

Community Health Evangelism

CHE is a true best practices model for integrating evangelism and discipleship with community based development. The first programs were done in Africa in the 1980s. CHE was then taken to other parts of the world where it proved adaptable to a wide-range of situations. Today CHE is being used around the world by hundreds of churches, denominations, mission agencies, non-government organizations, and national and local governments to lift whole communities out of cycles of poverty and disease.

Core Values

- **Commitment to the Poor and Marginalized:** Jesus came to preach good news to the poor. As His ambassadors we are committed to the poor and marginalized. We affirm their worth, call them to be children of God through faith in Christ, and seek to release them from brokenness and despair.
- **Long-Term Solutions:** We concentrate our efforts on long-term solutions that break the cycle of poverty and disease. We train, equip, and empower people to do for themselves. We focus on development rather than relief, and disease prevention rather than cure.
- **Local Ownership and Initiative:** Sustainable programs are owned by the people and built on local initiative. Ownership and initiative is demonstrated through volunteerism and strengthened through capacity building. We take time in communities to participate with the people in assessing their needs, identifying resources, and assisting them in organizing for action through training and consultation.
- **Participatory Learning:** We believe people must be active participants in their own development. Therefore, we use methods for adult learning that engage participants in a process of reflection and action. We also believe people learn by doing, and that modeling is essential.
- **Multiplication and Movements:** Our aim is not merely projects, but movements. This is facilitated by training people to train others using concepts that are transferable. We emphasize the use of local resources and appropriate technologies so that solutions can be passed along neighbor to neighbor. We build cooperation and vision at a community level. We work collaboratively with faith- and community-based organizations, local and international relief and development agencies, churches and missions, as well as governments to facilitate the transformation of communities and nations.
- **Christian Servant Leadership:** Jesus is our model. We seek to imitate him in humility and love. Jesus taught that the greatest in the kingdom is the servant of all. Every leader in our organization is Christian, and each one a servant. We seek to model servant leadership in our organization and programs, and raise up leaders in every community who give sacrificially to serve the needs of the people.
- **Contextualization:** Our programs will be adapted to local needs and requirements as identified by the local community.

How CHE Works

CHE is initiated in a community by a two- or three-person **CHE training team**—dedicated Christians who speak the language of the community and live close enough to visit frequently. CHE trainers are generally supervised by a local organization—whether a church, an association, a denomination, a mission agency, or an NGO.

As they start out in the community, they raise awareness of need and opportunity, and facilitate a process by which the community itself identifies solutions and begins to work together in an organized way. The community gains hope and vision, and a development process is catalyzed.

The trainers assure that community leaders understand CHE as a way they can address their physical, social and spiritual needs themselves, not a program that offers them money. The key to CHE is the community's willingness to take responsibility for addressing its own problems.

Through a series of open meetings, the community decides whether or not to do CHE as a community. If the training team has done its initial work well, most communities decide to do CHE.

The community then selects people to serve as their local **leadership committee**, which is prepared for its work by the training team. Then the CHE program is officially launched by the community.

The leadership committee selects other community members to be trained as volunteer **CHEs** (chays)—community health educators/evangelists. The work of these dedicated volunteers is crucial to achieving results.

Through frequent trainings, the CHEs are *equipped to implement health-improving steps in their own homes*, and they learn how to pass along what they are learning in home visits with other families. The CHEs become health educators and personal evangelists to their community.

The combined influence of the training team, the leadership committee, and the volunteer CHEs creates a dynamic process of learning and change in the community. Physical and social health improves, projects are accomplished, and spiritual growth occurs as people come to faith in Christ. The community changes from the inside-out.

CHE works because it is the community's own program, with CHE trainers serving as catalysts for change.

The Results of a CHE Program

The success of a CHE program can be measured by the following transformational indicators. These are the outcomes that we consistently see in mature CHE programs around the world:

- **Shared vision:** The community sees a better future and has hope that it can be achieved.
- **Leadership:** Godly Christian leaders are positioned and equipped to lead the community toward the accomplishment of its vision.
- **Ownership:** People are taking responsibility for their own health and well being.
- **Cooperation:** People are united and working together for the common good.
- **Volunteers:** People are taking initiative and acting sacrificially to meet the legitimate needs of others.
- **Dignity:** People have recovered their identity as made in the image of God and their vocation as stewards of creation. Instead of being controlled or victimized by their environment, they are stewards of it.
- **Learning, Skill, and Resources:** People are equipped to identify needs and resources, put together a plan, and mobilize volunteers to accomplish their vision. People are continually reflecting on what is happening in order to learn how to be more effective.
- **Christian Community and Witness:** Believers are meeting together for fellowship, prayer, Bible

Once the above outcomes are achieved, communities begin to change. Health improves, infant mortality decreases, agriculture becomes more productive, jobs are created, water systems, roads, schools and clinics are built, and churches are established or strengthened. All of this is achieved at the initiative of the people. Peace, justice, compassion, and righteousness are witnessed in the community and God is glorified.

Resources

CHE Lesson Plan DVD: This one DVD, updated for new material annually, provides everything that trainers need to implement a CHE program. It contains more than 10,000 documents including lesson plans, health stories, Bible storying, picture books, teaching aids, surveys, and tools for monitoring and evaluation. The DVD takes you step by step through the whole CHE process, and puts the materials that you need at your fingertips. Learn how to hold Vision Seminars and TOTs; enter the community; train CHEs and committee; and monitor and evaluate your progress. Topics include everything from Agriculture to Women's Cycle of Life. There are new lesson plans on a whole range of topics such as Neighborhood Transformation (Urban CHE), HIV, Tropical Diseases, Bible Storying, Healthy Aging, Disabilities, Children's CHE, Health Promotion and much more.

CHE Lessons Topics (a Selection)

- Addictions
- Animal Care
- Appropriate Technology
- Agriculture
- Bible Storying
- CHE Training
- Children's CHE
- Church Planting & Mission
- Disaster Preparedness
- Economic Development
- Emotional Care
- Evangelism
- Environment
- Family Planning
- Gender
- Health Promotion
- HIV & AIDS
- Kingdom Business
- Marriage, Family & Parenting
- Personal Finance
- Project Planning
- Micro-enterprise
- Monitoring & Evaluations
- Perinatal Support/Pregnancy
- Disease Prevention
- Saving and Internal Lending (SAIL)
- Servant Leadership
- Spiritual Growth
- Women's Cycle of Life
- Worldview & Wholistic Ministry

Medical Ambassadors International - One of MAI's prime strategies is to foster the CHE Movement. As an outworking of this, MAI led in initiating the Global CHE Network. Our commitment is to the advancement of the Kingdom of God through CHE. MAI sees the Global CHE Network as a way to enlist others to join in this cause. MAI models collaborative participation as a member of the Global CHE Network. MAI/LifeWind continues to commit resources of staff and materials to the network.

Global CHE Network - The Global CHE Network represents more than 395 churches, denominations, mission agencies, and faith based organizations in 105 countries who are using the Community Health Evangelism strategy to serve the needs of people physically and spiritually.

360 Transformation – Medical Ambassadors International staff, they are a South African Non-Profit Organization based in Cape Town who facilitate the expansion of CHE in the region of 10 Southern African countries.