

What is Transformation?

Transformation happens when something is substantially changed in its nature and character.

Relief is not transformation; neither is 10,000 people in a crusade meeting raising their hands to follow Jesus Christ. It is a life-long agenda; it concerns the whole of life in which a disciple's mind and character are being transformed by God's Spirit - then their life-style can work itself out in families and communities. (Romans 12.1 and 2, 2 Cor. 3.18, Phil 3.21). ICFEM's Mission statement is to accelerate community transformation and it does so *by enabling people to take the initiative and become self-drivers of development* – transformation comes from within the community through its members.

Some people see development as a dangerous thin edge of the social gospel – a deviation from saving people for the Kingdom; but God is concerned with the whole of life – as Jesus told the people of his home village, his mission was to “preach good news to the poor, release the oppressed, share food, provide shelter, clothe the naked, give sight to the blind” (Luke 4.18-19 and Isaiah 61.1 and 58.6-7 from which he was quoting).

Community development therefore is a skilled process of developing a broad network of interaction in order to increase the capacity of communities to help themselves to achieve a locally sustainable healthy economy and an improved quality of life. Bringing people together in a Fellowship means that the Fellowship will have a vision for the whole village and the individuals living there to enable members to learn to live as God intends, and to develop their skills, faith, attitudes, and understanding. It will be indigenous – no outsider is able to understand the deeper needs of individuals in a community - and it will be able to support itself from local resources.

Being poor is not merely a lack of material possession or food but it becomes a poverty of spirit, a lack of belief in self, in ability to change, to achieve, to better one's lot - so this is where ICFEM starts. No one understands transformation better than God and no one can do it better. It is about change for the better (Romans 12:1-2). Change is not about making you to become like me, but about "You" becoming a new "You" or restored to the "You" you would have become - to become better. And what is the key to this change? - learning and education.

ICFEM is in the business of creating change and space. It starts with identifying need "sensitisation" which is about identifying what you, the individual, the community need NOT about telling you what you are “going to do” and what you will be given. ICFEM is all about crying with people, identifying with them, standing beside them, showing them the Saviour's love. Do we need transformation in our own communities in other countries? YES WE DO! So maybe ICFEM staff can help us to find out how to achieve transformation for our own community.

Can't do becomes CAN DO!