors about the importance of integral mission
- envisioning church members about the importance of integral mission
- training church members in relief, development and advocacy methodologies
- training church members in facilitation skills
- building relationships between the local churches and the community
- providing ongoing facilitation and support.

At community level:

- envisioning community members
- facilitating community mobilisation.

Facilitators could belong to a Christian organisation, they could be external consultants or they could be local church members.

The role of a facilitator

The role of a facilitator is different from that of a teacher. A teacher explains new concepts and ideas, while a facilitator is an enabler and does not have all the answers.

> A facilitator can be compared to a midwife, who helps to bring into being something that is new and wonderful. They do not create life but provide support and help at a crucial stage.

The facilitator's role is to help a group to work smoothly and effectively towards their goal. Everyone should participate in working towards the goal as this can improve the quality of the work. Participation does not always happen naturally, since some people are dominant and others are shy or unconfident. The facilitator therefore has an important role in empowering others and ensuring that everyone is able to participate in discussions, decision-making and carrying out tasks. The facilitator values everyone's knowledge and opinions and encourages others to do the same. The facilitator draws out knowledge and ideas from the group, enabling members to learn from each other and to think and act together. This may involve introducing group exercises, and asking questions to start discussions and to encourage new ways of thinking about situations. The facilitator should avoid giving answers and solutions because the group should be in control rather than the facilitator. However, a facilitator may offer ideas or information to the group when it is felt necessary.

In the case of envisioning, a facilitator may give the group exercises to do (such as those on pages 70 and 71) or a Bible passage to study, to provide them with a platform for discussion. The facilitator may then facilitate discussions and other meetings in order to

help the church come to jointly-owned decisions. In the case of mobilising a church or community, a facilitator may be required to facilitate participatory methodologies to help the participants understand their situation and identify areas for improvement.

Sometimes a facilitator needs to take on a training role. For example, a facilitator could provide training in development methodologies to church members who have no development knowledge or experience. The facilitator may therefore have to provide quite a lot of knowledge and information. However, this can be done in a facilitatory and empowering way. While the facilitator's role becomes more like that of a trainer, it can be helpful to call them a facilitator to ensure the control remains with the participants. The training should be interactive and take account of different learning styles, including learning by doing. Facilitation skills are therefore just as relevant to training sessions as they are to participatory group discussion. Experienced facilitators who are brought in at the envisioning stage, may have an important role in identifying and training potential facilitators among the church membership and in the community, since during the mobilisation stage it may be beneficial to have more grassroots facilitators.

Identifying facilitators

Good facilitation is as dependent on the attitudes and character of the facilitator as on their skills.

CHARACTER	SKILLS
■ Humility	■ Ability to ask appropriate questions
■ Willingness to learn	■ Conflict resolution
■ Compassion	■ Listening skills
■ Values others – focus on others and their situation rather than own.	■ Ability to quickly gain an understanding of the local situation
■ Sociable	■ Ability to summarise others' ideas
■ Flexible	■ Encourager, motivator, enabler
■ Patient	■ Good communication skills
■ Accepting, affirming and inclusive	
■ Confident	

Those who have the necessary attitude and character are potential facilitators and often have a natural ability to facilitate. However, it can be helpful to provide them with training to ensure they have the range of skills needed to make them good facilitators.

People who have some of the necessary skills but do not possess the right attitudes and character may not make good facilitators.

Do not assume that confident people will make good facilitators. They may be tempted to talk too much and take control. Neither should it be assumed that school teachers or

church pastors will make good facilitators. It may be hard for them to change their approach from instructive to facilitative. However, those who show interest in participatory learning may make good facilitators.

Facilitation skills

Training could be provided in the skills mentioned in the table above. There is not space in this book to look at them in detail, but here we provide some tips for facilitators and address a few challenges that facilitators may face. For more details, see Tearfund's *Facilitation skills workbook.*

Tips for facilitators

BE PREPARED   When good facilitators are at work, it looks as though they do it effortlessly and without preparation. However, they have spent considerable time on planning, researching and practising. They should think about how the topic will be introduced, what questions should be asked to guide group discussions, how the discussions will be recorded and how to encourage people to apply what they have discussed and learned during discussions.

BE FLEXIBLE   Although facilitators need to be prepared, they also need to be open to changing their plans if necessary. The needs and interests of the group members should guide the discussion so it is relevant.

BE ENERGETIC   If facilitators want others to be excited, they have to be enthusiastic themselves.

ENCOURAGE HUMOUR   Humour can help to create a relaxed and productive environment.

BE CLEAR   If the facilitator is confused, the group may also be confused and quickly lose interest. The facilitator needs to communicate clearly and check that individual group members have understood.

EMBRACE YOUR OWN MISTAKES AND LIMITATIONS   Facilitators will make mistakes and wrong assumptions. If these are acknowledged by the facilitator, they can be turned into valuable learning opportunities.

BE SENSITIVE   A facilitator needs to observe people's moods and feelings. Watch how people behave with each other, and their verbal and non-verbal communication. If necessary, talk to individuals in private who are looking upset or distracted, or those who are not respecting others.

USE A VARIETY OF TECHNIQUES, METHODS AND ACTIVITIES   Each person has a different learning style. Variety keeps everyone involved and reinforces learning.

Difficult questions

• During preparation, anticipate questions that people might ask and think of possible responses. However, it is not possible to anticipate every question.

• Draw on the wisdom of other group members.

• Suggest where to go to get information to answer the question, such as publications and government or NGO offices.

• Do not be afraid to say that you do not have all the answers. Suggest that you will try to find out the answer to the question in time for the next session.

Managing conflict

• Be sensitive to possible differences and tensions. These may already exist among group members, or they may arise as a result of the discussions.

• Encourage people to work together through their differences, keeping their common goals in mind.

• If the differences are not related to the topic of discussion, ask them to resolve the differences after the session.

• If the differences are related to the topic of discussion, help the participants to identify the issues about which they do agree. Then encourage mutual respect and lead the participants to a place of agreement, even if this means that they agree to disagree.

Handling dominant people

To stop someone dominating the discussion, the following techniques could be used:

• Invite other people to speak by name.

• Split the group into smaller groups.

• Introduce a quota system where each person can only contribute a certain number of points to a discussion.

• Introduce an object which is easy to hold. The only person who is allowed to speak is the person holding the object. Ensure that the object is passed around frequently.

• Give the dominant person responsibility within the group. For example, ask them to write notes of the discussion. This will help them to listen more and talk less.

Working with shy people

• Put them into smaller groups where they are likely to feel more confident to contribute.

• Ask the group to discuss questions first in pairs.

• Refer back to and use the ideas that shy people have contributed to the discussion so that they know they are important and of value.

• Give them responsibility for note-taking as this role can involve giving feedback.

• If necessary, talk to them in private to establish reasons for their silence.

Facilitators who are trained as part of a church or community mobilisation process should be given ongoing training and support.

During the Participatory Evaluation Process in East Africa (see page 36), support for facilitators took the following form:

THEORY   PRACTICE WITH MENTOR   PRACTICE WITHOUT MENTOR   PEER REVIEW WITH MENTOR   THEORY
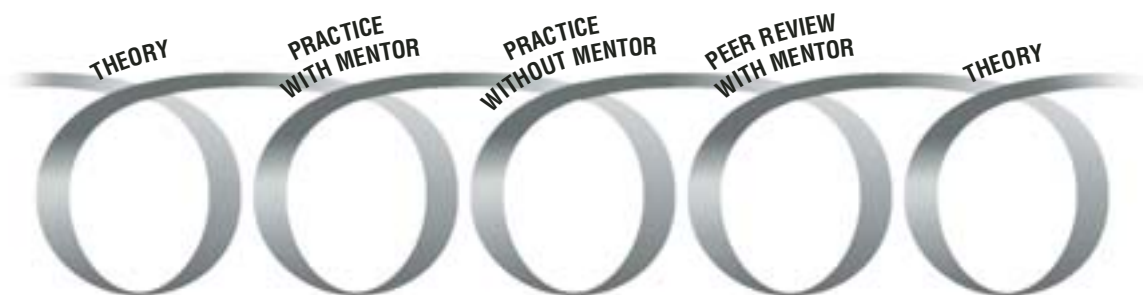
For example, training was given to facilitators in envisioning local churches. They then went to envision two pilot local churches under the guidance and supervision of the mentor. They then envisioned further local churches on their own. All the facilitators then came together with the mentor to reflect on their progress and to receive new training.

REFLECTION

■ **Can we think of potential facilitators in our organisation or in local churches?**

■ **Could we use the information in this section to train them to envision and mobilise local churches?**

■ **What other support could we give to them?**

4.6   Encouraging use of local resources

Many people see Christian organisations as simply a source of funding and other resources for community initiatives. This may be because their only experience of Christian organisations is receiving hand-outs from them during a crisis. Or it may be because projects run by Christian organisations in the local area do not require any contribution from community members.

It is good to encourage local people to contribute to local initiatives. People's willingness to contribute is linked to ownership and sustainability because it shows that they value an initiative. If they are not willing to contribute, they are probably not very interested in the initiative and it is not relevant. As a result, the initiative may fail if it is carried out and is probably not worth doing. The tool in the box below can be used to help local people to identify local resources that can be used for the benefit of the whole community.

In very poor communities, some Christian organisations will not even think of encouraging local people to contribute because they are so poor. However, this attitude can be disempowering in a place where people already feel that they have nothing to offer. It can cause local people to think that 'development' comes from outside the community and that there is little they can do except wait for help to come. Even in times of crisis, community participation is extremely important.

Community resources

Each community has a number of different resources. It is important to help people to understand and to value these resources, which may sometimes be overlooked. When community members are aware of the abundance of resources they possess, they may be able to address problems in the community with new confidence.

There are six main types of resources:

NATURAL resources include land, trees, forests and water.

HUMAN resources include health, skills, knowledge and mobility.

FINANCIAL resources include money, access to loans, savings opportunities and government support.

SOCIAL resources include culture, traditions, organisations, local groups, extended family, access to external contacts and networks.

PHYSICAL resources include buildings, tools, roads, water pumps, transport and power supply.

SPIRITUAL resources are the strength and encouragement that people gain from their faith. For Christians, spiritual resources include belonging to a local church, having access to a Bible and freedom to pray.

Explain the different types of resources to community members. Then for each type, ask people to identify the specific resources that exist in their own community.

Once the resources have been identified, find out:

■ which of the resources members had not considered before

■ which resources the community is rich in

■ which resources the community is poor in. Many communities are poor in financial resources but may be rich in terms of their human, social and spiritual resources. Sometimes, one kind of resource can be used in place of another resource which is lacking.
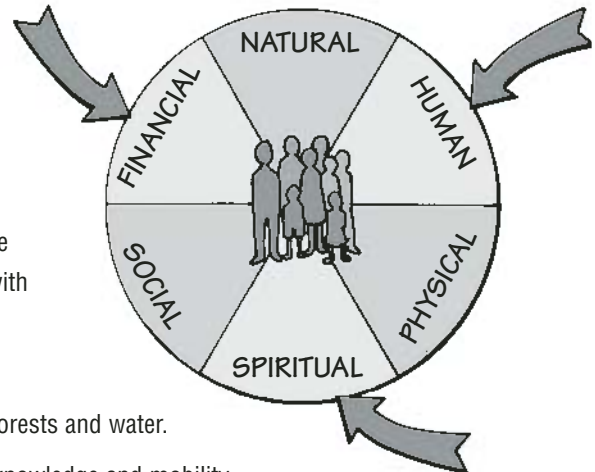
Adapted from PILLARS Guide *Mobilising the community*

Poor people may not have money that they can contribute. However, there is usually something they can contribute, such as materials, labour or time. The contributions do not have to cover all the costs of an initiative. Instead, they should be appropriate to people's ability to contribute:

■ There is no point in people contributing many days of labour to an initiative if their own livelihoods are to be negatively affected in the long-term as a result. Likewise, if people are to contribute financially, they should not be expected to use all of their savings. Otherwise, if a crisis happens, the community may not be able to cope and people may be pushed further into poverty.

■ On the other hand, if people are not encouraged to contribute enough, ownership of the initiative may be lacking, and the work may not be sustainable.

Christian organisations should encourage self-resourcing of activities by local churches and their communities. Church and community members should be encouraged to provide the bulk of the inputs, rather than expecting the Christian organisation to provide them. It is important that local churches and communities start with what they have before asking for support from Christian organisations. Church members in particular should be made aware of the biblical principles of giving generously and sacrificially.

Of course, there may be some inputs which are expensive and beyond the capacity of the local church and community to fund. Christian organisations should provide support in this situation. However, only when the local church and community have proved that it can contribute to some activities should the Christian organisation step in to fund the remainder of the initiative.

Christian organisations should consider what form such funding should take. It may not always be appropriate for Christian organisations to give support in the form of money. Churches and community structures do not necessarily have good financial management systems, and may be tempted to divert funds to other needs, such as to build or maintain church buildings or fund funerals. It may therefore be more appropriate for the Christian organisation to buy expensive inputs such as roofing sheets and deliver them to the community. Or the Christian organisation may provide access to equipment such as a water well rig or cement mixer that would otherwise need to be bought or hired by the local church and community.

A 'match funding' approach can be used to reduce over-dependency of local churches and communities on Christian organisations. The aim of the approach is to promote local ownership while at the same time not stretching the local church and community too much financially. The approach involves Christian organisations making financial support available for community initiatives, but communities can only access the funding if they can match it. For example, if an initiative costs US $5,000, the church and community must contribute US $2,500 if the Christian organisation is to contribute the remainder. Or a Christian organisation could agree to pay for the roof of a community building, but will only provide it once the community has paid for and built the building itself. In Ethiopia, Urban Ministries funds one community worker to envision and mobilise the community, and the local church funds the other.

It is important to beware of turning local churches into Christian organisations. Local churches and Christian organisations are not the same thing. As we saw in Section 2, they have different strengths, weaknesses and roles. Although great things can happen when local churches and Christian organisations work together, these different roles are important in themselves. There will always be a need for a local church, with integral mission at the heart of its agenda. There will always be a need for Christian organisations to support local churches in their outworking of integral mission. Christian organisations will also be needed to work directly in the community where there is no local church.

REFLECTION

- **Are local churches and communities often dependent on external funding in our local area?**
- **Could we use the tool on page 77 with a local church or community and help them to identify their resources?**
- **How can we encourage local people to contribute more to initiatives in their community?**
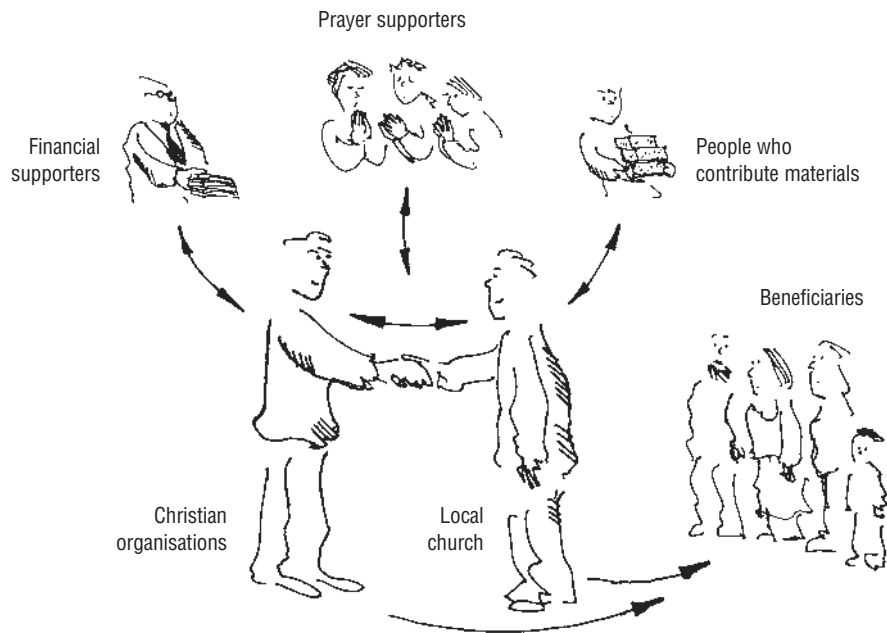
4.7 Monitoring and evaluation

It is important to assess performance for the following reasons:

ACCOUNTABILITY We should be good stewards of the resources God has blessed us with.

- Those who carry out the work (local churches or Christian organisations) should be accountable to those whom the work seeks to help – community members. If there is no accountability to beneficiaries, the initiative could just exist for the pleasure of the local church or donors and have minimal relevance and impact. The higher the degree of accountability to beneficiaries, the higher the quality of the initiative and the more empowered they become.

- People who have been entrusted with resources should show those who provided the resources that they have used them wisely and that they have produced fruit. These resources include money, time, materials and prayer. Those who provide such resources include local church members, community members, churches overseas and institutional donors.

- A Christian organisation and a local church working in partnership should assess their performance as a partnership. Each should contribute what they said they would, and should have opportunities to speak to the other partner if they feel they are not performing well. If the partners are not accountable to each other, the whole partnership could fall apart and its work could fail.

Lines of
accountability

Prayer supporters

Financial
supporters

People who
contribute materials

Beneficiaries

Christian
organisations

Local
church

LESSON LEARNING By measuring, analysing and reflecting on our performance we can learn lessons that will help us to improve our current plans and enrich our work in the future.

In order to assess performance, it is necessary to have objectives to work towards. Indicators show us when we have met these objectives. The methods used to assess performance are monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring is done continuously, such as every month to make sure work is on track. Monitoring achievement against indicators will tell us about the changes we expect to see. Evaluation is carried out at the end of an initiative to assess its impact. Evaluation provides an opportunity to assess positive and negative changes that we did not expect to see. For details about setting objectives and carrying out monitoring and evaluation, see *Project cycle management (*ROOTS 5).

When mobilising local churches to carry out integral mission, performance should be measured on a number of levels:

A CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION MONITORING AND EVALUATING ITS WORK One of the problems for Christian organisations wishing to encourage church and community mobilisation is that it can be difficult to find donors willing to fund such work. Many donors like to know what the impact in the community will be, yet until the Christian organisation has mobilised the church and community, it is impossible to know even what kind of initiative will happen at community level.

Christian organisations might seek funds from donors solely for envisioning and mobilising local churches. The main expenditures would be fees for facilitators and venues for training. However, they may also require some funds from donors to support the local church in the work it does in the community, such as providing technical expertise, equipment, and materials that the local church and community cannot afford to pay for themselves. At the proposal stage the amount of such funding will be unknown, since the types of initiative that will be carried out and the amount of support

that the Christian organisation will need to provide is unidentified. Some donors may be prepared to meet these financial needs through an extended proposal at a later stage.

The following table looks at two potential levels of objectives for a Christian organisation wishing to encourage church and community mobilisation. The outcomes are the higher level objectives. The outputs are more specific objectives that should lead to achievement of the outcomes.

Potential objectives for church and community mobilisation

PHASE	OUTCOME (higher level objectives)	OUTPUTS (specific objectives that lead to the outcome)
1	Capacity of the Christian organisation to support local churches carrying out integral mission developed.	• Knowledge of the biblical mandate for the engagement of the local church in integral mission increased within the Christian organisation. • Appropriate structures and processes for developing the capacity of local churches to carry out integral mission formed.
2	Local churches envisioned and prepared to engage in integral mission.	• Appropriate structures and processes for developing capacity for integral mission within the local church formed by the local church's leadership. • Knowledge of the biblical mandate for the engagement of the local church in integral mission increased in the local congregation. • Knowledge and skills to engage in integral mission increased in the local congregation. • Knowledge of the causes and consequences of poverty within the community (including the needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities of the community) increased in the local congregation.
3	Local churches (and communities) mobilised to identify and address specific causes and consequences of poverty and to respond to a crisis.	• Appropriate structures and processes for engaging in integral mission to address the specific causes and consequences of poverty in the community formed by the leadership of the local church and the community. • An action plan to address the agreed specific causes and consequences of poverty in the community developed. • A disaster-related action plan which can be implemented before or when a hazard hits a community drawn up. • Resources to implement the action plan mobilised by the local church and the community.
4	The specific causes and consequences of poverty addressed in the community.	• Specific targets in the action plan achieved.

A LOCAL CHURCH MONITORING AND EVALUATING ITS INTEGRAL MISSION WORK Local churches should monitor and evaluate their work for the following reasons:

■ If an organisation gains donor funding for envisioning the local church, the donor may require reports of the initiatives that the church carries out in, or with, the community to show that the envisioning phase had an impact.

■ If the donor funds inputs for the initiative in the community, the Christian organisation and local church will be required to assess their performance.

■ If a church goes ahead after the envisioning process and carries out integral mission without any external support, it should be encouraged to monitor and evaluate its work. There will be people that the local church should make itself accountable to, even if they do not ask the church to report on its work. For example:

• church members who are highly involved in initiatives should report to the wider church and other churches who are providing financial and prayer support. This helps them to feel involved in what is happening and encourages them that God is working in the lives of those in the community

• local churches that are part of a denomination could report on progress and impact to the leadership and at annual conferences. This may help to envision and encourage other local churches to engage in integral mission.

It is important to remember that local churches are not organisations. They have a wider agenda. Christian organisations therefore need to think carefully about the extent to which they should expect church members to become 'development professionals' in terms of the monitoring and evaluation expected. They should consider the areas in which the Christian organisation has the comparative advantage and can be more efficient. There are three main options:

■ The Christian organisation could take on most of the responsibility for assessing performance. This option could be a good one where the Christian organisation is accountable to institutional donors and therefore has an interest in good reporting. It may also be appropriate when working with a church that is carrying out integral mission work for the first time.

■ The Christian organisation could work with the local church to monitor progress and evaluate impact. They could take joint ownership and work together, dividing up tasks as appropriate.

■ The local church could be trained to assess performance itself. The Christian organisation could train two or three local church members, and perhaps a few community members, in monitoring and evaluating performance. This means that they have capacity to carry out initiatives in the future without technical support from the Christian organisation. This can be beneficial for churches that are showing potential to carry out integral mission without external support. However, there is a danger that people who are trained might leave the church in the future. It is important that the training they have received is passed on to other church members.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING WORK CARRIED OUT JOINTLY BY A CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION AND A LOCAL CHURCH   It can be helpful for Christian organisations to meet with each local church they are working with to review their work together one or twice each year.

Issues to explore could include:

Reviewing achievements

■ What has been achieved since the last review? Remember to celebrate these achievements!

■ Did everyone do what they said they would do? If not, why not?

■ Did anyone contribute more than they said they would to the work?

■ Do you think the work done together has had more impact than if the Christian organisation and local church had worked separately? Discuss strengths and weaknesses.

Reviewing the partnership itself (if a partnership exists)

■ Does each partner feel there is mutual accountability?

■ Does each partner feel that their contribution has been valued by the other partner?

■ Do the partners still share the same values? If not, it may not be worth continuing the partnership.

■ Are communication methods adequate, or should these be expanded?

■ What issues since the last review have affected the partnership positively or negatively?

The future

■ Are there ways in which the Christian organisation and local church could expand their work together, and therefore increase their impact?

■ Are there skills or knowledge relevant to the success of the work that neither the organisation nor the church possesses? If so, how could their capacity be developed?

■ In what ways could the relationship be deepened in the future, if appropriate?

■ Are there new strengths that the organisation or local church could offer to the work?

REFLECTION

■ **If we think church and community mobilisation is an appropriate objective for our organisation, do we know of funding organisations that might provide support for this?**

■ **How can we support local churches as they monitor and evaluate their integral mission work?**

Section 5

Resources and contacts

Recommended reading

- Blackman R (2003) ROOTS 5: *Project cycle management* Tearfund UK

- Clarke S, Blackman R and Carter I (2004) *Facilitation skills workbook* Tearfund UK

- Carter I (2004) PILLARS Guide: *Mobilising the church* Tearfund UK

- Carter I (2003) PILLARS Guide: *Mobilising the community* Tearfund UK

- Chester T (2004) *Good news to the poor: sharing the gospel through social involvement* Inter-Varsity Press

- Chester T (2002) *Justice, mercy and humility: integral mission and the poor* Paternoster Press

- Evans D (2004) *Creating space for strangers* Inter-Varsity Press

- Gordon G (2002) ROOTS 1 and 2: *Advocacy toolkit* Tearfund UK

- Hughes D with Bennett M (1998) *God of the poor* Operation Mobilisation

- Myers B (1999) *Walking with the poor: principles and practices of transformational development* Orbis Books

- Padilla R and Yamamori T (Eds) (2004) *The local church, agent of transformation* Ediciones Kairos

- Church, Community and Change is a facilitator-led training programme that can enable churches in the UK and Ireland to respond to the needs of their communities. For more information email: CCC@tearfund.org. A Spanish version of the booklets, contextualised for Latin America, is available from Ediciones Kairos, José Mármol 1734, B1602EAF Florida, Prov Bs As, Argentina. Email: edicion@kairos.org.ar

Websites

- **www.integral-mission.org/blog**
  An online discussion forum for integral mission.

- **http://tilz.tearfund.org/Topics/Church+and+Development.htm**
  The church and development section of Tearfund's tilz website.

- **www.micahnetwork.org**
  The Micah Network is a group of Christian relief, development and justice organisations from 75 countries. It aims to build the capacity of its members to respond to the needs of the poor, carry out integral mission and do advocacy work.

- **www.lareddelcamino.net**
  The Del Camino Network is a community of church leaders and Christian organisations that are committed to integral mission in Latin America.

Glossary

This glossary explains the meaning of certain words according to the way they are used in this book.

accountability	explaining decisions, actions or use of resources to stakeholders
advocacy	helping people to address underlying causes of poverty, bring justice and support good development through influencing the policies and practices of the powerful
beneficiary	someone who benefits from an initiative
bias	a view in favour of, or against, something
catalyst	something that causes change to happen
Christian organisation	Christian organisation that seeks to transform communities through development, relief and advocacy work. It is not the same as the local church
church and community mobilisation	the act of mobilising a local church to act as a facilitator in mobilising the whole community to address their needs
church mobilisation	the act of mobilising a local church to respond to needs in the community
coerce	to use pressure to make people do things they do not want to do
congregation	the same meaning as 'local church'
demonstration	showing people what it means to be part of God's kingdom, such as through caring for others. Also called 'social action' or 'social involvement'
denomination	a system into which local churches are organised and linked
desertification	a process by which land becomes dry until almost nothing can be cultivated, making it a desert
diocese	a district under the authority of a bishop
displaced	forced to move away from one's usual home
donor	a person or organisation that gives financial support
empowerment	the process by which people gain self-confidence and become agents of change
envision	to pass a vision to other people
eviction	when people are forced to move out of their home
exploit	to take advantage of someone or something for personal gain

facilitator	someone who enables a process to happen by encouraging people to find their own solutions to problems
gospel	the good news of Jesus Christ
hazard	a natural or man-made event or situation which could lead to danger, loss or injury
initiative	an activity or set of activities carried out by a local church or community to address a community issue
integral mission	speaking of and living out our faith in an undivided way in all aspects of life
labour-intensive	describing an activity that requires a large amount of human input
local church	a sustainable community of local Christian believers, accessible to all, where worship, discipleship, nurture and mission take place
Memorandum of Understanding	a document which states the intentions and responsibilities of two or more parties who have agreed to work together on a specific issue
mentor	a person who provides advice and support to those less experienced
midwife	someone who helps to deliver babies
mobilise	to help people to act on a vision and make it happen
multi-dimensional	having different aspects
NGO	non-governmental organisation
participatory	describes a situation where many people are taking part
pilot	a noun or a verb related to trying something out before implementing more widely
poor / poverty	lacking basic needs, such as food, clothes, shelter, social networks, political voice, faith in God
proclamation	telling people the gospel. Also called 'evangelism'
project	an activity carried out by a Christian organisation directly in a community
relief	help provided to those in need after a disaster
replication	repeating a process somewhere else
secular	not concerned with religious or spiritual matters
social action / social involvement	the process of a local church addressing material needs in society. Also called 'demonstration'
sustainability	when the benefits of an initiative continue
tangible	able to be felt or seen
welfare	provision of help to people in need, often without their participation

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