



A pre-covid photo of former ABC President, Dr. Don Ng, lecturing at North East Christian University

GIVING OPPORTUNITY IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& ONLINE BUSINESS SKILL TRAINING

INDIA / NEPAL

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTHEAST CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY: NAGALAND, INDIA

January – December 2022



International Ministries, also known as the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, works cross-culturally to invite people to become disciples of Jesus Christ and to proclaim, through both word and deed, God's reign of justice, peace and abundant life for all creation.

OVERVIEW

There is a real and present need in the Indian and Nepalese church to equip its members to create income-generating enterprises as a way of providing for basic life needs. Pastors need high-quality online business training, start-up capital, and business-focused mentoring to successfully build these businesses. In turn, the communities they serve benefit by generating economic stability and providing for their basic needs.

This need has become even more urgent when most rural and underserved communities are hit hard by the COVID pandemic, and they are striving to restore their work and financial capacity.

Businesses are a vital part of improving economic and technical development, and creating wealth and jobs. They play a central role in poverty reduction. But, how do people without access to funds, training and resources break into the highly competitive world of business? As “providing fish” is important in a disaster situation, “teaching to fish” and “helping to build fish ponds” are far more strategic in sustainable change and development.

Micro-enterprise (also known as small business) enables people to generate an income by starting and growing their own small business. Many of the businesses start as part-time or homebased businesses and, in time, they can provide jobs for other people within the community. Owning a business can build an individual’s confidence, dignity and self-esteem. When successful, it also enables people to earn their own income.

This project will equip and inspire 400 current and future pastors to develop their personal and congregational potential to experience the wholistic abundant life in their families and communities. The eight awardees of top business plans will become pioneers and models to educate and encourage more followers and practitioners to foster this change in their communities.



The Tuensang Hills in remote Eastern Nagaland, India. The United Sangtam Baptist Lithroti Ashimukhong Churches Association has a vision to build a pig farm to help bring economic stability to many families living in this remote region.

BACKGROUND



PHOTO OF URBAN CAMPUS OF NORTHEAST CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

In partnership with North East Christian University (NECU) in Nagaland, India, conduct 2, six-month online certificate training programs to teach theology students and pastors Christian stewardship and basic business skills to create income generating enterprises which are relevant to their context.

This training program will utilize an existing virtual training platform currently used to provide online leadership training to pastoral students across the northeast region of India. This program aims at training 200 students in each six-month program, for a total of 400 students in 2022.

The first three months of training teach the business theory including the model of business as mission. The second three months will focus on contextual application which produces measurable results.

The teaching team, coordinated by Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar, includes International Ministries global servants and Christian businesspeople who have the related expertise and ministry track record.

The 2022 program will finish with a business plan pitch for students. Using what they have learned, students will develop a business plan and presentation to promote their enterprise.

These will be submitted to a review committee which will choose four business ideas to award seed money (\$5K per award) to begin implementation. Winners will be paired with a mentor to provide counsel to the student during the implementation phase. We will learn from the experience of the 2022 program to develop further certificate and possibly degree programs which can be used by Christian communities in India and Nepal, and hopefully in other countries.



Photo of Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar; NECU Coordinator for the business skills training program

SITUATION

Theological graduates must become providers of jobs in rural and underserved communities. It is important to recognize that the majority of the theological students in Asia come from the countryside and belong to a farming or underserved community. But the majority of the pastors are not taught in the seminary how to help the rural and underserved communities develop economic opportunities to improve their quality of life. In order to serve their communities well and bring forth Jesus' promise of abundant life, pastors need basic knowledge of community organization, community development, health care, farming skills, and basic business skills.

Considering the complex context of Asia, it is imperative that along with foundational courses in biblical studies, theology, church history, and practical theology, more courses need to be taught relating to the application of Christian stewardship, resource development, social work, social ethics and analysis, community development, business development, and other skill-oriented courses. This will equip theological students to serve as pastors who will nurture its members' spiritual growth and nurture the community for positive change, economic and otherwise.

This training program is unique due to the aspect of awarding seed money to the four most compelling business cases for income generation in each six-month program, and the subsequent mentorship provided by some of those who serve on the evaluation committee. Two of the seed money awards will be funded through this project grant. The remaining two seed money awards will be funded through local churches and conventions.

PROPOSAL



Child of a beneficiary family with a young goat from a past ECD initiative in Northeast India

We propose that this virtual training and mentorship program be conducted for one year. At year-end, evaluation of the program, including preliminary progress of student grant awardees, will be conducted. Program adjustments will be made based on the evaluation results and implemented in subsequent years.

The potential for this program to be a catalyst for empowering both men and women to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty is significant - 200 students per six-month course (400 students annually). Due to the online learning environment, training costs (excluding seed money) are highly economical at just \$68 USD per student.

The top four business plans per six-month course will also be awarded seed money and a mentorship opportunity to implement their business plan. The mentorship framework will not only provide guidance and encouragement, but it will also inform the teaching team of necessary curriculum adjustments for future courses.

The advantage of utilizing an existing training platform and course model is reduced cost and lead time in beginning the business skills training program. With a virtual training platform teaching 200 students in one course the potential for impact is far greater than we could achieve in a brick-and-mortar classroom.

BUDGET

Training program costs (1 year)

Program Coordinator honorarium	\$10,000
Teacher honorariums &	\$10,000
Administrative expenses	\$ 14,200
Seed award money (20 \$5K awards)	\$100,000
SUBTOTAL:	\$134,200
Funding from India conventions:	(\$40,000)
Funding raised to date 3/4/2022	(\$78,000)
Fund balance needed.....	\$16,200

If you have any questions, or would like assistance to complete your gift, please contact Mission Advancement 610-768-2311

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