



## DNA Myanmar

Report—Cambodia Exposure Trip

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### Introduction

The nature of this report is to provide suggestions for the direction of DNA-Myanmar based upon what we observed in Cambodia. WDO—Wholistic Development Organization of Cambodia has developed a well oiled system for implementing wholistic development through the local church in villages throughout that country. There are many aspects of their work that we can use as a model because they have been proved to work well in the Asian context. Our conclusion is that there is much that we can implement from their model in Myanmar.

### History of WDO

The WDO originally was named FAITH—Food And Income Generation, Training and Health project initiated in 1999 by Southeast Asian Outreach (SAO). In 2003, mid-term evaluation paved the way for FAITH project's localization and shortly after, WDO was established on December 2005 as a local non-governmental organization (LNGO).

### WDO Vision

**Transformed Communities Everywhere** – Groups of Christians in Cambodia and beyond have enabled their communities to know God, have strong social capacity and consequently live in peace and harmony.

### WDO Mission

Facilitating, training and demonstrating a model of sustainable wholistic community development for individuals, local churches and social development agencies.

### WDO/Shining Light Project background

In 1999, Harvest conducted a vision conference introducing and teaching wholistic ministry, which encouraged church leaders to practice wholistic ministry. Several organizations were birthed out of this conference, one of which was the Wholistic Ministry Promotions Committee comprised of representatives from different Christian development organizations. These individuals met together regularly to build up a base of resources that could be used to train pastors in wholistic ministry. In June 2007, *Cheas Ponleu* (Shining Light Project) merged as a project of WDO.

## GOAL

To mobilize the Body of Christ in Cambodia to facilitate Wholistic Ministry effectively in their communities.

## Shining Light

**WDO has two branches.** The first is the *Shining Light* wholistic ministry training for pastors. We will discuss this branch first.

## Shining Light Activities

**Capacity Building**—WDO has trained a team of wholistic ministry facilitators that live in the communities around Cambodia and are responsible for training and mentoring pastors.

- The facilitators are employees of WDO (see picture.) They receive a minimal salary and are under the supervision of WDO. They return to Phnom Penh once a month for care and debriefing. All the facilitators meet together once every three months for three days to review their activities, problem solve and to make necessary adjustments to their ministerial plans and strategies.
- Many of the facilitators are young people and the pastors are older and more experienced, which produces a challenge to the Asian authority structure. The problem is resolved by making it clear that the facilitator is not the leader, rather the facilitator. The pastors will learn from each other and from the materials with the aid of the facilitator. This arrangement is acceptable to the pastors.
- WDO provides a motor bike and/or travel expenses for the facilitators.
- A diploma is offered for the course. The pastor must commit formally to attend all of the trainings and do the assignments for the entire course. The assignments are to teach their churches what they are learning in the course and encourage and train the members of their congregations to do wholistic ministry through Seed Projects and personal applications.
- A cohort of pastors (Pastor Forums) is selected from a region to participate in a 12 month TOT. The cohort is a minimum of 20 pastors and a maximum of 30.
- The pastors take turns hosting the TOTs. Because some of the pastors must travel great distances the travel costs exceed some of their budgets, WDO provides a portion of their expenses, but not all. Typically the assistance equals about US\$1-2 per person per month for those that require it.
- The monthly TOT will last for several hours including ice breakers, testimonies, study the lesson, planning for the coming month.
- If there are pastors who are graduates from prior TOTs in the region, they are frequently invited to facilitate a TOT session.
- During the month between the TOTs the facilitator travels to the different villages to provide follow up.



**Projects done by the communities**—The following list is provided by WDO. Many of these projects are larger than the prescribed “smallness” of a seed project, yet are projects that have been done by the local communities.

- Construction of dirt roads, ring wells and hand pumps, irrigation canals
- Backyard gardening, distribution of seeds (vegetables and fruit trees) for planting
- Distribution of small animals for raising
- Bible studies, teaching children
- Helping widows to repair/construct a decent house
- Introduction of income generating activities, such as sewing, small business, savings groups, etc.

**Impact**

- Pastors and local church leaders have started using the curriculum they have learned from the TOT to teach their congregation in their discipleship making program
- Other local church leaders and lay leaders prepared their sermons based on the concepts of wholistic ministry to teach and preach in their worship services as well as in their Sunday School programs.
- Implementation of seed projects has begun the process of lessening the gap between the Christians and the non-Christians in the communities.
- Relationship between the churches and the communities have improved.
- More converts (1563 accepted Christ)
- Relationship with local authority has improved
- Standard of living of the people has improved
- Christian and non-Christian work together without discrimination.

**2006-2010**

Pastors who were trained	Participants who received training from pastors	Seed projects implemented by pastors	Development programs implemented by pastors	People who received benefit from seed projects	New believers
2144	12,732	1377	217	88,962	1563

**Observations**

Our opinion is that the Shining Light model is extremely effective in the Asian context. The model we observed was only rural but with appropriate adjustments this should also work for the urban areas. The vision conference is but a teaser of what may happen. There are few pastors who are able to effectively implement wholistic ideas and methodologies based only upon a vision conference and a brief 1-2 day TOT. A one year TOT model is observably much more effective to produce sustainable results.

WDO has access to foreign funds for operational expenses but for the Shining light program the expenses aren't great. This issue would need to be studied carefully in the Myanmar context. In our opinion, each denomination and/or convention could provide for the salaries of their own facilitators. This would require the denominational leaders to fully embrace a national plan.

To properly begin this project in Myanmar we would probably need outside financial help. Stars of Dawn (SOD) is strategically set up to provide training for the facilitators. However, it would be our recommendation to send the first few cohorts of facilitator trainees, possibly graduates of the SOD, to receive practical training outside of Myanmar. WDO has accepted to receive teams of trainees for 1-2 months of practical training. FH-Vietnam is also willing to do the same. We suggest that the first 40 facilitator trainees receive 3-4 months of exposure and training in these two countries, in cohorts of 10-15 persons. Once the Myanmar team is functioning well with national leadership then we could provide our own training within the country in the SOD or other institutions.

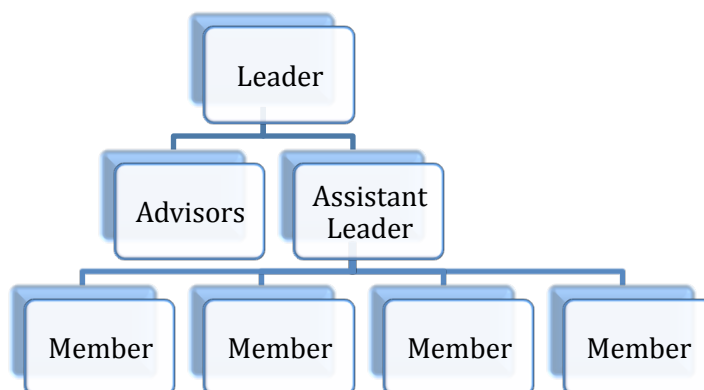
For this strategy to be effective in Myanmar, it would be the most effective if it were done as a joint effort of all the denominations and Christian organizations. To accomplish this there would need to be a national alliance of churches, denominations and Christian organizations, which is the express purpose of DNA-Myanmar to provide cohesive direction and the active participation of the members of the alliance.

### WDO—WCDP (Wholistic Community Development Project)

**WDO has two branches.** Now we will look at the second branch, which is the *WCDP—Wholistic Community Development Project*, which operates through community based Christian Core Groups.

#### Christian Core Group--CCG

The Christian Core Group is a group of five to seven members composed of Christians from the local church and non-Christian persons selected from the community by the community. The pastor serves as the leader and the village chief is on the board of advisors.

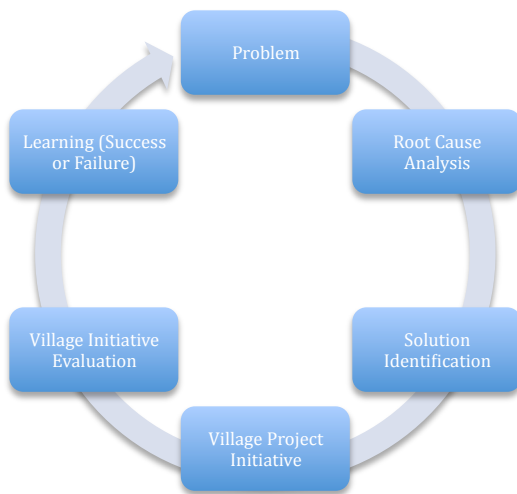


## Goal

Groups of committed Christians improve the physical, social, moral and environmental situation of people through establishing sustainable integrated community development practice within communities.

## Wholistic Community Development Process

The WDO works in partnership and through capacity building with the CCG. The CCG, who are residents of the community are the engine that produces development. The WDO works with them through training, support and prayer. The CCG is trained how to resolve their own problems through the following process.



## Training Provided

- Facilitation Skills
- Small Proposal Writing
- Agriculture
- Conflict Resolution
- Health and Sanitation
- Community Development
- Leadership
- Human Rights and Gender Issues
- Communications

## Activities Implemented

- Latrine building
- Well digging
- Irrigation canal
- Saving groups
- Rice banks
- Pig Raising
- Home Gardening
- Water Filters (sand)
- Methane gas systems
- Chicken Raising

## Photos

1. Group Photo
2. Rice Bank
3. Home built for widow
4. Well for rice paddy

- Road Repair
- Gender Activities

## **Impact**

- The projects enabled the people to have enough food to eat because of rice provision, rice loans and rice banks
- Cases of diarrhea and other diseases have decreased because of clean water from drinking well projects, water filters.
- The surroundings are cleaner because the people have more ready access to water to clean.
- Water is being supplied to rice farms because of irrigation canals and irrigation machines , thus there is greater harvest, which means more income.
- Animal raising activities added to income.
- People have sent their children to school and seek health treatment because of increased income.
- People are able to pay their debts to usurious lenders because they have access to alternative money savings/lending through savings groups where members help each other and support each other through the savings groups.
- Because of savings, many people are able to afford better homes.
- Cases of domestic violence have decreased.
- The project helped build the capacity of CCGs through facilitation skills to train them for community management, development work, agricultural techniques and fish raising.
- The projects facilitated open communications and cooperation among community members through sharing ideas as well as material things.
- Relationship between churches and local authorities have improved
- Harassment and rejection of Christians has been reduced.
- Christians and non-Christians work together well.
- More people are converted.

## **Observations**

In the context of Myanmar, certain aspects of the WCDP would not be feasible at this time because of their NGO nature but other aspects are. For example, the central element of the WCDP strategy, which is the CCG, a core group selected by the local community, which is composed of both Christians and non-Christians to identify, analyze, and resolve problems through village initiatives is an excellent concept that could potentially be adapted and used successfully. Many of the trainings offered are also useful and can be offered as there are available trainers. The savings groups and rice banks are fantastic concepts and don't require outside financing to be successful.