

WARNER WOODWORTH**NGOs Worldwide & Prof. Emeritus Marriott School of Business, Brigham Young University, United States****DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID****Abstract:**

This paper calls for disruptive innovation to mobilize and empower the global poor at the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP). The main argument is that poverty alleviation cannot be left to elites, government or big business. Alternative self-help methodologies are shown to counter big, slow bureaucracy through activist college students and faculty who become aligned with impoverished communities. New social inventions may be designed for the informal economy, radical economic development can be applied, and the world's have-nots may become empowered to lift themselves out of the wretched lives of the Third World.

This paper will briefly document three cases in Peru, the Philippines, and Honduras as to how universities may partner with village elders, women, and youth in suffering communities in using tools to improve the quality of life for the Third World. The particular case at hand is that of the Marriott School of Business at Brigham Young University, where we have worked for three decades now to mobilize MBA and MPA students, alumni, and faculty in empowering the poor. We use practical business models and concepts such as micro-finance, motivation theories, planning and decision-making, economic development, cross cultural management, social entrepreneurship, conflict and negotiation, change management, leadership, and marketing to design projects and then roll them out.

We will first highlight the socio-economic context in which we work. Then we will describe several university cases in which the author, colleagues, students and business entrepreneur partners designed classroom projects to fight poverty, then implemented them in the Third World, and eventually spun them off as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Collectively these efforts have succeeded in raising hundreds of millions of dollars and positively impacted more than 8 million people in dozens of countries who now have their own sustainable solutions for a better quality of life. The paper concludes with suggestions for future collaboration between business schools, rural villages and newly established NGOs.

Keywords:

BOP, Disruption, Microfinance

JEL Classification: E26, L31, O13