

## **How To Build Capacity within the Local Church by Jeff Anderson, ACTION International**

ACTION Philippine's Street Impact Team (SITeam) ministers the gospel and compassionate care to street kids and their families, this is our vision statement:

*"The vision of SITeam is to ignite, encourage and strengthen local churches--both in the Philippines and abroad--so we together will love street children and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ among them and their families, then see them lovingly nurtured in a Christ-centered Bible teaching church."*

Oftentimes it takes an outside catalyst to ignite and inflame this revival of faith in the church. We've seen this take place but we want to see more. But to see more of this will require faith, prayer, time and funds. Working alongside and through the local church is slow but in the long view the only way to build a lasting work because missionaries and para-church ministries will come and go but the church of Jesus Christ will remain until "He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day." (2 Thessalonians 1:10) and when "the Lord shall be revealed from heaven." (2 Thessalonians 1:7) \*also see Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 2:20 and 1 Peter 2:4-10\*

Lessons learned along the way:

1. In networking, have a clear purpose and objective. Don't raise expectations beyond what is realistic.
2. Doctrinal differences can become a huge hindrance so we need to practice what Philip Melanchthon said long ago: "in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty and in all things charity."
3. Recruiting churches and workers is difficult tedious work! To see this happen requires commitment and money.
4. People start well with good intentions but fade away with a lack of clarity as to why they've abandoned their ministry commitments.
5. Churches need a strong sense of ownership for their ministries which needs to start at the work's conception.
6. Confusion, frustration and weariness are part of the ministry and leadership, both for the network and church and so both must be ready to support workers when they struggle.
7. Communicate regularly with your prayer warriors and supporters so they will be up-to-date on your needs and what God is doing through you and your ministry.

### **Challenges:**

1. Teach. Teach. Teach and teach some more through workshops and seminars along with modeling what you teach from the Word of God and ministry experience.
2. Be realistic in planning and budgeting.
3. Be alert for benchmarks or indicators of God's involvement in the ministry.
4. Stay in a continual cycle of evaluation, adjustment and learning.
5. Develop and use locally produced and culturally relevant ministry tools.
6. Keep mobilizing and multiplying ministries and workers despite setbacks.