

How Your Congregation Can Help



pcusa.org/sdop



PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE ON THE
**Self-Development
of People**

This is Self-Development of People:

A group of poor women learns how to build a house and start their own home-building business.

Disabled individuals form an organization to advocate for more accessible public buildings.

Residents in a community without potable water band together to make safe water a reality in their community.

Tenants in a public housing development start a group to help themselves climb out of poverty.

The four preceding examples are each U.S. projects that have been partnerships between community groups and Self-Development of People.

OUR MISSION

When Jesus read the scriptures in the Nazareth synagogue (Luke 4:14-21), he chose verses from Isaiah as his text: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

Jesus of Nazareth befriended and assisted poor and oppressed people, and taught his followers the same responsibility. Through Self-Development of People (SDOP), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) lives out the primary responsibility taught by Jesus and demonstrates its solidarity with poor people here in the United States and around the world.

Self-Development of People affirms God’s concern for people by participating in the empowerment of economically poor, oppressed and disadvantaged people by establishing partnerships with low-income community groups.



GRANTS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Self-Development of People makes grants to community groups. To be considered for funding, community groups must:

- Be oppressed by poverty or social systems. A majority of the group’s decision-makers (the people who control the project) must be economically poor.
- Want to take charge of their own lives and be organized (or getting organized) to do something about their own conditions. Because SDOP seeks to empower poor and oppressed people, it does not fund one group of people to do something for another group of people.
- Benefit directly themselves from the group’s work.
- Be certain that their project will produce long-term community changes for their lives or communities. SDOP is about human dignity, the empowerment of people, and community growth.

A full list of SDOP’s Criteria for Funding can be found on the SDOP website (pcusa.org/sdop) or in SDOP’s Informational Booklet or SDOP Basic Info Sheet (see page 9 for ordering information).

BRINGING A SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE GRANT TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Your congregation is a vital link, connecting Self-Development of People to groups in your community who should apply for a grant. Obviously, community groups cannot apply for an SDOP grant unless they know about SDOP. Your congregation can provide a great service by contacting appropriate community groups, telling them about SDOP, encouraging them to apply for a grant, providing technical assistance, and helping them through the process.

There are two primary ways for your congregation to get the word out in your community about SDOP:

- 1) Distribute SDOP literature to prospective applicants; and
- 2) Host what SDOP calls a “community workshop.” Here’s more about each:

1) Literature Distribution

Self-Development of People has a variety of free printed resources, which will help you and your congregation speak to prospective applicants about SDOP:

- **The SDOP Informational Booklet** is available in both English and Spanish. It contains the basic information about SDOP that is needed by a group who wants to apply, and also has a “Frequently Asked Questions and Answers” section.
- **The SDOP Basic Information Info Sheet** has basically the same information, but is one sheet of paper folded into an 8.5" x 11" trifold. It’s intended as a handout for groups
- SDOP is summarized in a small brochure that folds to the size of a standard business card. From time to time, give a few of these **SDOP Wallet Cards** to every Sunday worshipper, and ask them to pass the cards along to those who might be interested in applying for a grant.

To learn how to order these resources, see page 9.

Self-Development also has a strong Internet presence. You will find it at pcusa.org/sdop. The site has all the basic information about SDOP, including Criteria for Funding, grant application forms, and examples of funded projects. Please tell prospective applicants about the website!





2) Community Workshops

An SDOP Community Workshop is a get-together where prospective applicants learn about Self-Development of People and how to apply for a grant.

Community workshops can be led by members of the National SDOP Committee, or by Presbytery/Synod SDOP Committee members (many Presbyteries and Synods have SDOP Committees; you will learn more about this below). SDOP staff is also available to conduct community workshops.

In order to host a Community Workshop, your congregation will need to start by determining a date and time when a workshop leader can be available. Then, the members of the congregation should aggressively publicize the event, making certain that the news is received by economically poor and oppressed people in the community, for certainly these are the primary audience! Congregational members can provide light refreshments at the event, and be proactive in welcoming non-church members who come, possibly beginning partnerships that will result in exciting ministry opportunities.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Self-Development of People's primary source of income is approximately one-third of the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), the special offering taken during Lent. (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the Presbyterian Hunger Program are the other programs receiving a portion of the offering).

Please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing, and encourage your congregation to do the same.

Equally important: Throughout the year, please share SDOP literature with your congregation, and do an occasional SDOP Minute for Mission during your worship service or Christian Education time. Let your congregation know how SDOP uses its share of the OGHS for ministry throughout the world!

CELEBRATE SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE SUNDAY

Once a year, in early Lent, Presbyterian congregations across the United States join together to celebrate Self-Development of People Sunday. Check the PC (USA) Program Calendar for the exact date. Each year in early January, an SDOP Sunday Worship Resource is posted on SDOP's website at pcusa.org/sdop. Please share this web resource with worship leadership in your congregation.

SDOP Sunday is a great opportunity to offer a Minute for Mission on an SDOP project. *The SDOP Informational Booklet* and *The SDOP Basic Information Info Sheet* both have SDOP project stories that can be used as Minutes for Mission. You can find additional SDOP project stories on the SDOP website, pcusa.org/sdop. Representatives from local SDOP projects could be invited to participate in the worship service, as could members of Presbytery/Synod or National SDOP Committees. SDOP Sunday is also an appropriate time to distribute SDOP literature to congregational members, and to encourage them to share those materials with prospective applicants in the community; the SDOP wallet card is especially useful for this purpose.

When celebrating SDOP Sunday, remember to mention that SDOP is funded by the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). The OGHS offering is taken up just a few Sundays after SDOP Sunday.



THE EXTRA COMMITMENT OPPORTUNITY (ECO) PROGRAM

For congregations and individuals who would like to designate a gift to a particular part of SDOP's ministry, the Extra Commitment Opportunity giving program is a channel. Congregations and individuals who are interested in a particular aspect of SDOP's ministry can designate a gift to it. You will find information about current SDOP giving opportunities in various parts of the world by going to the SDOP website: pcusa.org/sdop. Please consider making a contribution through the ECO program!

PRESBYTERY AND SYNOD SDOP COMMITTEES

Many Presbyteries and Synods have SDOP Committees that can make grants to projects within the boundaries of the Presbytery or Synod, and which can sometimes assist projects in other ways. Members of Presbytery and Synod SDOP Committees are often available to do Minutes for Missions or to provide interpretative programs about SDOP. Presbytery and Synod Committee members can also be called upon to offer Community Workshops.

Call your Presbytery or Synod office to see if they have an SDOP Committee. You can also call the national SDOP office in Louisville for this information.

If your Presbytery does not yet have an SDOP Committee, perhaps you could help to start one. Certified Presbytery SDOP Committees are themselves able to make grants to projects within the Presbytery that meet SDOP's Criteria for Funding. To do this, Presbytery SDOP Committees use up to half of SDOP's 32% share of the OGHs offering taken in the Presbytery. For assistance in starting a Presbytery SDOP Committee, please call the ministry's national office.

SERVING ON AN SDOP COMMITTEE

You or members of your congregation may feel called to serve on a Self-Development of People Committees at either the Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly level. If your Presbytery or Synod has an SDOP Committee, contact them directly to indicate your interest in serving. If you are interested in serving on national SDOP Committee, please contact either the SDOP national office or the General Assembly Nominating Committee.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE: STORIES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Here are the stories of two SDOP projects from recent years:

Rio Grande Fishermen Cooperative

Punta Gorda, Belize

Struggling to earn a living in Punta Gorda, Belize, members of the Rio Grande Fishermen Cooperative discovered that sea cucumbers are the answer! The small, snake-like fish are plentiful in Belize's coastal water, and are easy to catch. Not eaten by the people of Belize, sea cucumbers are in high demand in parts of China, where they're a popular food. Members of the cooperative decided to begin harvesting sea cucumbers for export.

The members of the Rio Grande Fishermen Cooperative quickly ran into two problems with their plan to sell sea cucumbers to



China: They needed additional space in their small production facility to process their catch, and needed more freezers to store the processed sea cucumbers until they had enough for a full shipment. Financially, those two requirements cost more than the group could afford. What could they do?

In 2012, the Cooperative learned about Self-Development of People, and applied for a grant. SDOP agreed to help the Cooperative, enabling the Belizeans to expand their facilities and to buy additional freezers. Cooperative members are now regularly shipping sea cucumbers to China; their economic situation is greatly improved!

Chainbreaker Collective's Bicycle Resource Center

Santa Fe, New Mexico

In 2004, transportation costs were a major problem for low-income adults and youth in Santa Fe, New Mexico. There was simply no inexpensive way “to get from here to there.” A lack of affordable transportation made it difficult for them to get to work, to school, to the doctor, or to any of the other places to which most of us usually go.

A group of Santa Fe residents who had transportation difficulties began to talk about how to solve their problem, and came up with a great idea! As Tomas Rivera, one of the founders, tells the story, the group formed “when a core group realized we had the common problem of a lack of transportation, and decided to work together toward a common solution. Many of us rode our bikes



as a way to get around and found it to be a first step toward solving that problem in an economical and environmentally friendly way. However, we also found that because we couldn't afford to buy a new bike or pay for repairs on our own, that without the ability to do our own maintenance, bicycle riding was not as reliable as we need it to be. Inspired by recycle-a-bike programs around the country, we began teaching ourselves bicycle mechanics and gathering donations of bicycles that would otherwise go unused. Interest in what we were doing grew rapidly and we saw the need to find our own pace and work with a broader community. We solicited a local non-profit to allow us to use a small piece of their parking lot to operate out of. In six months, we gathered materials and constructed a small but functional bike shop. We use the model we began with to meet other people in our situation and to get them involved in the program.

When the economy collapsed in 2008, it became clearer than ever that we had to expand our focus past bicycles to deal with transportation issues at the root cause. The Bicycle Resource Center provides an immediate and direct solution to the lack of transportation for our community and serves as an entry point to begin collectively addressing poor transportation policies and outdated city planning at their root. Chainbreaker members worked with local officials to develop a program that provides free bus passes to people who purchase a bicycle or receive one through the Bicycle Resource Center.”

Members of the Bicycle Resource Center say that the project has changed their lives. For example, Rivera tells the story of a man who was homeless and without transportation when he first encountered the Bicycle Resource Center two years ago. He was working as a day laborer and the place he needed to be each morning to get work was too far to walk from where he was staying. In addition, the nature of day laboring required him to be mobile to get to work sites. He was losing work each day because of his lack of transportation. He received a bicycle and learned enough mechanical skills to keep it functioning as a safe and reliable means of transportation. Through the Bicycle Resource Center, he was able to continuously obtain work and save enough money to move into an apartment. Today, he remains active in the Bicycle Resource Center as a mechanic instructor, also serves as a board member, and has become a leader in campaigns to support public transportation.”



SDOP ON THE INTERNET

Self-Development of People has a page on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) website. Go to pcusa.org/sdop and you will find regularly updated stories and news about SDOP and its partner projects. You will also find all the basic information about SDOP, including Criteria for Funding, Applications, Extra Commitment Opportunities, lists of the projects funded by SDOP, and stories about them. You can order SDOP resources, too. Visit the page often!

FREE PRINT AND INTERNET RESOURCES

Order SDOP print resources by calling the Presbyterian Distribution Service (PDS) at **800-524-2612**. Here is a partial list of materials you and your congregation may find useful; a full list appears on the SDOP website at pcusa.org/sdop.

- ***SDOP Informational Booklet*** (PDS 25422-12-002). This booklet is intended for prospective SDOP applicants, and for others wanting to learn about SDOP's ministry. It is a great resource for congregations to give to community groups that might be interested in applying for a grant.
- ***SDOP Basic Information Sheet*** (PDS 25422-14-001). This is a shorter version of the above resource, printed on one large sheet of paper and then folded into an 8½" by 11" trifold. It's a great piece to order when you want to give an SDOP resource to each person in a group.
- ***SDOP Wallet Cards*** (PDS 25422-07-001). This small brochure folds to the size of a standard business card so that it can easily be carried in one's wallet, purse, or business card case. See the "Literature Distribution" section for an idea on how to use it in your congregation.
- ***Self-Development of People: Sermons and Liturgy*** (PDS 74350-06-010). This web resource is designed especially for the pastor or worship leader who wants to prepare a service of worship with an SDOP theme, but will also be of interest to anyone wishing to learn about the biblical and theological foundations for the SDOP ministry. You'll find it on SDOP's website at pcusa.org/sdop.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)	800-728-7228
Self-Development of People	English x5782
National Office	Spanish x5790
100 Witherspoon Street	Fax: 502-569-8963
Louisville, KY 40202-1396	pcusa.org/sdop

To order additional booklets or other SDOP resources, please call 1-800-524-2612.

