

Building Sustainable Mission

*Workshop on Defining and Implementing Transformational Ministry Practices
GEMN 2014 Conference - Natalie Finstad, Tatua Kenya*

Opening Prayer

*We fall down, we cast our crowns at the feet of Jesus
And we cry holy, holy, holy is the Lamb (3x)*

Goals of the Workshop

Participants will gain an understanding of ...

- Ministry model of Tatua Kenya: community organizing and leadership development for sustainable change
- Transformational ministry practices
- Skills to assess and adapt ministry models according to transformational practices.

Introduction Reading for Workshop

Introduction to Tatua Kenya

Tatua Kenya (originally known as Be the Change) was started in 2010. I was volunteering at a small orphanage, outside of Nairobi and was asked to help source funding for the orphanage from the US. I was pretty sure I could help the home get funds but equally certain these funds would stop once I left Kenya. Instead, I chose to search for another option. I drew on my organising experience and began to recruit/train Kenyan young adults in community organising skills. These young adults then went out into their communities and recruited resources for Children's Hope; in four months the young adults mobilised the resources to feed the children for three months, started a local health clinic, began a mentorship programme for children at the home and started a small income generating project.

However, despite the program's success in moving away from international dependency a disturbing dynamic persisted: the local community and children's institutions still saw one another as enemies. Rachel, a director from a fairly successful orphanage repeatedly complained that the community saw them as a burden and they didn't care about the children. However, in assuming responsibility, the children's institutions had negated the community's role in the wellbeing of their children without the communities partnership and ownership poverty would never end in the way we desired.

In 2013 Tatua Kenya attempted to address this challenge by altering our strategy. Instead of asking the Children's Institutions and our organisers to come up with solutions to poverty we placed organisers in four neighborhoods in Kenya and charged them with the task of forming a community leadership team that would address child poverty. This team would start a community run initiative that addressed an aspect of child poverty, furthermore, they would be responsible for making sure this initiative strategically addressed the root causes of challenges in their community.

Case Study (1)

Rose Chege was offered a volunteer position as a Lead Organiser with Tatua Kenya in 2011. Rose originally turned down the offer because in her words, "She had never been a leader, not even a bell ringer at school." Despite her hesitancy Rose was compelled to take the job because of the poverty she witnessed in her neighborhood. At Tatua Kenya Rose participated in our organising training, leadership development programme and was coached by an experienced organiser.

In the context of this support Rose's confidence and ability to lead has blossomed. At staff lunch in

March the members of staff were asked to share times they have experienced joy at work. Rose offered up the following story.

This week I was recruiting community members to attend our community forum to decide upon our focus for the 2013 campaign. I approached some of the mothers (bosses) of local children's institutions and government officials because I wanted their support. They were all really excited about the forum and agreed to come. I asked them about their availability because I wanted to set the date around their calendars. What shocked me was their reply, they told me, "You set the date, you're in charge." I couldn't believe it, me? In charge? In that moment I realised, I've got something to offer.

Currently Rose is running a campaign in Matassia, Kenya that improves education for children. She has worked in a community, torn by division between parents and teachers and worked with community leadership to begin program that has parents and educators work together to provide students with better experiences. Together, with the time commitment of the parents and donation of land, parents have began community gardens that feed children lunch as well as raise income to pay the teachers to provide extra tutoring for children.

Case Study (2)

Since its founding by Methodist Missionaries in 1928 MMH has provided reliable health services to the Maua region. The hospital originally provided these services for free but has recently began to charge the community a small fee to offset the rising costs of maintaining the hospital, purchasing equipment and securing staff members.

These recent changes have caused a rift in the relationship between the community and MMH. The challenge is that this relationship began with a certain dynamic; the hospital, out of a desire to serve the community of Maua, established a relationship in which they had full responsibility for the health of the community. As a result, the community became dependent on the hospital for their wellbeing.

However, rising costs and a desire to move away from complete dependency on foreign donors have led the hospital to ask the community to contribute financially to their mission. Overall, this has been unsuccessful. Frequently, community members fail to maintain healthy practices, they do not prioritize securing National Health Care and they avoid going to the hospital when they begin to feel ill, instead they allow illnesses to develop over time into a serious complication. At this point, MMH, steps in as they have committed to treating patients facing death. This decision means MMH often treats patients who cannot pay for their services and instead are asked to remain at the hospital until they pay their bills.

The ineffectiveness of this solution is painfully visible, uniformed patients fill the lawns, beds and halls of MMH, stuck. The hospital knows this is not the ideal solution but, to quote a hospital team member, "we don't have a better option," stuck.

Teaching Notes

- Definition of Organizing

- Definition of Leadership
- Transformational Ministry Practices
 - Mutual Accountability
 - Shared Leadership/Power
 - Whole Person Culture
 - Dignity and Equality
- Timeline for Tatu Kenya's Work
 - Identify Lead Organizer/Fellow
 - Lead Organizer Begins Fellowship Program
 - Listening Project in Community
 - Community Identifies Core Issue for Campaign
 - Formation of Leadership Team
 - Leadership Team Attends Organizing Training
 - Campaign in Community to Achieve "Power With Change"
 - Campaign in Community to Achieve "Power Over Change."
- Additional Notes

Closing Prayer

In memory of Oscar Romero (1917-1980) by Bishop Ken Untener

A Future Not Our Own

It helps now and then to step back and take a long view.
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
it is beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of
saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.
No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession
brings perfection, no pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives include everything.
This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one
day will grow. We water the seeds already planted
knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects
far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of
liberation in realizing this.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning,
a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's
grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the
difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not
messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

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