**Community Development and Church Planting Movements**

Access Ministry and Community Development (CD)

Goal of CD: improve the quality of life of a community seeking the opportunity to share Christ

Goal of CPM: rapidly plant house churches which plant house churches

In a typical CD project, a CD expert enters a community and surveys to discover what the community feels their needs are. Then the CD expert will seek to mobilize the communities resources to meet that need. The CD expert introduces as few outside resources as possible so that the project will become self-sustaining. A typical CD project is focused on one community, is long term, and can involve a large investment from outside.

In a typical access ministry, CPM practitioners will serve a particular need and try to meet as many people as possible in as many communities as possible. The CPM practitioner is trying to identify a certain type of person, called a person of peace (POP), who will introduce them to their friends and family network. Research has shown that at any time 2% of the population in a given population segment are open to spiritual truths. Since the goal of CPM is to rapidly plant reproducing churches, the CPM practitioner uses access ministries to gain access to large numbers of people hoping to find this 2%. Examples of access ministries include a traveling medical clinic, a mobile library, as well as tutoring or teaching literacy, health, nutrition, sanitation, agriculture principles, or money management.

What is the difference between Community Development and Access Ministry? While there is significant overlap, generally speaking an Access Ministry is by definition a kind of community development, but Community Development is not necessarily an Access Ministry. For example, an organization might build a health clinic in a community as a Community Development project. The people in that community would be served by that health clinic; however, it isn’t certain that a Person of Peace (POP) lives in that community. On the other hand, an organization might sponsor a mobile health clinic. Because the clinic is mobile it has the potential to meet a greater number of people, increasing the likelihood of finding POPs One key principle is to look for people in that community who are willing to give their time, talent, and resources to see a need addressed. Often this is a person of peace or at least an ally that will allow you enough time to find the person(s) of peace.

As another example, an organization might build a library in a village as a Community Development project. The people in that village would be served by the library but it isn’t certain a POP lives in that village. On the other hand, a mobile library visits multiple villages and therefore comes into contact with more people.

As a final example, an organization might build a children’s home to serve the poor children in a certain community. This is a Community Development project. An Access Ministry would be to tutor poor children with their adult family members in multiple villages.[[1]](#footnote-1) It is important to keep in mind that we are aiming to reach households and not individuals. If children are part of your interactions, you need to involve parents and/or adults from their households. This is a huge piece of making sure we honor their communities. We also do not want to promote reaching children without their households of adults.

The ideal Access Ministry 1) is not located in one location but has the opportunity to move from one place to another, 2) does not require large sums of money to start and operate, 3) provides a strong rationale to interact with a large number of people, and 4) engages the community in ways which bubble up community advocates who may or may not be POPs. Through the process of interaction, the DMM catalyst is more readily able to locate potential POPs.

Leveraging CD and Access Ministries to facilitate CPM

1. Design the CD project so that the CPM practitioner will come into contact with as many people as possible.

2. Freely use *shema* statements. In CPM methodology, we believe that the Holy Spirit has gone before us to prepare people to receive the gospel messenger. Our job is to identify ourselves as spiritual people so that these seekers, POPs, can find us.

One natural way to do this is to explain our motivation for helping others. Jesus taught that we are help our neighbour; He then defined a neighbour as anyone with a need. He also taught that we help all people regardless of race or religion. Finally, Jesus taught that to whom much is given much is expected. Since we have been blessed in many ways (with health, finances, education, opportunities), we want to help others.

3. As a follower of Christ, prayer is a natural response to someone’s needs. As you encounter someone who has a need it is very natural to offer to pray with that person.

4. Introduce your contacts to Discovery Bible Stories. Typically we study 24 stories from the Old and New Testament which gradually bring a group of people to the point of decision to trust Christ. The stories act as a filter. People who are not open to spiritual matters drop out so that usually by the time you reach the final story only those truly open are still studying. One way to offer the stories is to say something like, “I know some stories from the Holy Books which have really helped my family and me. If you are interested I can share them with you.” This is a very low key approach, as the person doesn’t feel any pressure to study with you.

5. You can also explain that we are physical and spiritual people so you care about both their physical and spiritual needs.

Conclusion

In CPM implementation it is imperative to both demonstrate and declare the message of the Father’s heart among the UPGs. The discernment of Access ministry can become a huge piece to see the opening up of communities who are waiting to be found. Through Access ministry, we want to invite groups to study Discovery Bible Stories with us (as we commit ourselves to not stay in the forming Discovery Group longer than 4 times). This helps to make sure that God’s Word and the Holy Spirit are the true teachers, as you Model-Equip-Assist-Leave/Coach from outside the group with key inside facilitators (POPs or natural leaders). We can use any number of methods such as the above to invite people to study with us.

1. For further reading, see *Bhojpuri Breakthrough: A Movement That Keeps Multiplying* by Victor John with Dave Coles, available on Amazon. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)