

# INMED HUMANITARIAN HEALTH CONFERENCE - 2024

## MILESTONES OR MILLSTONES: WHEN "HELPING" MAY HURT

### The Challenges of Being Truly Effective in the Majority World Consequential Lessons from the Field

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#### ❖ GOALS OF THIS PRESENTATION

- Heighten your **awareness** of the **challenges** of being truly effective
- Gain a healthier perspective of "**can**" vis-à-vis "**should**" we do something
- Recognize potential "**Unintended Consequences**"
- **End result:** Enhanced **Wisdom** and more appropriate **Compassion**

#### ❖ DISCLOSURE

- There are no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose.

#### ❖ THE CALL TO MISSIONS - MATTHEW 9:35-38

- Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into this harvest field."

#### ❖ CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

- Respectful terminology:
  - ◆ The best: "The **Majority** World"
  - ◆ Second best: "The **Developing** World"
  - ◆ But NOT: The **Third** World

#### ❖ DEFINITIONS

- **Milestones:** A significant point in development
- **Millstones:** Something that grinds or crushes; a heavy burden
- **Worldview:** The total set of beliefs or assumptions that comprise the mindset of an individual and determine how they behave
- **Cultural Intelligence:** The capability to function effectively in intercultural contexts including different national, ethnic, organizational, generational, and many other contexts
- **Wisdom:** Knowledge of what is true or right coupled with just judgment as to action
  - ◆ I.e., with keen perception, foresight, discernment, or insight

## ❖ SCRIPTURES ABOUT WISDOM

- **1 Cor 1:25** For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.
- **James 3:13** Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

## ❖ MY "BIG 5" PRAYER REQUESTS

- **WISDOM**
- Strength
- Safety
- Health
- and Peace...

## ❖ DISCERNMENT - ROMANS 12:2

- Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.

## ❖ A MEDICAL ANALOGY

- When a sick person goes to the doctor, the doctor could make 2 crucial mistakes:
  - ◆ **Treating symptoms** instead of the underlying illness
  - ◆ **Misdiagnosing** the underlying illness and prescribing the wrong treatment

## ❖ "POVERTY" – IT'S COMPLICATED!

- Westerners think of **Poverty** primarily in **Materialistic** terms
- But as Corbett & Fikkert explain, it is so much more and may include poverty of:
  - ◆ Being
  - ◆ Community
  - ◆ Stewardship
  - ◆ Intimacy with God

## ❖ "MATERIALISTIC" POVERTY

- **RISKS** of using a **Materialistic** definition of poverty:
  - ◆ God-complexes of the materially non-poor
  - ◆ Feelings of inferiority of the materially poor
  - ◆ Causing: Harm to **both** the materially poor and non-poor

## ❖ DIFFERENTIATION OF RESPONSES [SEE: Page 6 of this handout]

- Does the situation require **RELIEF**?
- Does the situation require **REHABILITATION**?
- Does the situation require **DEVELOPMENT**?
- **"Relief"**
  - ◆ Defined as the **urgent and temporary** provision of emergency aid to reduce immediate suffering from a natural or man-made crisis

- **"Rehabilitation"**
  - ◆ Begins as soon as "the bleeding stops"
  - ◆ Seeks to restore people & communities to **positive pre-crisis** elements
  - ◆ Dynamic of working **with** the victims participating in their own recovery
- **"Development"**
  - ◆ The process that moves ALL the people involved
    - ◇ I.e., **both** the Helpers and the Helped
      - Closer to being in right relationship with God, self, others, and the rest of creation
    - ◇ It is not done TO people or FOR people, but **WITH** people
  - ◆ The key dynamic is promoting an **empowering** process
  - ◆ One of the greatest mistakes that North Americans make domestically and internationally:
    - ◇ Applying **relief** in situations in which **rehabilitation** or **development** would be the appropriate intervention
    - ◇ May provide **relief** inappropriately because:
      - They have a **materialistic** definition of poverty
      - **Relief** is easier to do than **development**
      - It is easier to raise donor funds for **relief**
- We need **wisdom and discernment** on the road to effective ministry and Kingdom work
  - ◆ Not infrequently we may encounter:
    - ◇ **Mixed Messages** and/or **Road Blocks** along the path towards proper discernment about which Response is appropriate

## ❖ CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

- Important to learn basic principles: **When "Helping" Could Be Hurtful**
- Impossible to know everything in advance...
- Therefore, while in another culture, we should endeavor to be:
  - ◆ Well-informed, in advance
  - ◆ Self-aware
  - ◆ Curious
  - ◆ Observant
  - ◆ AND Respectful with a modicum of Humility

## ❖ ISSUE: "WE'LL JUST FIX THEM!"

- Examples of the "Wrong Attitude"
  - ◆ **ARROGANCE**: "We can fix Haiti in a week!"
  - ◆ **DISRESPECT**: Skillsets - ignoring "Primum, non nocere"
  - ◆ **WORLDVIEW**: "Chaos" in the Haitian Clinic's Wound Care area
  - ◆ **A Remedy: CROSS-CULTURAL PROFESSIONALISM**

## ❖ ISSUE: UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

- Just because we didn't carefully consider or anticipate the potentially negative impact(s), doesn't mean they won't happen!
- Examples of the "Wrong Response"...EVEN when motivated by Altruism:

- ◆ **Too Much, Too Late:** USA response to a prior famine in Haiti
- ◆ **Competition:** FREE Healthcare long after a Disaster
- ◆ **Paternalism:** Deploying U.S. volunteers who inadvertently 'steal' manual labor jobs from local unemployed able-bodied people
- ◆ **Inappropriate Focus:** "Helicopter Docs" in Haiti volunteering with other NGOs
- ◆ **Demoralizing:** Wonderful Christmas gifts for "needy" immigrant kids from an Anglo church

### ❖ ISSUE: EXACERBATING THE POVERTY

- Colonialists found Handouts were their most powerful weapon of control – **creating dependence** and a **"poverty mindset"**
- **Dependency:** Freebies *ad infinitum* in Mozambique
- **Lack of Local Ownership:** U.S. volunteers completing the entire Church construction in Africa

### ❖ PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

- Reminder: This Pursuit of Excellence is a journey, not a destination...
  - ◆ Therefore, it is always a "work-in-progress"

### ❖ VISION: THE "IDEAL" HHI-HAITI CLINIC

- "Haitian Medical Professionals caring for Haitian Patients, with Americans and other Expats functioning as Mentors, Facilitators, and Networkers – working together to take our clinical efforts to the 'Next Level'"

### ❖ "S.A.L.T."

- **Serving and Learning Together!**
  - ◆ Requires a modicum of Humility and Teachability for ALL of us

### ❖ MODUS OPERANDI: EMPOWERMENT!!

- **"Giving Them a Fish" vis-à-vis "Teaching Them How to Fish"**
  - ◆ **...BUT ONLY IF THEY ASK FOR THIS!**

### ❖ AN ANTIDOTE TO BURNOUT

- **Medical Volunteerism for Americans**
  - ◆ This benefit was witnessed first-hand repeatedly in Haiti
  - ◆ After ~10 days of clinics:
    - ◇ They were rejuvenated, energized, with sparkling eyes
    - ◇ Despite very challenging clinical settings...
  - ◆ And some returned repeatedly to be medical volunteers thereafter!

### ❖ OUR INSPIRATION – MATTHEW 25:40b

- "...Truly I tell you, whatever you did **for\*** one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me."
  - ◆ **\*for:** if responding to an acute crisis with Relief
  - ◆ **\*with:** if responding to ongoing needs with Rehabilitation and Development

## ❖ BEING “HIS INSTRUMENTS” TO FACILITATE HEALING

- Of course, **ALL actual healing** comes from **The Great Physician**
  - ◆ I am blessed beyond words simply to be one of His “**instruments**” facilitating this healing process by utilizing my skillsets...
  - ◆ My personal hope and prayer:
    - ✧ These efforts will honor our Lord as my colleagues and I minister to the needs with Wisdom and Compassion
  - ◆ And I wish the SAME for each of you!

- ❖ **VOLUNTEERING:** If interested in being connected to an NGO to explore opportunities as an international medical volunteer, please email me at the address noted above.

## REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED INFORMATION RESOURCES\*\*

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\*\*Most impactful publications overall

## Thank You!

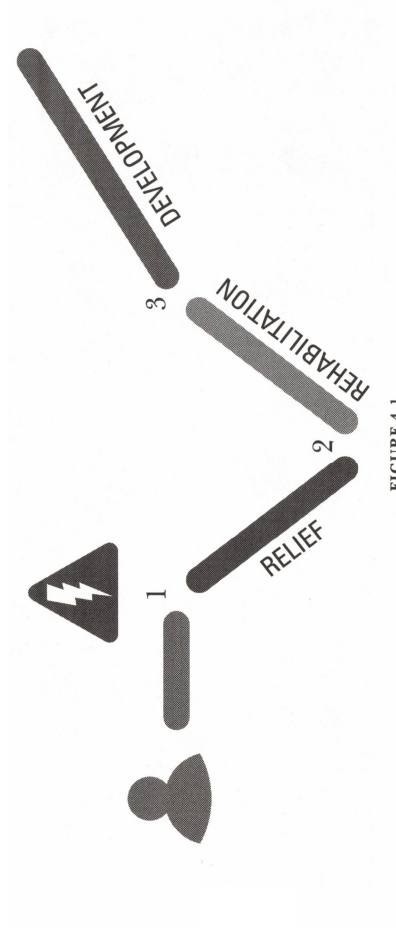


FIGURE 4.1

From Corbett & Fikkert - Page 100