

**WHEN HELPING HURTS: RISKS OF RELIEF**

Date: 06/10

(1 HOUR)

- OBJECTIVES:** After working through this lesson, participants will be able to:
1. Use case scenarios to distinguish between relief, rehabilitation and development.
  2. Give characteristics of effective relief.
  3. Explain two risks of relief (dependency and paternalism) and how to avoid them.
  4. Give a practical example of how to avoid doing things for people that they can do themselves.

**OVERVIEW FOR TRAINERS:** This is the seventh lesson adapted from the book, *When Helping Hurts*, by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert. These lessons combine CHE principles with the teaching of this book. The lessons may be used by short-term teams without prior CHE training or by CHEs working on community projects.

METHOD	TIME	KNOWLEDGE
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**Role Play:** A team from New York has just finished a week of working with a Mexican church.

5"

**Mex** Thank you for coming. You were an encouragement for us.

**U.S.** Why do you say that?

**Mex** Before you came, we had all the materials to do a Vacation Bible School with our children. But we were afraid to do it.

**U.S.** And how do you feel now?

**Mex** Now we know we can do it! You don't know our children, and you struggle with our language. We can do teach our children better than you did!

**----SHOWD questions----**

S = What do you **See**?

H = What is **H**appening?

O = Does this happen in **O**ur place?

W = **W**hy does this happen?

D = What will we **D**o about it?

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| <p>I. Relief, rehabilitation, or development?</p> <p>A. Divide into small groups. Give each small group a copy of <i>Relief, rehabilitation, or development</i>? Each small group will read one or more of the case scenarios. Discuss—Is this relief, rehabilitation or development? What was done well? What could be done better?</p> | <p>20"</p> |
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| <p>I. Relief, rehabilitation, or development?</p> <p>A. Building a church</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Situation--development</li> <li>2. The church is taking some initiative—making the plans, hiring the workers.</li> <li>3. But you are doing work that the church members could have done.</li> <li>4. The church members are not working alongside you.</li> <li>5. They could do this without you.</li> <li>6. Or you could work with them.</li> </ol> <p>B. After the tsunami</p> |
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## RISKS OF RELIEF

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This was a situation of relief after a disaster.</li> <li>2. But they were hesitant to move on into rehabilitation.</li> <li>3. The resources and leadership came from the government and relief agencies.</li> <li>4. The people took little initiative except to receive supplies.</li> <li>5. Over time, they became more dependent.</li> <li>6. From the beginning, the families could have been more involved in planning and carrying out their own relief.</li> <li>7. They need to work toward rehabilitation.</li> <li>8. They need to work toward moving home again.</li> </ol>
		<p>C. Repairing a school</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This was a situation of development—at least at first.</li> <li>2. The community members planned the project and worked toward carrying it out.</li> <li>3. The community provided many of the supplies.</li> <li>4. Even the children got involved.</li> <li>5. The short-term team worked with them.</li> <li>6. But when the wealthy foreigners came, offering to do things for them, they lost interest in doing their own work.</li> </ol>
		<p>D. New houses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This should have been a situation of development, but it was handled like relief.</li> <li>2. The short-term teams meant well.</li> <li>3. But they paid the costs, they did the work, and they used high-tech tools.</li> <li>4. So the local families did not or could not get involved.</li> <li>5. Some families saw this as a way to make money.</li> <li>6. So new houses were built, but they families did not learn new skills.</li> <li>7. The families did not take charge of building or buying their own homes.</li> <li>8. They could have worked on building their own homes.</li> </ol>

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<p>II. Effective relief Discuss in large group.</p> <p>A. What are some characteristics of effective relief?</p> <p>B. Can disasters or emergencies ever be anticipated?</p> <p>See the lessons on “Disaster Preparedness” for more information on this.</p> <p>C. One group put out standards for relief work. Hand out <i>Minimum Standards of Disaster and Rehabilitation Assistance</i>. How would you state this in your own words? (Avoid technical terms.)</p>	10”	<p>9. The families could pay a portion, or pay through “sweat equity”, such as working to help their neighbors build houses.</p> <p>II. <u>Effective relief</u></p> <p>A. Relief should be</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediate—immediately after a crisis or emergency.</li> <li>2. Short-lived</li> <li>3. Temporary</li> <li>4. Seldom (not given repeatedly)</li> </ol> <p>B. Can disasters be anticipated?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some disasters occur repeatedly, such as a river that often floods, or storms in a hurricane zone.</li> <li>2. So people or churches in an area can work to be ready for emergencies.</li> </ol> <p>C. <i>Minimum Standards of Disaster and Rehabilitation Assistance</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The local people should help assess, plan, carry out, and evaluate any relief project.</li> <li>2. Check out or assess the situation to understand the problems and know how to respond.</li> <li>3. Only respond if the local people and the local government can’t take care of it themselves</li> <li>4. Work with the most vulnerable and the neediest people. Don’t play favorites.</li> </ol>
<p>III. Paternalism and dependency Discuss in large group.</p> <p>A. What is the risk of receiving relief over a long time period? Think of the families after the tsunami.</p> <p>B. What is the risk of giving relief? Do relief teams ever have any wrong attitudes?</p>	25”	<p>III. <u>Paternalism and dependency</u></p> <p>A. Risk of receiving relief</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The families became accustomed to receiving relief.</li> <li>2. They did not learn to meet their own needs.</li> <li>3. It was hard to return home.</li> <li>4. This can lead to dependency on outside help.</li> </ol> <p>B. Risk of giving relief</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relief teams may feel that they can solve or fix the problem.</li> <li>2. Relief teams may feel proud of their own achievements.</li> <li>3. The relief teams may want to do too much for them, rather</li> </ol>

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C. What is a simple rule to avoid these problems?		<p>than with them.</p> <p>4. Relief teams may want to be in charge.</p>
D. What does that mean in practice?		<p>C. Avoiding these problem</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Avoid paternalism.</li> <li>2. Do not do things for people that they can do for themselves.</li> </ol> <p>D. What does that mean in practice?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Don't give money or resources if those resources are available locally.</li> <li>2. Allow the local people to take the leadership whenever possible.</li> <li>3. Don't assume that you have all the knowledge. They have much knowledge and many skills. They know the local situation.</li> <li>4. Don't assume that you are superior spiritually. Though they are poor, they may have thriving churches and strong spiritual life.</li> <li>5. Don't do work that they can do. Or, work alongside them.</li> <li>6. Allow them to manage their own projects.</li> </ol>
E. Think again of the relief team after the tsunami. What could they and the relief agencies have done differently to allow the local people to take more leadership?		<p>E. Tsunami team</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allow the local people to help in their own health care.</li> <li>2. Teach them to take blood pressures and measure temperatures.</li> <li>3. Teach them basic health skills that they can teach to others.</li> <li>4. Show them how to purify water, and encourage them to purify their own water.</li> <li>5. Train them how to dig latrines and have good hygiene.</li> <li>6. Encourage them to teach their neighbors basic health skills.</li> <li>7. Teach basic counseling skills about stress and trauma.</li> <li>8. Find out if there are Christians or a church in the camp.</li> <li>9. Encourage the Christians to reach out to their neighbors.</li> <li>10. Teach the children as well.</li> <li>11. The local people can also help with some of the services to the camp.</li> <li>12. They can purify water with SODIS.</li> </ol>

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		13. They can dig latrines. 14. They can make Tippy Taps and encourage hand washing. 15. They can organize the distribution of food and water. 16. There may be time to plant a garden. 17. Within the camp, they will develop an informal leadership system.

**References:**

Corbett, S. and B. Fikkert. 2009. *When helping hurts*. Chicago: Moody Publishers

Corbett, S. 2010. *Minimum Standards of Disaster and Rehabilitation Assistance* (The Sphere Project). Available from: [www.chalmers.org/when-helping-hurts/webinar/media/2010-02-24\\_slides.ppt](http://www.chalmers.org/when-helping-hurts/webinar/media/2010-02-24_slides.ppt)

**ATTITUDE:** Giving too much relief can cause harm.

**SKILL:** Participants will be able to define some risks of relief, and can give characteristics of effective relief.

**EVALUATION:** Are the participants able to think of ways to avoid doing things for people that they can do themselves?

**MATERIALS:** -Newsprint, markers, masking tape  
 -*Relief, rehabilitation, or development?* Handout  
 - *Minimum Standards of Disaster and Rehabilitation Assistance* handout

This lesson is used in: Short Term Missions/ When helping hurts and in Disaster Preparedness

## RELIEF, REHABILITATION, OR DEVELOPMENT?

--Based on real experiences--

### Building a church

Your short-term team is working with a middle class church in Latin America. They want to build a new church, and have hired contractors to oversee the work, along with a few day laborers. But none of the church members seem to be involved. They watch you as you work alongside the day laborers, building the walls for the church.

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### After the tsunami

Your disaster relief team is providing medical care and counseling after a tsunami, working in a camp that the government set up for tsunami victims. Many families lost their homes and their fishing businesses with the tsunami. Relief agencies provided tents for them, along with food and water, so they have few responsibilities, other than waiting in lines for their supplies. Their acute medical needs seem to be settling down, although they still are grieving their losses.

After you return home, you hear that the families seem to be settling in to life at the camp. They are well provided for, and have no immediate plans to return home.

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### Repairing a school

The local community leader asked you to work alongside of them to repair a school that is perched precariously on a steep hillside. They have purchased some construction supplies. You work together to haul cement, sand and gravel up the steep hill, and they pour new concrete floors for the school. The local school kids help to paint the old school—at least, some of the paint ended up on the school walls. You work hard all week in the blazing sun, working alongside adults and kids from the community. No one in the community is a Christian, but they are starting to ask you questions. Later that fall, you hear that the community leader and his family accepted Christ.

Later, a group of wealthy foreigners comes by, offering to buy them uniforms and books, and offering to help them build a new school. They lose interest in repairing their old school.

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### New houses

The mission agencies working along the border are experienced at building new homes. They have modern tools and use prefabricated kits, so that your church team can build a new home in a week. This week, different teams will build 18 homes.

The local families are happy to receive the homes. Some families have even turned this into a business. They receive a new home in the summer, but can sell it again during the year. After all, another short-team team should be coming next year to offer them a new home!

Work through these questions:

1. What kind of situation is this? Is this relief, rehabilitation, or development?
2. What was done well?
3. What would you do differently?

## Minimum Standards of Disaster and Rehabilitation Assistance

- *Participation* of affected population in assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance program
- *Do an initial assessment* to provide an understanding of the disaster situation and to determine the nature of the response
- *Respond* when needs of affected population are unmet whether due to local inability or government unwillingness
- *Targeting* of assistance based on vulnerability and need and provided equitably and impartially. The focus is typically children ages 0-5, pregnant women and the elderly.

**Adapted** from Corbett, S. 2010. *Minimum Standards of Disaster and Rehabilitation Assistance* (The Sphere Project). Available from: [www.chalmers.org/when-helping-hurts/webinar/media/2010-02-24\\_slides.ppt](http://www.chalmers.org/when-helping-hurts/webinar/media/2010-02-24_slides.ppt)