

The Indigenous Church Plan in Action

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In this presentation I will explain to you what we think of as Indigenous Church Planting Methodology. The emphasis is on the word **METHODOLOGY** together with **INDIGENOUS**. There is also an indigenous church **POLICY**. The two are obviously different. And it is necessary to analyze this difference.

You were asked to read for today the section in the BWM Handbook entitled **CHURCH PLANTING**. In this section you read of the four (4) “selfs,” self- propagating, administering, disciplining, supporting, which are necessary to achieve in a mission field in order to have finally planted a national church. The interesting thing about these four “selfs” is this: planting a national church, regardless of methodology used, always requires these as necessary to achieve or you do not have an independent national church. They have really little to do with how **INDIGENOUS** the planted church is. Also achieving these four “selfs” does not tell us by what **METHODOLOGY** they were attained. For example, in Africa we are confident that our sister churches in Zambia and Malawi will attain the four (4) “selfs.” And we have every hope that they will be quite indigenous. But they have not employed an indigenous church **METHODOLOGY**. This is in no way a criticism, it is simply a matter of fact.

In your reading of this section in the “Handbook” you came across another similar factor. It is 4.4, “Stages of Development.” These stages are listed as “Guardianship,” which I like to call “Parenting”; “Partnership,” a term I also use; and finally “Advisorship,” which is fine for now. My first comment is that all fields, regardless of **METHODOLOGY** used, go through these same stages. They are **NOT** part and parcel of the indigenous church policy or methodology. You can plant a small **WELS** church in a foreign country which certainly would **NOT** be indigenous and the planting or establishing would go through those stages. The **SECOND** thing I will say about these stages in the “Handbook” is that they need further detail in one or two instances for reflecting better true indigenous **METHODOLOGY**, and **PERHAPS** policy. The reason for this is, stated briefly here with more later, that we need to have further descriptive explanations such as **PLANNING**, **PLANTING** periods and finally at the end a **PARTING** period within some of the stated stages. Without the descriptive explanations of these periods and the natural activities carried out in them, and considering the turnover of members on the Administrative Committees (ACs) and the turnovers on the missionary teams (MT) on the field, we will cause unnecessary stressful and difficult situations for AC and MT members. More will follow on this point. One further point still needs to be included. We will try to keep in mind in this presentation that an AC can be dealing with two types of fields substantially different, that is one founded by **WELS** and at the same time in another country an existing national group that has come to us. Or you may administer one field that was started long ago before **WELS** was really familiar with an indigenous church methodology, and then with that, a field that was more recently begun, this time utilizing a different methodology. This can well mean that you will have different methodologies on different fields. You will have to keep that straight. But an existing field that comes to us will be at some stage of development just as will a field we started. In any field the stage which the work is at has to be known and kept in mind. This is important information to share with any called person in the orientation process. Equally important, remember our final goal is the same, and there has to be a **PARTING** period considered in your planning. So what really is Indigenous Church **METHODOLOGY** that follows Indigenous Church Policy? Let’s try to find out some of what it is at least in the time allotted to us. We begin with

Preamble - The future course of a mission field as to its indigenous methodology can be and often is determined by what is done in the planning and preparation of a field, and the first few years of activity of the missionaries on the field. If we want to plant a national church using what we think of or call the indigenous church method, then we had better plan well and know what we, both the AC and the MT, are doing before even one missionary steps on the field. There has to be accord regarding the Philosophy of Ministry and Methodology in the planning and carrying out of the work in each stage and unto its desired conclusion, which is to stand aside from a living, vibrant sister national church.

Therefore:

How do you, the AC, prepare for the planting

1. Do you have a general/specific Mission Statement for your AC?
If not, why not? And if you don't, how do you begin to orientate new members of your AC?
2. Do you have a specific **PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE** statement which sets down clearly the Philosophy of Ministry and Methodology for each field?
How do you begin to orientate a called worker to the broad policies and methodologies of the field, before he accepts, so he understands what the work is that he will be doing?
(TRUE STORY OF NEW WORKER)

Strategies and tactics in carrying out mission work are constantly changing. Your **PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE** statement should therefore state the philosophy of ministry being used and the methodology. It should reference or at least footnote any particular strategy and or tactics that is being or might be used. Obviously, it should contain your final purpose/goal for this endeavor.

CF. APPENDIX A (Two philosophies of ministry for missionaries)

After outlining the two philosophies of ministry Pastor Missionary P. Strackbein goes on to say: "This once again brings me to my original point: With this understanding, it would be possible for an Administrative Committee to have its own philosophy of ministry and even encourage the different fields that it is responsible for to adopt this philosophy of ministry without interfering in any way with the different plans, strategies, and methodologies that the fields may come up with. It is my opinion that after already having unity in doctrine, it is unity in the philosophy of ministry rather than unity with strategies, etc. that more than anything else will contribute to harmony among missionaries. It is my opinion that we will not achieve this harmony in our different fields unless the Administrative Committee takes the lead in directing the missionaries with regard to the PoM that it feels is most desired.

It may happen by chance in a reactive way. The AC taking charge would be a proactive way to achieve it."

(I believe that it should be clear from this example that new developments are always occurring in the Indigenous Work Plan in Action.)

Besides stating a philosophy of ministry in your **PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE** statement, this declaration also might reflect your coworker relation with the missionary and the MT, your service in Christ to the nation and the people which you serve, and finally your intention to establish a national church rather than a congregation or district of WELS. The AC might want to consider whether to amend or update this statement as the mission field passes to a new stage.

WORK TIME (5 minutes)

*Each committee will draw up **PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE STATEMENT** for one of its fields. Each committee may use this time, if they choose, to draw up a rebuttal to this idea of a **PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE STATEMENT** instead of the statement.*

(If you need or want help, you may go to Appendix B for a sample of such a **PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE** statement.)

3. Do you as an AC have a (A) **long range plan** and (B) **short range plan** for the field? With this do you have a **time line graph** of progression of the work, from the beginning, Day 1, to the day of departure, that is the day we think WELS is basically done with its planting work? (We might have a man there as advisor or a helper in theological education, but the national church has attained the four (4) “selfs.”)
- A. The **LONG RANGE** plan will be contain larger, less detailed thoughts for a 10 to 20 year period. It will also contain at least a statement, if not more detail of when WELS hopes to have accomplished the planting and is willing and ready to leave. For a **NEW FIELD the long range plan (and graph)** might look something like this:

Yrs 1-5 (After having learned the language)

Sowing, harvesting first believers, training for membership and then congregational leadership, Sunday School Teaching, and outreach. Development with help from the nationals of congregational leadership and outreach materials will be done. At end of 5 yrs., nationals are in charge of outreach. Find first students for further ministry offices. (This is the most ambitious part of the 20 year program, because the missionaries themselves will be less able to sow the seed the first year at least.)

Yrs 5-10

Continue sowing the seed but mostly by nationals, begin training for ministry classes, lay level, and pre-seminary level; nationals are trained to train other lay level leaders, particularly in evangelism, membership, congregational leadership, and Sunday School. Courses for such training are borrowed from sister fields or are newly developed. During years five (5) to ten (10) future evangelist and pastor candidates will be identified. Their training will begin.

Yrs 10-20

We finish *parenting*, we pass through *partnering*, and we enter the last stage, the Advisorship stage which must also include the parting stage, or be followed by it. During these years our biggest concentration will be on training pastors as well as lower level workers. Again literature such as preparing written courses are necessary. We will desist from doing congregational work except to observe and counsel. We will plan for national workers to take over the government as well as the theological education of the church. We will lay plans for leaving except for a helper or two to the national church, if they desire it and the Lord permits it.

B. How can we adapt and apply such a plan to a field now existing with the conditions and situations of the present moment? This no one can do for you. The MT will be in the best condition to consider this and draw up such a long range plan. But the AC will definitely have a role to play, especially that of keeping before the MT the goal of turning all the work over to the nationals.

EXAMPLE

To apply this idea of short and long range plans to fields long in existence with an eye always on departure, the AC for Latin America asked for three things from its MT (at least I know they did of us in Cuba). **First**, each field via its MT was asked to state to what stage their particular field had attained and was presently at. **Secondly**, it was to use the study done by the BWM regarding goals needed to be accomplished in order for WELS to depart and state where we were at in accomplishing them. **Thirdly**, we were asked to draw up a Ten Year Plan in which we would accomplish (and how we were going to do it) as many of those goals as possible—or at least make strides towards accomplishing them.

4. The short range plan will cover the first few years, probably 3 or 5 years. This plan will have more detail in it. This plan is very helpful in the fact that as you look down the road to what you want to accomplish in the first three (3) or (5) years you can also convey this in the orientation of the workers as you call them for the work. They are responsible for the work on the field, but they need some guidance, especially in a new field and doubly so if they are new to world mission work. For instance, where do you want them to work, among which class of people, the poor, the middle class, the working class? These types of questions and their answers are of extreme importance in getting off on the right foot in order to truly follow an indigenous methodology.

Having these tools in hand you have the necessary information to properly orientate a called worker even while he has the call. If he doesn't agree with your purpose/objectives and/or the methodology, perhaps he should return the call. (I realize that he may not fully understand all you are telling him, but you will be able to explain to him these matters.)

There is more that we could **probably** say to add to this **PLANNING PERIOD**. For instance, the type of missionary you are looking for. But we had better move on to the next stage.

WORK TIME:

Take 5 to 7 minutes to recall and be ready to report orally the highlights of the plan of work of one of your fields for the next three (3) to (5) five years.

II. The Planting Stage - (Not listed in BWM, Handbook)

We add this new or additional stage because there is a period of time between the **PLANNING PERIOD** and the **GUARDIANSHIP** or **PARENTING STAGE** that can not be passed over. There is one very important rule that goes into effect as soon as one of the MT members steps unto the field. There are also several crucial questions at the beginning of this stage that need answers. All this is important because any false step which we can not easily undo with little harm is going to affect negatively the future of the field for a long time to come.

The important rule is this: **FROM THE BEGINNING THE MT AND THE AC SHOULD NOT DO ANYTHING THAT THE NATIONALS CAN DO FOR THEMSELVES**. This seems so simple and logical if we are establishing a national church that will stand on its own. And perhaps today it is among our missionaries. But it is a lesson that has taken a long time to be learned, if it has been. (If we had time we could explore this further with examples. But one simple example might be: Should I a missionary be preaching at a congregation when I have a national evangelist who can preach using a sermon prepared for evangelists?)

The first of the crucial questions is, according to the culture what shall I consider as to how the all powerful Word of God might be sowed. WELS expatriate workers plant a church through evangelism. Should

the MT consider establishing a *Christian Information Center* (CIC); or is using *English as a Foreign Language Classes* (EFL) a good idea? Is the MT able to go door to door, or distribute literature? What about newspaper advertisements publicizing a special event, or radio and TV ads? The AC wants to be sure of two things. The MT is learning the national's culture, and then using their knowledge of the culture from the beginning as they evangelize. (Cf. Appendix C, 1, c.; Appendix C contains the *Guiding Principals for all WELS Cross-Cultural Ministry*; also *Prerequisites for Cross-Cultural Work*" M.A. Goeglein). Equally important is for the MT to try to set aside as much as possible their own USA' and WELS' culture.

There is a second part to knowing the culture for the purpose of evangelism. Once the MT knows what type of evangelism to employ in their particular national culture, the MT should dedicate time to discovering how to present their chosen way of Evangelism in a culturally friendly environment; in a CIC in Latin America this could be as simple as having coffee for those that enter. Likewise the evangelism presentation can be done in a culturally friendly manner; this might be presenting the Gospel in stories or pictures. In both cases the nationals will know better than we what might be best, Cf. Appendix C, 5, d.

The second important question at this time is, where will the missionaries plant the church? In what social, economic class of people will they begin? This is a crucial decision that has to be made and the AC has to watch carefully what the MT does! —Lets analyze a bit which is the best? (And for this we have to set aside for now a rural setting type mission field). We are talking cities. Among what class of people should we begin to sow the seed? A broad division of levels could be rich, middle, working, poor. WELS expatriate workers plant a church through evangelism. In what social economic level will they begin? That depends upon the characteristics of each class. Can the poor read? What level of education have the poor had, if any? What is their income level? What I'm driving at is this: The social economic level in which we want to work has to be one from which we can draw somewhat educated male leaders. Also we need people who in time, blessed by the Lord, can give offerings of one type or another that will support the national church, it workers and its programs. Can the poor do this? In many countries no! —Another important question is, if I begin with the poor, can I move up in the society to a higher level later? Basically, WELS will work with one societal class and allow the national church to branch out to the other classes in their home mission efforts.

Up to now we have not had to say anything about subsidy. That was because we hadn't reached the field. Now we are there. So one key factor we want to watch is subsidy. The general thought is and will be, "No money for the nationals," but this does not preclude using humanitarian aid. But this **PLANTING STAGE** is perhaps one of the most dangerous times to use this humanitarian aid as we must be beware from the beginning of making "rice Christians."

Also there is relatively little need for subsidy at this point. You have no national workers you are training at the higher theologically levels. A possible problem that one can see at this stage is transportation for people to church. If there is such a problem, and remember public conveyances are much better in other countries than ours, this should be dealt with by the nationals, and this can even be the case if you yet don't have any confirmed members. By their solving the transportation problem, they are taking a small important step in their Christianity, that of serving others, especially those of the household of faith, and also a small step in their independence. They are problem solving, and they are depending on themselves and their resources. The instruction during this period will deal with a children's ministry in part, with emphasis on adult instruction. Missionary Soltau, from the Korean field of the late 1800s, keeps stressing in his book that it is of extreme importance to teach well (thoroughly) the first adult converts, remembering that most everything concerning the Word of God is new to them. He also added that after you have the first adult members, these should, and not the missionary alone, approve new instructed candidates for adult communicant membership. This advice is still wisdom for today, an example being Cuba.

Since evangelism is one of the very first tasks we will be turning over to the nationals, perhaps we need to look at how Hong Kong has included this in the instruction for adult membership.

III. The Guardianship Stage (Parenting)

This stage may be characterized in the beginning by now having communicant members. The moment that we have instructed confirmed members (also baptized children members) we at least begin to pass from the **Planting** to this new stage. But a more notable characteristic is two fold. The MT role changes at least in part or at least for some of the missionaries on the team, from doing evangelism to training and teaching for every member ministries. The MT may also have to prepare the courses and literature for this. The second part of this is that evangelism continues with as great an emphasis as before, but now is to be done more and more by the nationals. They should be asked to assist in preparation of the handout materials such as tracts. They also ought to and will determine which evangelism methodologies will be used most.

There are several potential dangers in this stage that threaten us from continuing our planned methodology for planting an indigenous church. Our AC and MT need to be aware of these dangers so that they can deal with them properly. There is the more obvious one of subsidy. And the temptation to use direct subsidy will begin to raise its specter again and again. But there is also the more the subtle threat which I will label **overexpansion**.

Overexpansion must be watched for two reasons. The national church's newness and smallness; also WELS manpower and financial situations play a role. The AC and the MT must keep in mind that planting a national church means that the missionaries will work themselves out of a job. They do this task by task. As we shift from evangelizing to training the nationals for every member ministries, the missionary must carefully extract himself from the evangelism effort. A missionary also only has 24 hours in a day. If he is going to train nationals, he doesn't have time to keep on serving congregations full time, and especially doesn't have time to keep on planting new ones that will demand his time. Also, how many congregations will the nationals be able to take over, provide for them national pastors, and support them? Add into this WELS inability to keep throwing men and money into the field. Just as we can't open all the home missions in the USA that WELS desires, so we can't over expand on a mission field in a foreign country without putting off further and farther the independence of the national church group and also possibly burning out a few missionaries. —So we have to watch overexpansion in the number of congregations started, overexpansion of the duties of the missionary, and overexpansion of the costs that will be handed on to the national church that they are and will be expected to take over.

Then there is the problem of using what the Handbook calls direct subsidy (Practical definition). With this stage also comes the question that may have already risen in the previous stage, what do we do for worship facilities.

Beginning with this question of transportation, and continuing into the Parenting or Guardian Stage with the question of buildings, we need first of all, to reiterate the rule that we should do nothing for the nationals that they can do for themselves. To this we now can add a second rule. **Do not begin or start a project, program, or edifice that the nationals can not afford, or can not abandon without seriously harming the continued life of the national church.** (This rule can be applied above to overexpansion). The long time story example of this is of the mother church which built a beautiful temple for the nationals, but they could not pay the cost of the utilities when they should have taken over the operation of the building. Whether fictitious or not, it is a nice word picture emphasizing the need for our rule above.

What is to be done regarding church buildings? The obvious answer for our indigenous methodology is to let the nationals provide whatever they can. But there are alternatives that can be explored. Does our (WELS) "seeding" a national Church Extension Fund work? It has in Puerto Rico to a degree, but not in Colombia, though at first it did, according to my knowledge. This "seeding" is a one-time or two-time gift to the national church which then establishes a national CEF from which the local congregations can borrow and then repay the money. It is a type of subsidy. But it is in the form of a one or two time outright gift. It goes to no individual. And the national church does not have to become dependent upon it. But the AC, MT team ought to insist that the national church has some proper guidelines for its use. It would seem that without good

guidelines for its employment, even taking into account the cultural situation, it would not be wise to employ such a strategy.

An additional problem for such “seeding” of a CEF overseas is inflation. It can make the money in the national CEF almost worthless in a very short time due to huge changes in value of the local currency. This is what happened in Colombia.

One process for providing worship facilities which does NOT fit our indigenous methodology is that we build and pay for their churches.

The instruction of nationals during the early and middle portions of this stage will be centered on lay ministries. If the nationals are going to take over the work, they need to know how to teach in and supervise a children’s ministry (Sunday School, children’s confirmation, etc.). They will need to know how to evangelize. They also can be instructed and trained to teach the confirmation course to other adults. This level of training is similar to the new “Evangelism Program” for minority laity developed for use in the USA. Since these people are locally trained by their leaders, there is no need for subsidy. Again the necessary literature will need to be found or prepared to teach these additional subjects.

They will need to know how to govern their present congregations and how to plant new ones. **It will probably be necessary to try to teach and train them to analyze, to think out, and then plan. Along with this they have to learn to draw up policies, guidelines, and goals.** But then we will have to observe and counsel them in the implementation of these policies.

National as well as congregational stewardship programs and stewardship training ought to be started at this time, if not already begun. This is obviously essential regardless of the kind of methodology employed on any field.

As we move along in this stage, we will be looking for men who might enter a theological training program for advance ministries. They will be men who have proved themselves in faithfulness to the Word and in service to the Lord at the lay level. They also like Timothy ought to have the approval of the nationals for such training. But Paul Hartman has raised a legitimate warning. We should not abandon the emphasis on lay training, putting all our eggs in one basket, namely in that of training men for pastoral ministry. Too many of these men do not work out, and if we count totally on them, we keep returning to square one, starting over in the theological training with one or more new people, when the first ones do fail to measure up.

A sign of the later portion of this stage is the actual beginning of the theological education program. With this undertaking the problem of subsidy again comes into play. When, where, and how will you train them? What will you teach them? A curriculum study will need to be done, and the first courses written unless they can be begged, borrowed or stolen from existent sources. Also necessary to decide is which basic theological books will be needed in the target language. Answering all these questions will bring up the question of time and money. (Remember that in WELS, USA, training of our future pastors and teachers is one of the most costly portions of our kingdom work.) These questions ought to bring up ideas and suggestions for consideration that do not follow the traditional WELS way of doing things, an example being that the nationals will have a tent-making educational period and ministry. While that is fine, at the same time faithfulness to the Word in doctrine and practice is never to be changed, or worse forgotten, in carrying out these steps in our methodology. As the BWM Handbook says, there is no shortcut in this training.

The next rule we will insist on if we are going to follow the indigenous church methodology now comes up and is: **NO WELS MONEY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS, SALARIES, OR HOUSING for national students or workers.** To clarify this we state that no regular payments from WELS monies to national students and evangelists and pastors for study or work should ever be started. Such payments often harm the work rather than help it because of jealousies, hypocrisy, etc. Additionally, use of such subsidies establishes a program which is extremely difficult for the national church to take over or abandon. (This is one reason why the MT, at least the Latin American ones, will probably fight tooth and nail against regional seminaries.)

Now some have said it is not right for us (the MT) to have nice homes, etc. and the student, the evangelist, the student pastor, or the pastor has to sleep under a leaky roof on a wet bed. Use humanitarian aid

to help them in these one time needs. (They do have a need for glasses to read the Bible and shoes to walk to make visits.) That type of aid does not make the national church dependent on WELS monies! But scholarship and salaries do make them dependent and for a long time.

If you use humanitarian aid in this area, be very careful in trying to be fair. Jealousies can easily be sown if one student, or one church worker, receives aid and another does not. (In Cuba we have established so much per worker per year, unless there is an absolute, sudden need.)

Now you may ask, what kind of a training program can we have without nice facilities in a national or regional center? A good, solid program (except for library facilities), because the real training depends on the **WORD OF GOD**. It is most likely that in such cases where there is no subsidy for these matters, the theological training will take longer, say 10 years instead of 4, 5, or 6 years. Also it is possible that a traveling seminary will be utilized.

The lack of library facilities (when you have a traveling seminary) can perhaps be handled over a period of time by having the national church provide the students with the basic books for a pastoral library. This possibly can involve indirect subsidy, monies from WELS to the national church for these books. This can be a revolving national fund, or one that is later on abandoned by WELS, no more monies, without great harm.

WORK TIME

At the end of this presentation, each **committee** is to consider the **four (4) stages of development** and is to list **at least five (5) programs** for which the **national church** ought to **draw up policy and guidelines**. Try to list one program which needs policies and guidelines **from each stage**, if possible.

IV. Advisorship Stage (Partnership)

This stage can be characterized by several broad statements that cover many really large changes. National church leaders (pastors and others) continue to completion the taking over of the work (this doesn't happen overnight), the national church finalizes the organization of the church at all levels, it works on and completes a national statement of beliefs (their *This We Believe*, not just a copy of ours), determines what are its long term religious literature needs and draws up a plan for providing them, works toward and finalizes a stewardship program which will help pay for their workers as they are able, it begins to learn to train their own future workers, and plan and put into action how they will pay for the costs of their theological training program, no matter what type it might be.

By the end of this stage any expatriate worker still on the field should be working under the leadership of a national, serving the national leader as a coworker and especially as an advisor.

It is very important for the nationals to continue to learn to analyze, realizing that if we do "A" the result will hopefully be such. But if we do "B," the results will probably be better or worse. I emphasize this because it appears that some cultures are very "today, the present, now" orientated. Thus there is not enough concern at times as to the result of today's actions. But cause and effect are not negated by culture. They exist. And the expatriates will serve the nationals well by simply asking, "If you do what you are suggesting, what will the result be according to life here in Timbaktu?" This can be stated whether you believe their plans are good or otherwise. It just gets them to analyze, consider, and to judge the best they can before they take an action.

We should not expect a necessarily highly developed organizational structure for the national church. In fact, it should be as simple as possible and yet be effective. It only needs the offices, committees, the policies that truly pertain to governing the necessary. It does not need to look like a little WELS in structure at any level from congregational on up. (For instance, it does not need a formal or professional looking recruitment team or office for finding future candidates for ministry. WELS had no such item for over 100 years.) It makes me uneasy when I read in the handbook that the national church should submit its **constitution** to the WELS when time arrives for formal declaration of fellowship. Now, if WELS wants to look to see if Article II, the Article on

Faith, is present, fine. But I wonder why they might want to consider the other parts of it, and if they even will understand some of the matters presented because of the cultural nature regarding how the nationals do things. I would much rather think WELS would want to study the national church's version of *This We Believe*.

The national church will need to draw up a declaration of what the church believes and teaches. This will need to be done for all the normal internal (within own church body) and external (with the world) reasons. Particularly, beyond the normal basic Biblical doctrines covered, a national church body will want to include its stand for God's Word over against local and national false teachings (spiritism, etc.) and antichrists, i.e., witchcraft, Santaríá, perhaps local "human" deities, etc.

The national church will need to draw of a list of the types of literature materials they will need to proceed on their own. They will need to determine how they will continue to provide Sunday School lessons, youth and adult instruction materials, evangelism and stewardship materials, worship essentials, and finally training materials for all levels including theological education.

In this stage an ongoing local and national stewardship programs and processes ought to be completed. Obviously, these will take into consideration the nation's culture. I think the biggest thing that we will have to watch out for, at least based on my Latin American experience is that "giving to the Lord" does not become law centered rather than Gospel motivated. There is this tendency in all of us that when we see the great needs of the kingdom work, we in our flesh want to get the funds by all means possible. I think this is perhaps even more true in a church body much younger and less experienced in the Word of our Lord.

Sharing the teaching and then turning over the leadership of theological training to the nationals seems to be something we readily understand since we are doing it in several of our fields. It is essential that it does continue on all our fields.

I will say that as **I view** an indigenous **METHODOLOGY**, a regional seminary is anathema. It takes the national worker from his field, from his culture, and it will return him somewhat different than he was; it by necessity introduces some form of subsidy from WELS; it will cause jealousies; it is not proven that it is the most economical. Once the national churches are established, they may want to consider a regional seminary. By that time, it may be feasible.

It shall be interesting to see how theological education by extension develops considering the modern technology. Will this be practical on a world field some day where the national church has students living over a vast area?

One area in this training that we can help with indirect subsidies is to help each church body establish a (one) more developed library on the national level. This, of course, due to language differences, will play in with the literature that is being developed in the distinct languages.

The day is coming that, since the Internet is worldwide, our nationals will be able to access a central library, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary or elsewhere (if they know English). This should be kept in mind in the BWM's long range thinking.

Plans should be considered and drawn up for reduction of expatriate staff fairly early in this Advisorship stage. This has to be done in consultation with the nationals. It has to be done early enough in the stage so that necessary preparations are begun before such exiting begins. Obviously, the plans have to be flexible enough so that changes can be incorporated. Finally, plans made earlier in this stage to reduce the expatriate staff are put into action as the stage grows to a close.

Somewhere in this stage, if not earlier, the national church should not only reach the point of doing all their own "home" mission work, but it is uplifting for them to also begin an international outreach. This may not be with men or lots of money. In fact, it will probably have a small first step. But it can and will under the Lord develop.

As this stage draws to a close, the national church will have to have decided how they are going to maintain and pay for their theological program of training future pastors in particular.

V. The Parting Period

This period can be included as the last part of the Advisorship stage. And there are probably advantages to do so since this latter will flow out of the former. But the point of clearly talking about a Parting stage is that it is kept in the thinking. It should be in our thinking from the very beginning as we said earlier.

The main characteristic of this period in addition to the exit of the expatriate MT in our indigenous **METHODOLOGY** is the end of all subsidies, direct and indirect. (This is not to say that WELS would not help out a daughter national church in an emergency.)

The parting stage is reached when the national church according to its size, culture, and needs ably carries out the four (4) “selfs.” Who is to determine this? I would hope the nationals. But if they are timid yet appear ready, it will have to be the AC together with MT. But let us pray that not everyone is too timid.

To help make the decision we need to realize that this little daughter we have founded can always be bigger, and always stronger, always have more going for it. Those kind of thoughts have to be set aside when considering parting.

If we have not utilized direct subsidy for salaries, if we have used a truly indigenous methodology, the money problem, which will probably be the biggest hurdle for the national church for them to stand alone, will not be as great. (But we have to remember something. WELS also has money problems, and just about constantly.)

Before the last expatriate leaves the field, the nationals need to be fully capable of training well their own future pastors. And they must have enough staff to do this. But it does necessarily mean they need a large staff of two or three, or even one pastor dedicated to this full time. There are ways of properly solving this need with the personnel God has provided.

Also before parting, WELS and the national church together will need to plan for regular contacts, which would seem wise to continue. This is in addition to the national church belonging to the international Lutheran group, CELC.

Conclusion

There is no one way the indigenous church methodology will be carried out if and when attempted. The larger differences and the little nuances on each field using this methodology will be noticeable. They are due to different situations, i.e. culture for example, different ACs and MTs, different eras when a field is started, etc. But that doesn't matter. What does matter is using the indigenous methodology wherever possible; improving upon it, of course; replacing it with something better, if such a methodology develops.

Finally, I hope that you will not throw out this presentation. Use it by consulting it at times when it might be beneficial. I say this not because I think it is so great, in fact, I would hope many others will improve on it. But I say this because what this presentation contains is sort of a recollection of many truths learned the hard way, the old fashioned way, by trial and error. The methodology emphasized in this paper is the methodology that developed in my era and is still in use today. Writing this presentation has given me the chance, for which I thank the Lord first and then you, to put on paper many ideas and concepts that I didn't want to take to the grave without first writing them down for use by others. This presentation can stand improvement, but it is a start. Thank you!

APPENDIX A

Philosophy #1

- I have talents that God has given me
- I have seminary training
- When I get to my field of service
 - I'm going to love the people
 - I'm going to do everything I can to use my talents to serve them
- If someone asks for help, my answer will always be
 - Yes, of course I will help you... that's what I'm here for
 - I'm here to serve you
- If someone needs financial assistance and I have money that I can use to help him, I will do it.
- I will tell the people...
 - You can count on me
 - I will always be here for you
- In his mind, the missionary who has this philosophy will always have the thought...
 - This is my mission
 - This is my ministry
 - Since the church body that has called me has an indigenous church policy, whenever I can I will try to invite the people I serve to participate and help me with my ministry.

Philosophy #2

- The church body that has called me has an indigenous church policy. And I too understand that what will be best for the people I am going to serve in the long run is to become spiritually strong and able to do things on their own.
- Therefore, out of love for them, when I get to my field of service and when someone asks me to do something for them, I am going to prepare myself so that whenever possible I can give the following answer:
 - No, I'm not going to do this for you for the following reasons:
 - God has given you many talents and abilities
 - I think you can do it yourself
 - I will be happy to train you to do it
 - I will be happy to do it with you as part of your training
 - But I'm not going to do it for you.
- This is not my mission or my ministry, it's your mission and your ministry which you have the great privilege and responsibility of carrying out to the best of your ability.
- My reason for being here is to help and train you, if that is needed, to carry out your mission and your ministry. I would be more than happy to serve you in this way.
- I'm not always going to be here for you, but then I don't need to be because I know that you will be here to get the Gospel out to your own people, the people of your country.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE: *Purpose/Objective Statement*

In Timbuktu our purpose is to establish an indigenous national church using the indigenous church methodology, particularly asking our missionaries to follow the Type 2 Philosophy of ministry. Our objective in working with our missionaries in this way is to as rapidly as possible establish a sister national church. While we will consider humanitarian aid efforts that further cement our bond of love in Christ with the people, we will not use any direct subsidy for programs, projects, or buildings. (Any deviation from this basic purpose and objective should contain in it an explanation of how such a departure from original plans will further the establishment of the national church better than the former plans.)

Guiding Principles for All WELS Cross-Cultural Ministry
March 2001

1. The Means of Grace (Gospel in Word and sacraments) is the only means God has provided to win the lost for Christ and to sustain believers in a community that confesses his name.
 - a. The Means of Grace compels, supports, drives, motivates and instructs us in our ministries of outreach.
 - b. Communication of Law and Gospel must be done in a style and with a relevant content (e.g., applications, illustrations, and topical emphasis) that will be understood by the host (i.e., target) cultures.
 - c. As we use the Means of Grace, we also encourage the use of culturally relevant resources (e.g. strategies, methods, and modes of outreach) that do not contradict, diminish, obscure or conflict with these means.
2. We believe it is best to learn other cultures by listening (e.g., ethnographic interviews) and by participant observation.
 - a. We can uncover the specific cultural issues, questions, and hurts to which we can apply
 - 1) specific law and gospel, and
 - 2) specific mission strategies.
 - b. We can begin to develop practical theological applications and emphases that speak to the specific issues, questions, and hurts of the host culture.
3. We are willing to take risks for Christ and his powerful Word of truth and grace.
 - a. We are as flexible as Scripture allows in our methods of outreach, in providing training for mission workers and in using forms of ministry.
 - b. Because risk-taking may create tensions among God's people, we will take the lead in giving legitimacy and permission to new approaches to outreach ministry, and we will monitor the development of new approaches.
4. We commit ourselves to equip all the saints for works of service.
 - a. In accordance with the doctrine of Church and Ministry, we understand that the forms of ministry may vary from time to time and place to place.
 - b. All of God's people, whether ordained or not, have the privilege and responsibility to share the Gospel with the lost and to nurture the people of God. We are committed, therefore, to training laity for outreach and other ministries.

- c. Within the framework of the doctrine of the Role of Men and Women, women also have the privilege and responsibility to share the Gospel with the lost and to nurture the people of God. We are committed, therefore, to training and involving women in outreach and other ministries.
5. Our goal in cross-cultural outreach ministry is for all to experience and enjoy full partnership in the Gospel.
- a. By “partnership” we mean that we of the planting culture:
 - 1) Show as much respect for the decision-making style, worship style, communications style, practical theological applications and emphases, and general cultural distinctives of the host culture as we do for our own.
 - 2) Do not require the people of the host culture to accommodate themselves to us and to our culture.
 - 3) Readily admit that we who are in positions of leadership in the planting culture do not have the answers for every situation and, therefore, we invite full participation from the host culture in discovering God-pleasing solutions.
 - 4) Understand that we gain credibility in the eyes of the people of the host culture when we admit our personal limitations and failures as we live in mutual respect and love.
 - 5) Encourage the host culture to formulate plans, set goals, and focus the vision for the outreach and nurture ministries we hold in common.
 - b. We are able to achieve the lofty goal of “partnership”
 - 1) when we see the world through the new perspective Christ has given us and not from a worldly point of view
 - 2) and when we join the Lord Jesus, who washed the feet of his disciples, and with him humbly express our love for others.
 - c. As individual children of God, who still live in a sinful world, we may give expression to this “partnership”
 - 1) by making a sincere effort to identify and lift the societal burdens that sin creates between cultures, and
 - 2) by using whatever positions of status and privilege society accords us to advance respect for others in keeping with God’s Word.
 - d. Since God’s Word enlightens people within their specific culture, God’s people in the host culture are crucial in determining methods of outreach, forms of ministry and training of workers within that culture. .
6. Within our fellowship we seek church wide involvement and ownership of cross-cultural outreach ministry.

- a. We trust and support each other as each of us implements outreach ministry in the areas to which we are assigned, and we cooperate wherever responsibilities overlap and opportunities exist for joint work.
- b. We serve cross-cultural ministry best when the whole church works together.

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