



Asset-Based Church & Community Transformation in Asia

Report of the consultation
held in Yangon, Myanmar
1-5 July 2019



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Introduction

In July 2019, participants from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, the Philippines, Malaysia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Myanmar gathered in Yangon, Myanmar, to share their experiences of Asset-Based Church & Community Transformation (ABCCT). One of the names used to describe ABCCT is 'Umoja' – a Swahili word that means 'together'. 'Together' perfectly expresses the objectives of the workshop, which were:

- * To come *together* to learn from each other about the various approaches to ABCCT, uniquely shaped in each context.
- * To discover *together* the shared principles / characteristics of these approaches and unique differences, identifying what works well, how to overcome blockages and what each can learn from other models.
- * To commit *together* to collaboration and shared learning in the future, avoiding duplication or confusion.
- * To recommend *together* specific actions we should take at national and regional levels to enhance the effectiveness of the various models.

The consultation was organised by the Anglican Alliance, in collaboration with Tearfund as well as Episcopal Relief & Development and the Anglican Board of Mission (Australia). It was hosted by the Church of the Province of Myanmar.



Setting the Scene: What is Asset-Based Church and Community Transformation?

Rev. Rachel Carnegie, Executive Director of the Anglican Alliance
& Dino Touthang, Community Transformation Lead for Asia, Tearfund

Asset-Based Church and Community Transformation is a family of approaches that encourage churches to work in and with communities to see poverty reduced holistically and sustainably - to bring life in all its fullness.

Many names, one vision

ABCCT approaches go by different names in different places, but all involve the church working *with* the community rather than *for* the community.

There are two main groupings - or strands - within ABCCT:

- ✦ Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)
- ✦ Church and Community Mobilisation Process / Church and Community Transformation (CCMP / CCT).

The different models use different processes for church and community engagement. The particular gifts that the two main strands bring were explored during the workshop. However, the approaches have more in common than differences. They share a vision of transformed communities enjoying abundant living through releasing the assets - the God-given gifts - in the community, rather than looking to outsiders for help.

The process takes longer than standard development models but produces deeper change.



"What have you most enjoyed about working with communities?"

ABCCT brings...

Deep transformation

"The process told us we cannot wait for someone to come, we are to be salt and light in the world... and it helped us to understand that we had many resources to help ourselves." (Pastor Ezra, PAG, Uganda)*

Genuine empowerment and sustainability

"Where the poor previously accepted the decisions of the powerful, they are now participating in community processes and making decisions for themselves." (WDO, Cambodia)*

Wide-reaching change

Changes seen in communities have included improved response to HIV, better family relationships, health, local advocacy, self-esteem, water and sanitation, gender empowerment, church growth, education, communities that are more resilient to disaster etc.

* Quotes from Tearfund



What are the underlying principles of ABCCT?

- Kingdom and biblical foundation for whole-life transformation
- Restoration of relationships with self, others, the environment and God
- A mindset change rather than a project or programme
- Facilitated, not taught, with participatory tools
- The church breaks out of the building to become 'Salt and Light' in the community
- Breaking of dependency mentality through mobilising local resources
- Community & church working together for the common good
- Adapted to the local context

Case study 1: the Philippines

ABCD - The ECP Experience. “A spectacular success”

Floyd Lalwet – Director of E-CARE, Episcopal Church of the Philippines

The seed of dependency

In 1990, the Episcopal Church of the Philippines (ECP) became an autonomous and independent Church. However, it still depended for 60% of its income on the Episcopal Church of the USA, which had established the ECP as a missionary diocese in 1901.

“We will be forever grateful to our Mother Church for bringing faith to our people,” Floyd said. “But the way mission was pursued at that time brought some disastrous effects. It was premised on the idea of the missionary church bringing light to a world in darkness, [of saying] ‘you do not have the means to practise the faith’. And so it planted the seed of dependency that has become the bane of development work up until recent years”.

In 1993 the ECP agreed a 15-year stepped reduction plan to wean itself off the annual grant subsidy from ECUSA. “We were so addicted to our subsidy that it was a very painful process”, Floyd reflected – and one which plunged the Church into recurrent financial crisis. By the end of 2003, the subsidy had been substantially reduced to 14%, but the ECP’s budget deficit was the highest it had been since 1990.

A night of reflection and a decision that changed everything

The financial position was so challenging that during a review process in 2004 a resolution was drafted which proposed that the ECP seek an extension of the grant subsidy, from 2008 to 2010. However, the following day things took an unexpected turn when a total opposite resolution was proposed – of cutting off the subsidy and, from the beginning of 2005, depending only on local income and resources. Surprisingly, this resolution was passed. “Everyone anticipated disasters, but what actually happened was almost miraculous. We ended 2005 with a surplus, the first time in over 100 years. And it was a substantial surplus”.

The ECP finally realised that it is only when you stop looking at others that you start to look into yourself... at what you have and what you can achieve with what you have. Achieving financial autonomy was ABCD in practice and the ECP went on to apply this approach to its development work. Instead of trying to fill a need, under Asset Based Community Development the ECP worked with communities to identify and mobilize the resources already present. This led to and an increase in community contributions to projects and enabled the ECP to start reducing its grant funding for projects – and to reduce what it received in grants itself from partners by twenty percent.

More challenges and changes

The next challenge was how to apply the ABCD process to grants from external partners. The grant mindset was so pervasive that nobody really wanted to cut off the grants that were still pouring in from partners. ABCD was in real danger of simply being used as a mechanism or concept to leverage external resources in a manner that was more acceptable to funding partners but which, in the end, did not make a significant dent on dependency.

This led to another bold change in approach with the adoption of the Receivers to Givers policy by the ECP. Under Receivers to Givers (R2G), communities that receive grants for their projects and programs are expected to pass on that same amount in the future. This way they are transformed from being receivers to givers.



Under ABCD, community projects mobilize available resources, assets and capacities.



In the first 3-year implementation period (2013-15), it was decided that communities had to grant back and pass on a total of Php 6 million. “No one believed it would happen”, Floyd said. However, by June 2015 communities had already granted back a total of Php 15 million. By the end of December 2015, total grant-backs amounted to Php 28 million. And 3 years later, at the end of December 2018, total grant-backs had increased to Php 80 million, meaning that as 2019 dawned the E-CARE Foundation had achieved zero-level external grant funding for community projects. E-CARE’s role is now to facilitate the process of grants being passed on and to provide facilitators who continue to roll out the process. E-CARE is itself self-reliant, the facilitators’ salaries coming from a percentage of each R2G payback.

“What I love is that I am always wrong”

Floyd shared two stories that demonstrate the capacity of communities (and proved him to be wrong!).

The first was in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, when affected communities had lost not only their homes, but also their livelihoods. E-CARE was prepared to partner with them in the rebuilding of their homes but they needed to purchase land for this purpose since, being tenants, the affected communities would not be allowed by their landlords to build permanent structures on land they didn’t own. As the E-CARE staff arrived to meet with the devastated community, they were asking themselves how could they possibly expect grants to be regranted back and passed on in such dire circumstances. Surely people would just go to the agencies providing handouts instead? “We had our bags packed,” Floyd recalled. “We thought we would be rejected.” Not so. The community embraced R2G, grasping the opportunity to buy land and own their own homes for the first time in their lives. They had granted back 40% of the amount used to purchase the land before the project even broke ground for the house construction. “We were wrong in assuming they could not do it, that they would prefer the Red Cross”, Floyd reflected.

The second story is of the misunderstanding that led to the start of R2G. E-CARE was working in the very poor community of Miramonte with women who had lost their jobs at a garment factory when it closed down. They identified their sewing skills as their asset and asked E-CARE to work with them to buy sewing machines as a means to earning a livelihood. When the 20 machines were delivered, the women asked for a year to pay for them. “We were shocked, because it had never happened in a hundred years in the ECP, that people will give back! We expected it to be given as a grant, but they were the ones who told us ‘no’! It was just natural for them. If you’re given something, you pay it back. They were thinking it was a loan! We developed it into R2G”. Reflecting later, Floyd said “The slum community taught us they can give back. It was something we never expected. The poorest community taught us that.”

The Sea of Galilee or the Dead Sea?

Floyd shared the analogy of comparing the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea that E-CARE use when explaining the principles of R2G. The Sea of Galilee is so full of life compared to the Dead Sea, where nothing lives. The difference is that the Sea of Galilee receives water from the Jordan River. But every drop it receives it gives back to the River Jordan flowing south. What makes it so full of life is the continuous process of receiving and giving out – as opposed to the Dead Sea, which has an entry but doesn’t have an exit. It just receives. Likewise, communities that receive grants must be enabled, so that in time they will be able to transform themselves from receivers into givers.



LET THE
CHAIN OF
LOVE
BE
UNBROKEN!



R2G ceremonies and community products

What is the ABCD process in the Philippines? How does it work in the community?

The ABCD process refers to the activities and exercises that are carried out to enable communities to identify, appreciate and value local assets and capacities which they then further enhance and mobilize for sustainable development. The process enables communities to do what the ECP did, that is, “to stop looking at others and start looking into itself so that it realizes and appreciates what it has and look into what it can do with these”. It invites communities to reflect on the “dependency-creating” ways of working to which they are so used and to invite them to evolve another way of looking at realities and addressing challenges. It is a process that enables people to collectively look at “God’s abundance” within their midst – those assets and resources, often taken for granted, that are found within communities and to explore opportunities that such assets can create and/or bring about. There are three major activities in this process:

1. **ABCD orientation**, which starts with a discussion of the various approaches to development as experienced in the ECP. These are : i) dole-out system as a missionary strategy and the dependency-culture it has created; ii) the needs-based approach, which institutionalized the “half-empty glass” mindset; iii) the asset-based approach, which creates “half-full glass” thinking. Bible studies on the feeding of the five thousand, the widow’s oil etc. are used to affirm the ABCD process and draw out learning that “miracles (and development) start with what we have and miracles (and development) happen when we maximize what we have”. It also shows that ABCD is a Biblical concept. Biblical lessons are also used to show that God has gifted every person and community with skills, competencies, capabilities and resources and when these are not utilized, they are taken away or are lost or destroyed (parable of the five talents).
2. **Asset-mapping** exercises, which take stock of the resources and assets within the community. These include identification of gifts of individuals, associations, institutions and connections; transect walk and village mapping around the community to look at physical resources; and drawing the community asset map.
3. **Community visioning** exercises, which involve exploring how to make greatest use of assets, conducting feasibility studies to determine the most viable options and drawing up the development vision and plans.

Issues, Challenges and Resolutions

ABCD gives communities an exciting, new and positive energy that liberates them from the negative cycles of need and dependency. However, the process is a very difficult and challenging one.

Economic marginalization not only deprives people of the means to a more self-reliant economic situation but also diminishes their capacity to imagine or envision a better life. Owing to the fixation on the search for the next meal, people do not have the excitement and the urge to initiate a long-term endeavor especially when such initiative requires time and physical effort in addition to current pre-occupation. This is the reason why hand-outs or needs-satisfying projects from external sources are very much preferred by them.

The majority of partner communities are indigenous rural villages or small communities whose livelihoods have been based on agriculture since time immemorial. They scoff initially at the idea that their agricultural resources (small landholdings, farming skills, etc.) are valuable assets and believe that economic salvation can never come from such traditional ways of life – and the only way to a better life are dole-outs from external benefactors.

To address these challenges, the program has pursued a number of strategies: exploring alternative or non-traditional livelihoods, such as sari-sari (local convenience) stores, buy-and-sell and other trading activities, blacksmithing, etc; value chain development (eg processing food to sell, rather than just selling the raw product); and enhancing the production base.

The need to overcome people's skepticism about the potential of their current economic activity has led E-CARE to pledge to buy crops from partner communities in some cases, to jumpstart production. In all but one case, this has proved economically viable for E-CARE. One example is the Soquib camote planters, where E-CARE pledged to purchase large volumes of camote, a product traditionally accorded low value. When E-CARE paid for 0.7 tons of camote from a single planter (enabling her to pay off long-overdue debts to a cooperative), many others were motivated to plant or increase production of the crop. This jumpstarted camote production which is now not only produced but also processed by the community, to add value, for income-generating purposes.

Case Study 2: India

Parivartan. Umoja in the Indian context

Parivartan, the Hindi for holistic transformation, is the ABCCT approach used in India. It was started in 2013 – and failed in its first year. However, this initial failure proved to be the key to later success.

What is the process with communities?

The Parivartan model follows the 5-step process of Umoja:

1. Envisioning and equipping the Church
2. Envisioning the community
3. Dreaming dreams and planning for actions
4. Taking action
5. Evaluation

The 5 stages take around 3 years.

What is the underlying development philosophy or principles?

Parivartan...

- Is scripture-based and builds on a long tradition in India of training pastors and churches in Integral Mission.
- Empowers churches and local communities by developing their skills and understanding on social issues such as creation care, GBV, disability etc. It makes use of existing assets, such as the Adult Learning Method (Vella methodology, which has been in use for over 20 years) and has an early focus on building advocacy skills, in order to increase the capacity of communities to use the Right to Information Act (RTI) and government schemes.
- Empowers communities to address their issues on their own using their local resources.
- Uses mentoring relationships to encourage participation and learning.

How does this approach engage with people's faith?

Parivartan is deeply rooted in the Bible. Bible studies help envision the local church and stories, skits and games are used to engage both the church and wider community at the monthly meetings. The approach encourages the local church to visit and pray for community members, especially those who are sick or struggling, and to be a presence in the community in all circumstances, not only in its development activities.

What are the contextual issues which impact on the process?

India is extremely diverse, with many religions, cultures, languages, classes and castes. There are immense differences between urban and rural settings. Christians are only 2% of the population and most Indian churches focus more on church planting and less on social or development work. Insurgency creates hurdles in many operational areas. More positively, there are supportive acts and policies – such as the RTI – which can be used to good effect.

What are the challenges?

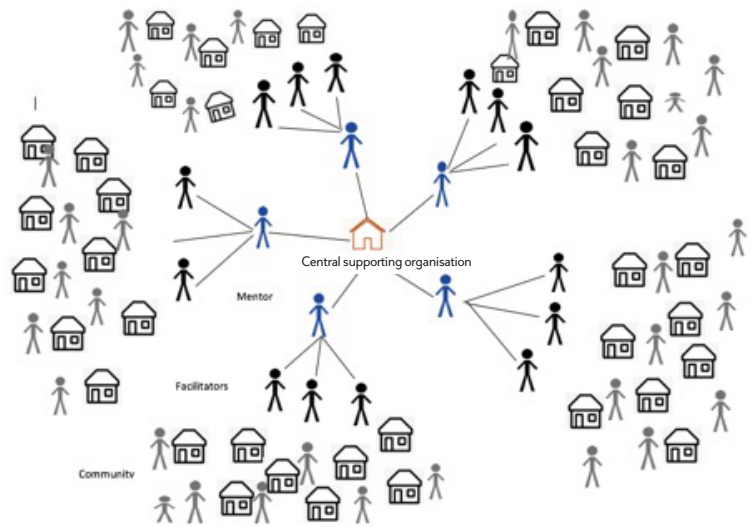


Parivartan failed in its first year of implementation. It was the first time an asset-based approach had been tried so it was very much a time of learning by doing. “We were just trying to understand since none of us were trained in Umoja / CCMP / CCT”, the presenter said. “In addition, churches were not fully ready for this kind of work since working with their own resources was a real challenge at that time”. The initial selection of churches and communities was also not good as they were all between 150 and 350km from the mentor’s location, making monitoring difficult. However, much was learnt from this experience, paving the way to later success.

Continuing challenges include... finding the right facilitators: it is especially difficult to find women facilitators; payment: only expenses are paid but facilitators expect remuneration and think (wrongly) that mentors are paid; time: mentors and facilitators have other personal responsibilities and there are large distances to cover; there is also misunderstanding, with people thinking that the Church is trying to convert people. This is particularly challenging in the context of the Anti-Conversion Bill.

The Parivartan Structure

Parivartan has a clear structure and capacity-building process. Facilitators work with local communities. Facilitators undertake an initial 5-day “Nehemiah” training and implement their learning in the community. They are supported by a mentor and receive further training on various social issues (such as climate change, disability, and gender-based violence). With experience, selected facilitators become mentors. Mentors continue to have their capacity built on different social issues and meet quarterly to encourage and motivate each other. Mentors are supported by the local supporting organization in India.



Stories of transformation

Before Parivartan, partner communities in Bihar had no road, school, pukka (concrete) houses, hand pump for drinking water, health worker, toilet, bank or water supply and suffered from problems such as alcoholism and domestic violence.

After Parivartan, these communities now boast a concrete road, tuition centres, mostly pukka houses, a hand pump, a, toilets and a bank. A water project grant has been sanctioned and alcohol banned. Maternal death rates and infant mortality rates have fallen thanks to the new social health activist, who ensures mothers get to a health facility for their baby’s delivery. A women’s Parivartan group has been formed and government projects are being implemented. People have started coming to faith.

The photos show a facilitator who worked in his own community, mobilising the community to open bank accounts and enabling people to save. The process was so successful that 1,500 bank accounts were opened, leading the bank to open a branch in the community. Four hundred people access it every day.



Case Study 3: Myanmar

Experiences of both CCMP & ABCD

Joy Hla Gyaw and Peter San Lin

Provincial Development Desk, Church of the Province of Myanmar

“We work to help communities discover their potential and their own resources.” This is how Peter San Lin and Joy Hla Gyaw of the Development Department of the Anglican Church of Myanmar, described their vision for ABCCT.

Embracing both approaches

The Anglican Church in Myanmar presents a fascinating case study as it embraces both approaches – CCMP and ABCD – within their mission and development activities. CCMP stands for Church and Community Mobilisation Process. The Church has journeyed with both approaches for several years, but finds that increasingly they are influencing and complementing each other. The key distinctive in guiding their decisions on process is about the context: where the Church is working in largely non-Christian communities then they adopt the ABCD approach with less emphasis on Bible studies and spiritual transformation.

Joy and Peter explained how the journey began with reflection on their development theology. The Episcopal Church of the Philippines walked with the Anglican Church in Myanmar to reflect on scripture, including John 10:10 – that Christ came to bring life in all its fullness. They then built on this to define their development philosophy – an asset-based approach to enable local churches and communities to envision and create their own change.

Envisioning and training in CCMP – learning from Kenya

The next step was to envision church leaders. Many bishops and other leaders visited the Diocese of Kericho in the Anglican Church of Kenya – the home diocese of the current Archbishop of Kenya. There they witnessed the profound impact of CCMP in those local churches and communities. The Archdeacon of Kericho also visited Myanmar to inspire the church leaders with his experiences. Three regional coordinators were then trained in CCMP, along with local facilitators who had follow-up mentoring visits every six months. The bishop of one diocese, Myitkina, was so convinced that he decided that all his parishes should be envisioned in CCMP.

Skills development in ABCD – learning from the Philippines

Meanwhile, development staff were also visiting the Philippines over several years for training in ABCD approaches by E-CARE – the development wing of the Episcopal Church. They were also trained in cooperative development, leadership and financial management – skills which were then transferred to local church and community leaders. This led to a range of ABCD initiatives in church and non-church communities in Myanmar.

Seeds bear fruit

The seeds planted then began to bear fruit. Joy described the story from one community, which was receiving many new people displaced by conflict. The local church wanted a church hall for community activities. The CCMP coordinator conducted five Bible studies to help the church members to recognise their own assets and how to use them. The community raised and pooled funds and set about building their church hall. Bishop John Zau Li of Myitkina Diocese described how the CCMP process is modelled on the Early Church, emphasising the study of Scripture, of prayer and in care for the vulnerable. He also gave vivid examples of how to turn problems into opportunities, illustrating how he deliberately chose those priests who were most resistant to the process to go for training – after which they became CCMP's greatest advocates!

Complementarity of ABCD and CCMP

It was clear from the illustration of the two approaches – ABCD and CCMP – that each has influenced and strengthened the other. ABCD has tended to focus more on community development, building an asset based approach for livelihoods, with skills in more technical areas such as food processing and cooperative development. Where the development staff are working in non-church communities, then the ABCD process provides an effective entry-point. Meanwhile, CCMP has emphasised the value of spiritual growth as the foundation for

churches to develop the vision and motivation to engage with their communities on practical initiatives. In some cases this first foundation stage may take a year or more of scriptural reflection to spiritually inspire and equip the church members.

When asked how the two approaches complement each other, Joy responded with an illustration from the Diocese of Mandalay. The development staff, led by a priest, were implementing a project on water and sanitation, using the ABCD approach. Finding that the local church seemed trapped in a dependency mode, the priest drew on his CCMP experience and used some Bible studies before introducing the ABCD steps. Joy explained: “This parish, previously so dependent, started contributing to the training by bringing cooked food. The youth too collected their earnings and on their own initiative redecorated the church interior.”



CCM facilitator training and mentoring



ABCD training

“A transformed person transforms me”

Naw Anthea - CCT focal person, Tearfund Myanmar

I met an important person when I worked as a CCMP coordinator. At that time, I was proud of working at head-quarter level and thought local communities could only be developed when we (high-level staff) assisted them. We could invite people to be CCMP facilitators, give them training and equip them with necessary skills.

When Ko Thein Soe came to first time training, he was silent. I was frustrated with his behavior during training. I noticed he never talked in the big group, but he did discuss with peer facilitators and learned from them. The second facilitator training was the same. But I started seeing a few actions in their church, such as organizing youths to make compost and sell it as a source of youth funding; they held Biblical reflections in church. At the end of third facilitator training he started speaking. By that time he was active, curious and liked to learn new things, not only from his peer group but also from others, approaching people in his community for knowledge and resources, and working with them. Through small initiatives he gained confidence.

Before starting the training Ko Thein Soe had decided they would test CCMP for three years. If they hadn't seen any benefit by then they would stop. But after three years the community had a water filtration station, a grocery store, a day care centre, people who knew how to look after livestock, solar power, free tuition for children, they could upgrade the nurse and were co-ordinating with the Buddhist monks. Ko Thein Soe's church was so small, with only twenty households; it was often overlooked by the local Christian association. But because of the changes, that church became a model of transformation that many people visited.

Ko Thein Soe had not finished high school and had no qualifications or theological training, but he became my teacher. He taught me how valuable local knowledge and wisdom are. He showed me that church and community transformation can be sustained through mobilizing local resources. He modelled for me how working closely with local people (instead of staying at high level and asking people to do this and that) motivates facilitators to have confidence and become competent. I have learned that without valuing local wisdom and local capacity, transformation cannot happen; without working with community, togetherness will never be achieved; and without CCMP, the Church cannot show light in the community and fulfill the promise of God. There are many people like Ko Thein Soe, who are so inspired in CCMP and I am transformed because of their transformation.

Case Study 4: Sri Lanka

The Disaster Resilience Programme of the Diocese of Colombo

Binnu Selvarajah - Coordinator of the Board of Social Responsibility

Sri Lanka is a country prone to natural disasters, suffering from cyclones, floods, landslides and drought. The Disaster Resilience Programme of the Diocese of Colombo was born of its churches' extensive experience of responding to such disasters, particularly the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, and to conflict, in the civil war.

Background

The Diocese of Colombo is one of two dioceses in the Church of Ceylon. It has nearly one hundred parishes and 50,000 members. Churches have a history of, and are committed to, responding to disasters, offering comfort, solidarity, sustainability and local accountability. The Church is there before, during and long after a disaster is in the news.

After the 2004 tsunami and the civil war, the diocese took time in 2010 to review their work. They identified their strengths: having good reach across the country; having good connections; working well with other stakeholders - and through interfaith networks where the Church might be viewed with suspicion. They also determined that there were opportunities: to expand their reach; to enhance their effectiveness; to leverage other stakeholders.

At the end of their review, they developed a strategic plan to build capacity in disaster risk reduction (DRR). With only two central staff, they decided the way to build such capacity was through training clergy and lay people in how to prepare for disasters and minimise their impact. The diocese carried out their training programme in collaboration with Episcopal Relief & Development and the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action the (CASA), an agency of the National Council of Churches in India.

Building capacity to make a difference

The initial Training of Trainers (ToT) in disaster response and resilience was delivered by CASA over 18 months as seven one-week modules, with two months between each module for participants to put theory into practice in their communities. There have been two subsequent phases, with 43 trainers and 92 committee members (lay and clergy) trained to date.

Having seen the impact of the training in the Diocese of Colombo when they respond to disasters, the National Council of Churches of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) requested that the diocese help to build NCCSL capacity in disaster response and resilience.



A Disaster Management ToT participant provides training to an ecumenical group of lay people to build the regional teams

Working with stakeholders has been key. The diocese works with and through: regional committees - these are ecumenical and undertake surveys, community mapping, planning and implementation; the Ministry of Disaster Management; ecumenical partners; civil society; village development management committees; local government at district level.

The effectiveness of these committees and relationships was seen after the flooding and landslides of 2017, when having a lot of volunteers and the structure to use them was a big asset: people from churches came to help; youths helped distribute water storage barrels, students and others helped sort relief items during the disaster response; young people helped clean up homes and some even helped with proposal and report writing.

Photo: North Central Province Regional Committee distributing 30 water storage containers to drought-affected communities. The containers were donated by youth from a church. Their donation of both the containers and their time meant the central diocesan office did not have to purchase supplies, hire people to do the work or spend time co-ordinating the response.



Pastors and Disasters

Underpinning all of the Diocese of Colombo's disaster response and resilience work is Pastors and Disasters, a toolkit created by Episcopal Relief & Development, using the pooled experience of Anglicans responding to disasters, including in Sri Lanka. The toolkit builds the capacity of clergy and lay people to work in their communities to prepare for, and respond to, disasters. It uses an asset-based approach, is accessible and is rooted in faith. Pastors and Disasters ensures that disaster responses are community-based and community-led.

Fr Manoruban was one of the Anglican priests in Sri Lanka who contributed to the development of Pastors and Disasters, drawing on his experience of living and ministering through both the 2004 tsunami and civil war. In a short film about the toolkit, Father Manoruban describes how he continues to use this asset-based community approach. "In my present ministry I know that flooding will occur in a particular season. We now have youth groups in the parish. I have formed teams among them and they managed to draw maps of this village showing where the low lying areas are. We know how and which way the water will enter into the village. Therefore we can plan for disaster and take people to a safer place. I do this with the help of the community. This derived from a Tamil saying 'if you want to clap you need both hands'."



Over time, the disaster response and resilience work of the Diocese of Colombo has grown and expanded. As well as becoming ecumenical, the committees have become engaged in other community work, such as reforestation, water and livelihood schemes. This is a model they want to see replicated in other places. Asset-based thinking has become so deeply rooted that now, when a disaster hits Sri Lanka, the diocese does not ask external organisations for funding. They are able to mobilise their youth groups, their Mothers' Union and their parishes to fund the initial relief phase, which might go on for 3 to 6 months. International partners are only approached if there is need for a later recovery programme that goes beyond the relief phase.

The picture shows a community response to flooding in Galle district in 2017. The priest, Buddhist monk and local community members are working together to distribute water and relief items to isolated people. This was taking place within hours of the flooding and they are using a boat provided by a member of the community who is not a Christian. The response was led by the local committee and the work carried out without the need for external support.



Working with the government

The diocese works with the government's national Disaster Management Centre, which is supposed to have a disaster unit in every village. The village unit is meant to know what to do in an emergency and to have an evacuation map. In reality not every community has such a unit, so the Church works in partnership with the government. Where there is both a government unit and a church committee, they work together. Where there is no government unit but the Church does have a committee, the Church offers to be the unit for that region, with the government able to add members to the unit. Whilst this sometimes leads the government to abdicate its responsibility, seeing the Church taking such a lead more often shames the government into doing more themselves.

This year the diocese has also started working with local government on climate change adaptation. The diocese organised a series of workshops on climate change for its regions. They prepared a curriculum and then met with relevant local government officers, who were surprised to see the Church organising something like this. However, they thought the curriculum was "awesome". They agreed to work together - the local government officers providing technical input on climate change at country and global levels and the diocese leading on practical skills such as mapping.

Case Study 5: Nepal

Sangsangai - “working together”

Context

Nepal is a small country surrounded by two huge ones. Even so, it has 123 languages. Christians are in the minority (1.4%), as in most Asian countries. There are around 6,000 churches and 450,000 Christians. The Nepali church evolved out of persecution and has a strong Nepali identity, with an emphasis on evangelism, healing and deliverance. It is one of the fastest growing churches in the world, despite a prohibition on people changing their religion (an offence carrying a five-year prison sentence).

Envisioning the Church

Envisioning the Church for church and community transformation has happened in a variety of ways in Nepal. A series of “Thinking Theology” conferences were held, first at regional and later at national level. These comprised both theological reflection and practical learning, and covered themes such as human trafficking, theological education and creation care at national level.

In addition, Integral Mission is well-established in Nepal. It is part of the curriculum in just over half the nation’s theological institutions and over one thousand churches have been envisioned by it.

Sangsangai

The Church and Community Transformation (CCT) approach used in Nepal is called Sangsangai, a Nepali word meaning “working together”. It is a process adapted from Umoja to be specific to the Nepali context and is multi-denominational.

Sangsangai starts with integral mission envisioning. It continues through Bible study, prayer and action. Groups of participants actively seek God’s will as they work through a programme which focuses on different aspects of life in a progressively outward-looking sequence: me and my family; me and my church; activity for the community; activity with the community. The workbooks for this process have been developed contextually. Through the workbook questions for each of the four focus areas, participants discuss their needs, challenges and opportunities and the need to take action. A resolution to act is made, action taken, and success celebrated.

The underlying philosophy of Sangsangai

Sangsangai has much in common with Umoja, with: a focus on the local church; the central feature of Bible studies; prayer; facilitated discussions engaging everyone; ‘project’ identification by the group, not outsiders; identification & using local resources first; reflecting always on how things can be improved; sharing stories, learning & being accountable to one another; aiming to impact the community and not just the church. There are also differences from Umoja, as shown.

Philosophy

- ▶ Talent (Local Resources – includes everything) **Fostering Creativity**
- ▶ Discipleship: Correct use of talents/gifts/resources which God has given
- ▶ Process not Project
- ▶ Light and Salt in the community (Mathew 5)
- ▶ So studying the Bible and prayer and seeking God's will become central to our approach.
- ▶ Church vision and shared vision with the community
- ▶ A process that can be integrated into church life and not be reliant on external resourcing and funding

How is the Sangsangai process delivered?

A male/female pair of facilitators lead the process within a community, working closely with the local pastor and supported by a co-ordinator. Facilitators undertake a training programme, which takes 24 to 36 months and is in 5 parts – an introduction to integral mission and each of the 4 areas described above. After part 4 of the training, the trainees undertake a small project in the community, to gain confidence.

Sangsangai is a dynamic and evolving process, with changes implemented in response to challenges. For example, there are plans for trainers

Differences from the Umoja process

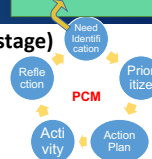
Umoja (5 Stages)

1. Envisioning church
2. Community description
3. Analysis and planning
4. Action
5. Evaluation

Sangsangai (PCM in each stage)

1. IM Envisioning
2. Self & family
3. Church
4. Church project in the community
5. Project together with Community

Community mapping
Identify need
Identify resources



Facilitators’ and coordinators’ manual essential reference book

to train churches rather than individual facilitators, in order to address the difficulties facilitators have in relaying their training back to their churches and the challenge of good facilitators tending to drift into community work.

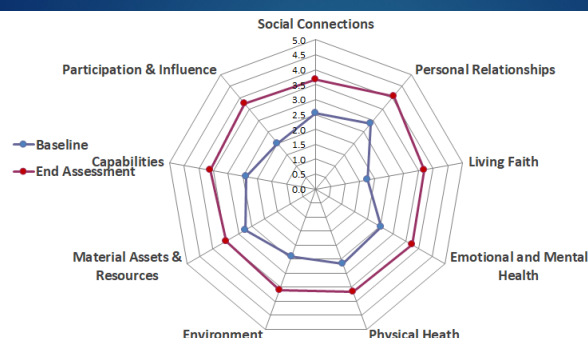
Fruits of the process

In a sample of 13 out of 49 churches that had undergone the process, a total of 62 projects were reported: 3 in agriculture, 33 in construction, 11 in education, 8 in health and 7 in water. If aggregated to the 49 churches in the two areas, this equates to 267 projects worth £733,264. In a sample of 29/49 churches, they saw an Increase in church attendance of 18% over 30 months and an Increase in giving of 66% over 30 months (small sample only).

Partners also provide training on how to work with the local government. Part of the process is to run training sessions in the Participatory Planning Process, to make communities aware of training and funds that are available through the local government, and what that they are entitled to as citizens. After the training, communities are equipped to talk with their local government and bid for funding for their projects. One group that did this got 50 lakh (about \$50,000) for dam construction (right); another group got \$5,000 for local road construction, with the church doing the work.

Fruits/Results

Attitudes & Relationships –
Bardiya over 30 months from Evaluation 3



15 churches sampled

All categories showed an improvement on scores of 3 years ago

Average improvement of 1.27 on a scale of 1-5



Reflections on the impact of Sangsangai

The presenter described how, when they adopted the new Sangsangai approach in 2014, they were very nervous, wondering how they could work with communities without giving financial support, but followed what they felt God had put on their hearts. Their partners are now working with over 300 churches in partnership with 6 denominations and 4 District Christian Societies. The process was not easy and some of the churches really struggled, but the participants began to see fruit as they implemented activities in their communities. The leaders who had undergone the training felt encouraged and empowered, saying “We had a new lens for working with our community”. They described how their understanding of mission had developed, so that they can envisage not needing to add the prefix “integral” – as all mission is understood to be holistic. They also no longer expect financial support from external partners for their activities, looking to their own resources first instead.

“Over the years I have been reflecting on what this process is doing”, the presenter said. “We are so often focused on tangible stuff, but, visiting different communities, I can see this is more than tangible stuff. There’s change happening in people, in churches... it’s a discipleship training”. They described how the Sangsangai approach had enabled a leadership conflict to be resolved, “allowing reconciliation and forgiveness”. They also recounted a story they had just heard about a village that had been deeply divided. In the village, the Christian and Hindu communities did not mix. This created a barrier and caused problems, especially when it came to funerals. However, when the church undertook the training and did the Bible studies, they decided this separation was not right, realising “we are all made in the image of God; this is not how we should be behaving”. They approached the village chief to discuss the issue and to find out the ‘dos and don’ts’ of Hindu funeral practice, so they could come together and offer comfort and practical support, which “really broke the barrier and built up the relationship in the community”.

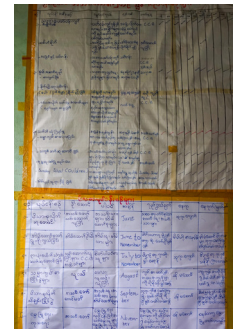
Field visit 1: CCMP at a Glance

The church in this community started on CCMP in 2015. Since then, the development perspective and values of its members have changed. Bible studies strengthened their faith and enabled them to gradually formulate clear visions and programs for their church. The process started as being more about the church's development, but their actions and activities now go beyond it.



Interfaith relationships (sharing Christmas celebrations, Buddhist celebrations and school activities) existed in the village even before CCMP came onto the scene. These became one of the most valuable assets in the community, which church members used to initiate and mobilize community members to participate in projects such as simple garbage collection, its proper disposal and pathway repair. Because of these activities, the church gained the community's trust. Families belonging to other faiths are now confident to send their children to study programs organized by the church.

Two young women, who are part of CCMP, spoke about their hopes. One wants to become a minister for the regions, the other a legal advocate for the people. Another lady, who is 53 and a mother of 2, described how she actively participated in the Bible study sessions even though she could not read and write. The support provided by the members who were literate helped her to comprehend and motivated her to learn more about God's teachings.



Another woman who is the mother of 9 children had a different story to tell. She used to be a Buddhist and says her life started to change when she began to open herself to the word of God. She described a time when she challenged God for the healing of her son and herself from serious illnesses, undertaking fasting, praying and reading the 27 books of the New Testament within a month to strengthen her belief that God is a living and healing God. She told the group they were healed and that her experience had become a powerful means to encourage others that God listens and that his love can change lives.



With thanks to Augusta Nafa and Clagel Nellas for writing this report.

Field visit 2: Going Forward with God

The last mile to our field visit village was on the back of motorbikes along an uneven track across paddy fields. We then walked carefully along a muddy path, past houses with raised floors and animals tethered downstairs or outside.

We gathered in the newly dedicated church with church and community members, where the priest-in-charge, Andrew, welcomed us. The community is a village of about eighty households, who are mainly of Sgaw Karen ethnicity. The people are Christian, mainly Baptist, but with ten Anglican families.



Rev. Andrew shared that he had been posted there in 2015. At that time there was no church building and church members had little health knowledge.

“The community did not keep any cover around the bath place when taking showers. Everyone just took baths in an open space. Most of them did not use sanitary latrines,” Rev. Andrew explained. He added that the members argued a lot at that time.

The village has changed since then.

ABBCT experiences

About five years ago, the church received support from the diocese for livelihood activities and joined the Water and Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH) project. With the latter, there wasn't enough funding to provide a latrine for every household in the village, so the community decided to contribute their own labour and resources so that all could have one. This was their first experience of Asset Based Community Development.

Then Rev. Andrew trained in CCMP and introduced it to the church in 2016. Since then, he has been sharing Bible reflections with both Anglican church members and other Christians in the village. Having learnt different ways of using the Bible studies he was able to adapt them to the context, education level and experience of the people. The community is mainly made up of day labourers working in other people's fields, raising livestock, doing things like masonry and driving motorbikes.

The two approaches have complemented each other, with the ABCD approach providing a foundation for CCMP to flourish.



What changes has the village seen?

Now, the community has sanitary latrines and covered bathrooms. “Sanitary latrines are very good. In the past [we] used an open pit, [which was] very dirty. Some people built better ones, some simple. I am glad that the village is not dirty now,” one villager said. Another added, “The latrine project gave us the knowledge to be healthy and sanitary. Now everyone has their own latrine”.

They reported that the water system worked well and was especially valued in summer. “In the dry season, people come and we allow them to take water, but tell them to be careful not to break the pipes or taps,” one participant said. “Before the water project young girls did not know that you need barriers when washing, now they have safe bathrooms,” another shared.

It was interesting to see that the newly built church had also included water harvesting in its construction (right).

The group shared some of the impact of CCMP has had on them as a community and as families. The spoke of how they have become more understanding towards each other; they argue less. The members gather at one another's houses for Bible study every week. In the past, the congregation did not have serious discussions but now during Bible study they talk about issues that affect church members, such as migration. "We also talk as families now, we discuss things and consult the Reverend", they said. Other positive changes include spiritual growth, with deeper belief and reliance on God, and provision for those in need, especially widows and elderly people. For example, church members put aside a handful of rice regularly and collect it in church so it can be given to those in need.

They acknowledged difficulties as well as successes along the way. Their key challenges are people's health and having limited time. People don't own their land, so have to work as day labourers for other people, making it hard to come together. Not everything has worked out. The livelihood support project that provided some people with piglets encountered problems when some of the piglets succumbed to disease and died.



Individual testimonies

A woman about forty years old, shared about her faith. She was not born a Christian but married a Christian man. She attended the Bible reflections. Then she shared how she accepted Jesus when her prayers were answered during an illness. She also shared that she looks forward to the Bible reflections sessions.

Other men and women shared their vision for the church. Although there are only a few members, they have built the church through their own effort and with other donors' help. The spouses of the church members are becoming Christians and actively participating.



Looking to the future

CCMP has helped church members develop a vision for the church for 2020: To become a full parish (rather than a congregation as at present); Spiritual growth of church members; To keep tithing loyally; To set up a church endowment, purchasing a plot of land to grow seasonal crops and using the income to do development work; Leadership development; To promote education; Church unity.

From the discussion it felt as though this was really owned by the congregation. Their vision and objectives were displayed on the wall and they kept referring to it during the morning's discussion. They also had a poster of their CCMP activities and a flipchart with the notes from a recent Bible study.

With a beaming smile, Rev. Andrew thanked the visitors and prayed for them. The group also prayed for the church and their vision. The visitors returned heartened by their visit and having learnt a lot. All felt the strong faith of the priest, and the women, men and the youth of this small church, who are small but walking bravely with God.



With thanks to Joy Hla Gyaw for helping write this report.

Field visit 3: Witnessing local transformation

Paul smiled broadly.

“We want to grow spiritually and physically inside our church and in unity with our community,” he said.

“We want to share our blessings by working together with our neighbours.”



Witnessing local transformation

As we sat on rush mats on either side of the nave in Paul's church, evidence of that growth and transformation was all around us. A community hall, which was being built by the community after their day's work, was well underway next door, close to the new guest house. A concrete footpath to the road was being laid, the usefulness of which was abundantly clear on this rainy day. Even more impressive, though – and moving – were the joyful faces and lively testimonies of the congregation as they enthusiastically told us about their journey into asset-based church and community transformation.



The village is a community of 30 households of different faiths. We visited mid-morning, and were welcomed by forty or so men, women and children, the parish priest and Paul, the CCMP facilitator.

As we enjoyed the tea and fruit that had been set out before us, Paul told us about their journey with CCMP. “We started with Bible study. Then we realised that through the Bible we can live our lives and overcome our problems”.

“This training is very strange because I cannot stop!”

The parish had been doing CCMP for some time now, Paul said, but even so it was hard to stop: Bible studies were still enjoyed and demanded, community issues continued to arise and people continued to take initiatives (his CCMP supervisor also kept calling to what he was doing!). Four months ago, the church had gathered with the rest of the community to discuss the problem of rubbish and plastic waste and had taken action together to address it. Just a few days previously the footpath initiative had begun. “One family gave money in thanksgiving and we organised twenty people to help build the footpath together,” Paul said.





Someone else stood to say that she is a very impatient person but has learnt patience through community Bible study. Another woman told us she had always been painfully shy and never came to church, but now longs for Sunday to come. We were all struck by the fact that she related the story of her shyness with self-deprecating humour and energy. The priest interjected that the women in his congregation are more vocal than the men!

A young man, inspired by the courage of others, told us that there were two people fighting inside him all the time. Sometimes he followed one, sometimes the other. But he told us how the Bible studies helped him remember God in his weak moments. He asked for our prayers.

Bringing us back to the path being laid even as we were hearing these stories of transformation, an elderly lady said, "For a long time I have prayed for paving on our road as I am old and the muddy road is difficult. Then one member put in resources and the rest of the community contributed. You have to trust God. Change will come at the right time."

Voices from the community

One by one, others began to speak of the impact of CCMP on their lives and the community. An older man told us how their world-view was changing. No longer looking out solely for themselves, they had learnt how to live with others, and to work with them to make the village a clean, peaceful and pleasant place to live.

An old woman said proudly that although they are not semi-nary-trained, the Holy Spirit had given them wisdom and insight through the scriptures and, following the bishop's lead, each household was giving 10% of their income and saving another 10%. A handful of rice is put aside, daily, for the poor. She told us how CCMP had taught them the value of patience. A younger woman agreed - they rely on God much more now, she said.



Blessed and inspired

After they had spoken, we all shared something too: our own vulnerabilities, some encouragements, and prayer. We were, I think, all impressed with the way that God is using the CCMP process and Bible studies to give them confidence to grow personally, as well as confidence to partner with the village community, believing they had something to offer.

The visit was an inspiring, humbling experience - so refreshing to recognise and share our common humanity with these wonderful people.



Learning from the consultation 1: Listening groups

During the consultation, small groups met to capture ideas and learning from each case study. The seven “listening groups” each focused on one of the following aspects:

1. **Faith issues:** How does the process connect/enrich people’s Christian faith? How do we deal with the sensitivities of people of other faiths? How do we engage with people of other faiths? Are there any sensitivities and how do we deal with them?
2. **Process:** What are the steps in each ABCCT approach? Who takes these steps? What are the key factors for success?
3. **Contextual issues:** What are the different contexts in Asia? How is the ABCCT process adapted to different contexts? What different elements of the context should we think about?
4. **Facilitator development:** Who are the Facilitators? What is their role? How do we develop their skills? Who chooses them?
5. **Support structures.** What structures are needed to support the process? Who coordinates / mentors the facilitators and enables shared learning?
6. **Engaging church leadership:** How critical is the support of the church leadership? How do we engage/ strengthen/bring them closely on board?
7. **Challenges:** What are the key challenges which can block the process? How do we deal with them?

After all five case studies had been presented, each group summarised their reflections and presented their observations, as follows:



1. FAITH ISSUES

How does the process connect/enrich people’s Christian faith? How do we deal with the sensitivities of people of other faiths? How do we engage with people of other faiths? Are there any sensitivities and how do we deal with them?

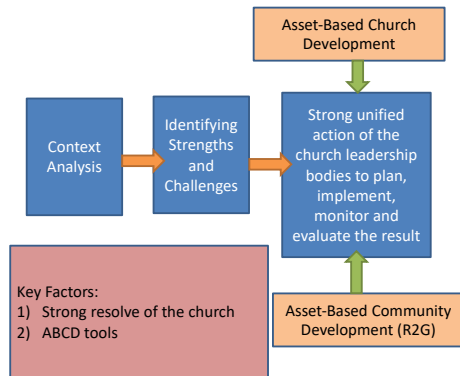
The faith issues listening group presented the insights they had gained from the five case studies in the form of a skit, which made the following points:

- Being involved in ABCCT is exciting; it brings people’s faith to life.
- Talking about it to others is easy as everyone can relate to good news, whatever their faith background. It opens up conversation; people are interested.
- Engage with others openly and honestly. Take time to answer people’s questions; share your experiences.
- Respect the sensitivities of people of other faiths in order to build trust and open up the space for conversation.
- Explain that ABCCT is not about trying to convert people; our religious teaching says we are to care for the whole person and the whole community.
- Make connections and find common threads in our faith stories and experiences.
- Form partnerships between different faith groups and government structures.

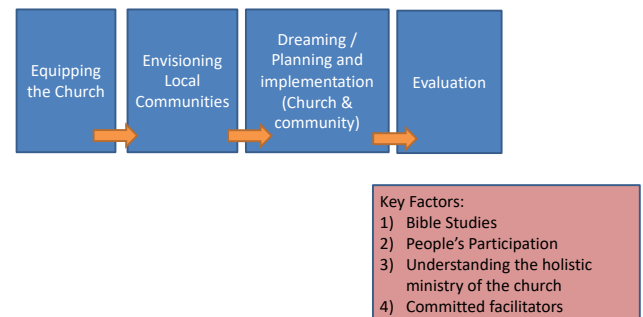
2. PROCESS

What are the steps in each ABCCT approach? Who takes these steps? What are the key factors for success?
The process listening group presented their observations through the following set of slides:

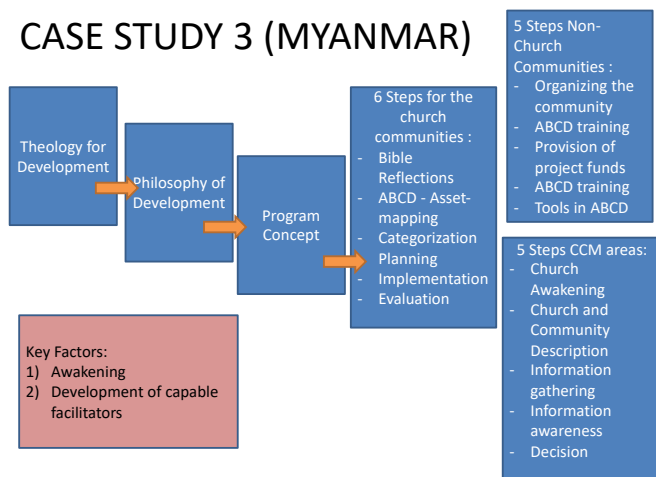
CASE STUDY 1 (ABCD – ECP)



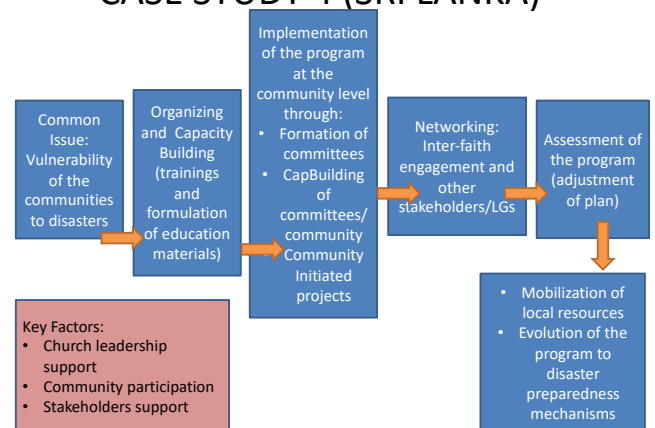
CASE STUDY 2 (INDIA)



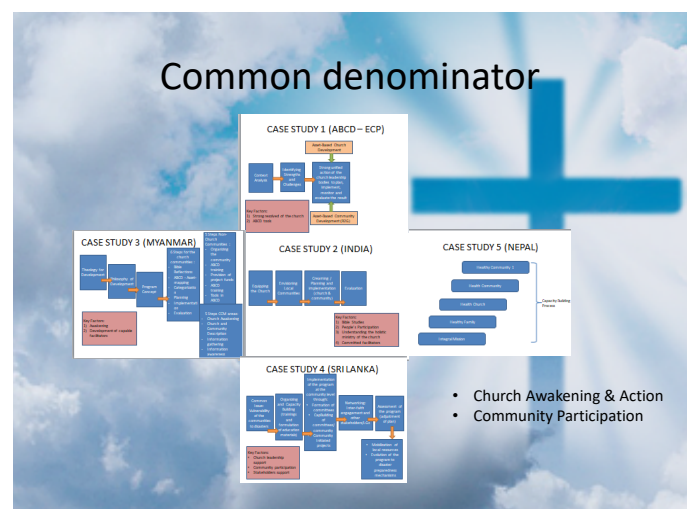
CASE STUDY 3 (MYANMAR)



CASE STUDY 4 (SRI LANKA)



CASE STUDY 5 (NEPAL)



3. CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

What are the different contexts in Asia? How is the ABCCT process adapted to different contexts? What different elements of the context should we think about?

Different elements of the context and resulting issues:

- Church working in a minority context, except for Philippines, inter-faith tension - hostility, inequality, fear, control, restriction on activities
- Gender inequality is a big limiting issue in society and Church (except in the Philippines where gender not issue in Church)
- Hostile environment, civil war or post-civil war - violence, suspicion, fear
- Natural disasters and climate change, typhoons, earthquakes, landslides, flooding, drought, pollution
- Inequality, poverty: caste, tribal, gender, disability, urban, rural - unemployment, alcoholism, drugs, migration
- Diversity, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-faith

Process adaptation for the context:

Minority context:

- Use Bible study to envision and strengthen the congregation spiritually
- Leave the Bible in Church and go out modelling Jesus, love in action
- Work together with other Christians, be seen to be united, e.g. one curriculum for CCT in a country
- Use a common issue to engage community across faiths and ethnicities, e.g. disasters, climate change, drugs
- Be clear that not evangelising when reach out to community
- Be careful where meet, what share, as can be sensitive and quickly reported back

Interfaith context:

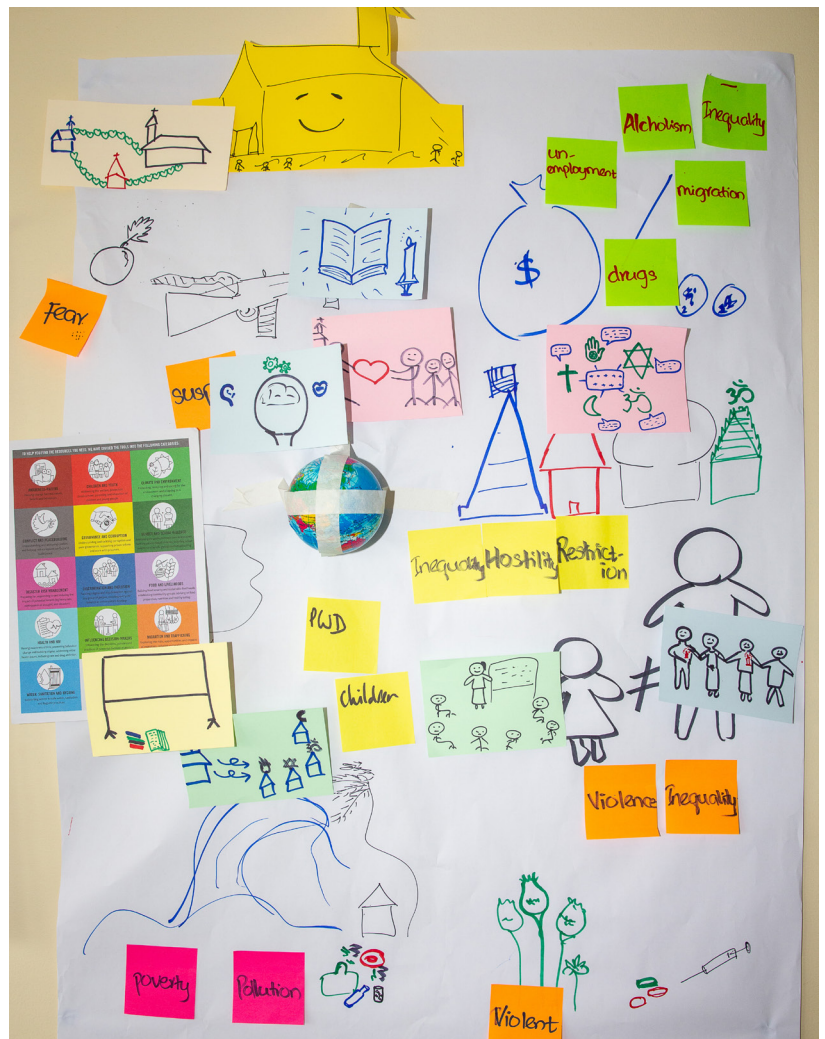
- Build relationships with other faith groups, bring people together
- Look for link to faith stories
- Use skits/drama to illustrate

Gender inequality context:

- Use women leaders, model alternative gender roles in church and community
- Delay working with community until accept inclusion of women, but accept working as separate groups if needed

Inequality, poverty context:

- Use process to tackle poverty, that is the root of many problems, drugs, migration etc
- Use work to give hope, so decrease poverty, decrease drug abuse, alcohol abuse
- Be intentional about working with minority groups, youth
- Follow up on the energy generated by activities to go onto new activities



4. FACILITATOR DEVELOPMENT

ABCCT facilitators come from different backgrounds within the Church – both ordained and lay.

Facilitators receive training in ABCCT, for example through a project officer from the national office, which is used to build the capacity of local communities through their chosen development activities. Facilitators (also known as project officers) act as a bridge between the Church and community, building rapport with the community to help Church and community work well together. Facilitators envision the Church and facilitate the Bible studies, as well as helping mobilise resources to implement activities.

Facilitators are often chosen / asked to become facilitators by their bishop or other officer within the Church. This means they can attend training without much idea of what ABCCT is and under a certain degree of compulsion. Others feel chosen by God for the task. Once training has begun, participants often report feeling enlightened, caught and inspired by the vision of ABCCT. One participant recalled a training of clergy who were used to napping in the post-lunch sessions of trainings. However, the participatory nature of the ABCCT training meant they were so engaged they did not want to miss anything and did not fall asleep. The element of compulsion was discussed further, with one delegate saying that for ABCCT to be effective it needs to be institutionalised within the Church – i.e. made part and parcel of the life of the Church. It is this need to embed ABCCT within the organisation that should drive any compulsory attendance, not the force of personality or whim of a bishop.

What challenges do facilitators face?

Pastors who are also facilitators can face challenges trying to manage both their pastoral and community development roles. It can be time-consuming, leading to tension at home. Other facilitators also often have more than one role, again leading to not having enough time for the competing demands of the roles.

Facilitators can have large geographical areas to cover, which again is time-consuming. They can also face threats from fanatical or government bodies who think they have come to proselytise. Some people have expectations that facilitators will do something for them and it can be hard to get people to realise there are local resources which can be utilised for community transformation. There is often resistance to lay people – especially women – leading Bible study.



5. SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Practitioners of ABCCT need support in three key areas: from the top leadership (bishop or equivalent), from the next level of leadership (diocesan structures, clergy) and as individual practitioners.

Top level leadership. An enthusiastic and envisioned bishop creates an enabling environment. When top level leaders take the initiative and enthuse others, ABCCT becomes embedded in the organisation, creating an overall supportive context for practitioners.

Second level leadership, including diocesan structures. Integrating ABCCT into diocesan strategy, allocating budget and providing both good training opportunities and practical resources, also creates a supportive and enabling environment.

Personal support. Facilitators need the support of their local community, for example from the village chief or local government. They also need mentoring and support structures to maintain their enthusiasm and build their knowledge. Local, regional and national communities of practice connect facilitators with one another and provide ongoing envisioning and support.

6. ENGAGING CHURCH LEADERSHIP

How do we engage Church leaders? ABCCT is a long process, of at least 2 to 3 years, so their support is vital.

First, we need to create **an envisioning space for key/top leaders** (bottom right in the photo). Field visits to see ABCCT in practice, creating ecumenical communities of practice, inviting other voices of experience in and approaching ABCCT in terms of discipleship are all keys to effective envisioning.

Second, **integral / holistic mission thinking** needs to be embedded throughout the whole Church organisation through: incorporation into theological training programmes; workshops (such as the Thinking Theology seminars in Nepal); preaching in weekly sermons and discussion in radio programmes and magazine articles. Training resources are needed for these activities.



A **strong set of values** is needed to underpin all these envisioning and embedding activities. Key amongst these are: living out integral mission in daily life, being a role model; living a Christ-centred or Christ-like life and reflecting the beatitudes; leaders need to act as mentors, providing support to junior colleagues; having clarity of vision and purpose, that is reflected in the organisation's policies.

Together, these elements are likely to have positive and reinforcing impacts that align with the aspirations of Church leaders (top left in the photo). At the same time, there are a number of challenges to engaging Church leadership. These include: leaders having different priorities or theologies (such as prosperity theologies or suffering theologies); limited human, financial and time resources.

7. CHALLENGES

Key challenges encountered by practitioners of ABCCT and suggestions for dealing with them were:

Challenge	Suggestions for dealing with the challenge
Finding good facilitators – i.e. people with the right social and technical skills who will be able to pass on their training to a local community.	Need a good selection process. Don't limit facilitators to clergy. Need local facilitators from the community, selected by the local church.
Retaining facilitators. The long time scale of ABCCT process can lead to drop out.	Find out what motivates facilitators and maintains their interest. Make the training lively and engaging.
Limited women's participation in places where Church leadership is predominantly male.	Needs an intentional strategy to bring in women – for example requiring a 50:50 ratio of male and female facilitators at parish level; holding activities when women are free.
A culture of dependency. People can be so used to being given things it makes the concept of ABCCT difficult to grasp; they find it hard to accept they can solve problems using their own resources and are resistant to change.	Firm and confident leadership. Demonstrate successes elsewhere to convince and inspire people.
Perceptions and priorities of the Church. The Church is seen by wider society as wanting to convert people and churches are often themselves in the mode of church planting. This creates hostility to the Church and resistance to ABCCT activities, hampering the process.	We need to be transparent about our activities, what we are doing and why. Demonstrate successes elsewhere to convince and inspire people. Need also to work with others, collaborating with the government and other stakeholders.

Where are they distinct from one another?



Participants were asked to write down the key features of the ABCCT approach they practise, whether ABCD or CCMP. The group then analysed those features and arranged them as a Venn diagram to show:

- the features that are common to both approaches (the overlap area in the middle of the Venn diagram)
- the features that are unique to one or other approach.



The result of the exercise is shown opposite. As can be seen, the approaches have a great deal in common.

The key distinctive features concern the entry point of the process (church or community), the context in which each ABCCT approach can be used, the dependence on a trained facilitator and whether the approach is an entry gate from the church to the community (CCMP) or a bridge between the two (ABCD).



Reflections on the consultation

Representatives from the different agencies were asked to reflect on the questions:

- What has inspired you from the consultation?
- How will you take it forward?

Common themes emerged in the answers to both questions:

What has inspired you?

- ★ The richness of the week. Especially, having so many people in the room – from ten countries, from a range of organisations and from all levels of engagement (grass-roots community practitioners to global leads).
- ★ Celebrating the similarities between the different ABCCT approaches – finding common ground.
- ★ Better understanding and appreciation of other approaches. Eyes opened to healthy interdependence.
- ★ Celebrating the distinctiveness of each – and appreciating how this is enriching (not competition or a threat).
- ★ “A joy to see people walking together this week – as on the road to Emmaus – not competing.”

How will you take things forwards?

- ★ Replicate the consultation in more localised settings, working collaboratively across denominations and approaches and appreciating all the other things that are happening in this area in the Body of Christ.
- ★ Move together with others. Need not only to do the right thing, but do it right, pausing so as not to leave anyone behind. Slower, but more effective in long run.
- ★ Will work differently (smarter) in places where a different ABCCT approach has already been used. Can now build on what’s already been done, rather than repeating the material the different approaches have in common. See the presence of the other approach as a gift and a blessing.
- ★ Will work differently. One participant who said they have tended to focus on the community level, could now see the importance of engaging church leadership too and will now do so more intentionally.
- ★ Exploring the possibility of new R2G partnerships, between countries – passing on the chain of love.
- ★ Keep moving together; gather again. Offer to host from the Philippines.

Rachel Carnegie thanked all the churches and agencies present for the generous sharing of their experiences and expertise. She acknowledged Tearfund for their ground-breaking work on CCT saying, “Tearfund has been exemplary in that you really pioneered this work over the last 15 – 20 years. I watched in 2010 when you made a very deliberate decision to give it away, not trying to contain and control it, but saying ‘this is a gift from God. Let it go out in the Church’. And we’ve seen the fruit. We have all the different approaches we’ve heard about here. Many, many different churches and agencies have been blessed by that and taken it forwards”.

Outcomes

At the end of the consultation, three ways of moving forward together were identified:

1. Networking. The need for practitioners to connect with one another is crucial. Various ways of doing so were suggested, including:

- Ongoing connection with one another for mutual support, to identify issues on which we wish to build momentum and to challenge one another to maintain momentum.
- Expanding our networks at home, finding new people to partner with.
- Helping to link up people new to ABCCT with current practitioners.

2. Learning. Suggestions for continued learning included:

- Sharing resources, including our toolkits and Bible studies.
- Another gathering, facilitated by the Anglican Alliance.
- Exposure and exchange programmes, both within and between countries.

3. Prayer. Participants agreed to pray for one another in two ways:

- At a specific time each week (Saturday morning was agreed and a WhatsApp group created).
- In pairs of prayer partners.

A small planning group was formed to carry on thinking about the next steps in more depth.

A precious time together...

"Jesus came alongside the disciples; he did not interrupt or stop them; he walked with them at their pace and asked 'what is your reality?' Jesus used the scriptures to help the disciples understand their present reality; he used the sweep of the story and finished where they are part of the story".

Reflections from the Bible study on the Road to Emmaus



En route to one of the field visits

"This moment is like Heaven. In the end time, when Jesus comes, we will all be in the Kingdom of God, countless people gathered together like this. Our faces [and] our colour is different, but the blood is the same". Archbishop Stephen Than Myint Oo, Primate of the Church of the Province of Myanmar



Telling the Bible story as a news report: the boy who shared his lunch

"Since my first encounter with ABCCT in 2007, I have seen God at work. We are literally chasing the Spirit, who is moving so fast with this work around the Anglican Communion and around the other denominations, saying 'this is how you can be part of building the Kingdom' ". Rev. Rachel Carnegie



The market place



Bible study was at the heart of our time together

"It's been such a blessing to marry ABCD and CCMP together and to see we are not competing with each other, but walking together, as on the road to Emmaus. It's really wonderful to see everyone excited about it." Annam Arumanayagam, East Asia Facilitator



Field visit feedback: analysing the impacts of ABCCT using the light wheel developed by Tearfund and the University of Bath

"For me, this is one of the most wonderful, meaningful CCMP/ CCT gatherings - because of the process, the questions, the case studies, the small group discussion. It is very meaningful; I have learned greatly. For me, calling something ABCD or CCT is not that important but just doing something that brings a whole-life transformation to the church and community is." S'lont Mun, Tearfund Director, Myanmar



Fellowship and fun!

Jesus himself came near and walked beside them... And he was known to them in the breaking of bread. Luke 24:15 and 35



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★ **Transformation**, supporting Anglicans as they work to bring transformational change to - and with - their communities;

★ **Connection**, enabling the sharing of learning and skills, building capacity and promoting partnerships;

★ **God-given gifts**, taking an asset-based approach in all our work. This takes as its starting point the gifts God has given to churches and communities - their resources, skills and experience.



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