

## A step-by-step guide to issue-focused church mobilisation

### 1. Initial interest is stimulated and responded to

An organisation with a focus on a specific issue (e.g. caring for orphan-headed households; getting churches prepared to respond to disasters) will aim to stimulate interest amongst church pastors in this issue. Interest can be stimulated in a variety of ways including: through one-to-one communication, through the influence of the church pastors' bishop or senior leader, or through advertising in church minister newsletters.

In response to the interest stimulated, an envisioning workshop on the issue will be organised for church pastors in the area. Some organisations will look to one of the interested local church pastors to organise and host such a workshop. This helps to increase local ownership, whilst keeping the organisation's own administrative costs down.

### 2. An envisioning workshop for pastors is held

An envisioning workshop for pastors is held. There is a strong emphasis on Scripture, and what the Bible has to say about the specific issue being focused on. This helps participants to see the relevance of the workshop to their own work. During the workshop, participants are encouraged to explore the relevance of the issue to their own congregation and community, and to identify individuals within their congregations who have a vision and gifting for responding to these issues.

### 3. The pastors envision their own congregations

Many of the pastors attending the Envisioning Workshop will then share the vision with their congregation as a whole, and specifically with potential volunteers that they identified at the workshop. They may do this through sermons and Bible studies, as well as one-to-one conversations. This often results in a number of church members expressing interest in greater involvement in church mobilisation.

### 4. Volunteer workshops are run

The church pastor may then request the organisation to come and lead a volunteer training workshop. The pastor takes responsibility for organising the logistics for the workshop, including booking the venue. Training provides volunteers with simple ways of personally responding to the issues, and ways in which they can work with the church pastor in mobilising the church as a whole to get involved.

### 5. The volunteers take action

The volunteers act upon the training they have received. The church pastor, or a volunteer already experienced in the issues being addressed, takes an oversight role, ensuring the volunteers are being adequately supported. The activities that the volunteers carry out may be simple, but when done in a spirit of love and compassion, can have an immense impact in a community.

### 6. Regular reporting meetings take place

It is important that the volunteers have regular meetings to assess progress, learn from one another, and support one another. In one visitation programme, for example, every volunteer is given a notebook and pen in which they record every month the names of the people they visited, when they visited, the needs and issues they observed, and what they did. They report this information at a monthly meeting of pastors and volunteers. This enhances accountability and provides an opportunity for volunteers to share problems that have been too big for them to solve on their own.

## 7. The whole church supports and gets involved

The churches should take responsibility for the volunteers, supporting them in their work through prayer, and where appropriate, finances. They may also take the initiative in responding to some of the bigger needs identified through the volunteers' work that are too big for the individual volunteers themselves.

## 8. Specialist training is provided and exchange visits encouraged

As churches and volunteers become more involved in the work, they may begin to want further skills to provide greater assistance to those for whom they are caring. The mobilising organisation may want to provide further specialist training, and to encourage exchange visits between churches, to provide mutual encouragement and inspiration.

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