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HEALING LIVES

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CONTENTS

From the Editor

"It Is Ours!"



Book Review: A Long Walk to Water 8

You CAN Teach an Old Dog New Tricks

Multiplying Senior Leadership

12



It's A Pocess: Transition to Local Leadership



The People of Stone

Learning from Nehemiah

^h20

CHE Failure: When Local Ownership Did Not Happen

> Donor Story: Frana Hamilton



Madelle Payne, Editor

When God put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, He gave them stewardship of His masterpiece. He put them in charge—with real responsibility. For instance, as Adam gave names to each animal, he had to own that decision and live with the consequences. The Garden was truly in the care of Adam and Eve. And thus, we can imagine, the work of their hands and minds was extremely fulfilling and satisfying to them.

When Medical Ambassadors goes into a community, we recognize the most profound changes will happen only if the local people control the decisions made and the resulting actions. As you read this issue of *Healing Lives*, watch for instances of local ownership in the stories you see.

You'll find the feature article by Ravi Jayakaran about the subject of ownership (page 4). In two stories, John Payne addresses situations in which the lack of local ownership brings complexity or sabotage to good projects (pages 6 and 22). Victor Chen writes about biblical people who learned to work together to accomplish an enormous goal (page 20). And the "Field Notes" bring you current happenings from around the world (page 14).

Turning over leadership happens organizationally as well as locally. Bibiana Mac Leod writes of new leaders emerging in the Caribbean and South America (page 12). Bill and Sharon Bieber tell the story of watching a young woman grow into the Area Coordinator in Papua New Guinea (page 16). And that woman, Emma Wakpi, writes (page 18) about a downtrodden people group who discover their value as they connect God's story to their own cultural stories.

And finally, Steve Belton, MAI's President of the Board and an ob-gyn physician, describes attending a Women's Cycle of Life training seminar (page 10). Despite his considerable credentials, Steve says you can still teach an old dog new tricks!

There's something amazing about empowering people to use their ideas and efforts for good, whether locally or across a continent. Through MAI's training programs people learn to work together; learn how to carry out their desires for bettering their communities; learn to know and love the God Who put them there as stewards. Through this process—wonderfully!—people find their God-given potential and fulfillment.



Dr. Ravi I. Jayakaran, President/CEO

Ownership is imperative in the work of community development.

Ownership is part of the DNA of a community's *survival strategy*—a combination of multiple things implemented by the people, such as crop cultivation, raising animals, generating revenue, solving problems they encounter, and preparing for uncertainties. Every community owns its survival strategy, because it is time tested, inherited from ancestors, and extremely relevant in its context.

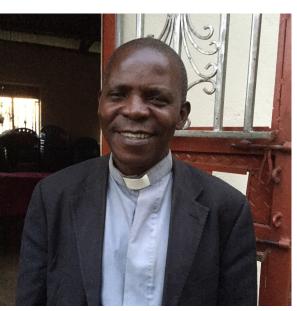
Good development practices involve making an accurate assessment of what а community is already doing as a part of its survival strategy. Assessments analyze capacities and vulnerabilities, resulting in confirming practices already being done or changing what's not working.

Sometimes outside agencies or missionaries introduce heavilyfunded projects that do not even consider the survival strategy of the community for whom they are designing the program. How can the residents "own" something they have had no input in creating? How can they maintain a program without the know-how or resources?

MAI's Community Health Evangelists go to great lengths to ensure that those they train decide which of the village problems need addressing, thereby owning the changes involved. One way of ensuring this is to keep outside resources to a minimum. Exploration of existing resources within a village offers residents a new perspective—namely, that the resources a community needs for building and strengthening itself are often already available inside the community—unless that community has been part of a major disaster or a protracted catastrophe.

Other interesting things that may develop in a well **"Owned"** program are **Sustainability** and **Empowerment**. All three are closely connected. If the people have a strong sense of ownership for a program and see how it supports the community's survival strategy, the natural result is the people will feel increasingly empowered. The more they are empowered, the more their ownership grows, and the more sustainable the project will be.

Ownership, Sustainability, and Empowerment are all closely connected.



Rev. Godfrey, CHE Facilitator Some time back I visited a CHE program in a village in Uganda. As the local CHE Facilitator, Rev. Godfrey, took me around the village, I kept asking him some uncomfortable questions related to community ownership: How much was built on the foundation the community already had and how much was imposed from outsiders? As we walked around visiting CHE households one after another and talking with villagers, a small group of people gathered to walk along with us. Since most of these villagers could follow our conversation in English, I saw them eagerly responding and defending their program. This is a very healthy sign. People will help



continue what they are engaged in creating and will fervently defend it as their own.

Later when I attended a savingsgroup meeting in the village, I saw how they had taken the initial program to a new level. They were considering other options for investment—another sign of

People will help continue what they are engaged in creating and will fervently defend it as their own.

growth in ownership—owning it enough to make their own changes, beyond what MAI had first taught and shown them!

It was then that I shared with the villagers that I had been testing them to check for their degree of ownership. Their response was heartwarming for me. "Of course, we own it," they told me. "It is ours!"

For further Bible study on Ownership, read Genesis 1:28-31



John Payne, MD, Advancement Facilitator

Ownership of water supplies is a very tricky issue in rural Africa and in much of the rest of the developing world. In most developed parts of the world, public water companies supply water, or water comes from private wells monitored by public agencies.

In rural Africa, much of the water comes from wells drilled by outsiders – from groups like the United Nations or private charitable organizations. The expectation used to be: "Outsiders will build the well and pumping mechanism, and then turn the completed project over to locals to maintain." However, maintenance often required more funds, expertise, and trust of one's neighbors than most local groups possessed. That meant many wells had a short life expectancy. In 2008 the British magazine, *The Guardian** estimated that about 60% of the wells it sampled in developing countries were not functioning. They said that much of the \$360 million spent by outsiders had been wasted.

Since then, outside agencies have improved their methods. Many now focus on lower-cost products and put more energy into training locals to perform maintenance and repairs. In some cases, they even train villagers how to charge fees for water. These fees allow communities to save for repairs and spare parts needed later. However, systems set up by outsiders often fail after the outsiders leave. In some cases, local politicians promise free water to attract voters and thus sabotage maintenance funding. In the end, unless local people are working together to carry out their own plans, water often dries up, and trust between local people suffers.

Local ownership is one of the reasons Community Heath Evangelism (CHE) can be so powerful. CHE cannot begin work until local people choose their own leaders to pursue their own goals and protect their own results. In some places I have seen, where local leaders prioritized improving their water supply, community people pooled their resources to develop simple water projects. In others, communities who had learned to work together showed they were able to maintain the new equipment as part of their appeal for government construction help.

However, the best source of group trust and cooperation comes when local villagers discover the love of Jesus Christ. Then loving their neighbors as themselves is just part of loving Jesus. As the love of Jesus permeates a community, people are much more willing to act unselfishly and volunteer for the good of their community. Soon this love begins to spread to other communities, and true regional transformation begins.



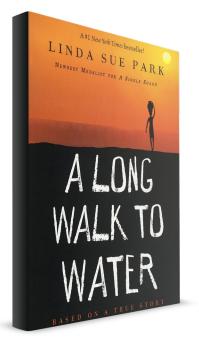
Medical Ambassadors International's strategy of Community Health Evangelism is transforming lives in communities in Western Kenya. Watch this clip about one community that created more than 20 protected water springs, providing clean water to prevent many diseases that were common in the area.

* http://youtu.be/1ThMA8x1Zo4

^{*} The Guardian Mon. Feb. 25, 2008 https://www.theguardian.com/society/katineblog/2008/feb/25/waterdebatedoboreholeswork



BOOK REVIEW: A LONG WALK TO WATER



Reviewed by April Brown, Graphic Designer

<u>A Long Walk to Water</u> by Linda Sue Park is a story of two young Africans. One boy. One girl. Both on very long walks.

One is a story of tragedy, loss, fear, and the hope that sustains us. The other is a story of hardship, trials, and the hope that sustainability can bring. These two stories are woven together in a way that keeps you reading "just one more chapter."

Based on a true story, <u>A Long Walk to Water</u> gives a glimpse into the difficult lives of the Sudanese people during the war that began in 1985 and the day-to-day challenges in 2008. Life is harder for these elevenyear-olds than we Westerners can even imagine. And yet they have hope. Hope for a future. Hope for happiness. Hope that they can help make change. Hope for themselves, for their families, for the people of Sudan.



You CAN Teach an Old Dog New Tricks

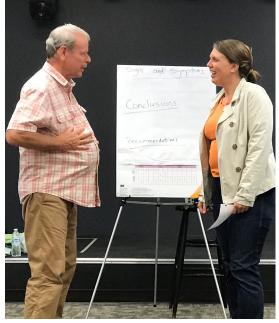
Stephen Belton, MD Chairman, Board of Directors for MAI

There is a saying, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," that I was able to test recently. My findings? False! Yes, old dogs (in this instance, me) can learn new and fresh ideas! The setting for my "research" was the recent MAI Women's Cycle of Life (WCL) training in Tucson, Arizona. Consider this: I have been an ob-gyn doctor for 40 years, and I am currently Board Chair for MAI, yet there were indeed some new "tricks" in store for me despite my familiarity with all this material. Yes, this week-long conference kept me on the edge of my seat, as I was constantly learning and seeing and hearing things with this group of 25 or so women (no surprise that I was the only male participant!) that deeply impacted me in my walk with God and my view of the work He is doing throughout the world with this material and the people and organizations that are using it.

The material we covered in that week was important and ultimately will be highly useful when introduced into communities throughout the world, for even basic health knowledge is often lacking. It affirms the way God values women as being created equally in His image. It recognizes the value and essential role of women in families and communities. It provides women with important health information for every stage of their lives from puberty to pregnancy to menopause – basic information that is most often not known even by the adults in a community. It gives godly guidance in relationships with husbands, family, and neighbors. These were the things I knew already. The new and exciting revelations for me from this training experience fell into three broad categories: First, an affirmation of the importance of what MAI has done and is doing all over the globe. Second, a recognition of the excellence of this WCL material and its presenters. Third, hope for the future as I participated with this diverse group of energetic, bright, talented women whose heart's desire is to bring the Gospel alongside tangible help to women, families, and communities all around the world.

This training, hosted by MAI and Global CHE Network, and this material represent the tip of the iceberg of what these organizations are doing to build relationships with the world's most vulnerable people and to bring healing to their communities. The training facilitators, with passion, humor, energy, and emotion, led the group in skits, stories and discussions to discover together the truths behind the content. The group of attendees gave me great hope! We ranged in age from 22 to 82 and brought a wide range of life and mission experience yet shared a common core of a Gospel-driven center, desiring to share the ultimate Good News with women and their communities far and wide. These, more than anything, brought a smile to this "old dog's" face!







As the only male participant at the training, I had the privilege of pretending to be the mother in labor. MAI's trainings include hands on practice, participation from all, and an important element in learning: laughter.



MULTIPLYING SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Bibiana Mac Leod, Resource Facilitator (formerly Regional Coordinator for South America and Caribbean)

Editor's note: What happens when experienced and expert senior leaders face transition? Some leaders cling to power and position, long past their time of usefulness. Bibiana models the view that a leader's stepping down actually produces multiplication of ministry.

The core values of Community Health Evangelism (CHE) include multiplication, which must happen not only at the village or neighborhood level but also among us—trainers and coordinators. We know God leads us to people in the field whom He is calling to the task. We invest our lives in them; we build relationships and experience ministry together. He does the rest.

I met **Flor de Leon** in Dominican Republic while attending her local church. She was interested in our participatory teaching techniques and attended a peri-natal CHE training while also helping us at the local office. In 2009 Flor and her husband, Hiran, were asked to lead CHE training in their country. They had started a CHE program in El Ejido, witnessing transformation of individuals and families, then expanded to other towns through partnerships with other denominations and mission groups.

Meanwhile in Peru, **Marco Quispe** and his wife, Vilma, were growing in experience, conducting CHE in the outskirts of Trujillo. Marco had learned to use Bible storytelling techniques and taught it to other coordinators in the region.



I started to see that God was raising this new generation of CHE leaders and asked them to help teach their skills to co-workers from other countries. Flor and Hiran traveled to help our partners in other Caribbean countries; Marco taught in Haiti and Dominican Republic. Most recently, they were both fully responsible for the Spanish CHE Internship offered in Santiago, Dominican Republic.

So, my task as Regional Coordinator was shared with Flor and Marco as they progressively took more and more responsibilities over the years. It was time for me to step down.



At the end of 2018, Medical Ambassadors International recognized Flor and Marco as subregional coordinators: Marco for South America and Flor for the Caribbean. We are happy to see their growth and desire to serve God wherever He takes them.

New challenges are coming our way: more and more South American indigenous people from oral cultures are asking for CHE training. Marco is the son of Quechuas, descendants from the Inca. Along with Orfa Gómez, a young woman from the Bolivian Guarani tribe, we have been working together to adapt teaching materials to oral learners—a curriculum we have taught in Peru, Argentina, Brazil, and Bolivia.

Do I have less work than before? Not at all! God is leading me into new areas, some of them in cooperation with other MAI co-workers: a program targeting the first 1000 days of life; the training of birth attendants in Haiti; monitoring and evaluation; and...more learning for me. Wheaton College offers a two-year part-time program for a Masters in Humanitarian Disaster leadership. So I am back in school, learning exciting new topics and how MAI can be on the frontlines, offering what we do best—organizing communities for sustainable development in the areas of risk management and response to emergencies.

There is so much to do in the Kingdom! We thank God for raising up new leaders and pray He will continue to equip each of us for the task.

He will continue to equip each of us for the task

FIELD NOTES Uplifting news from MAI's workers around the world.

COUNTRY: ALBANIA DJ, Regional Coordinator

He gave me life when I was "dead."

MAI's team in Albania meets regularly with women in one of the communities where they are serving. One morning our CHE worker asked them, "Why do you believe in Jesus? What change has He made in your lives?" A couple of their most poignant answers were: "He gave me life when I was 'dead.' I feel the difference that He has made in my life and that's why I fully trust Him." Another answer was: "Who else can we turn to? There isn't hope or life anywhere else. He has given us light, life and hope. I have read literature from other faiths, and there isn't life anywhere else."



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SOUTHEAST ASIA Bill & Sharon Bieber, *Regional Coordinators*

Everlasting life as long-term development in heaven

Ma Marla is a CHE committee member and the committee chair on agriculture on the City Council in her village. Her village went through great transformation when CHE was introduced. She tells how before CHE there was no cleanliness or sanitation; people were idle, playing cards and gossiping, many were malnourished and took their sick children to health centers and hospitals for little illnesses. Since CHE has been introduced, people now clean their surroundings and have sanitary water-sealed toilets. They have planted herb and vegetable gardens. They use first aid and herbs and prayer for sickness, which they learned in the mother's CHE health classes; they go less often to the clinics. They practice the three "R's": recycle, reuse, and reduce to help with waste management. Spiritually, they practice God's command to love their neighbors as themselves. Above all, they know where they will go when they die. Ma Marla says, "We have everlasting life as long-term development in heaven!"

CREATIVE ACCESS COUNTRY GC, Regional Coordinator

It was written...

Last November I was riding in a taxi from the train station to my host's home. I asked the driver to pick a place where we could stop and have breakfast. He chose an inexpensive, open-air place where we had flat bread and vegetable curry. He was amazed he was eating with a foreigner and exclaimed, "It was written that this should happen today." After breakfast he asked me to wait while he finished smoking. "I'm addicted to two things," he said, "smoking and my wife." He told me his story as he drove. He was the only surviving sibling of ten children. All but he had died in infancy. Now he is married with two teenagers of his own. I tried to explain how God can deliver him from addictions. I gave him a little extra money when we stopped and suggested he buy a New Testament in his language. He gave me a sincere handshake, eyes not wavering from mine, tearing up. That deep of a response is rare! I knew the Spirit had been at work. I had to agree: It was written that today this should happen!



Sushma's Story

Sushma, her husband and two children are fortunate. Sushma's husband earns sufficient money for their living expenses; they are neither rich nor poor. So, when CHE home visitors came and taught Sushma how to safeguard their drinking water and keep her surroundings pollution-free and clean, she paid little attention. The CHE workers were disappointed but remained persistent in their teachings. They taught her the importance of kitchen gardens and clean water, yet Sushma was negligent in following their suggestions. But then she noticed something. Her family frequently was sick, and they spent a lot of money on treatments. When she observed the families in the village who practiced CHE teachings, they appeared healthier and cleaner. This changed Sushma's attitude. She now stands as an example to her community. Her home and dirt-floored patio are kept clean, she has a kitchen garden, she reconstructed a sanitary toilet, and her children are well kept. She has become a respected CHE volunteer and displays great interest in all new trainings.



IT'S A PROCESS: Transition to Local Leadership

Bill & Sharon Bieber, Regional Coordinators, SE Asia & West Pacific

We first noticed Emma Wakpi because she seemed to be smiling all the time. As we got to know her, that sunny smile revealed a somewhat shy but brilliant and competent young Papua New Guinean woman. She had just returned to PNG after completing her bachelor's degree in Business or administrative work as long as it did not involve answering the telephone or talking to people! They knew that would change with time, so they hired her.

We encouraged Emma to attend the Community Health Evangelism (CHE) training in 2003,



Sharon and Emma

in Australia. In her job interview with the administrator of the mission where she worked when we met in Goroka, she told them that she could do any financial and it became obvious that she had a natural communication gift that inspired others. We realized her leadership potential under that shy exterior. Soon these

gifts became recognized in her workplace, in the communities where she taught CHE lessons, and at the national level of Christian Health Services where she became part of the executive team. Her influence there helped CHE become accepted as the disease prevention strategy of Christian Health Services and was recommended for all the church-run health facilities in the country. This passion to help CHE spread and to watch communities transform continues, as in 2018 Emma completed a master's degree in Health Policy, Planning and Leadership in Perth, Australia. It also makes her a logical leader to contribute to MAI as a full member and to extend her influence by taking over the role we have been doing in the Pacific Region.

Transition. Ownership. Sustainability. Partnerships. It all seems a maze, but gradually the mist



lifts and the way forward becomes Consistent clear. with MAI goals principles, and we know that local leaders will relate better than outsiders in the culture they understand. Still, one of the issues in transitioning to

local leadership and ownership is replacing outside financial dependence. As talked we through the need for long-term sustainability with Emma, a social entrepreneurship idea emergedlike a community-asset map that reveals local resources, coffee production came to the surface. Emma's father owned a coffee processing factory that was sitting idle in the middle of their tribal lands. The tribal lands are owned by small coffee farmers capable of growing some of the best coffee in the world. It seemed a no brainer!

A Christian coffee consultant became known to us at about the same time. His expertise promises to make improvements to the mill, enabling it to produce specialty grade coffee and help market it to world consumers. From the coffee cherry to the cup, the hope will be to see the chain shortened and the profits returned to PNG, giving support for farmers and their community development, for Emma's personal and ministry needs as Area Coordinator, for other trainers in the area who need travel funds to keep visiting their communities...and for us coffee drinkers who want our daily grind to count for the Kingdom. We believe it can all happen with God's help and for His glory.

THE PEOPLE OF STONE

Editor's Note: Emma Wakpi is MAI's Area Coordinator in Papua New Guinea. She explains how the Minimbi people group had to see themselves through God's story in order to claim ownership to their identity as an important and relevant people group.



When introducing the Community Health Evangelism program to new community, а the second lesson of a typical six-session series is called, "The Power of Story." The community is encouraged to tell their traditional cultural stories with a view of seeing how these might intersect with God's story for their community. As Acts 17:26-27 (NIV) states: "From one man he made all the nations.

that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us."

As Emma came to this session in her training with the Minimbi people group from the remote Western Highland in Papua New Guinea, they explained why they are known as the "people of stone." They live in a very rugged stony place, called in derision the "back page" of the area. Also, their ancestor Minimbi was hatched from an egg placed on a stone. Therefore, they see themselves as "Stone People," even placing their hand on a stone when they swear to the truth. (They say, "Touch stone; I'm telling the truth!")

Emma asked them, "Who in the Bible is called a Rock?" "Jesus is," they replied. The room was silent for a time, then their faces began to light up, as the analogy became apparent.

"Let's read about others who are called stones in the Bible," Emma continued. Turning to 1 Peter 2:4-5, they read that Christ, the living Stone, had been rejected like them, but was precious to God. Then they learned that they, "like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood."

The excitement in the room was building! "We

Their faces began to light up... "We are stones—living ones!"

are stones—living ones!" The room was buzzing with chatter now. "And we are children of the King, being built into a house for Him to occupy!" Their importance and significance to God was becoming obvious to all. "We are not worthless people, we are royal priests for God."

"We really came from Jesus!" someone stated. "And when we touch a stone now, it is Christ the Rock that we are basing our truth upon." Soon someone else wanted to share another Minimbi story:

One day Minimbi was invited by the "people of the clouds" to go up and share a meal with them. So, he tried to climb a banana tree to get up to the clouds, but his ladder broke and he fell to the ground. The "people of the clouds" felt sorry for him and threw down a pig for him to cook.

When he started to cook it, his Stone neighbor smelled the smoke and came over to join him. They both ate only the vegetables and left the meat. After the meal Minimbi gave the meat to his neighbor and told him to cook it the next day.

That day a third Stone person came to eat with the second Stone, but again they ate only the vegetables, and the third Stone was given the meat to take home. This went on for nine days until finally the ninth Stone, named Mitiku, cooked the pig. Nobody came to eat with him, so he ate the pig.

Feeling very full and sluggish, Mitiku went to the stream for a drink. As he did so, healing properties went into the water from the meat he had eaten that came from the "people of the clouds." From then on, they believed that the stream of water had healing properties for their cuts and wounds.

"How do you relate this story to God's Story?" Emma asked the Minimbi.

Gradually, with her help, they pieced together their story with God's story of the redemption of mankind, until a true "redemptive analogy" emerged.

Minimbi, representing mankind, was created for fellowship with God. Trying to reach God in his own way, Minimbi fell. But God in His love—even at the time of man's eviction from the Garden of Eden gave the promise of the Way to God that was for all people. This promise was passed on from generation to generation until at the right time, God sent Jesus into the world of humanity. Jesus became the "river



a true "redemptive analogy" emerged

of life" for all mankind to find healing from their fallen state as they partake of Him.

The Minimbi people, once thinking of themselves as despised and worthless, now know they are so precious to God that He used their own culture to finally bring them to knowledge of His true intention for them as a people. They have dignity and a new desire to continue learning how they can fulfill God's plan.

And could it be that God has embedded into every culture on earth keys like this to open their hearts to an understanding of Him and grasp the full ownership of who they are in Christ?



Dr. Victor Chen, Global Coordinator

The book of Nehemiah is often read as a wonderful example of leadership. A catalyst can mobilize a struggling community when he pursues the vision placed in his heart by the Lord, humbles himself before God, and employs the skills and wisdom God has equipped him with through years of molding and experience. The nation of Israel had been destroyed by the Babylonian empire, and the Jews were scattered and taken into captivity. Eventually, Babylon fell to the new world power, Persia. Under the Persian King Cyrus, the first group of Jewish exiles was granted permission to return to Jerusalem. Ninety years later, Nehemiah, then serving as King Artaxerxes' royal cupbearer, was moved to tears after hearing reports that the walls of Jerusalem still lay in ruins, even after two groups of Jews had returned to Jerusalem and the passing of decades. After a period of fasting and prayer to God, Nehemiah received favor and support from King Artaxerxes to journey to Jerusalem to help rebuild the walls of the city. The completion of the walls represented not only security and protection for the Jews from their surrounding enemies but the fulfilling of God's promise to return and restore His people to Israel after a painful period of exile.

... moved to action to help their own communities, guided by a dream greater and more hopeful than the present reality

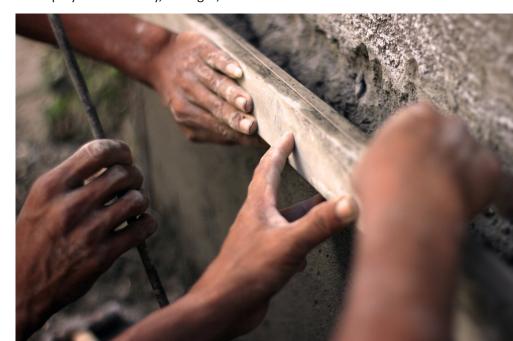
We go on to read about Nehemiah's strong capabilities as a learner, researcher, and collaborator and how he dealt with skepticism, conflict, and the threat of enemies. In Medical Ambassadors' work with communities, we often see that the first steps begin with one or a few key individuals who are moved to action to help their own communities, guided by a dream greater and more hopeful than the present reality. In the example of Nehemiah, it is instructive to see how God used him to help the Jews of Jerusalem take ownership of a common vision. As the people of Jerusalem also caught the vision to rebuild the walls, several key things happened. Nobles, priests and workers, along with their families, were tasked together with rebuilding specific sections of the gates and walls. The most prominent people were right in the middle of the work, leading by example. In many places, families were tasked with rebuilding sections of the wall right in front of their own houses. Nehemiah understood human nature well—if a family's security was directly at stake, they would spare nothing to have the strongest and best-designed wall so no invaders would breach their section. Where there were other vulnerable spots, Nehemiah stationed people in family clans to both repair and defend the wall. Who would fight harder against the threat of enemies than members of the same family fighting to defend their own loved ones next to them? The importance and urgency to defend the city moved from being an abstract idea to one directly tied to the wellbeing of one's own family and neighbors and the grace of God's hand and promises.

As the people of Jerusalem worked together, they rebuilt the walls in 52 days, a feat so amazing that their enemies could only conclude in fear that God was on the side of the Jews. Everyone knew something special had happened that involved more than construction. For the Jews, it also meant a turning back to God and a redeeming of their society. Nehemiah helped the community recognize the societal practices that caused the poor to become more indebted and enslaved and facilitated an agreement to have debts forgiven and unfair practices stopped. Nehemiah and Ezra led the people in celebration of the Lord's goodness and faithfulness, a re-discovery of God's word through the scriptures, and a re-dedication to His ways and laws.

... they are ignited by the spark of our Divine Creator and moved to action for the sake of their families and neighborhoods

What a powerful thing it is when a community captures a vision of abundance and flourishing, takes ownership for their actions and responsibilities, and looks to the Lord for direction and strength. The community experiences God's work of healing and redemption as He enables them to employ the creativity, strength,

and resources He has given them. We are privileged to see many communities around the world re-energized when they are ignited by the spark of our Divine Creator and moved to action for the sake of their families and neighborhoods. As people get reoriented to right relationship with God and embrace their identity and dignity as people created in the image of God, amazing things happen. Transformation begins, communities experience reconciliation and healing, neighbors take witness, and God is honored.



CHE FAILURE: When Local Ownership Did Not Happen

John Payne, MD, Advancement Facilitator

A group of Kenyans went out as missionaries supported by Kenyan churches to a part of Kenya that had experienced terrible drought. People in that area had been kept alive by rice shipments from the United Nations and the Kenyan government.

Because the area has many Muslims, the Kenyan missionaries decided to use a "family-based" model of Community Health Evangelism (CHE). This is a strategy in which one Christian family, living in the midst of a largely non-Christian population, models simple development changes and then shows its neighbors how to make the same changes. This approach requires no buy-in from the larger community at the beginning but relies on finding an insider who will champion the new ideas. It also creates opportunities for sharing the Gospel one-toone.

"We'll tell them how they can have a garden like this one."

The Kenyan missionaries observed that the standard local diet included very few vegetables. So they

planted a small "kitchen garden" in the dry dirt outside their new hut, using "grey" water from laundry or dish washing to water it. However, more water was essential. They prayed, and God provided a strange rain that watered their garden better than the surrounding land.

Before long, a beautiful crop of vegetables was growing outside the missionaries' hut. When their neighbors came to visit, the missionary family thought, "Here is our opportunity to help these folks do something <u>really</u> beneficial for their families! We'll tell them how they can have a garden like this one."

Instead of admiring the garden, however, the neighbors were worried about it. "The United Nations World Food Program officials are coming to our village tomorrow," they said. "If they see your vegetable garden, they might cut off the rice shipments on which we depend."

The neighbors went on, "Please don't cause us trouble. Tear out your vegetable garden before tomorrow. Your garden will place doubts in the minds of those who are helping us. If they cut off our food aid, how can we live?" As painful as it was for the Kenyan missionaries, they reasoned that ignoring their neighbors' request would destroy any chance of making a difference long-term with both community development and the Gospel. So, they harvested what they could and then ripped out their flourishing garden.

they ripped out their flourishing garden

There were at least two reasons the neighbors did not want to copy a successful garden project, which could have greatly benefited their families. One is obvious: it is easier to be given food than grow it for yourself. However, the more important reason is this: after failing to succeed in feeding themselves in the past, they had lost confidence in their ability to do so in the future. Every bag of rice they received reminded them that they had been unable to raise their own food. Now they were afraid to try again, because they had convinced themselves it would never work.



Why did CHE fail in this village? It lacked two vital factors. In order to succeed, CHE needs both an inside champion who is willing to try new things and local leaders who are eager to manage a plan they see as their own.



DONOR STORY: Frana Hamilton

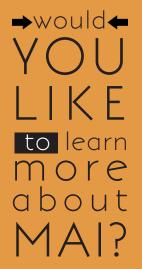
Frana is a member of the MAI team...she's a donor and a faithful pray-er. Her connection with MAI goes back to the days of Founder Dr. Ray and Lou Benson. Years ago, Frana and her husband, Wes, went to the same church the Bensons attended in Billings, Montana.

The opportunity to talk with Frana was a delight and her life experiences have been many and varied. Frana is 87 years young with a fantastic outlook on life. Let me show you by having Frana speak for herself:

We were at this conference grounds and I was standing there looking at these huge evergreens. I noticed this old grove—the trees have been there for hundreds of years. On the end of every branch, there was some green growth. I said, "Lord, when I get old"—I was only 50 years old at that time—"when I get old, Lord, I still want that new growth in my life. Will you give me new growth as long as I'm alive? Will you let me have new growth so that I can continue to be relevant? So that I can continue to serve you and have a ministry for you?" It's grand and glorious to walk with the Lord. As I get older I'm looking back on my life and realizing how, unbeknownst to me, God was planning things all along.



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