



(l to r) Mikenson and Met Yves

Community Health Evangelism

Integrating Evangelism, Discipleship, and Church Planting with Community Health and Development



Community leaders from several villages who earned CHE training certificates

Community Health Evangelism (CHE) is based on the belief that health has four foundational elements: physical, emotional, social, and spiritual. In order to achieve optimum health, one must be healthy in these four areas. The primary goal of CHE is to teach people that they can take care of themselves by giving them the knowledge and the tools to do so. Through a structured form of accountability, we train village leaders who train others to in turn train others; there is a multiplication that takes place so that many people can hear the lessons. It is a strategy that seamlessly integrates evangelism, discipleship, and church planting with community health and development. People become followers of Jesus, and whole communities are lifted out of cycles of poverty and disease.

We were first trained in the CHE method in 2006 and were excited when God opened the door for us to begin the process of going to Haiti with Global Partners. We had developed a plan and a timeline for the introduction and progression of the CHE principles on the island of La Gonave in Haiti. When we went to Haiti in 2010, the goal was to establish one or two communities on La Gonave with the CHE principles. We had a four-year goal to have Haitian leadership carrying 50 percent of the training and community communication responsibilities.

In the first year, we started working with the Fantina community; they were very motivated and worked hard to solve their problems. Some major problems identified by the community and trainers were the need for clean water and sanitation. Our goal was to use local resources to solve these problems so that the solutions could be multiplied throughout the island.

After many hours of reading through Internet resources, a solution was found. It is called SODIS. SODIS is the process of filling clear bottles, such as used Coke bottles, with water. The bottles are then placed in the sunlight for six hours. The UV rays of the sun kill all of the bacteria and germs in the water thus providing clean, safe drinking water. We started

this process during the time of a cholera outbreak. No cases of cholera were reported from the communities using SODIS for clean water.

The other half of the problem is lack of sanitation because less than ten percent of the homes have latrines. We told the communities that for every family who dug their own pit for a latrine, we would do our best to provide them with cement to cover the pit with a slab. They would have to do all the work and pray with us for God to move on the hearts of people to give money for the cement.

God answered our prayer for Haitian leadership. Two gentlemen, Met Yves and Mikenson, quickly learned the CHE principles and began training others. Both of them brought so many good things to the team, and we are blessed to work with them. By the second year, all CHE training was done by Haitians! And all community outreach was done by Haitians! Our time is spent training and mentoring these two Haitian leaders. God's timeline blew ours apart! Our goal was four years and 50 percent of the work done by Haitians; God's goal was two years and 100 percent

of the work done by Haitians. During this second year, we grew from two communities to over 30.

Year three brought more advancement. Evangelism had become the main focus of the community training. During years two and three, 1,500 families built latrines and more than 1,500 people accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. Each month the communities are given four lessons. Three lessons are physical in nature, such as how to prevent malaria or first aid and treatment for children with diarrhea. One lesson is always spiritual and the first lesson taught in each community is the plan of salvation with subsequent months bringing discipleship lessons.

One thing we learned is that God's plan is always bigger than ours. Now as we look to the future, we try to make our goals more God-sized.

The plan is to expand the CHE project to the mainland of Haiti with every church using CHE as an integral part of their outreach.

We are totally convinced there is also place for CHE beyond the borders of Haiti. CHE is a template that can be used in every community to help meet the needs of people, both physical and spiritual. The goal is to assist other GP missionaries and fields by training nationals of each country in CHE.

We want to see North American churches begin to adopt CHE principals for their community outreach and for the purpose of church planting.

All communities worldwide share a common issue—they have problems. Problems pull them apart and create heartache. Haiti, South Africa, Europe, Southeast Asia—even mainstream America—have communities where people need change. The principals of CHE bring restoration and renewal through God's Word. ■

Lowell and Robin Adams are long-term missionaries with Global Partners, and they are from the Central New York District. Lowell is also a registered nurse. They have three children: Lance ('91), Cassandra ('93), and Madalyn ('07).