



Quotations on Change and Development Assistance¹

Ted Ward

Three change principles:

1. Don't deal with institutions or institutionalized groups. Deal with people or people groups.
2. Encourage self-critique.
3. Work with a series of steps--the steps being people oriented.

Four tasks in Development:

1. Information Stage
 - (a) Sharing information (friendship, explaining, demonstrating)
 - (b) Discussing information (listening, questioning)
2. Action
 - (c) Planning action (organizing, resource discovery, encouraging)
 - (d) Carrying out action (management and problem solving)

The skills identified in each of these stages require nonformal education experiences. A facilitator can't bring about change by telling information or by doing it for them. These are not acts of kindness. Acts of kindness cannot be evaluated simply in terms of the motives of the giver; they have to be looked at in terms of the consequences of those acts kindness . . . Sometimes we do assistance with the world's finest motives when, in fact, were hurting."

"When you take really important stuff and give it to people you've lost the opportunity to develop it into a walk and a sharing across time."

"I'm conscious when I come into a group of people as a consultant, as a speaker, as a lecturer, as a conference leader, that I'm always testing to see how far they're willing to think. I've discovered that people are willing to think out to a certain point and then they turn off. The trick is to stay at the ragged edge, stay just this side of the turning off point; and then just keep trying to nudge that forward so they're willing to deal with more and more."

"Evaluation is a constant process of mid course corrections in relation to what the person or group does and what the planner should do next time."

"Facilitators should show up in a reflect mode not in an act mode. They should show up in a listening posture. Development facilitators make it possible for people to talk about their situation and then help them identify circumstances in their situation that have to be changed. The analysis should be done by and with insiders."

¹ Ted Ward. Quotations on Change and Development Assistance. The Role of the Church in Development Seminar. Wheaton College, July 1981

Terminology:

Self-help has to do with people taking part in their own development processes. Self-help is one of the best guarantees against misguided assistance.

Facilitation. In development work, it is important to understand the difference between directing and facilitating. In facilitating the goal is given, but people are given more leeway as to how the goal can be met. Sometimes, for the sake of efficiency, the development facilitator will move into a directing mode. But it doesn't follow that facilitations will generate self-help motivations.

Dissemination. The spreading of ideas and information. Dissemination is not considered a good thing in development because it assumes that all countries need what the developed nation that is most often doing the disseminating has.

Participation. One of the most promising dynamics in development. It is hard for people who think from an elitist posture to see the value of participation. One problem is that there are too many highly educated people functioning as development specialists. Until you are ready to trust people, you can't enter into meaningful participation. People who have latent racism, quite often are quick to worship abstractly the idea of participation, but not implement it.

Dialogue. People need to talk about ideas. A person who is unable to form ideas and talk about them can handicap the whole process. Accelerated development requires intensified communication and dialogue—not receiving information from people who are telling you the answers, but talking about problems and issues. Dialogue is the most crucial early variable in the effectiveness of development activity. You can do anything you want technologically, but you won't see effectiveness until there's dialogue.”

Community. A collective of people who have common values and concerns. One of the reasons why the church often becomes a cornerstone in development activity, is because it is already a community. I believe that the potential reality for Christians to be involved in the development of regions and nations is very great . . . because a church is a community when it is functional.