

Examples of how these principles have been outworked in practice

1. Understand how you are perceived – *make sure you understand what others expect of you.*

- In [Marsabit](#) the Disaster Management Team (DMT) had to help one church partner to re-assess their expectations about how they would operate as they initially thought they would work together as they had previously
- In [Gujarat](#) EFICOR had to make it clear to the Baptist group of church leaders that, because of the anti-Christian feeling in the state, evangelism was not to be part of the response.
- In [Assam](#) the churches were expecting relief; NEICORD's purpose, however, was to be involved in prevention and mitigation. This needed to be explained repetitively over many years.
- In [Port Blair](#) the senior leader of the Pentecostal Mission was unsure of DCC; he felt that working with DCC would divert members' attention from being a worshipping community.

2. Know your churches – *Not every church or group of churches has things to offer!*

- The membership of the church in Gandhidam, near the epicentre of the [Gujarat earthquake](#) in northwest India, came mostly from Kerala state in the south west of India. They could not speak the local language.
- The distinctive church culture of The Pentecostal Mission in [Port Blair](#) had to be understood before DCC could encourage them to participate in the relief response.
- The Salvation Army's knowledge of the Catholic Church in [Tamil Nadu](#) before the tsunami meant that they were confident to work with them in delivering relief.
- The negotiators in [Manipur](#) understood the complex situation - the mix of church and ethnic alliances - because they were from the affected area themselves and so were in a good position address the conflict effectively

3. Identify and persuade those who are respected- *as these people have influence.*

- The Association Heads of the Baptist Churches in [Assam](#) were the first people NEICORD went to when promoting their DRR programme. They had considerable influence over the response among the network of Baptist churches along the Brahmaputra River.
- In [Manipur](#) no progress could be made without convincing the pastors from the two conflicting communities that peace was essential. Pastors in these communities have considerable authority.
- The Catholic parish priests in [Tamil Nadu](#) were the people with whom the Salvation Army needed to engage. No work could have been done without their consent.
- The assistant pastor enthusiastically led the TPM response in [Port Blair](#) and took a shy congregation along with him.
- The Women's groups in [Manipur](#) fully supported the peace process and along with the pastors were first to be involved in prayer days and peace marches.
- The loose network of churches in [Mumbai](#) were brought together to form the Task Force by a charismatic church elder of the city. He was respected by everyone and EFICOR had worked with him in the past.

4. Prepare to exit – *if you do this, you will think about sustainability.*

- In [Assam](#) NEICORD held Christmas celebrations and learning events with all its stakeholders including church leaders, local pastors, village volunteers, government officials and other interested NGOs. This led to a better understanding of the process of DRR and prepared everyone to take the process forward in the future.
- The Salvation Army was able to share its skills and knowledge as it worked with the Basic Christian Communities in [Tamil Nadu](#). BCC were then able to use this knowledge and way of working for themselves.
- In [Marsabit](#) it became clear that the peace-building initiatives would take longer than the life of the programme, so DMT asked a local Tearfund partner organisation, to work with them on this project.
- The negotiators in [Manipur](#) knew that only the state government could formally approve a peace process, so they kept officials informed of the initiatives they were implementing. When they had the basis of an agreement they handed the peace process over to the government to be finalised.

5. Use each other's strengths - *This means complementing the strengths of the local church with those of the NGO.*

- Before the tsunami, the Basic Christian Community in [Tamil Nadu](#) were involved in caring for the community and praying for people. The parish priests were used to burying the dead. –. The Salvation Army added to this support with its HIV/AIDS counsellors, who were able to transfer their skills to this new set of bereaved people.
- The church compound in Gandhidam, [Gujarat](#) was an ideal base from which EFICOR could deliver its relief operations. EFICOR not only needed facilities to accommodate volunteers and storage space for supplies, but also needed a co-operative and supportive landlord. Seventy church volunteers sent by the Bombay Baptist Group of Churches to support EFICOR's operation meant that relief packages were distributed to a much larger number of communities, than if EFICOR had paid relief workers to do the same work.
- Sunday services in [Marsabit](#) where members of the community come together on a regular basis to hear the Word of God also became the means by which early warning messages on the drought situation could be spread in the community. DMT and the government department worked with pastors to provide them with the necessary information.
- The Christian businessman that met the DCC team knew all the important Government, NGO and church representatives in [Port Blair](#) and so within 24 hours of arrival DCC had met them all.
- In [Tamil Nadu](#) The Salvation Army encouraged the Catholic Bishop to call a meeting of international NGOs to coordinate the increasing number of groups coming into the area to help. The Salvation Army knew that the Bishop had the authority to do that and so could organise a more effective NGO response.

6. Be realistic - The local church has its limitations – find out what they are.

- The church volunteers from Bombay gave a week of their time to EFICOR's relief operation in [Gujarat](#). This was the most time people could be away from work, family and church commitments. EFICOR acknowledged this and worked within these constraints, even though it meant more frequent orientations for new volunteers.
- The pastors in [Marsabit](#) had to be accompanied by the Church Mobilisation Officer to gain representation on the District Peace Building Committees. Once they had been accepted on the Committees, however, the pastors were confident.
- The churches in [Assam](#) actually benefited from the traditional relief handout approach. So in the short term at least, it was more attractive than a disaster risk reduction approach.
- In [Marsabit](#) the resentment between some of the denominations surprised and shocked the Disaster Management Team.

7. Do no harm! – *Danger areas to avoid*

Do not overpower!

The Roman Catholic Church worked well with the Salvation Army in responding to the tsunami in [Tamil Nadu](#) because both churches recognised and respected each other's strengths and limitations, and co-operated closely together. In the [Andaman Islands](#) DCC could easily have used its greater influence and financial strength to impose its own agenda and priorities on the Pentecostal Mission, but instead chose to work more co-operatively with them.

Do not over-expect!

Both the project area and the need for NEICORD to overcome the relief dependency mindset of the communities on the banks of the Brahmaputra in [Assam](#) were unrealistic. A concentration of effort on a smaller target area would have enabled them address these deep issues of mindset change more effectively.

Do not tempt!

The purpose of these case studies is to show good practice, so there are no examples of the misuse of money or supplies. However, this can happen when too much responsibility is given without an appropriate level of accountability.

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