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## Worldview Empowers Village to Overcome Challenges that Impoverish

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Sometimes people ask me how villages can move out of poverty if we never give them any resources. It's a hard question to answer—in part it's a God thing. In part it's because as they change how they see themselves and their communities they change how they live. Those changes can have dramatic ramifications.

One such story is found in this village. It is, or was a simple village. The people were poor with barely enough to eat. Most of the farms for the village were far away along a dirt track, which meant any crops that grew had to be carried on their backs for over 10kms. According to them, it would have taken two years of back-breaking work to carry out \$400 worth of crops. Consequently, food shortages were normal and everyone lived with crippling debt.

Through our program, the community learnt to work together. They also learnt that it is possible to change the future. So often the poor in these villages believe that if they are born poor they will die poor. There doesn't seem any point in trying to change the future because they don't believe they can. As we encouraged them to believe that through God they can see change, they started to dream.

They claimed that with a road they could not only get to these fields but also transport their crops out by vehicle. After a year of dreaming, it was decided to try and realize their dream. A road of 10km was carved out of the rock and mountains. They negotiated with farmers to allow them to pass through their land and they mobilized the whole village to provide the labor. The whole project took 2400 volunteer days of labour (eg. One person working one day).



As a result, the people of the village were able to significantly increase how much they could earn. The average person increased their income by seven times. So grateful was

the village to the church for organizing the project that they gave the church most of the extra proceeds that they earned that year (around \$50,000). As a result, the church was able to build a modern, large church building.



No other village in the province or even in the denomination has such a large building. It's the pride of their area and the talking point of villages from many kilometers away. (For those cynics, like myself, who wonder if all that money might have been better spent, my spouse reminds us that this church had already built a school and a community center

for the village. This building now stands as an incredible testimony to what God can do in a community.)

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