

WAGF

MISSIONS COMMISSION BEST PRACTICES

A Practical Guide to Building an
Effective Sending Agency



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WAGF

MISSIONS COMMISSION BEST PRACTICES

A Practical Guide to Building an
Effective Sending Agency



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PART 1

MISSIONS THEOLOGY FOUNDATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Missions Theology

Opportunities and Challenges

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WAGF Best Practices Task Force Part 1*

While the ways gospel communication occurs varies from context to context, the God of mission and the core of the gospel never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

While the ways gospel communication occurs varies from context to context, the God of mission and the core of the gospel never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). Paul indicates that “other gospels” abound requiring faithful stewardship of the message of the gospel (Gal. 1:6–9; 1 Tim. 6:20)

Introduction

Part 1 of the WAGF Missions Commission’s “Best Practices” documents engages the missions theology that undergirds those practices. Organized around three sections, Part 1 addresses: 1) Missions Theology Foundations, 2) Fundamental Missiology for Practice of Cross-cultural missions, and 3) Theological/Missiological Challenges.

Justification

Relying on solid biblical missiology propels the Church forward to maximize contemporary missions opportunities. Missiological drift, the almost imperceptible move from God’s missionary agenda in the world to alternate agendas, practices, and theologies, occurs not only in traditional denominations, but increasingly in Pentecostal churches and missions agencies. The best practices presented in part 1 of this series attempt to address these challenges and present a solid missions theology foundation.

Theological/Missiological Opportunities and Challenges

1. Opportunities
 - A. A solid biblical missiology provides motivation and direction for local and national churches to engage in global mission.
 - B. The growth of the Pentecostal church globally.
 - C. The increase in missions sending from the global South.
2. Challenges

God set the agenda for missions sending in His Word. The task of God’s missionary people, the Church, and the missions agencies that serve them, is to obey His agenda in the power of the Spirit.

- A. The rise of pluralism, “inclusivism” and universalism.
- B. Faulty eschatology, the study of the end times, that deemphasizes the importance of the Lord’s return and the responsibility of the Church until He comes.
- C. Faulty ecclesiology, the study of the Church, shifting the focus from making disciples through evangelization and the planting of local churches to bringing about the kingdom of God through social means.
- D. The increase of dependency in missions and a drift away from the sound biblical practices articulated in “Indigenous Church” principles.

General Observations to Respond to These Challenges

1. Each national church and sending agency needs to articulate and propagate a contextual biblical missions theology.
2. Local and national missiological drift should be identified and address in a loving but prophetic manner.
3. The biblical principles of the “Indigenous Church” should guide missions attitudes, decisions, and actions.

Best Practices for a National Missions Committee and Teams

1. Develop mobilization and training programs grounded in sound biblical missions theology.
2. All missions mobilization and training should be based on and emphasize the importance of a biblical missions theology.
3. The national missions committee and teams should periodically and frequently review their standards and practices to verify that no missiological drift is occurring.
4. All mission endeavors and attitudes should be evaluated in light of biblical principles of missions.

Conclusion

God set the agenda for missions sending in His Word. The task of God’s missionary people, the Church, and the missions agencies that serve them, is to obey His agenda in the power of the Spirit. Good missions theology calls God’s missionary people back to a missiology and practice grounded in His revealed Truth, the Bible.



SECTION 1

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSIONS:
FOUNDATIONS



number **1**

Biblical Theology of Missions: Foundations

Why Is Biblical Theology Necessary?

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To glorify and be true to the God of mission revealed in the Bible, missions must be centered in the Word of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit

To glorify and be true to the God of mission revealed in the Bible, missions must be centered in the Word of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

God is worthy of all glory, honor, and praise. His plan for humankind and all of creation revealed in the Bible is for His glory (Eph. 1). It is a plan of revelation and reconciliation. The task of missions is to populate heaven with worshippers.

Justification

Due to the Fall, human hearts wander as human agendas replace God's agenda. This malady infects not only individuals, but missionaries, churches, and sending agencies. The antidote is to reflect theologically and missiologically, asking, "Is our missions agenda, God's agenda?" and "Are we doing that agenda in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the power of the gospel, or in our own flawed sources of power?" This is the task of a biblical theology of missions.

General Observations

1. Foundational biblical truths that undergird the missions of the Church:
 - A. The Scriptures, the final authority for faith and practice, have the final say in determining the nature and scope of the Church's mission.
 - B. The lostness of [humankind], separated from God and without the ability to save [oneself], is a tragic fact which finds its remedy only in the salvation offered through the gospel of Christ.
 - C. The uniqueness of Jesus Christ as God's Son and [humankind's] Savior. "Neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12).
 - D. All [people] are candidates for salvation in Jesus Christ on the condition of repentance from evil works and faith toward God through Jesus Christ.

Missionary training should be grounded in biblical missions theology and practice.

- E.** The Church, composed of true believers in Jesus Christ, is God's own possession and His agent for world evangelism.
- F.** The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church and becomes the source of power and equipment for missions as believers receive of His fullness.
- G.** The return of Christ to the earth is the hope of true believers and the final solution to earth's ills. The kingdoms of this earth shall become the kingdoms of God and His Christ, and He shall reign forever.¹

Best Practices

- 1.** Engagement with missions theology must be intentional or missiological drift will occur.
- 2.** Each sending church and agency should prayerfully review the Scriptures and sound biblical missiology to evaluate their teaching and missionary actions to maintain alignment with God's mission.
- 3.** Consistently renew the means to communicate biblical foundations of missions theology to constituents.
- 4.** Missionary training should be grounded in biblical missions theology and practice.

¹Hodges, Melvin L. *A Theology of the Church and Its Mission: A Pentecostal Perspective*. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1977), 19.



number **2**

Missio Dei: God's Mission

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From Genesis to
Revelation, God's
plan of redemption
unfolds in revelation
and reconciliation.

The agenda for missions must be determined by God's agenda in mission as set forth in the Bible. From Genesis to Revelation, God's plan of redemption unfolds in revelation and reconciliation. In the redemption story God covenants with a man, Abraham, and a people to fulfill His missionary agenda.

Introduction:

The term *missio Dei* (Latin for "God's mission") refers to God's universal redemptive plan revealed in the Bible is to reconcile all things in heaven and earth to himself in Christ (Eph.1). From creation, God partnered with humankind to "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it." (Gen. 1:28 The Dominion Mandate). Abraham and the people of Israel were set apart to bless the nations (Gen. 12, Ex. 19). With the coming of the Messiah, through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, reconciliation with God and other humans becomes possible. Jesus commissions (Matt. 28:18–20) His people to fulfill His mandate to make disciples of all nations providing empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Motivation for missions is grounded in obedience to the God of mission and an anticipation of the return of Christ. *Missio Dei* culminates in the fulness of the kingdom of God at Christ's return to earth and in paradise restored with redeemed representatives before the throne glorifying God (Rev. 7:9).

Justification

A clear understanding of God's mission (*missio Dei*) in the world enables God's missionary people to align their missions agendas and activities with His agenda.

General Observations

1. Foundational biblical truths that undergird the missions of the Church:
 - A. Humankind and all of creation were created for the glory of God.
 - B. Beginning in Genesis 1:28, God partners (covenants) with women and men to accomplish His purposes culminating in a partnership with God's missionary people, the Church, to fulfill

God, the author of missions, is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9).

His mission through the communication of the gospel and the making of disciples of all nations.

- C.** God calls and partners with one man, Abraham, to bless the nations. From Abraham, God separates a people (the people of Israel) to be a missionary people a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:6) to bless the nations.
- D.** An introverted Israel fails to fulfill the covenant, but with the arrival of the promised Messiah the first fruits of the kingdom of God entered human history.
- E.** Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, He created the possibility that women and men could be reconciled to God and each other (Eph. 1, 2; Cor. 5:11–21).
- F.** Jesus commissioned His disciples to communicate the gospel to all people and every person, making disciples of all nations by going, baptizing, and teaching all that He commanded (Matt. 28:18–20).
- G.** Through the Church, in the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), the manifold wisdom of God is made know (Eph. 3:10).
- H.** The Church is to be God’s missionary people “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (1 Pet. 2:9–10).
- I.** God, the author of missions, is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9), but His desire is that every person and every people be restored to relationship with Him and each other through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- J.** Reconciliation only occurs on the condition of conversion that requires repentance from sin and evil and submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ, the only legitimate king.
- K.** Submission to Christ includes participation in local communities of faith. Thus, the importance of planting local churches among all peoples.
- L.** The motivation for missions is obedience to the God of mission. The ultimate motivation is the glory of God expressed in love for women and men being reconciled to God and one another.
- M.** The purpose of missions is to populate heaven with worshippers of God for the glory of God in anticipation of the redemption of humankind and all of creation.

Best Practices

1. Missions philosophies and practices must be aligned with the agenda of revelation and reconciliation established in the mission of God (*missio Dei*) revealed in the Bible.
2. While multiple motivations (e.g. burden for the lost, personal agendas, social justice, the return of Christ) for missions exist, the most legitimate and primary motivation is love for God and others expressed in communication of the gospel in word and deed to the lost, alienated from God and each other.

Conclusion

The mission of God calls God's missionary people back to a missiology and practice grounded in His revealed Truth, the Bible. God's agenda in missions, revelation and reconciliation, center in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The task of God's missionary people, the Church, and the missions agencies that serve them, is to obey His agenda in the power of the Spirit.



number **3**

Eschatology

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People should not speculate on when it will happen or how it will happen, but rather on being the kind of people God wants them to be and what they should be doing now.

Missions should be engaged with the end in mind, eschatology matters.

Justification

How believers see the end of God's redemptive plan exerts a powerful influence on how Christians have understood and practiced global missions.

General Observations

1. Many interpreted the Pentecostal outpouring at the beginning of the 20th Century as a sign of the soon return of Jesus. This created a sense of urgency to proclaim the gospel and at the same time led to neglect preparation, training, and engagement with social issues. The delay in His return has led some Pentecostals to lose the sense urgency to proclaim Christ as Lord and soon-coming King thus focusing on issues of the present realities and social ills in place of reaching the lost. A complicating issue is the wide variety of interpretational systems that Christians hold regarding the end times. Hence, it is wise to hold all eschatological positions with humility and realize that other sincere Christians will hold different views. With the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, people can have many different ways of understanding the return of the Lord Jesus and the end times. Believers can be united on clear biblical witness to the role of God's people as they conduct their lives before His return.
2. There are three biblical ideas that can guide Christians, no matter how they understand the last days, that helps them live and serve in His presence in the New Jerusalem.
 - A. First, the Bible clearly states that God's redemptive plan will be accomplished among all the tribes, tongues, peoples, and nations (Rev. 5:9; 7:9; 21:24, 26) and that "the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). This means that whenever one talks about the end times, his/her focus always needs to be about the progress of the good news to all diverse humanity.

While developing long term plans and practices, God's missionary people need to continually live with a sense of urgency in anticipation of His coming.

- B.** Second, the primary focus of all New Testament passages that relate to eschatology is on how followers of Jesus must live in light of His return. People should not speculate on when it will happen or how it will happen, but rather on being the kind of people God wants them to be and what they should be doing now. Jesus talked of the need to be on guard and not deceived (Mark 13:5–6) and to be watchful because no one knows the time of His return (Mark 13:32–37). Peter, after talking about the divine judgment on human achievements (II Peter 3:10), asks his readers what kind of lives they should be living in light of this (II Peter 3:11). He responds that they should live holy and godly lives, and seek to be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with Jesus (II Peter 3:11, 14).
- C.** Finally, the entire Bible shows how the living God accomplishes His plan of redemption by working through His people. This includes both the way that believers live, reflecting the values of God's rule, and also as the instruments that He uses to proclaim the good news of Jesus to the nations. Peter seems to indicate that Christians hasten the return of the Lord through the proclamation of the gospel (II Peter 3:12). He reminds his readers that they should not look at the slowness of the return of the Lord as problematic but rather as the Lord's patience that more may come to salvation, because He is not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9).

Best Practices

1. Missionaries, missions agencies, and sending churches need to keep the end in mind when formulating missions philosophy and practice.
2. While developing long term plans and practices, God's missionary people need to continually live with a sense of urgency in anticipation of His coming.

number

4

Biblical Theology of Missions

Definition of Terms

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In the missiological world, terms frequently carry multiple definitions creating confusion. In order to facilitate communication, the WAGF MC recommends the following definitions of key terms.

Justification

Clarity in the understanding and use of missiological terms will facilitate communication.

General Observations

Due to the lack of uniformity in the definitions of terms like missionary, mission, and missions, the WAGF MC proposes definitions to facilitate communication among WAGF sending churches. The WAGF Missions Leadership recommend the following definitions of key missiological terms to the missions community:

- 1. Cross-cultural Evangelism**—the communication of the gospel across cultural barriers. In a technical missiology this does not refer to a believer who testifies to a person of another culture who lives in his/her community, though this is witness and vitally needed. It refers to those called to set aside their own culture and to take on the culture of a specific people group (missionary identification and acculturation) in order to communicate the gospel and plant the church. It can include both missionaries who cross geographic and political boundaries and those who do not (the latter are sometimes referred to as cross-cultural workers or as “home” missionaries, this term is often confusing and misleading because “home” missionaries can also refer to workers supported to plant the church in other geographic regions without crossing cultural boundaries).
- 2. Evangelism**—the communication of the gospel in the power of the Spirit to those who are lost without Christ. Evangelism should constitute an ongoing cycle that includes: The establishment of a Christian **1) presence** in a community as a witness to unbelievers (Matt. 5:13–16). This presence must be accompanied by the **2) proclamation** of the good news (Mark 16:15–16; Luke 24:46–48) whose objective is the **3) persuasion** of women and men to accept Jesus as

their Savior and Lord (Acts 26:28–29; 2 Cor. 5:11). Having received Christ, **4) participation** in the body of Christ should follow including service, good works, and the building up of fellow believers (Matt. 5:16; Gal. 6:8–9; Eph. 4:16). The cycle should come full circle when the convert becomes an additional evangelistic presence in the **5) propagation** of the gospel.¹

- 3. Least Reached**—Those nations with people/ethnic groups where the presence and presentation of the gospel is almost or completely non-existent.
- 4. Mission (*missio Dei*)** (Latin- mission of God)—the purpose and activity of God for the redemption of humankind and all of creation. (It should be noted that for some missiologists *missio Dei* refers to everything God does for the salvation of humankind and mission is everything that the church does to point to the kingdom of God).
- 5. Missions**—the activity and program of the Church to communicate Christ through word and deed, resulting in the establishment of the Church among a people of another language and/or culture in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 6. Missionary**—a person called and empowered by the Holy Spirit, commissioned by the Church to go to another people and place, to communicate the gospel, and disciple and establish the Church of Jesus Christ among a different language and/or culture.
- 7. International Cross-cultural Missionary**—defined as a worker intentionally sent or recognized by his/her national council missions (or local national churches) sending structure(s) to a country other than his/her own, to work among a people group culturally different.
- 8. Cross-Cultural Domestic Home Missionary**—defined as a worker intentionally sent or recognized by his/her national council mission (or local national churches) sending structure(s) to a people group within the borders of his/her own country, to work among a people group culturally different.
- 9. Missionary (Missional) Church**—a local community of believers who are equipped by leadership and empowered by the Spirit to live in service and worship of God, in the mutual edification of its members, and in witness to the world. This witness includes simultaneously communicating the gospel in word and deed to the people of their own community (Jerusalem), to other communities of their own culture (Judea), to other geographically nearby cultural groups (Samaria), and to all the cultural people groups of the earth (ends of the earth).

¹ Melvin Hodges, *A Theology of the Church and Its Mission: A Pentecostal Perspective*, (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1977), 77.

10. **People Group**—an ethnic community within which the gospel can spread before encountering a barrier of language, culture, religion, or geographical limitation.
11. **Reached People Group**—a people group with their own unique language, culture, and worldview that has enough indigenous Christians that these believers, with their own resources and initiative, are able to evangelize the remainder of their people.
12. **Unreached People Group**—a ethno-linguistic community among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people. Therefore, ambassadors for Christ must come from the outside with the purpose of learning the language and culture to contextualize and propagate the gospel within this group, make disciples, and establish indigenous churches. The original Joshua Project editorial committee selected the criteria less than or equal to 2% Evangelical Christian and less than or equal to 5% Professing Christians.² Increasingly the definition is shifting to qualitative (do the people being reached have the capacity to reach their own) rather than simply quantitative (has the people being reached passed the 2% evangelical threshold).
13. **Holistic Missions**—the word, *holos*, comes from the Greek, meaning “whole” or “complete.” A holistic ministry cares for the whole person, intentionally ministering to a person’s spirit, body, emotions and mind using words, loving deeds, and supernatural signs. The insertion point is arbitrary, (sometimes witness begins with words, sometimes with deeds, sometimes with a miraculous sign) but witness is not complete unless word, deed, and sign complement each other. Biblical holism is a way of thinking that intentionally recognizes the Lordship of Christ over every aspect of life.

Best Practices

1. Missions agencies and missionary training centers should create awareness in their spheres of influence that brings uniformity in the use of missions terms. The WAGF Missions Leadership recommend the use of the above definitions.
2. In the preparation of mobilization and training resources, missions agencies and missionary training centers should clearly define key missiological terms.
3. If confusion arises related to missiological terms, consult with like-minded missions entities (e.g. the WAGF missions community).

²Lausanne Committee “AD2000 and Beyond Movement and Joshua Project” (paper presentation Lausanne Conference, Chicago, 1982).



SECTION 2

FUNDAMENTAL THEOLOGY
FOR THE PRACTICE OF
CROSS-CULTURAL MISSIONS



number **5**

Vision of World Evangelization

Taking the Gospel Where Christ Is Not Known

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God's redemptive plan embraces all peoples. The challenge for God's missionary people is to create access to the gospel for all peoples and every person.

Justification

When one looks at the arc of God's redemptive plan in the Bible, he/she sees that from the beginning to the end it embraces all the diversity of humanity. God promised Abraham that through him, all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 pictures multitudes from nations, tribes, peoples, and languages before the throne of the living God. Therefore, the priority of missions is to plant the Church among all peoples to create access to the gospel for every person.

General Observations

1. The goals of the five commissions in the Gospels and Acts (Matthew 28:16–20; Mark 16:14–18; Luke 24:44–49; John 20:21–23; Acts 1:4–9) show that God's people are to make disciples of all the *ethnē* (every ethnic group or nation not allied with and trusting in the God of Israel) proclaim the gospel to every creature, preach repentance and forgiveness in Jesus' name to all the *ethnē*, and bear witness to Christ from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.
2. One does this as God's people sent into the world by the Father, proclaiming good news, calling people to repentance and faith to receive forgiveness of sins, incorporating those who believe into the family of God through baptism, teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded, and are empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness across cultural boundaries to the uttermost parts of the earth, sent into the world as Jesus.
3. The task is of immense complexity and global in scope, embracing all the diversity of humanity, requiring cross-cultural efforts, and the need for abilities in evangelism, discipling, teaching, and planting faith communities. It is clear that as the gospel is rooted among a people, God mandated the faith community to the work of domestic missions to evangelize and disciple every person within that people

God's redemptive plan embraces all peoples. The challenge for God's missionary people is to create access to the gospel for all peoples and every person.

group. At the same time, Jesus mandates the whole Church to ongoing cross-cultural mission (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10).

4. The mandate given from the Scripture means that the primary focus of cross-cultural sending must be to bring gospel access to peoples and places that do not have it. Two things provide one with clear guidance in this matter.
 - A. In Acts 1:8, Jesus sets the agenda for the Church by indicating that it will move not just across geographic boundaries, but cultural ones also. The book of Acts, with its movement from Jerusalem to Rome, shows that this is not a serial progression where one starts in Jerusalem and when that is completed goes to the next place and so on. The church in Jerusalem continues to work in evangelizing their society while the gospel moves out to new places and peoples. This means that in participating in God's redemptive plan there is always going to be evangelism and church planting within a person's own culture, and the need to send workers to do cross-cultural evangelism and church planting in places where the Church does not exist.
 - B. The book of Acts shows that the cross-cultural dimension in taking the gospel to the world spawned a distinct structural response. Ralph Winter's seminal article on God's two redemptive structures shows how in Acts one sees the local church and apostolic mission band.¹ The Acts narrative shows the Spirit working through already existing structures of synagogues meeting in house and Jewish proselytizing bands and repurposing them. Robert Banks points out that Paul's task group did specialized work which involved a common task and their gifts were aimed at the evangelization of outsiders rather than edification of the body. While the churches all had multiple authority figures, in the mission band it was Paul who was in charge.² It is crucial to note that each of these structures, local churches and cross-cultural missionary bands, do different things well and have different strengths in God's redemptive mission. The narrow work of the Pauline apostolic band was to plant churches who would then be able to participate in the mission of God.
5. Paul's understanding of his calling shows us that cross-cultural labor focuses on the planting of the Church where it does not exist. Luke

¹Ralph D. Winter, "The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission." *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, edited by Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 220–30. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999).

²Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in Their Cultural Setting*, revised edition ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 159–162, 169.

Over a billion people live in societies with one or less than one Christian per thousand people.

was not just a historian but also a theologian. Roger Stronstad argues that Luke's narratives fall into a combination of four categories: episodic, typological, programmatic, and paradigmatic.³ By the latter he means that the episode shows normative features for the mission and character of God's people living in the last days. Luke's focus on the Pauline band shows it is paradigmatic for the conduct of the cross-cultural transmission of the gospel both structurally and in terms of goals and practices.⁴ Paul's reflections on his calling shows that he understood it as proclaiming the good news of Jesus to places "where Christ was not known" (Rom. 15:20) and not building on another's foundation. Paul did not see his work as going to places where the church existed that he did not help found. His letter to the Romans again shows him in movement, not avoiding the church, but wanting to share mutual encouragement (Rom. 1:11–12) and more importantly to have them assist him on his way to evangelize in Spain (Rom. 15:24). This trajectory of seeking to take the gospel to new ground is confirmed by the Acts narrative where there is movement from Cyprus to evangelization in Asia Minor, the direction of the Spirit to not evangelize in Asia or Bithynia (Acts 16:7), and the resulting call to Macedonia on the western Aegean. In the third journey, Paul plants the church in Ephesus in the province of Asia where he had previously been forbidden to work by the Spirit (Acts 19:1). Even when Paul is interacting with a church he helped to start, his hope is to see his team's area of influence enlarged "so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you" (2 Cor 10:15–16).

6. The World Assemblies of God Fellowship with its millions of believers and hundreds of thousands of local churches finds itself in a world where nearly 40% of the people have very limited access to the saving message of Jesus Christ. These are people who have no near neighbor who can share the story of Jesus, no culturally relevant church they can visit, in many cases not a single verse of Scripture in their language, and no Christian media. Over a billion people live in societies with one or less than one Christian per thousand people. Christian demographers say that among the Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim blocs 86% of the people do not know a single Christian. Missions researchers explain that less than 3% of all personnel and finance flow into places where people have limited or no access to the gospel. While there are people among every nation-state, tribe,

³Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984), 8–9.

⁴Alan R. Johnson, "The Apostolic Priority: Why Long-Term, Culture- and Language-Competent Workers doing Church Planting Among the Unreached is Still Our Highest Missions Priority," *International Journal of Pentecostal Missiology* 7:1 (2020): 101–102.

and tongue who are eternally lost, cross-cultural missions efforts need to follow Paul's example of planting the Church where Jesus is not known or named.

Best Practices

1. WAGF sending structures must prioritize creating access to the gospel among every people and to every person by planting local and national churches.
2. To accomplish this complex task requires the sending of career long-term workers to incarnate the gospel establishing local and national churches.
3. Prayer and the allocation of human and economic resources should prioritize creating access among those without access to the gospel.

number

6

Holy Spirit and Missions

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The fulfillment of missions is only accomplished through the agency of the Holy Spirit. As the missionary people of God surrender the direction and empowerment of the Spirit, the gospel is communicated to the world creating the possibility of humans being reconciled to God and to each other.

Introduction

After the resurrection before Jesus ascended to heaven, He entrusted His disciples with the task of making disciples of all nations. However, the task was too great to be accomplished on their own. Jesus directed them to wait until they were endowed with power. With the Pentecost event and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit-filled disciples were empowered to fulfill the promise: “You will be my witness . . .” (Acts 1:8).

Justification

To fulfill the missionary mandate, God’s people must depend on the Holy Spirit in all aspects of the missionary enterprise.

General Observations

1. Core affirmations of a Spirit-driven missiology:

- A.** The Lord fulfills mission through His Church by the direction and power of the Holy Spirit.
- B.** All members of the Church carry the responsibility for the apostolic mandate to reach all peoples with the good news of the kingdom.
- C.** Church leadership create environments that guide people in contextually appropriate ways to encounter the Holy Spirit that are held to the standard of the Word in order to empower them for holiness and service that gives credibility to their witness to Christ.
- D.** Effective missional praxis requires the Church to paradoxically exert great effort while relying fully on the power of the Spirit.
- E.** Reliance on the Spirit requires a commitment to prayer and waiting in His presence to seek His guidance and power both individually and corporately.

The fulfillment of missions is only accomplished through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit empowers God's missionary people to give witness to the nations of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the redemptive power of the gospel through lives lived in community, in holiness, and in service.

2. **The Indigenous Church Principles Revisited:** An indigenous church is a community of sinners saved by grace and birthed in a specific context who are Spirit-driven (Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered) to accomplish God's purposes for and through that community. Like the various churches described in the New Testament, particularly in Acts, these local and national communities of faith are to be Spirit-governed, Spirit-supported, and Spirit-propagated.
 - A. Spirit-governed—God, by His Spirit, calls and equips local leaders to disciple and mobilize believers in the faith and guides them in discerning and fulfilling the will of God for their community.
 - B. Spirit-supported—As a responsible community, the indigenous church turns to the unlimited resources of the Spirit for its sustenance so as not to depend on the missionary, institutions, ministries, or agencies.
 - C. Spirit-propagated—As a community of faith, indigenous church members are impassioned and empowered by the Spirit to reach their neighbors, their nation, and their world with the gospel.
3. The baptism of the Holy Spirit empowers God's missionary people to give witness to the nations of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the redemptive power of the gospel through lives lived in community, in holiness, and in service.

Best Practices

1. Saturate every decision and action in prayer guided by the Holy Spirit aligned with Scripture and the biblical principles of the indigenous church.
2. Develop the discipline of prayer for the nations in sending church.
3. In selection of missionary candidates, evaluate their prayer life and history of dependence on the Spirit for direction and fruitfulness.
4. In the training of missionaries, all aspects of the training process should be saturated in prayer, modeling for the candidates Spirit dependence. Training content should emphasize the importance of prayer and Spirit dependency in missionary endeavors and all aspects of life.
5. Intentional times should be set aside by the missions agency and training structures to wait upon the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
6. Frequently communicate progress and plans to likeminded, Spirit-driven agencies and leader (e.g. WAGF, PWF) for evaluation and encouragement in order to have confirmation of direction and activities in missions.



number

7

Balance in Missiology

Integrating Evangelism, Discipleship, Church Planting, and Compassion

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Many missionaries and missions organizations work on specific dimensions of missions in a compartmentalized fashion. However, in Scripture the work of evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and compassion, these dimensions are integrated holistically in the fulfillment of missions.

Justification

The Pentecostal focus on the establishment and development of not only indigenous local churches but fully indigenous national church movements guides the AG to an integrated and holistic approach to missionary practice.

General Observations

1. Pentecostal missionaries place a priority on the Spirit-driven, biblically directed work of evangelism, discipling converts, planting churches, and showing compassion to the hurting and marginalized. Global workers endeavor to transmit these biblical functions as the founding DNA in the establishing of indigenous churches and indigenous national church movements.
2. Passing on that spiritual DNA to nurture fully indigenous churches and church movements requires that cross-cultural workers incorporate all four of these biblical activities during the planting and establishing of churches to move these movements toward maturity to ensure that they are fully capable of thinking theologically and prophetically in their social contexts.
3. In order to pass on biblical DNA to the new church, missionaries must teach as well as disciple the believers to help them discern the needs in their context, hear God's voice, develop models of ministry, and equip members to do the work of the ministry.
4. Everything cross-cultural workers do must be done with a view to building the kind of church that takes ownership of the care of the poor and vulnerable and at the same time not hinder their development along indigenous lines of self-governance, finance, evangelism,

Global workers should respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit and be intentional in the integration of evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and compassion in all missionary activities.

theological development, social concern, and sending their own missionaries.

5. These new church movements in turn were to participate in the mission of God as the new community of righteousness and thus become the vehicle that the Lord uses to accomplish His redemptive purpose.

Best Practices

1. Global workers should respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit and be intentional in the integration of evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and compassion in all missionary activities.
2. All churches should be planted and established contextually in alignment with indigenous church principles integrating the dimensions of evangelism, discipleship, church planting and compassion.
3. All compassion ministries should be able to establish a direct link to the other three dimensions of evangelism, discipleship, and church planting.

number

8

Ecclesiology and the Importance of Planting the Church

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A weak theology of the Church will produce a weak sense of mission.

The Church, as God’s missionary people, plants local communities of faith to fulfill the missionary mandate. Therefore, the study of missions becomes the study of the Church. A weak theology of the Church will produce a weak sense of mission.

Justification

What is the Church? What is the mission of the Church? The Church is not in itself the source of missions. One must go farther back. The Church is the result of God’s redemptive purpose and plan. The Church is the object of Christ’s love. The Church is the body of Christ through which the eternal purpose is carried out. The Church is of Christ and Christ is of God (1 Cor. 3:23). The study of missions then becomes the study of the Church. A weak theology of the Church will produce a weak sense of mission.¹

General Observations

1. Missions takes people back to the heart of God. When they go back to the source of sending of God’s people into the world, they come to the heart of the plan and purpose of the living God. God’s redemptive plan centers on human beings and His redeemed followers always live as a new community under His rule.
2. One sees in the book of Acts that the early church interpreted the commission of Jesus to make disciples of the nations and proclaim the good news in all the world as meaning not just the evangelism of individuals but the formation of local communities of faith. It is local churches that bear witness to their societies.
3. The local church is at the front line of global missions for two reasons. First, local churches are the seedbed for the development of the cross-cultural missionaries that will take the gospel to new peoples and places. Second, when global workers go out, they plant new local churches who will bear witness to their society and produce new cross-cultural workers for the world.

¹ Melvin Hodges, *A Theology of the Church and Its Mission: A Pentecostal Perspective*, (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1977), 10.

Local churches should be a seedbed for the development of the cross-cultural missionaries and a center for missions mobilization and missionary formation.

4. These congregations and national organizations are to be patterned after the New Testament church — Spirit-supported, Spirit-governed and Spirit-propagated. This means that it is the Spirit that provides for the needs of the Church, the Spirit that directs and leads the congregation, the Spirit that enables their apostolic witness to the world. The New Testament indicates that churches that are contextually organized preserve the fruit of Spirit revival; the goal should be to have the dynamics of Spirit power and a Spirit directed organization.
5. Pentecostal missiology recognizes that the missionary mandate cannot be fulfilled unless the entire Church community (the priesthood of all believers) both local and global is empowered and directed by the Spirit. Therefore, the most important competency for ministry and missions is to be able to discern the voice of the Spirit and in obedience yield to Spirit empowerment both supernaturally in miracles, signs, and wonders and naturally through the gifts and fruit of the Spirit in the lives of God's missionary people.

Best Practices

1. Missions agencies and global workers must prioritize the planting and establishing of local churches patterned after the New Testament that result in the formation of indigenous national movements.
2. Local churches should be a seedbed for the development of the cross-cultural missionaries and a center for missions mobilization and missionary formation.
3. Missions agencies and training programs should develop global workers able to discern the voice of the Spirit and in obedience yield to Spirit empowerment.



number **9**

Ministry Sensitive to the Context

Balance and Avoiding Extremes

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When cross-cultural workers take their “version” of faith into another culture, they may find that some of their practices actually hinder people from being able to respond to the message.

All churches and church movements are embedded in culture. Believers’ versions or modes of faith, the way they live out following Jesus as Lord, are of necessity combinations of both the Bible and their local culture.

Justification

The mandate to take the gospel to all the peoples means that followers of Jesus in one sociocultural context must cross into a new cultural setting to root the gospel in that context. The missiological discipline that addresses the gospel crossing into new cultural settings is often referred to as contextualization.

General Observations

1. While in one’s own social sphere, his/her version of faith may be very effective at seeing people come to faith in Jesus. When cross-cultural workers take their “version” of faith into another culture, they may find that some of their practices actually hinder people from being able to respond to the message. When versions of faith are exported into a new cultural setting, the receiving people often feel that it is foreign.
2. To contextualize, cross cultural workers should seek to do ministry that is sensitive to the local context. This is a communal process where one works with local people, both non-Christians and Christians, to find appropriate local forms to express biblically mandated functions.
3. Ministry that is sensitive to context involves an incarnational dimension, which is the missionary’s identification with the local culture; an ecclesial dimension, in which the community of faith fleshes out what it means to be under the Lordship of Christ in that context, and finally a theological dimension in which leadership of the community of faith articulates theological tenets relevant to their own issues.
4. A helpful process for working on contextual issues is suggested by Paul Hiebert. 1) Begin by deeply understanding the cultural issue

Contextualization is a complicated task for an indigenous community of faith requiring biblical skills and spiritual discernment as cultures are dynamic, constantly changing.

in question. 2) Exegete Scripture and build a bridge to see how the truth of the gospel applies to the local issue. 3) Develop a critical response to the issue by evaluating local customs in light of new biblical understandings. 4) Develop new contextualized practices that express biblical teaching.¹

5. Ministry sensitive to context encourages the formation of a Jesus-based identity for new believers rather than retaining their previous religious identity. “Insider movements,” that began with people working with Muslims, advocate that “Jesus followers” should continue to identify with their “birth” religion (e.g. a Muslim follower of Jesus, a Buddhist follower of Jesus, a Hindu follower of Jesus). However, a Buddhist cannot continue to identify as a Buddhist when entering their new life under the rulership of Christ. The gospel prophetically challenges religious rituals and practices and elements of local culture that are not in alignment with the truth of revelation.
6. Contextualization is a complicated task for an indigenous community of faith requiring biblical skills and spiritual discernment as cultures are dynamic, constantly changing. Use of local rituals and cultural patterns facilitate the communication of the gospel and the formation of local communities of faith but done without a critical view results in syncretism that distorts the truth of the gospel.

Best Practices

1. Missions agencies and missionary training structures need to equip global workers with capacity to exegete Scripture and local culture in community in order to minister and develop local and national churches in cultural appropriate ways.
2. In order to avoid the extremes of “Insider movements,” new believers should be empowered to communally discern culturally appropriate expressions of their identity in Christ under the direction of the Spirit.
3. Indigenous churches should engage with the global church and church history as a safeguard in avoiding syncretism.

¹Paul Hiebert, “Critical Contextualization,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (July 1987): 104–12.



SECTION 3

CHALLENGES/THREATS TO
GLOBAL MISSIONS

number

10

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The Threat of Universalism and the Uniqueness of Christ, the Savior of the World

The threat of universalism denies the uniqueness of Christ, the authority of the Bible, the need for conversion, and global missions.

Justification

If cultural expediency leads to the rejection of the uniqueness of Christ and the authority of the Bible, the Church has lost its core identity and its reason for being. The Scriptures reveal that through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, humans who are alienated from God and each other because of sin, can be reconciled to God and each other on the condition of repentance, conversion, surrender to the Lordship of Christ, and participation in God's mission in the world.

General Observations

1. Overview

- A.** The Bible presents a grand story of the living God who creates humanity in His image for the purpose of living in intimate relationship with Him and multiplying the human family to worship and serve Him. When humans attempted to usurp God's role and become like God, this relationship was broken. The first and primary condition of spiritual lostness is a broken relationship with God caused by the idolatry of making oneself god which leads to deliberate disobedience to God's commands. This rebellion and disobedience shattered the harmony between God and humans, between man and woman, and between humans and God's good creation.
- B.** The Bible's view of humanity as lost and separated from God and in need of salvation and deliverance from judgment is at the heart of God's redemptive project and the fundamental standpoint for understanding the whole of Scripture.
- C.** The story of the Bible and the apostolic message is about how reconciliation with God can happen and how humans can know God personally and have access to the living God. The good news of what God has done in Jesus Christ to redeem humanity, forgive their sins, abolish death, and bring light and immortality

If cultural expediency leads to the rejection of the uniqueness of Christ and the authority of the Bible, the Church has lost its core identity and its reason for being.

The Bible not only speaks to the human condition, it also resonates with the experience of millions of people who have met the living God through Jesus Christ and found a changed life.

to them (2 Tim. 1:10) is the message that God's people proclaim to a broken world in word and deed.

- D.** There are many voices today both in the Christian and secular worlds that see the Bible as a human document with little or no authority, that find the idea of God's judgement repulsive, and see no need for salvation in Jesus. In their view, all religions are equally salvific, there is nothing to be saved from or converted to, and the ultimate goal is not for God to be known and glorified among the nations but for all humans to get along with each other.
 - E.** The following points briefly explain why the Church remains committed to the authority of the Bible, a biblical view of the living God, and the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the peoples, nations, tribes and tongues on the earth.
- 2. Why is the Bible important?**
- A.** Religions and philosophies create accounts to explain fundamental questions as to the nature of the world, the essential nature of humanity, what has gone wrong with humanity, and the solution to that problem. It is popular to say that all religions lead to the same place; the problem is that the accounts of the various religions have radically different solutions and ends. The account of the Old and New Testaments resonates with the experiences of all that is known about humanity.
 - B.** The Bible offers a solution to the human dilemma that can deliver and transform people, give purpose in life, conquer death, and bring them a future in God's presence forever.
 - C.** The Bible not only speaks to the human condition, it also resonates with the experience of millions of people who have met the living God through Jesus Christ and found a changed life. The testimony of eyewitnesses in the Bible to Jesus Christ raised from the dead who is Lord of all continues to be confirmed in the Christian experience as He is proclaimed among the nations.
- 3. If God is a God of love, how can He send a person to hell?**
- A.** The idea of God's wrath and anger makes some people very uncomfortable; they see it as incompatible with the Bible's emphasis on His love. Three things will help one to understand that God's love and His wrath and judgment of sin are not at odds with each other.
 - B.** First, God's love means that He loves humans so much that He will not force them into His presence. The Bible's picture of humanity without God is clear that humans love darkness more than the light and do not come into the light lest their wicked

deeds be exposed (John 3:19–20) and that they refuse to love the truth and take pleasure in unrighteousness (11 Thess. 2:10–12). When Paul says people are by nature children of wrath (Eph. 2:3; Col. 3:6), it is because, as one writer expresses it, they would not want to be in heaven as He is, and as they are.

- C. The Bible affirms that the living God will judge every human with truth and justice; no one will be treated unfairly and in the end, he/she will get what he/she has sought and desired.
 - D. Finally, God's wrath is inseparable from His love. God's merciful and gracious love that humanity experience as they enter into a covenant relationship with Him through Jesus, is, as C. S. Lewis reminds us, "something more than mere kindness."¹ God's love for human's as revealed in the Bible is what Lewis calls "an awful and surprising truth."² God loves people too much and too intensely to simply leave them in their broken state, but He also loves them too much to force them into His presence when they spurn His love. There is a very real sense in which God does not send people to hell, but they choose it.
4. Why do we proclaim Jesus as the only way and the necessity of conversion?
- A. Romans 1:18–32 indicates that humans suppress the truth that can be known about God from general revelation. All humans have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23) and are accountable to God (Rom. 3:19). Humans are incapable of saving themselves.
 - B. In Acts 4:12, Peter declares that God has provided an answer for the human dilemma in Jesus Christ. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to human-kind by which we must be saved."
 - C. Salvation is the free gift of God. Conversion requires that humans repent (turn away) of their sin, surrendering their self-sovereignty to Him, live in a way that honors God, and serve Christ as the rightful king of their lives and head of the community of faith, the Church.
 - D. In response to the questions, "Why not just make the world a better place?" Conversionary evangelism declares that good intentions do not resolve the issue of sin, only repentance and belief in and surrender to Christ resolves the human dilemma of sin.

¹ C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, (New York, NY: MacMillan Publishing, 1977), 41.

² Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 46.

Missionaries and missions agencies should not surrender to the pressures of culture that affirm that all religious paths lead to salvation undermining the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation.

Best Practices

- 1.** Missionaries and missions agencies should not surrender to the pressures of culture that affirm that all religious paths lead to salvation undermining the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation.
- 2.** The Bible must be held as the standard of truth where God's redemptive agenda and the agenda of the mission of the Church is revealed.
- 3.** Salvation, provided in the work of Christ, requires each person to repent from sin and convert from self-rulership to the rule of Christ demonstrated by love for God and love for each other.
- 4.** The Church must reach out in love and truth to those who deviate from the truth of the gospel.

number

11

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The Challenges of Managerial Missiology and The New Apostolic Reformation

The dual theological threats of managerial missiology and the new apostolic reformation undermine a Spirit-driven missiology.

Justification

The rise of managerial missiology and the new apostolic movement undermines the need for Spirit-direction and Spirit-empowerment, grounding missionary philosophy and activities in human agency (i.e. relying on human resources rather than depending on the Spirit in missions).

General Observations

1. Managerial missiology

- A. The intent of missiologists identified as promoting a “managerial missiology” is to seek closure to the unfinished task of global evangelization. Seeking to reach the unreached through analysis and strategic deployment, they focus on human agency and strategies.
- B. If one follows the patterns of managerial missiology, missionary vision becomes limited to human ingenuity, efforts, and resources. Biblical missiology affirms that missionary vision and practice is limited only by the direction and empowerment of the Spirit. The God of the Bible is the God of the impossible. The fulfillment of the missionary mandate is the impossible made possible by God through the Church in the power of the Spirit.
- C. “Make no mistake, the missionary venture of the church, no matter how well planned, how finely administered and finely supported, would fail like every other vast human enterprise, were it not that where human instrumentality leaves off, a blessed ally takes over. It is the Holy Spirit that calls, it is the Holy Spirit that inspires, it is the Holy Spirit that reveals, and it is the Holy Spirit that administers . . . I have long since ceased to be interested in meetings where mission leaders are called together to a room filled with charts, maps, graphs and statistics. All one needs to do to find plenteous harvest is simply to follow the leading of the Spirit . . . The essential optimism of Christianity is that the Holy Spirit is a force capable of bursting into the hardest

The God of the Bible is
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paganism, discomfoting the most rigid dogmatism, electrifying the most suffocating organization and bringing the glory of Pentecost.”¹

- D.** Pentecostals rightly reject a managerial approach but affirm that data about the status of world evangelization, strategic planning, implementation, and organization are vital in the missionary enterprise if submitted to the guidance and empowerment of the Spirit and aligned with the principles of Scripture.

2. The New Apostolic Reformation

- A.** In order to evangelize the world, participants in the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) advocate for the establishment of a church leadership hierarchy, based on the “doctrine of five-fold ministries” identified in Ephesians 4:11, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.
- B.** While the majority of Pentecostals advocate for the function of these ministries to equip the people God for ministry, the claim of unique supernatural and ecclesial power for these offices undermines the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the need for all Christians to participate in God’s mission in the world.
- C.** Other tenets of the NAR include spiritual warfare and dominion theology where spiritual authority has been granted to “kingdom-minded people” to exercise dominion in the world and in the spirit realm (i.e. establish the kingdom of God on earth). Pentecostals affirm that with Jesus’ advent, the first fruits of the kingdom entered the present age empowering the Church to give witness to the world. However, the fullness of the kingdom will only occur when Jesus Christ returns. In the interim, the mission of the Church is not to establish the kingdom but proclaim in word and deed the gospel of the kingdom with signs following. To do otherwise is to usurp the authority of Christ.

Best Practices

- 1.** Missionary sending agencies and global workers need to be aware of the ways in which the theological perspectives and actions of managerial missiology and the NAR undermine a biblically based, Spirit-dependent missiology and practice.

¹ As quoted in Wilson, Everett A. *Strategy of the Spirit: J. Philip Hogan and the Growth of the Assemblies of God Worldwide 1960–1990*. (Carlisle, U.K.: Regnum Books International, 1997), 136–137.

2. Missionary vision and action should never be limited by a theology or philosophy of missions that limits the possibilities of what God can do through his missionary people.
3. Within missions structures, safeguards need to be established that place all levels of leadership in accountability to the Church. “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph. 5:21).

number

12

The Amateurization of Missions

The Challenge of Untrained and Short-term Workers

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In recent years local church members (amateurs) have increased their participation in on field missions work. When done with training and preparation, these experiences can mobilize the church to increased participation in mission. However, these often short-term experiences should not de-emphasize the critical importance of long-term incarnational ministry of career missionaries and the establishment of local and national churches.

Justification

Opportunities for lay persons from local churches to have missions involvement should not cause agencies to distract from the importance of prioritizing the sending of full time career workers and the preparation and training of everyone engage in missions.

General Observation

1. Circumstances today allow local churches to be involved in missions in a way that was not accessible in past decades. There has been rapid growth in missions involvement over the internet and social media and through short term trips. Local churches become involved in their own project in another country without sound missiology or missiological training and without input from those experienced in missions leadership. There exists a temptation to bypass training and preparation and send people direct to the field.
2. To have “amateurs” involved in missions can be a very positive thing as it mobilizes the church to missions and creates the possibility that additional members of the church can have a hands-on experience in missions. If done with training, “amateurs” will be increasingly mobilized to give, pray, and participate in multiple ways in missions. Amateur engagement in missions should not lead the church to undervalue career missions and training. An overemphasis on amateur missions may impede the production of an indigenous mature product on the receiving end.

Amateur engagement in missions should not lead the church to undervalue career missions and training.

3. Ironically, the churches who lack preparation and training for missions and short-term workers, often insist on preparation and training for their pastor and staff. To be consistent, both local leadership and participants in missions need to value and participate in training programs. When done with training and intentionality, the missionary involvement and participation of laity in missions will bless the missionary enterprise and will no longer be a threat to long-term missions results.

Best Practices

1. The church should affirm the involvement of lay persons in missions opportunities that lead to missions commitment through the local church (e.g. prayer, finances, service).
2. The church should not allow the involvement of lay persons to diminish their commitment to supporting long term career missionaries.
3. The church can use short term involvement to be a “pipeline” to identify those that might be called and encourage them towards further training and preparation.



number **13**

Eschatology

Restoring the Urgency of Bringing Back and Announcing the King

*Original prepared in July 2022, by
WAGF Best Practices Task Force Part 1*

In historical Pentecostalism, the urgency in fulfilling the Great Commission emerged from the conviction that Jesus was coming soon to rapture His Church.

Justification

Increasingly in evangelical and Pentecostal circles, eschatology is shifting from the urgency of the return of Christ, the King, to bringing about the kingdom of God on earth resulting in a de-emphasis on global evangelization.

General Observations

1. In recent years, modern Pentecostalism has had less of a focus on preaching, teaching, and emphasizing the second coming of Christ. Though some of the emphasis in decades past on the second coming of Christ might have been at times “faddish,” it was almost always tied to an urgency around the Great Commission. As the Church has de-emphasized the second coming of Christ, it results in less of a conviction of the importance of reaching the least reached.
2. An overemphasis on the details of the return of Christ (e.g. assigning dates, signs, apocalyptic interpretations) distracts from the biblical emphasis in Scripture on the responsibility of the Church to evangelize the world in the power of the Spirit until He comes.
3. Peter indicates that God is patient with the Church in the fulfillment of its mission because, from the human perspective, the day of the Lord and return of Christ, is “sped” by “holy and godly lives” that give witness to the gospel (2 Pet. 3:11–12).

Best Practices

1. Believers must preach with conviction on the second coming of Christ.
2. Followers of Christ must connect that conviction to the urgency of the Great Commission and respond with missions vision.

3. A church lacking missionary vision needs to consider the possibility that preaching on the second coming of Christ has been neglected.
4. One way to sow a missionary vision is to preach on the second coming of Christ and connect it intentionally to the responsibility of the Church to fulfill the Great Commission.



PART 2 BEST PRACTICES FOR THE FUNCTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF MISSIONS SENDING STRUCTURES/AGENCIES

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Challenges Faced by New Sending Structures

Every country and sending structure face challenges. However, the challenges that confront a new sender country from a country that historically has not done foreign missions, are frequently similar from context to context.

Justification

Every country and sending structure face challenges. However, the challenges that confront a new sender country from a country that historically has not done foreign missions, are frequently similar from context to context. In this introduction we, as the missions commission of the WAGF, will map out many of the challenges faced by new sender countries, in a variety of contexts. The best practices presented in part 2 of this series will attempt to engage these challenges and equip leaders to overcome them.

Challenges Frequently Faced by a National Church in a Variety of Contexts Include:

1. The lack of missions vision in the national church and its leadership.
2. The shortage of 'missional leaders' in the top-level national leadership.
3. The fundamental absence of missiology in ecclesiology.
4. The scarcity of trained national missions directors.
5. The absence of missions mobilization mechanisms.
6. The scenario of few sending churches vs majority of non-sending churches.
7. The lack of a coherent system of coordination of missionary vision and objectives.
8. The nonexistence of priority and non-allocation of missionary budgets in the national and/or local levels.
9. The scarcity of focused training for missionaries.
10. The shortage of cross-pollination and networking with older sending nations.
11. The perspective or paradigm of national leaders, churches, and people that missions leadership is an 'institutional position,' not a 'influential leadership' (the national church selects their missions leader to an organizational or institutional position not by his or her missions vision, experience, and influence).

In all sending structures efforts to overcome these challenges, they must be committed to spiritual warfare and intercessory prayer. The Holy Spirit can help accelerate the process. He is the Lord of the harvest, and His leading is essential.

12. A carnal not biblical paradigm of the concept of missions. (Example: The belief that the national church only receives rich Western missionaries, and they cannot send because of their poverty).
13. To ‘jump start’ a missions structure often requires a full-time leader in the national church but qualified leaders are busy pastors or serving in other areas of ministry.
14. The reality that some leaders do not want to admit that they are not up to the challenge of starting the missions structure, and therefore, do not make room for a person who can better confront these issues.
15. The problem that some national churches are passive and comfortable in not having an effective missions program. They willingly continue the ‘status quo’ of not stretching the church to do things they have not done before and send missionaries.
16. The challenge of getting to a “critical mass” in every new sending structure. A “critical mass” has between 30–50 sent workers. The national church needs to know that missions department is solid and “here to stay,” not something that will disappear (Example: if a country has three missionary couples and one of them leaves the field, that country has lost 33% of their missionary force).
17. The lack of missiological training and missionary formation among pastors and missionaries in Bible schools and training programs.
18. The absence of financial structures, stewardship, and accountability.
19. The confusion between domestic and foreign missions.
20. The equating of diaspora missions with cross-cultural missions.
21. The nonexistence of networking with other missions agencies within the Assemblies of God and beyond.

General Observations to Respond to These Challenges:

1. Most problems are a ‘leadership problem.’ Good and targeted leadership will be able to confront difficulties and overcome them.
2. Good mentorship and training can be key to help develop more effective leaders.
3. While funding is required for the fulfillment of missions, the issue is not a lack of money, but a lack of vision, commitment, and organization.
4. While organization overcomes many of these challenges, the bottom line is that missions is a spiritual enterprise overcome with spiritual weapons.

Best Practices for a National Missions Committee and Teams:

1. In all sending structures efforts to overcome these challenges, they must be committed to spiritual warfare and intercessory prayer. The

All nations, rich or poor,
must answer His call.

Holy Spirit can help accelerate the process. He is the Lord of the harvest, and His leading is essential.

2. Critical to the process is an organizational structure that empowers the sent missionaries and the senders. Good organization structures are key.
3. Essential to the development of the sending structure is interaction and networking with other sending structures
4. Training programs for missionary leaders and missionaries are vital.
5. The sending structures should always engage and develop the next generation of missionaries, pastors, and laity.

Conclusion

When Jesus said, “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). He meant all His people. All nations, rich or poor, must answer His call. This document presents best missions practices that will help national churches overcome the challenges mentioned in this introduction and develop a vibrant sending structure.

number

1

Incorporating Missions Vision in the National Leadership and Church

Original prepared in June 2022, by
WAGF Best Practices Task Force Part 2

It is important that both the national leadership and the local churches have a missionary vision.

Justification

To participate in God's global mission, a global missionary vision is required in both national leadership and local churches. A lack of missions vision impedes the sending of missionaries through the sending structure and their national church. This section will look at general principles, observations, and best practices for missionary vision.

General Principals and Observations

1. Though one can find unique cases where the missions sending structure has grown in spite of a lack of vision, generally at least a few members of the executive team of a general council must share the vision to send missionaries.
2. Many times, believers have an 'incorrect non-biblical' paradigm instead of a 'correct biblical' one in key aspects of missions. Examples of this include:
 - A. Considering planting churches in one's own country as the only mission field and thereby not considering sending workers to other countries or regions.
 - B. A confusion between domestic evangelism and cross-cultural and global missions.
 - C. Thinking that they do not have available resources to send out missionaries.
 - D. Affirming that missions only occurs when done by historical sending churches with resources.
3. 'Non-biblical' global missions paradigms must be replaced with biblical ones.

A lack of missions vision impedes the sending of missionaries through the sending structure and their national church.

Best Practices to have a Missionary Vision in the General Council Leadership

1. Have missions be a focus in a retreat or planning session of the leadership.

Missions is not just a department but the reason for being for the entire national church and its dependencies.

2. Encourage the leaders to take a cross-cultural missions trip together.
3. Establish a regular monthly missionary offering in every church.
4. Provide missions motivation to all different age groups.
5. Include global missions in the curriculum and lesson plans of the materials for all ages.
6. Utilize every platform the church can provide to promote and teach missionary vision.
7. Seek to develop a missions focus in every national department (youth, Sunday school, men's, women's, music, etc.).
8. Urge all national meetings to include prayer for the nations and missionaries as part of the agenda for the meeting.
9. In all national gatherings, include a missions window, spotlight, or focus of some kind.
10. In the national General Council or conference, include one service with a global missions emphasis led by the missions agency leadership.
11. Require missionary training in all the ministerial training programs.
12. Provide missionary orientation and training to the national leadership periodically.
13. Encourage participation in WAGF missions congresses and activities.
14. Communicate that missions is not just a department but the reason for being for the entire national church and its dependencies. It has a purpose that distinguishes it from the other departments.
15. The national church should consider giving a tithe or regular offering (percentage) from the national income to the missionary sending structure to help support and develop their infrastructure and missionary endeavors.
16. Consider that at least one of the positions in the missions sending structure is full-time and long-term.



number **2**

The Importance of Training Missionary Candidates

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It is not just sending someone; it is sending someone who is called, prepared, and trained.

Introduction

The biblical model demonstrates that missionaries require training. To send missionaries long-term, it is vitally important to make plans to prepare new workers for intercultural outreaches. Training must precede sending. Methods of church planting in intercultural context should be taught. It is important to have Spirit-led, Spirit empowered evangelists to then become candidate missionaries who will be able to serve in a holistic way. As well, if a country has no history of sending, these challenges are intensified because of a lack of experience among the potential trainers.

Justification

Why must missionaries be trained? Missionaries in the biblical text were trained, providing a challenge and model for contemporary missions. Jesus developed His disciples over three years. The Holy Spirit trained Paul and then he mentored and trained other missionaries. As one example, God helped to launch a training center in one country six years before they had a viable sending agency to send their missionaries. The pioneers of the mission vision prepared workers in faith that God would birth a sending agency. They believed that God would not only call but provide the means to send. These trained and called workers then shared with their local pastors and leaders the CALL God had placed on their lives, which in turn compelled something to be done to enable SENDING. Having workers already called and ready to go accelerated the entire process of finding a means to effectively send.

Jesus developed His disciples over three years. The Holy Spirit trained Paul and then he mentored and trained other missionaries.

Philosophical Foundation and Observations

Balance between the academic and practical is important. A certain amount of people trained at an academic level helps. They can guarantee that stagnation and isolation will be avoided by providing a bigger picture. Workers in missions, however, can benefit by learning practical skills and studying applied models from more experienced peers.

Jesus in His training combined theory and practice. Mark 3:14–15 describes that in this way: “He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him, and he might send them out to preach and have authority to drive out demons.” To be with Him and to send them. To be trained not only in theory but by observing how He lived and worked. That enabled the disciples to be sent to do the same. This Pentecostal principle has also produced fruit in modern times at Azusa street and elsewhere.

A well-trained missionary is equipped in, 1) BEING, 2) KNOWING, and 3) DOING. He or she has enough adequate knowledge in spiritual and practical things. He or she has been trained for DOING and his or her priority, as much as possible, must be with the Lord, listening to Him and learning from Him.

Best Practice Recommendations and Suggestions

Many challenges have to be answered. People called to be missionaries come from very diverse education and ministerial backgrounds. In some countries they have full Bible school training and in others they have very little. This requires that missions training programs need to adapt to each context.

1. Challenge #1. What does the missionary need to learn?
 - A. We would like to suggest multiple options according to the developmental level of a country to send missionaries. A basic curriculum with levels of importance for the new candidate missionary includes:
 - (1) Spiritual formation—A course on developing a missionary’s spiritual walk with the Lord and fostering competency in the spiritual disciplines.
 - (2) An introduction to missions including (these can be divided into more courses):
 - Theology of Missions in both the Old and New Testaments.
 - A History of Missions—A course focusing on methodology missionaries have developed.
 - The “three-self” missiology of indigenous church planting
 - (3) Cross-cultural contextualization—A course on the importance of identification with local culture/language.
 - (4) Specific studies in the primary religion of the people group of the missionary’s calling.
 - (5) English language—Many international teams use English as a common language for local meetings. Having learned English may also help the missionary to learn the local language.

Training is vital to a missionary's success on the field, particularly with base knowledge of faith and of intercultural adaptation and needs.

- (6) Discipleship—Mentoring courses.
- (7) Biblical studies—Courses in the following areas.

- The Gospels
- Acts
- Introduction to Old and New Testaments
- Biblical Doctrines from a Pentecostal perspective
- Pneumatology

- (8) Missions Mobilization—Missionaries need to be able to inspire and equip local churches to participate in global missions, including both members and leadership.

- (9) Please look at appendices I and II for further suggestions for proven missionary training programs.

2. Challenge #2. How much time required?

If possible, a minimum of one year of basic training is ideal, followed by an internship with a veteran missionary (for as much as one year).

3. Challenge #3. How to begin?

The important thing is **TO BEGIN!** If a country has a local Bible school, ask to include this specialty in the basic program, highlighting the priority courses or offering special courses in seminar formats. If there is no school at present, seek to begin a class site, using a local church as the host, with a visiting professor(s)—preferably veteran missionaries. Where possible, expose the students to a variety of teachers, including diverse cultures. In a block course (i.e. one solid week format) it is possible to have visiting professors come to teach. Be creative with the format and site. Training is vital to a missionary's success on the field, particularly with base knowledge of faith and of intercultural adaptation and needs. However, the first step is **TO BEGIN TO TRAIN INTERCULTURAL WORKERS!!!**

4. Challenge 4#. What model to use?

One size does not fit all. There needs to be openness for different ways of the modern missionary work. Every worker needs a clear understanding of the spiritual and practical basics as well as tools for life-long learning. Besides church planting, the foundation for the sustainable mission work, different aspects can include subjects such as children's ministry, discipleship, and Bible education, even holistic ministry can be added. Other special ministries like Bible translation, missionary aviation, etc. belong to the big picture of the various ministries in missions. Business as mission (BAM) or as transformation (BAT) are also effective ways of fulfilling the Great Commission in many contexts. The tentmaking idea used by Paul can likewise be practiced today by global professionals (GP). Short-term

Every member of the church needs to be mobilized to participate in missions through their local church. Every church leader, including pastors, need training to shape or re-shape their ministerial habits to include missions mobilization in their local church.

Both missionary mentors and missionary teachers need to continue in life-long learning.

ministry has grown much during the last decades. Training of short-term missionaries also needs special attention.

The above-mentioned ways of doing missions today also needs attention in forming training programs. All different type of workers in missions needs the same kind of spiritual equipment although the practical ways of DOING vary (integrating even the GPs into the strategic goals of missions is both challenging and important). Keeping all of the different kinds of workers together in the same vision and goal setting requires a well-coordinated training program with sufficient flexibility.

5. Challenge 5#. How to train the senders?

Not only those who go need training, the senders must be trained as well. Every member of the church needs to be mobilized to participate in missions through their local church. Every church leader, including pastors, need training to shape or re-shape their ministerial habits to include missions mobilization in their local church. They need to know the status of the world evangelization. The Simply Mobilizing Organization (www.simplymobilizing.com) offers practical tools (Kairos courses etc.) for learning the basic global facts from the mission perspective. Future pastors need to be trained in their ministerial training programs to have a global missionary vision and engagement.

6. Challenge 6#. How to train the trainers?

Both missionary mentors and missionary teachers need to continue in life-long learning and will also benefit from seminars focusing on the status of world evangelism.

7. Challenge 7#. Where to train?

A good cooperation between the training institutes, local churches, and mission department/organization is pivotal. Sometimes training can take place in existing theological institutions as an integrated part of the programs, at other times it will be necessary to separate training into a specialized mission school. In some places, regional training might be feasible. Missions sending structure should take advantage of all available resources that could include online and regional courses or WAGF sponsored congresses and events.

APPENDIX I

The Model of the Romanian APME Missionary Training Institute

FIRST YEAR COURSES	SECOND YEAR COURSES
Student Orientation	SIIR 1 Introduction to Islam
Spiritual Discipline	SIIR 2 Popular Islam (Folk Islam, Women in Islam)
Introduction to the New Testament	SIIR 3 Ministry in an Islamic Context
Introduction to Islam	SIIR 4 Spiritual Health when Ministering in a Restrictive Zone
Theology of Missions	SIIR 5 Discipleship in an Islamic Context
History of Mission	SIIR 6 Islamic Theology
Apologetics	Transcultural Communication
Spiritual Warfare	Church Planting
Children's Ministry	Apologetics
Viziunea Personală a Liderului	Spiritual Warfare
Methods of Bible Study Hermeneutics	Personal Vision of a Leader
Homiletics (Expository Preaching)	Contextualization
Acts of the Apostles (from a Missiological Perspective)	World Religions
Learning a Foreign Language	Leadership and Working as a Team
Introduction to the Old Testament	World Religions
Pneumatology	Internship on the Field for two months
Short Term Missions Trip	Old Wine in New Wineskins
The History of Christianity	Evangelism in Missions
Missionary Orientation	Finalizing Diploma Works
Discipleship	Remaining Work, Themes, Project, etc.
Holistic Vision	Sustaining the Diploma Work
Kingdom of God	Signs and Wonders
Missionary Character	Pedagogy
The Gospels	Christian Ethics
Evangelism in Missions	Youth
Bi-vocationalism	Anthropology
Family Life	

APPENDIX II

An Optional Model Curriculum for Missionary Training (Finland)

<p>FOUNDATIONAL MISSIOLOGY</p>	<p>Missiology including Missio Dei History of Missions World Religions Hermeneutics for mission contexts Kairos course (for overview and motivation for missions) Missiological hermeneutics on particular Bible books: Johan, Acts, and others</p>
<p>APPLIED MISSIOLOGY</p>	<p>Cultural Anthropology, including worldviews Evangelism Mission Strategies and Methods, including Church Planting Linguistics Personal and family life of missionaries Cross-cultural communications Prayer life and spiritual warfare Leading/pastoring in foreign contexts</p>
<p>PRACTICAL COURSES</p>	<p>Kairos course (with its emphasis on UPG) Team building Rehabilitation Ministry Foreign language courses Courses in combination with development studies: agriculture, construction, human rights, gender issues, empowerment, political justice, etc. Media and communication techniques Support-building and fund-raising Church planting First aid and medical intro</p>
<p>SPECIALIZED COURSES</p>	<p>Islam Hinduism Other religions Ministry to children and youth Regional specialization: (e.g. Pacific Islanders, urban ministries, tribal ministries, etc). Mission among cults and sects Bible translation Outreach to handicapped people Practical courses in electrics, plumbing, etc. Humanitarian aid Preparatory courses for tentmakers and Business as Mission Internet, Social Media Radio and tv</p>

(Arto Hämäläinen: "Teaching Missions at Colleges", *A Manual For Starting and Developing Bible Schools*, ed. Ulf Strohhahn, Helsinki: Fida International, 2020.)



number **3**

Building Global Missions Mobilization Structures

Original prepared in June 2022, by
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If a missions structure does not properly mobilize, it will not advance and grow.

If a missions structure does not properly mobilize, it will not advance and grow.

Without proper structures and processes, one leaves success to chance and the mere hope that a worker deployed to the field is ready for the challenges of living and ministering overseas.

Introduction

Taking new global workers from calling to deployment is the process called mobilization. The steps involved have vital importance for effective missions service as well as to ensure that those called do not refrain from going to the field because of the lack of an adequate process. If a missions structure does not properly mobilize, it will not advance and grow.

Justification

Without proper structures and processes, one leaves success to chance and the mere hope that a worker deployed to the field is ready for the challenges of living and ministering overseas. If one considers the mobilization of an army, certain components in the process are critical to success on the battlefield.

Philosophical foundation and observations.

There are four steps in the deployment of an army and, for our purposes, an army of global workers.

The first process in mobilization is **recruitment**. A good army looks for the strongest, brightest, and most courageous fighters. We are looking for the called—those who have sensed that the Lord has spoken to them about service in a cross-cultural setting. Recruitment finds those who God called and connects them with the sending structure who help to provide opportunities where they feel God has asked them to go. Additionally, recruitment sponsors or is present at events that challenge people to commit their hearts to the call of the Lord for global service.

The second process in mobilization is **vetting**. Just because people say they have a call on their life does not mean they are ready to go. A good vetting process can weed out some people with impure motives, some who may not be ready despite a strong call, and some going through challenges that may make missions service unsuitable at the time of their calling. The vetting process should consider the following: application (general information), references, interviews, ministerial experience,

The process of deploying global workers to the field takes thought and work with the receiving end of the mission to achieve success.

physical fitness, education, language-learning ability, doctrinal stances, mental health, financial history, and any other information that can help a sending agency deem when and if a candidate is fit for the field.

The third process in mobilization is **training**. Pre-deployment training is vital to prepare global workers for service on the front lines of the Great Commission. Going back to the earlier illustration of an army being deployed, before soldiers go to the battlefield, they go through rigorous training. The army does not just hand a weapon to the person and tell him or her to go. Pre-field training for a global worker can contain but not limited to these areas: cross-cultural communications, studies in world religions, setting proper expectations, funding, managing internal and external conflict, personal security, spiritual warfare, creating healthy family rhythms, mission goals and values, and any other training a sending agency feels is essential to the mission.

The last key area in the process of mobilization is **launching** or **deploying** to the field. A global worker cannot just get on a plane and depart without people on the receiving end being ready for his or her arrival. When new army units arrive on the field, they are generally expected. The commanders on the ground are ready for their arrival and prepared to help them become effective on the battlefield. The process of deploying global workers to the field takes thought and work with the receiving end of the mission to achieve success. Before they can deploy, several clearances must happen: 1) financial—do they have enough funds or commitments, so they do not become a burden for the host country? 2) visa—do they have a legal way of living in the country in which they work? and 3) arrival—are global workers and the national church (where it exists) ready to receive them, have their arrival dates, and prepared a place to stay?

Best Practice Recommendations and Suggestions:

Four areas of best practices can help the recruiting, vetting, training, and launching processes.

- A. Make someone responsible for each area (or all four areas if the mission's sending structure is small).

Unless it is someone's job, then it is no one's job. Be sure to clearly state who is in charge of each of the above areas. Often God calls people to work in these areas. Finding someone who has passion about mobilization can be a tremendous gift to the country's organization. If the mission's sending structure is small and the deployed number of missionaries limited, then assign one person to oversee all four areas.

- B. As a leadership team, think through each step and determine which ones to take to achieve maximum results.

Having regular meetings with both the sending and receiving leadership will let the mobilization department evolve and improve over time. Determine where the workers come from, what information helps in the vetting process, what training pieces have importance for the worker to learn, and what experiences people have had after arriving to the field. Taking time regularly to iron out strategies of mobilization will lead to greater retention and success of workers on the field.

C. Collaborate with other like-minded sending organizations.

Ask other like-minded organizations for input and resources—even human resources. Another organization could have a trainer to lend a new department. Another organization might be able to help as first workers arrive and get settled in a country, navigating the complexities of finding a house, opening a bank account, registering with government authorities, finding a language school, and other launching issues. Do not do it alone; get help. Do not try to reinvent something that already exists; just make it unique to each missionary sending structure.

D. Be committed to long-term retention and development of workers.

Global workers should be upgrading their skill set constantly. Workers launch for the first time but also relaunch during home visits and fundraising times. We see this in the Book of Acts. The apostle Paul considered the Antioch church his home base and would launch and relaunch from there several times during his years of missionary ministry in the ancient world. As the missionary sending structure, make the missionaries' visits back to their sending country a time of refreshment, training, and resending. Workers can get isolated in their place of ministry and not be aware of current tools, trends, and tactics to reach the lost. A periodic time home develops more knowledge in a global worker, and well-planned development shows that the overall organization cares about its missions and workers.

Mobilization includes equipping local church members and leaders to participate in the sending of the missionaries and the continued support of missionaries on the field. The focus of local church mobilization is highlighted and developed in Part 2 number 10.



number **4**

Creating Resources that Promote Missions

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There is not a shortage of resources to respond to the Great Commission.

Great resources ignite a passion for the Great Commission. If someone engages with great missions resources, they grow in praying, giving, going, and sending, and also become better advocates to others.

There is not a shortage of resources to respond to the Great Commission.

Introduction:

Humanity lives in the information age. Today when people become interested in something, they search online for information. In this modern era, attractive, informed, inspirational, and well-organized resources lead people interested in missions to invest their prayer, finances, and time to participate in God's mission.

Justification:

Information and easy access to it is everything today. Creating resources people want to use enhances every aspect of the mission. In the past, we have talked about the big three — pray, give, and go; they have not changed much over the years, and each one supports the other. Jesus commanded His believers all to go the ends of the world. Some people have the responsibility to go and others to send. However, it is not just the work of the sending structure to send, all must be senders.

Philosophical Foundation and Observations:

What stimulates someone to look for further information? The answer to this question ultimately is the end goal of resourcing mission. The missions structure, in some way, must pique people's interest in missions enough that they want to know more than just Matthew 28:19–20. When fueled by excellent resources, this interest spurs giving, praying, and going. Great resources ignite a passion for the Great Commission. If someone engages with great missions resources, they grow in praying, giving, going, and sending, and also become better advocates to others. Several resources inform and inspire along those lines:

- 1. Written resources.** A missions periodical/magazine with stories of workers overseas is a good start in informing people about how their prayers and giving affect the world. Journals and devotionals are exceptional tools for getting people into a daily routine of thinking about and praying for missions and workers. These also can inspire people to see themselves in the stories and take a more active role in

the Great Commission. Additionally, biographies of great missionaries can inspire people to take on their own challenge of bringing the gospel to another people.

- 2. Video resources.** These can help people see the field for themselves, telling the story of the country's workers and the people and places where they work. Nothing speaks louder than a picture or a video of current events on the field. Live calls and prepared videos can prove effective in helping senders feel like they are right there with the workers they support. A video can tell a story and have an even greater impact than a missions sermon.
- 3. Digital resources.** These include websites and social media posts. The onset of this section said the world is in the information age where people want rapid, easy access to information—how quickly they use search engines like Google and Bing. These lead individuals to websites with more information. Additionally, social media has changed the world. Leveraging content on several platforms to inform and present can enhance a country's missions opportunities and allow them to actively engage with people about the Great Commission.

Best Practice Recommendations and Suggestions:

Three best practices will be outlined here, but each sending nation should think through which might be best for their nation.

- 1. Make sure the resources teach correct missiology.** The definition of the mission of God varies significantly among sending agencies and especially to the local church constituencies. The sending structure must stay on the mission of making disciples of all peoples. Too often people define missions as simply doing good work in a foreign land or reaching their country's expatriates living abroad. Resources should always point to the work of making disciples.
- 2. Churches and individual Christians will engage with a missions structure's resources if they make them relevant.** Before creating a resource or advancing a periodical, survey the target audience and ask what they want to hear about. Missions resources are too often focused on telling the sending structure's story rather than finding out what churches need. Always remember the main work of local church pastors in your country: discipling their own people. If pastors see a resource as helping them do that, they will use it and promote it.
- 3. Resources need to be aesthetically appealing.** Engage professionals in the creation and design of any resources, whether written, video, or digital. If a resource is attractive to the eye, it has the best chance of being clicked on, looked at, or read. One can often find people in

churches who do this professionally and will willingly donate time to create resources for the sending structure. Do not do it alone, get people the Lord has gifted in these areas to help.

Also, do not forget the **youth and children**. All of the resource types above need to be created for children and youth. If they are taught at a young age to pray, give, and go, they will do it as adults as well.



number **5**

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WAGF Best Practices Task Force Part 2*

Providing Transparency and Excellence in the Administration of Resources

If there is trust, people will respond in giving more. If there is no trust, people will not give.

A lack of adequate and transparent reporting is a major cause of donor distrust harming the entire missionary sending structure's image.

If there is trust, people will respond in giving more. If there is no trust, people will not give.

Introduction

The Bible says, “Now, a person who is put in charge as a manager must be faithful.” (1 Corinthians 4:2 New Living Translation). If there is trust, people will respond in giving more. If there is no trust, people will not give.

Justification

If the missionary sending structure does not have good administration in the resources entrusted to them, the churches and donors will not trust them and therefore not give. Also, this will be used as an ‘excuse’ to not respond. Thus, it is essential that good administration and transparency be a key part of the missions structure.

Philosophical Foundations and Observations

The missionary sending structure is obligated to conduct its activities with accountability and transparency. As with every Christian organization, the missionary sending structure should convey information to the public about their activities, finances, accomplishments, and decision-making processes in a regular and open basis, in order to build and establish understanding and trust. A lack of adequate and transparent reporting is a major cause of donor distrust harming the entire missionary sending structure's image.

Excellence in the administration of resources shall be established as a main tenant so that every person involved in the structure is reliable, trustworthy, and gifted. Before building trust, the missionary sending structure needs to build relationships, which takes time and intentionality. As they grow in the relationship with their donors, they will get insights of their donors expectations which will help them to set the course to respond properly.

On the other hand, the relationship with the missionary sending structure's missionaries need to be close so they can see the big picture where they are a part of the team. The structure and the missionary, together, go

to the mission field to accomplish the Lord's mandate. The missionary must know that the structure stands with them, and has the same commitment remains to the mission.

When planning and budgeting, the missionary sending structure needs to ensure that it has adequate resources to function and fulfill their administrative task. Funding for this may come from a percentage of the missionaries' offerings. At the same time, the percentage used for administration should not put at risk the missionaries' projects, financial stability, and sustainability. The missionary structure must also live within its own budget and not create deficits. It would be helpful if the national church would also contribute to the missionary structures administrative budget.

When establishing the budget of both the missionary and the sending structure, emergency funds should be both set aside and included in the budget. This is a necessity because of having global workers in complex environments, and in a world where policies and situations can change by the minute. Still, there are some aspects that the missionary structure can budget for and they must create a culture of savings to cover health, traveling, immigration costs, and a retirement plan.

It is important to have a separated bank account in the name of the missionary sending structure or managed by them if legally necessary to have it under the name of the national church. This allows the missionary structure to make decisions in a timely manner and do the necessary accounting. It also helps to prevent diversion of funds from its intended purpose. Some countries missionary sending structures may have differing details but the principals of ethical use of money remain the same.

Best Practice Recommendations and Suggestions

1. To build trust and provide transparency.
 - A. Be intentional in building relationships with donors and missionaries.
 - B. Have a reliable software for accounting and reporting.
 - C. Build and keep the database of contacts.
 - D. Provide opportunities to build relationships among donors and missionaries.
 - E. Offer networking opportunities for missionaries.
 - F. Speak and report the truth.
 - G. Be thankful, recognize the efforts, highlight achievements.
 - H. Encourage and model transparency.
 - I. Admit when you don't know something.
 - J. Accept other's help.

2. For a healthy management of administration costs.
 - A. Manage the funds with the big picture in mind of the Great Commission.
 - B. Hire the best person for a position (administration).
 - C. Welcome volunteers.
 - D. Invest in promotions and developing relationships.
 - E. Invest in missionaries care
 - F. Keep travel costs to priorities and justifiable expenses.
3. To create reserves.
 - A. Create a savings culture both in the organization and the missionaries.
 - B. Honor the purpose of the funds. Do not authorize a different use (remember to build trust).
 - C. Be sensitive when emergencies occur, work for answers with the donors and the missionaries.
 - D. A recommendation, each budget should include a monthly contribution to a savings account for the purchase of the return airfare for each missionary.
4. Separate bank accounts.
 - A. Explain the need for managing the funds in a separate account.
 - B. Explain the risks of not having a separate account.
 - C. Provide financial reports to keep the board informed.
 - D. Provide confidence by having joint signatures when transferring funds or making payments.

number

6

Networking and Placement of Workers in Other Countries

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Missions agencies must avoid attrition by preparing an environment that will ease the transition of new workers and help them to identify opportunities for ministry that will bless both the worker and the national body.

Placement of workers is a key component of an effective missions strategy.

Introduction:

In order to effectively place workers in other countries, it is vital to communicate and network with both the local national church and with sister missions agencies from other nations present in the area. Missions sending structures do better working together as international teams when possible.

Justification:

Missions agencies must avoid attrition by preparing an environment that will ease the transition of new workers and help them to identify opportunities for ministry that will bless both the worker and the national body. They also must assist their missionaries the first year by helping them with language acquisition and by providing a local mentor.

General Principals and Observations:

- 1. Collaboration:** It is of **vital** importance to offer help in the placement of new missions workers by AG and other sister organizations with compatible missions philosophy (For example, the missions structures who have membership with the PWF and MC). The WAGF and MC allows networking as missions senders worldwide and offers the possibility of providing contacts for mentoring new placements to help with the first years of service interculturally, and hopefully increase longevity and productivity on the field of service.
- 2. Logistical Preparation:** The missions sending structure should arrange the logistics for new candidates prior to their being sent.
 - A.** Best training options for their assignment
 - B.** Best platforms for obtaining visas (what kind of visas)
 - (1) NGO
 - (2) Education
 - (3) Business
 - (4) Student
 - (5) Religious

Unreached people groups demand pioneer efforts. Even so, the pioneer needs the support of mentors.

- C. Identify best language school options and opportunities
 - D. Explore ministry opportunities for the candidate.
 - E. Determine what language(s) that are needed. Determine if a working knowledge of English is required for team interaction.
- 3. Networking and Communication:** This networking and communication is between and among sender and receiver.
- A. Where there is a national church organization:
 - (1) Consult with the national church as to the most profitable ways the missionary can serve and contribute. Guide the missionary in their first steps of service alongside the national church body.
 - (2) Insist that the missionary identify culturally to impact the people group.
 - (3) Helping the new worker find where he or she can best fit and follow God's call to collaborate with the national church.
 - (4) Be proactive in learning the structure of the national church and its vision before and after the missionary is sent.
 - (5) Explore areas where a missionary can make an impact. Look beyond what exists to new possibilities.
 - B. Where there is no national church structure:
 - (1) The worker needs a "pioneer" mentality, but also must have a "safety net" of mentorship and partnership which can be established either with missions leaders of his or her country of origin or with sister organizations.
 - (2) Provide models of how each potential worker may begin to engage in missions in a frontier context.
 - (3) Networking with like-minded workers is key in offering help to the pioneer worker throughout the process of establishing themselves in a new context.
 - (4) Recognizing that models of "church" may greatly differ from culture to culture.
 - (5) Unreached people groups demand pioneer efforts. Even so, the pioneer needs the support of mentors.
 - (6) The objective of networking is to develop communities of faith (local churches) that eventually will network together (a national church).
 - C. Examples of Collaboration in networking:
 - (1) WAGF offers incredible opportunities for international collaboration to help the cause of missions worldwide.
 - (2) Seek contacts and networking help with those members of the WAGF that are already on site (for example, help was

given in the placing of Romanian workers in 26 countries, many in difficult countries where dominant religion is Islam).

- (3) Bridges of communication are vital. Working with Central and South American missions senders and church structures in Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania have helped better collaboration to impact difficult areas and open doors for new senders to prosper.

Best Practices for Networking and Placement of Workers:

1. **Mentorship:** There is a need for a “safe” environment for first steps in language learning, cultural adaptation, a sounding board for questions, and concerns. To facilitate this, veteran co-workers can offer a newcomer help, direction, and encouragement.
2. **Obtaining Visas:** Missionaries often need to renew their visas. Traveling to neighboring countries instead of returning to their sending country to update their visas is a great option.
3. **Networking:** Establishing teams of co-workers on the local site, with whom a worker can share, discuss situations, and collaborate together.
4. **Intentionality:** Focusing on helping new missions agencies develop their own missions training and structure including the logistics of financial reporting and placement.
5. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** Missions structures must have clearly defined roles and expectations. The MOU clarifies what can be expected from other organizations and *vice versa*.
6. **Affirm the value of international teams:** As Frontiers and more recently Live Dead Arab World have practice them. They can provide infrastructure that a new sender does not have.
7. **Participate in organized events:** These events provide opportunities to meet and network with likeminded missions structures (the WAGF congresses and summits, the PWF congresses, and other regional gatherings).

number

7

Committed Personnel and Office Support

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Missionary sending structures need to organize. In order to efficiently send missionaries, a team of support workers, devoted to the goal of sending these global workers to the ends of the earth must emerge.

A missions office must be organized and acquire the trust of everyone. This only happens with committed personnel.

Introduction:

As a new sending country begins to envision how to send their workers, the need to organize and to develop a strategy to send workers to reach a new land or people group is a vital step. This needs planning and thought so that the missionary sender structure can grow as God calls more workers to serve “to the ends of the earth.”

Justification:

Each national church needs, with time, to find a ‘champion’ — a local and respected leader who personally dedicates him or herself to the cause of sending workers to reach other cultures and who willingly invests his or her life to nationally promoting the vision of intercultural missions. This person needs to develop a team of missions minded leaders who volunteer their time to begin and enable the process. Missionary sending structures **NEED TO ORGANIZE**. In order to efficiently send missionaries, a team of support workers, devoted to the goal of sending these global workers to the ends of the earth must emerge.

General Principals and Observations:

- 1. The importance of full-time leaders.** Each missionary sending structure needs leaders who can dedicate significant portions of life and time to the mobilization of the church and the organization of the structure. In the beginning this may not be full-time. However, with growth and progress, this may become a full-time job with the need for a salary.
- 2. The importance of office support staff.** The workload soon can become too much for one person alone. The national leader needs to begin to develop a team of co-workers to handle the specific work areas, each with different responsibilities.
 - A.** A secretary should be one of the first office staff members to hire. This person needs to maintain communications with both

missionaries and local churches, and promote missions via printed materials, the telephone, and internet.

- (1) Economic transparency is key to building faith in supporters.
- (2) Financial software should be used to help in this task (available through WAGF MC). One country gives a testimony of an expert who came from Central America with software to help them organize their financial structure. They brought software used in Latin America to track and report offerings—as a result they were able to offer detailed annual summaries of what each church had given, each missionary had received, and how to adapt the software to the needs in Romania effectively. The difference this software made was without description.

- B. Equally important is a financial worker to oversee reporting—someone trained as a financial accountant, to receive, receipt, enter data, give progress reports about and to each missionary as he or she raises the necessary funds.
- C. An important addition is a promotions team, made up of local pastors and leaders, to go alongside beginning missionaries to help them present their vision in churches and learn how to raise funds.
- D. As the workload gets larger, adding more staff becomes necessary. Begin small and let the vision constantly grow. Be prepared to see the support staff grow.
- E. Financing office staff. It costs to have support staff. As missionaries begin to raise monthly support, most countries assess a small percentage (7%-10%) of the offerings they receive towards supporting the ministries of the national missions office. As time passes, more missionaries will be added, allow the size of the staff to correspond with the number of missionaries being sent.

Best Practices Regarding Personnel and Office Support

1. Ideally the missions director should become full-time. Having a full-time missions director and office will signal the priority of missions. It will help mobilize more churches in missions and help to raise a greater amount of funds and increase the participation of churches in missions.
2. In some cases, the missions director is a respected pastor and therefore unable to be full-time. At the same time, they love missions and are a model along with their church. In these cases, the missionary sending structure needs a good full-time executive director (or another title) to help facilitate growth.

3. The missions director and the missions administrative staff require basic missionary orientation.
4. The WAGF offers a mentoring program for new directors. This tool should be used by new directors and those that have not been mentored previously.
5. All personnel and office support staff should be periodically evaluated.
6. Personnel and support staff should receive fair compensation for their labor.
7. To ensure continuity and effectiveness, a missions director's term of office should be defined.
8. The person elected to be full-time must have a missionary vision and a calling from the Lord.
9. There needs to be a clear job description for each full-time person, executives, and support staff.



number **8**

Different Models for a National Missions Committee

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Missions leaders
should not work alone
but develop a team
supported by key leaders.

One person alone will
not lead a country
to an effective
missions outreach.

Missions leaders should not work alone but develop a team supported by key leaders.

Justification:

An effective missions sending structure will not only have a good and effective leader, but a team around them. One person alone will not lead a country to an effective missions outreach. Important decisions should not depend on only one person. As well, there is the need for a team to multiply the leader's reach and impact. A committee and/or team are essential to gain the deepest respect on a national level.

General Principals and Observations:

1. If leaders, pastors, and churches see the missions structure built around one personality there will be less motivation and trust to become involved and support it.
2. If a country does not have a history of missions involvement, one person will not be able to bring about the changes needed to have the vision spread and involve the greatest number of churches.
3. Importantly, there needs to be some kind of committee and team. In some cases, it might be necessary to have both an institutional committee and a team of people who have the time to execute decisions and implement the work needed to be done.

Different Models for a Missions Committee:

There are multiple ways of organizing the national missions committee. A few of the potential models available follow:

1. A "Board" model.
In this model the committee is made up of respected leaders and pastors who give credibility to the organization, but do not have the time to invest in leadership or details. They might meet as little as twice a year or once every two months. Should this be the case, there is the need for another type of team that can be more involved and meet more frequently.

2. A “Committee” model.

A committee will meet once a month or at the least once every two months. They will be more involved in decision making They can either be organized by responsibilities or by regions (by regions might be difficult in the beginning).

3. An “Executive Team” model.

The two models mentioned above can also be referred to as “institutional models.” In other words, they help make the missions structure respected and part of the “institution” or “organization.” It is often necessary, especially as a structure grows, to also have a parallel type of team that will be comprised of people who have more time and commitment to implementing the vision of the structure. This team can be referred to by many descriptions: Executive Committee (one which executes decisions by a group that is institutionally over them), Administrative Commission, or other options.

4. An “Administrative Assistant” model.

Employees will implement much of the action as guided by the leadership.

Different Ways of Organizing the Teams.

When the structure grows and there are many missionaries on the field, it is common to have persons organized by “regions,” with responsibility for oversight and pastoral care for persons in a particular region. For example, “Africa Region,” “European Region,” etc. or to organize by “religious focus,” not geographical.

At the same time, or especially in the beginning when the missions structure does not have many missionaries, areas might be divided into tasks: mobilization (building vision among the churches), intercession, identifying future missionary candidates, pastoral care (for existing missionaries), etc. The team therefore can be built around different tasks.

Two Common Challenges:

1. Having elected missions leaders that do not have a vision or experience.

Description of the scenario: Many countries formed missions structures when they had no missionary vision. Therefore, the missions position is more a title than a function. Thus, it has become a great challenge to work with this reality. Best practices will be listed separately for this scenario.

2. “Institutional leadership” as opposed to “influential leadership.”

Another common problem happens in many countries when a country elects people to a position who cannot influence others.

“Influential leadership” is a person who leads by example, by experience, and has authority that comes from his or her life and ministry and not just an institutional position.

Best Practices for a National missions Committee and Teams:

1. A missions leader needs to multiply his or her efforts through the development of an effective missions team, to create missions vision on a national level.
2. Members of any level of leadership (national, district, task force, etc.) need to have a concrete and tangible missions vision.
3. Elections for missions leadership is acceptable if the candidates have missions vision and experience. Candidates for missions leadership should demonstrate a history of missions giving and support for the national missions structure, both personally and with their church.
4. Only churches that have demonstrated a commitment to missions should participate in the name or election of leaders.
5. Encourage all leadership within the missions structure to participate in short term missions activities and broaden their understanding and experience.
6. Leaders in the missions structure should go through a periodic process of evaluation.
7. In special cases where there are large numbers of district or regional missions representation that are voted on, but many do not always have a missions vision, some best practices to help transform institutional positions into spiritual ones which will help advance the vision follows.
 - A. Discuss with the top leadership the challenges of this problem and the importance of having people with a track record of missions vision and involvement in these positions and look for ways to improve the selection process and/or find ways to propose changes in the way the church names or elects people.
 - B. Understanding that before potential institutional reforms, one has to work with the present reality. Look for those representatives that can be mentored (ways to build vision through short term trips, etc.).
 - C. Have training, retreats, and times where the Holy Spirit can shape these missions leaders with vision and commitment.
 - D. Identify some districts or areas that can serve as “models” that will motivate to strive to do the same.

Conclusion:

Jesus invested much of His time in mentoring and training His team of 12 disciples. As the leader builds teams, not only will these teams serve to give credibility to the structure and multiply the leader's impact by involving others, but they will help contribute to a greater "critical mass" of churches involved so that the missions sending structure will see their potential realized.



number **9**

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Facilitating Partnership Between Strong Sending Churches and a National Sending Structure

Hybrid of local church and national sending structure in contexts where churches started sending on their own before a national structure emerged.

Justification:

All churches could benefit from a sending structure, even those that have worked previously on their own.

General Principals and Observations:

Some contexts make it difficult to have a unified national sending structure.

All churches could benefit from a sending structure, even those that have worked previously on their own.

1. Reasons can vary from churches doing missions before a structure emerges, to some churches being very autonomous in nature and do not fit easily into a national sending structure.
2. Another reason may be that some churches cooperate little with others. These autonomous churches may avoid having an organized sending structure. If some local churches historically initiated the sending, it is challenging to have them consider alternatives.
3. The challenge in these scenarios is that smaller churches can be “left out” of the process of sending missionaries because they do not have the ability to do so on their own. In these cases, a “hybrid” model might be possible. A missions structure would have a dual purpose, to build relationship between churches that do missions autonomously and also help smaller churches seeking cooperation with others to send missionaries.

Best Practices for “Hybrid” Models:

1. Even if local churches are highly autonomous in their sending no matter what the reason, these churches can potentially connect with the missions structure through events, networking opportunities, sharing of information and contacts, thus benefiting both the churches and the shared structure.
2. Autonomous churches that send their own missionaries should communicate both to the national sending structure and to the national receiving church, the information related to the sending process. If

this communication is not received, the receiving country might assume the missionary is being sent by the national church. The national missions structure, by being the voice of the national work, can help open doors in other countries for those autonomous local churches seeking to send out missionaries. By working with other local churches these autonomous churches will multiply their influence on all levels, nationally and internationally.

3. The missions structure can share strategic topics and information through consultations and other organized events to facilitate cooperation among all local churches.
4. The national church missions leader should recognize that in some contexts, trust must be earned. The autonomous churches will not embrace him or her simply because of an institutional leadership position. The leader must model influential leadership to have true respect.

number

10

Models for Mobilizing Local Churches with Missions Vision

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Missions should be the heart of the local church. If the local and national church does not have missions vision, missionaries will not be sent.

The local church is the foundation for the first missionary journey (Acts 13).

Missions should be the heart of the local church. If the local and national church does not have missions vision, missionaries will not be sent.

Introduction:

The church must develop a culture of missions rather than just a program of missions.

Justification:

Unquestionably, the reason for the church's existence and its identity links to its work of making disciples, reaching the nations from its locality to the ends of the earth.

Philosophical Foundation and Observations:

The local church is the foundation for the first missionary journey (Acts 13). Paul continually talks about the local church as supporters (e.g. the Philippian church) and sending workers and prayer support. To gain support for missionaries, the local church must have a missionary heart.

The church must grow in every way. This includes to discover the gifts of each one, and to reflect love for the gospel through going to all the people of the world. Ephesians 4:11–12 states, “Now these are **the gifts Christ gave to the church**: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. **Their responsibility is to equip God's people** to do **his work** and **build up the church**, the body of Christ.” The ministry of the church is the ministry of revelation and reconciliation. Therefore, the focus of missions is consistent and central to the ministry of the church.

As the Bible clearly reveals the involvement of the church in missions and the Great Commission, a question arises: Why do a majority of local churches lack engagement in cross-cultural missions?

Churches must also involve all members, and not just those in a “department” or part of the church. While the church works locally and has a vision for evangelism, it must also have a vision for world missions.

Generate a culture of intercession, that includes a burden for world missions and intercedes for the evangelization of the world.

Best Practice Recommendations and Suggestions:

1. The church must have a both a global and local missions vision and culture. Therefore, the church must create a culture of missions which is the biblical DNA and reason for its being.
2. Discover and empower the call every member of the church to the task of missions.
3. Train all groups in the church through discipleship and missions teaching. Missions should also be taught to the youth, adults, elderly, students, professionals, etc.
4. Generate a culture of intercession, that includes a burden for world missions and intercedes for the evangelization of the world.
5. Develop a culture of generosity. Teach generosity in relationship to missions participation, that includes the discipline of missionary offerings and the commitment to faith promises. Teach on faith promise commitment, to commit to systemic and ongoing missions giving. Strive that a large percentage of the church will participate.
6. Encourage and facilitate members of the church to participate in cross cultural missions trips.
7. Organize a local missions mobilization team that promotes missions during service and other events. Make sure they have unity in their activity.
8. Invite missionaries to share their vision and experiences with the church, motivating members to participate in God's global mission.
9. Organize a yearly or semi-annual missions emphasis to focus on missions and engage people with missionary vision.
10. Target the children and youth with an age appropriate language and resources that will lead them to participate in missions.
11. In all these missionary mobilization activities, create space for hearing God's call to missions with unique opportunities for children, youth, and adults to respond.
12. Use media and social media to accelerate the vision. Take advantage of Zoom, videos, WhatsApp, and other means to have current communication with missionaries and keep the church updated.
13. Maintaining a spiritual atmosphere in all missions activities because missions is not just a program or institution. It is God's call for the church.
14. Continually evaluate and make changes. Adapt as needed. Learn from others. Learn from successes and things that do not make an impact as well.

Best Practices for the Missions Structures to Encourage Local Churches with a Missions Vision.

Though one can find this subject in part under "mobilization," it is worth noting here that if the local churches are the "life blood" of missions

The presence of a culture of missions in the local church should be the norm and not something that is amazing or extraordinary.

support and vision, then the missions structures must make it a priority to engage local churches to embrace a missionary vision.

1. Missions structures should encourage and train local churches to become involved in missions.
2. Missions structures should develop age appropriate materials that can be used by the local church.
3. Missions structures connect nationally appointed missionaries with the local church to facilitate mobilization and empower the missionary to be sent and supported.
4. Missions structures should train the local churches.
5. Missions structure should provide orientation for local churches to participate in trips and provide short-term missions opportunities for national leaders.

Conclusion:

Some countries are still surprised when the local church does world missions. In the future, we wish to have it be reversed: people will be surprised to see a church that does not do world missions. The presence of a culture of missions in the local church should be the norm and not something that is amazing or extraordinary.

number

11

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A Partnership Challenge for Historical Senders

Historical senders can make an impact by mentoring new sending structures and by sending experienced missionaries who can facilitate the development of the new missions sending structures.

The goal of the historical senders should be to raise a missionary church with intentionality and be pro-active.

While historical senders should continue to have a vision to reach the world, they should include as part of the missionary work to help engage those that have received missionaries, to now become a sending missionary church.

Introduction:

Historical senders should include as part of their global vision the possibility of sending missionaries who will build relationships that will facilitate missions engagement with partner fraternal churches.

Justification:

Even if personnel are not available to answer the call, they should seek to find ways to mentor and challenge the new sending structures. The goal of the historical senders should be to raise a missionary church with intentionality and be pro-active.

Philosophical Foundations and Observations:

There are many reasons why some countries that are new senders have not been involved in world missions previously. One of them is that the historical senders often had a paradigm that these countries were mission fields, and they did not see them as future potential missionary forces. Often times the focus on “reaching your country” was done so in a way that created a misunderstanding that the role of missionaries was to reach the world, and the role of the national church was only to reach their country.

The challenge now is to reverse decades of paradigms. While historical senders should continue to have a vision to reach the world, they should include as part of the missionary work to help engage those that have received missionaries, to now become a sending missionary church.

One can see examples of how missionaries from the United States encouraged several leaders in Latin America to believe that “it can be done.” Romania is another example of a missionary working with the national church in developing a strong sending vision and structure. Missions agencies consider humanitarian work as legitimate. Training workers through Bible schools. Planting churches. All of these things

are regarded as normal missionary work. We suggest that we add to that list of missionary activities, the encouraging of “the receivers going full circle and become senders.”

Best Practices for Historical Senders Mentoring New Ones:

1. Consider missions mobilization as a missionary task. If people do not consider this as a missions focus, they will not do it.
2. Understand that new senders do not have experience. The historical senders do. Having someone help and mentor the formation of a sending structure can accelerate the process and take years off the development of the same.
3. Make sure the focus is on mentoring, and not on financially supporting the country’s missionaries. Do not rob the church of a blessing of supporting their missionaries.
4. If one considers providing assistance, make sure it is targeted, focused, and strategic.
5. Ask veteran missionaries to pray about this challenge. Often times, new missionaries do not have the experience in the culture to be able to influence, mentor, and impact a change.
6. Share the journey and tell the story: Share the historical background of the sending nation to encourage the new senders. Reaffirm the role of the biblical mandate of missions in their journey. Share the missionary stories and experiences of the sending nations. Share the outcomes and results.
7. Explore options and encourage the national sending structure by finding ways to participate in the development of the sending structure. This could include some of the following:
 - A. Adopting and training a national missions director and contribute in mentoring him or her.
 - B. Providing the initial support for the sending structure that may allow them to have a fulltime director or staff.
 - C. Help set up an office in the national church office or other premises.
 - D. Supporting the development of missions promotional material and communication systems to accelerate missions awareness and vision.
 - E. The possibility of adding the national missions director as a missionary from the sending nation. This can be a unique role and a position to become a catalyst to missions endeavors.
8. Investment by historical sending nations should have an impact and contribute to the development of missions sending in the receiving

country. Investment should encourage generosity and not reinforce dependency.

9. Historical senders, guided by the principles of the indigenous church need to embrace the concept of “helping the receivers go full circle and become senders” (“self-propagation” should be “worldwide propagation.” In raising the “bar,” we realize many churches have not yet become fully “self-propagating”).
10. Historical senders and new senders can partner together in developing teams and joint initiatives in reaching unreached people groups.

Conclusion:

Missions is not the obligation of only wealthy sending nations, but the responsibility of all churches everywhere.

1. There must be a paradigm shift in the historical senders' understanding of the goals and objectives of the national church.
 - A. Is it to raise a national church, or a missionary church?
 - B. Projects and programs sponsored by historical senders should avoid the creation of dependency.
 - C. They should avoid doing programs that create a misconception of missions to the national church. They must rethink and present initiatives which create missionary passion in the national church. Missions is not the obligation of only wealthy sending nations, but the responsibility of all churches everywhere.
2. The historical senders should conduct a self-evaluation to determine how much they have contributed to new national sending structures and vision.
 - A. The historical senders or local churches who have not created or not contributed to the missionary sending models in the national church must seriously evaluate their objectives in mission.
 - B. The missions sending growth in Latin America and Romania could serve as a model for future partnerships in missions between historical and new senders.

number

12

The Importance of Intercession and Prayer Support for Missions Programs and Missionaries

Original prepared in June 2022, by
WAGF Best Practices Task Force Part 2

Sending does not just involve financial support, but the critical covering of prayer.

Justification:

Effective missions programs must include an effective prayer and intercession component. Without prayer and intercession, the work will never be completed.

Philosophical Foundations and Observations:

The church in Antioch birthed the first missionary trip in a spirit of prayer and intercession. They sent out and commissioned by prayer and intercession their first missionaries. This prayer and intercession advanced the mission of God.

Missionaries encounter great spiritual warfare on the field, especially in difficult places where the church still has not been established. They constantly affirm the need for prayer covering and support. One can hear countless testimonies documenting the fact that intercessory prayer has saved lives, averted many a crisis, healed, and protected people from life threatening diseases or situations. The Holy Spirit provides intercession in difficult situations.

Best Practices:

1. Include intercession as a key part of a local and national church missions program.
2. Look for people with an intercessory ministry that can provide leadership to involve more people in this ministry.
3. Good communication can provide a network of persons with a burden and vision for intercessory prayer.
4. Many countries have prayer ministries. Find ways to connect a missions focus as part of those ministries.
5. One should never emphasize finances to such a degree that people consider prayer to have less importance in missions work.
6. New missionaries should not just raise up “financial supporters,” but “prayer supporters” also.

7. Many countries that have had difficulty in advancing the missionary vision, must be covered in prayer, because often a breakthrough will not happen because of spiritual warfare.



PART 3

BEST PRACTICES OF MISSIONS ENGAGEMENT AMONG WAGF COUNCILS AND CHURCHES

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These 13 points were worked on in London, Jan. 2020 and reviewed by the commission in Miami in 2022. Two meetings in Madrid and Dublin were postponed because of Covid. Task Force: Uche Ama, Rick Cunningham, Alan Johnson, Arto Hamalainen, DeLonn Rance, Rob Shipley, and Brad Walz

number

1

*Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in
London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force*

The sending of each missionary is unique. Participants in the sending process must be sufficiently flexible to respond to the direction of the Holy Spirit regarding the needs of both the missionary and the missionary work.

Protocols for Sending and Receiving of Missionaries for Missions Agencies Associated with the World Assemblies of God Fellowship

This document seeks to facilitate the sending of Assemblies of God missionaries and strengthen the relationships between the sending national church, the receiving national church (where one exists), other “like minded” missions agencies and their personnel, and the missionary.

Justification:

The sending of each missionary is unique. Participants in the sending process must be sufficiently flexible to respond to the direction of the Holy Spirit regarding the needs of both the missionary and the missionary work. Even as ministerial ethics apply at the level of local churches so also missiological ethics apply to the relationship between the national churches, their representatives, and the missionaries of the Assemblies of God worldwide. This requires respecting the autonomous authority of each national church while affirming that Jesus Christ is Lord of the harvest and the final authority in the sending of the missionary.

General Principals and Observations:

1. As members of the Assemblies of God, our primary ecclesial loyalty is to our fellow Assemblies of God fraternities, councils, and networks. We should identify ourselves as such even when there is no immediate or obvious personal benefit or advantage.
2. Situations may justify cooperative agreements with other agencies if compatible with Assemblies of God doctrinal principles and work philosophy. Given that cooperative agreements with non-Assemblies of God agencies may establish precedents that affect other Assemblies of God sending churches, it is recommended that any sending nation that seeks to enter a cooperative agreement first consult with the WAGF missions commission.
3. In Assemblies of God polity, missions agencies, departments, or administrations are responsible for the sending of the missionary under the authority of the national executive committee (e.g. All official missions correspondence should be signed by the missions president) and the national executive committee of receiving church is responsible for receiving the missionary.

4. Given that the sending of a missionary to a nation may affect other sending churches of the Assemblies of God, communication and cooperation with the Missions Commission of the WAGF is vital.
5. The Missions Commission of the WAGF is a missions leadership network to promote and facilitate the missionary movements of the national churches of WAGF, not a mission agency. Those responsible for the sending of missionaries are the departments, agencies, and administrations of the national sending churches.
6. Practical arrangements: From the beginning, every church planted and ministry established by missionaries should adhere to indigenous church principles and be infused with missions vision and commitment with a view to contextually organize with other local AG churches resulting in an organized national fellowship/church.

Best Practices for Sending and Receiving of Missionaries (Potential Progression of Activities):

1. **What people or place:** Initial interest in a specific context may emerge in various ways including but not limited to: a specific call received by a missionary candidate, a request from the receiving church, contacts between leaders at WAGF or other international events, the influence of a diaspora community, an international media event, or proposed as part of a national church strategic missions plan.
2. **Seek local contacts:** Communicate with the WAGF Missions Commission to find contacts of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship in the people group, nation, or region (e.g. the national superintendent and/or executive committee, other AG agencies or missionaries serving in the target group) or other sources of information regarding current or projected missions activities in the receiving nation or people group.
3. **Letters of recommendation:** To facilitate connections and fraternal relationships, the WAGF Missions Commission may issue a letter of introduction for the missions president of the sending nation for presentation to national leadership and/or contacts in the receiving nation or region.
4. **Exploratory trip:** If feasible, conduct an exploratory trip to make contact with Assemblies of God leadership, missionaries, or believers or, in their absence, with other missions agencies or believers in target group.
5. **Official communication:** The missions president of the sending church officially communicates with appropriate leadership or contacts providing the missionary candidate's resume, a description of possible ministry and responsibilities of the missionary, and other relevant information.

The harvest is ripe
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- 6. Practical arrangements:** Complete the official sending arrangements including: receive an official invitation from the national church where it exists, process visa and immigration work, prepare letters of introduction, set up means to deliver financial support to the missionary, and prepare a formal description of the missionary work.
- 7. Notify WAGF:** In order to keep its database current, communicate to the WAGF Missions Commission relevant information regarding the missionary being sent.
- 8. Cooperate:** To demonstrate unity in the Body of Christ, the missionary, the sending national church, and the emerging national church should seek fraternal relationships with other Christian traditions, other church planting activities, and/or missions agencies serving the target people group.

Conclusion:

The harvest is ripe and the workers are few. Unity in the body of Christ is critical to the Church's witness to the lost. Within the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, cooperation and mutual respect in the sending and receiving of missionaries critically influences its effectiveness in the fulfillment of the missionary mandate to make disciples of every nation.

Important Note: This is an executive summary of a 29-page document, which gives much more detail and guidance.



number **2**

Our Response to Unreached People Groups

In the sending of missionaries, make it a priority to send to peoples where a Bible believing indigenous church does not exist among that people group, or is so small that the people group require(s) outside assistance to reach their society and beyond.

In the sending of missionaries, make it a priority to send to peoples where a Bible believing indigenous church does not exist among that people group, or is so small that the people group require(s) outside assistance to reach their society and beyond.

Justification:

Following the Pauline prioritization of the “regions and peoples beyond,” (Rom. 15:20; II Cor. 10) we should focus as much as possible to send missionaries to the peoples that have little or no access to the gospel, without limiting the call of the Holy Spirit.

Part 1: General Observations: Why do we Need to Prioritize our Sending to Peoples and Places with Little or no Access to the Gospel?

First, because it is unambiguously part of God’s redemptive mission. From Genesis 12:3, all the families of the earth will be blessed, to the prophetic vision of the nations streaming to worship Yahweh in Zion, to the five Commissions in the New Testament to disciple, preach, go as the Father sent Jesus to the uttermost parts of the earth, to the final vision in Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 where representatives from every tribe and tongue and people and nation stand in worship before the throne.

Second, because of current data, we know where the Church does not exist or is extremely small. Therefore, we cannot stand before the judgment seat of Christ and plead ignorance, and we will be hard pressed to explain how knowing this we did not pour prayer, resources, and missionaries into peoples and places that lack access to the gospel.

Third, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of harvest. Acts 1:8 is our watchword—when the Spirit comes we receive power to be His witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth. It is inconceivable that the Holy Spirit, who loves all people and is not willing that any should perish, would not be calling laborers into the harvest fields of the least-reached.

Finally, we are called to follow the Pauline model, proclaiming the gospel “to the regions beyond,” (II Cor. 10:16), where “Christ has not already been named” (Rom. 15:20–21). Therefore, the Church is commissioned and compelled to engage frontier peoples and places with the gospel.

Part 2: Best Practices for Engaging Peoples and Places with Little or no Access to the Gospel.

1. We recommend that each constituent body within the WAGF advocate and raise awareness to the end that every local church and believer are conscious of the existence and priority of peoples and places with little or no access to the gospel, both globally and within their own geopolitical boundaries.
2. The primary method of missionary engagement among the peoples and places with little or no access to the gospel is long-term, sustained, in-culture missionary deployment that results in the multiplication of disciples and planting of indigenous church movements.
3. Each constituent body should develop training processes that produce missionaries capable of discipling and planting indigenous church movements among the peoples and places with little or no access to the gospel. We cannot assume that people trained to minister in an existing church environment are equipped for work among the “least reached.”
4. Missions sending structures should create opportunities to expose the church and future candidates to missionaries and representatives working in frontier context. As well, they should offer short-term trips to least reached frontiers. These will help facilitate commitment to the priority of responding to peoples and places with little or no access to the gospel.
5. In cases where long term resident missions engagement is not feasible, non-resident missions as alternative means of engaging the unreached is biblical, attainable, and, in some cases, necessary or preferable.
 - Non-resident missions is biblical. Paul, at times was unable to remain for long periods of time in most of the places he planted churches.
 - Non-resident missions can be a strategic means of reaching restricted access peoples and places with the gospel.
 - Examples:
 - An emerging national church near Iran has engaged very successfully in non-residential missions among Iranians using a variety of means. They have planted multiple streams of churches inside Iran that are multiple generations deep.
 - Sometimes believers discipled in another country will feel a call to return to their native homeland, and can be instrumental in becoming an advocate for the planting or strengthening of the church.

Resources to consider that provide information on UPG's.



number **3**

Compassion in Missions

*Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in
London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force*

The compassion of God was beautifully expressed through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in healing the sick, delivering the oppressed, raising the dead, feeding the hungry and proclaiming the gospel (Matt. 11).

The Church will always find itself confronted with human suffering and alienation.

The compassion of God was beautifully expressed through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in healing the sick, delivering the oppressed, raising the dead, feeding the hungry and proclaiming the gospel (Matt. 11). Following Jesus example, Paul and the New Testament Church also responded in compassion to human need as directed by the Spirit. As we follow that biblical example, WAGF missions entities will seek to empower the church to respond to all human suffering, but especially eternal suffering, through the declaring of the gospel by preaching and the planting of the church.

Justification:

The relationship between proclamation and social concern is a biblical, historical, and current issue. Compassion has to do with “how” we live our lives in mission, not the “why we engage” in missions.

Part 1: A Theology of Compassion Ministry and the Role of Cross-cultural Workers; the Role of the Church in the World:

It is our belief that the gospel transforms the human heart and restores value to life. This is essential to real sustainable social uplift. The gospel is the most effective change agent because it brings personal transformation, true human dignity, and empowers individuals, through the Holy Spirit, to change not only their own lives and that of their family, but also the social and economic environment in which they live.

The Church will always find itself confronted with human suffering and alienation. In obedience to God’s mission the church must care for the widow, the orphan, the sick, the poor, the refugee, the migrant and the prisoner. The presence of Christ mediated through His Church can and must bring hope to the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless and the destitute. We respond in a manner that respects all people regardless of race, gender, or social status and we believe all people have intrinsic value and God-given dignity.

The greatest act of
compassion is to
plant a local church.

The Mission of the Church and Expressions of Compassion:

The work of the Pauline missionary band was to plant churches *that would then be able to participate in the mission of God in its broader sense*. This includes caring for the poor and marginalized inside their own community and beyond and embodying prophetic witness to the world of God's rule now and in its future fullness. Our commitment to indigeneity means that we value and encourage the primacy and instrumentality of local engagement by the Church to respond to social needs. *This requires the cross-cultural worker to see one's role as catalytic in nature to encourage, promote, and equip the Church toward compassionate responses and sustainable solutions to social injustices.*

As missions agencies sending cross-cultural workers we relate to the brokenness and injustices of our world as an apostolic missionary band whose priority work is:

to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom in word and deed

in order to plant reproducing indigenous churches where there are no viable church-planting movements

resulting in local communities of faith

that are transformed by the Spirit and are sign of the kingdom to come

that extend a hand of compassion to the broken and oppressed,
and proclaim a prophetic message through word and deed,
challenging social injustices.

The primary task of cross-cultural missionaries is not to grapple with social issues as stand-alone ministry, but to plant and then work with local churches to strategize, equip, and empower local members to do ministry. There is increasing evidence around the world that this kind of practice has produced indigenous church movements that have brought about true social transformation.

We declare: "The greatest act of compassion is to plant a local church."

Part 2: Best Practices for Missionary Involvement in Compassion Ministry:

As a missions agency sending forth laborers to plant and strengthen the church we engage human need primarily by creating new communities of faith and partnering with them in expressing God's love and compassion both within and beyond the household of faith. This means that our cross-cultural missionaries and teams must cultivate all the gifts given by the Spirit and incorporate them in an integrative fashion.

Here are some integrative practices for cross-cultural workers who are involved in compassion ministry:

1. Compassion ministries stemming from social concerns should always begin with and include listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us.
2. Mission includes loving, compassionate care, which is a natural outgrowth of our spiritual life; yet the Bible is clear in its emphasis on eternal salvation received by hearing and responding to the good news.
3. Our mission is best accomplished when local workers partner with the indigenous church to develop vision and strategies for the needs in their community as they listen to the Spirit. Working with the indigenous church allows for accountability, local ingenuity, social stability, and sustainability.
4. The goal remains to make disciples and plant churches by ministering in word, deed, and sign to body, soul, and spirit—never to only create and maintain a program or a social ministry.

Recommended Best Practices for Practitioners of Compassion Ministry:

These practitioners should be:

- Mature Christian workers committed to the truth of the gospel, have a basic understanding of biblical missiology and have studied the principles of Christian community development.
- Committed to partnership with national and local church leadership so that the compassion of Christ is seen as an extension of the local believers and not the outside partnering agency.
- Respectful of the local church leadership and seek to empower and build capacity in those who will be responsible for the implementation and long-term sustainability of any interventions.
- Familiar with effective disciple making and church planting methods particularly for the local context in which they work.
- Consider language acquisition an important asset and as time allows make efforts to learn the local language.
- Study the cultural mores, behaviors, values, beliefs, and worldview of the local context to the greatest extent possible. All interventions into a group of people (spiritual, social, technical, economic, or educational) carry a message that must be understood and interpreted from the host culture's worldview.
- Regularly evaluate all teaching for its cultural appropriateness, biblical correctness, and especially for the host culture's perception of it.
- Ensure that the organizations capacity or one's skill sets are not the only factor that shapes program design.

Just as Jesus as led by the Spirit to express compassion to people in need, so too the Church must follow His example, serving others by communicating the gospel in word, deed, and sign in order that women and men encounter Christ as Savior and Lord.

- Never do for others (especially the poor) what they have (or could have) the capacity to do for themselves.
- Ask people to identify what is important to them and listed to how they see their needs.
- Listen closely to those you seek to help, especially to what is not being said—unspoken feelings may contain essential clues to effective service.
- Avoid the distribution of “free goods” except in disaster/emergency situations.
- Treat every person with dignity and respect as people made in the image of God.
- Work with local people and empower them to advocate for their own rights.
- Conduct regular evaluations of ministry activities, asking questions such as:
 - Is it sustainable in the local context?
 - Is it an appropriate response to the situation or need?
 - Will it bring about lasting change or at least open the door to potential long-term change?
 - Will it strengthen or weaken the local church’s Christian witness in the local community (if a church exists)? If a church does not exist, consider the potential future church.)
 - Is it an authentic expression of the kingdom of God, or just a good idea?
 - Is it based on a clear understanding of the most significant local needs? (A participatory asset-based assessment of needs and opportunities should be conducted)
 - Has there been good communication with the local community and the proposed beneficiaries of the project?
 - How has the local community been involved in shaping the ideas undergirding the project design?
 - What are the social and missional impact measures for the project? How and when will these be evaluated?
 - Is there a plan for monitoring the progress of the project?
 - Has a means of financial accountability been put into place?
 - Is there integrity and truthfulness in the way that the ministry or project is promoted and reported on? Has care been taken to avoid exploitation of individuals or groups in promotional and reporting media?
 - Have you thought through the possible unintended consequences of your proposed intervention? (www.tearfund.org/tilz)
 - Will the project potentially result in debilitating dependency or can it provide a pathway to self-sustainability?

Conclusion:

Just as Jesus as led by the Spirit to express compassion to people in need, so too the Church must follow His example, serving others by communicating the gospel in word, deed, and sign in order that women and men encounter Christ as Savior and Lord.

number

4

Business as Mission as a Response to the Great Commission

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London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force*

In the appropriate context BAM can provide access to places and peoples, as well as an “umbrella,” but should not be a substitute for sending and supporting “traditional” career missionaries. (BAM is a popular term used currently. But many of these same principals would apply to “Tentmaking” or “Bi-vocational” ministries).

Justification:

In looking for sources from which to draw for this document one is immediately encountered with a stark difference between the manner in which BAM is defined and practiced by many of those writing on the subject and Pentecostal missionary practitioners sent by the Assemblies of God. (Resources offered by the BAM Global website carry titles such as Wealth Creation and the Stewardship of Creation, Role of the Church in Wealth Creation, and Wealth Creation and the Poor.¹ These topics are representative of the majority of available materials on BAM from a variety of sources).

Contrast this with a list of BAM objectives from one Pentecostal missionary practitioner. In referring to reasons for which to engage in BAM he notes access to the lost and unreached, visa opportunities, secure foundation for church planting, and credibility and a means of justification for presence among host people.

General Principals and Observations:

- 1. BAM as a focus has grown much in recent years.**
2. It could almost be considered a “fad” by some, in that it is something that is recent in focus, and now is often talked about. There are principals and philosophy connected with BAM that is helpful for our work. There are also some extremes to be cautious in embracing and to balance so that our disciple making church planting focus is not diluted or diverted.
- 3. Principals and points of emphasis in BAM that are helpful to our vision and work.**

¹ BAM Global, <https://bamglobal.org/reports/>

Most nations that reject or curtail the church workers or missionaries, do allow, and in some cases encourage, the ongoing presence of foreigners for business. By engaging in business, the church gains access to peoples who are otherwise cut off from missionaries.

- The WAGF Missions Commission would see BAM narrowly focused as a means, or platform for missionaries, making possible, or aiding, the process of making disciples, and planting churches among the peoples and places with little or no access to the gospel.
- Point of Emphasis: Access. Every geopolitical nation on earth engages in business. Furthermore, globalization and the democratization of business have increased both the breadth and socioeconomic depth of international interaction. Whereas business owners and high-level managers have long interacted across international boundaries, frequent international engagements have now become commonplace on multiple levels of employment responsibility and business. In other words, growing numbers of people, from multiple levels of responsibility, are experiencing increasing interaction with peoples of other nations through company and business relationships. All of this means that engagement in business provides access to peoples and places that simply does not exist otherwise. Most nations that reject or curtail the church workers or missionaries, do allow, and in some cases encourage, the ongoing presence of foreigners for business. By engaging in business, the church gains access to peoples who are otherwise cut off from missionaries.
- BAM includes believers in Christ whose work takes them to peoples with no access to the Gospel. They should be empowered to give witness to their faith by ethical practices in business and engagement with those communities.

4. Some of the concerns connected with BAM philosophy and literature.

- Much that is written on BAM tend to see things such as human flourishing and preservation of the environment as mission with just as much claim on the missionary focus of the church as gospel proclamation and the making of disciples. While things such as human flourishing and environmental health may indeed be included in God's mission through Christ and represent worthy pursuits, we do not see them as the primary purpose or vocation of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, or its constituent members represented on the Missions Commission. The view most widely embraced among Pentecostals is that there are significant issues such as "human flourishing" that are of consequence which are part of God's mission but are not primary to the church's mission as expressed by Christ in His various commissioning statements.

BAM projects must exist for the ultimate purpose of making disciples and planting the church.

BAM should never be used as a complete replacement of the involvement of the wider church body in financing the mission of the church. A church that is giving to missions will be a church that is praying for missionaries.

- Some of the literature of BAM presents “self-support” as a priority and even a biblical example as per Paul and “tentmaking.” An extreme position would be that this is a preferable means of missionary support, in order, to not depend on offerings or churches. The temptation to encourage “bi-vocational” ministry can be especially strong in countries where there is a weaker economy and the perception that the church does not have the ability to fully support missionaries. However, by sheer numbers of believers they could easily send missionaries if the church responded with passion, commitment, and action. To promote BAM as an alternative because one believes that the “church can’t do it,” or “doesn’t have the maturity to follow through on commitments” is not a good motivation for considering BAM as a vehicle for going to other nations and cultures.

5. Best Practices for BAM

- Business created must offer legitimate goods or services (not a shell for something else). BAM ventures must be profitable, sustainable and built upon a well construed business plan. We do not endorse poorly conceived or disingenuous business done in the name of Christ and His mission.
- BAM projects must operate with the upmost integrity, honesty, Biblical stewardship, and accountability.
- BAM projects must exist for the ultimate purpose of making disciples and planting the church.
- Every BAM person should be trained properly.
- Every BAM person should have the spiritual support of a sending church or agency.
- While the BAM concept can be a biblical strategy (Example: Paul and tentmaking) it should not exclude missions giving or missionary sending by the Church. Even though BAM business successes and profitability are increasingly reported among missionaries, and there is great potential to create wealth for missions purposes, BAM should never be used as a complete replacement of the involvement of the wider church body in financing the mission of the church. A church that is giving to missions will be a church that is praying for missionaries.
- The BAM and its use of profits should be structured in such a way as to discourage abuse or migration of focus from church planting to personal gain, and from reliance and dependence on the Spirit to independence.
- Even though BAM can be used as a means of justifying missionaries’ presence in a given context, it must never become the end goal or fulfillment of the role of the missionaries. This is a greater

Access, and opportunity to engage the lost and unreached, are the greatest asset provided by any BAM.

BAM must serve the mission of establishing the church among all peoples rather than being an end in itself.

temptation than it may at first appear. Missionaries struggling to learn language and facing resistance of their efforts to proclaim the gospel can be tempted to throw themselves, their efforts, and passions into a business role. This manifests in missionaries giving increasing mental energy and time working in the business and less resources engaging the gospel with the people of their calling.

Conclusion—Key Points to Consider:

1. An oft overlooked benefit of BAM is its ability to engage a broader spectrum of the body of Christ in missions. Businesspeople who have historically seen missions in more traditional categories of pulpit ministry, teaching, or health care are now given opportunity to bring their gifts and experiences to bear in missions through BAM.
2. Good BAM projects are those that **provide access to people**. Some businesses are quite good at generating profit and are easy to justify in the local business community but produce very little contact with the local or target population. Access, and opportunity to engage the lost and unreached, are the greatest asset provided by any BAM.
3. BAM must serve the mission of establishing the church among all peoples rather than being an end in itself. While we understand that some may disagree with this position and, as those referred to in the early portion of this document, see the business itself as the mission, this is not our position. While appreciating the benefits of business conducted in an ethical and Christ-like manner, we engage in BAM so that Jesus is made known and His Church is established among all peoples.



number **5**

*Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in
London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force*

Transitioning the National Church to Become a “Mission Sending Force”

The importance of encouraging new senders, missions agencies, local churches, and missionaries to assure that every national church develops a capacity and practical plan to respond to the Great Commission.

A national church must have a conviction that to be fully indigenous, involves going “full circle” sending missionaries.

Part 1: Justification and Observations:

One of the greatest joys we can experience is helping a national Pentecostal church begin to catch ahold of and obey Christ’s mandate—to “Go and preach the gospel to the ends of the earth!”—WAGF shares in the privilege of helping birth this vision in new movements, and will continue to encourage a “world” vision to be taught, preached, and shared.

Historically, one of the normal expectations of a genuine move of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost) in a land, sees the birth of a burning desire to share Jesus’ love with those in need . . . first at home—but this vision grows as the Spirit of God opens our eyes to see further and further from our home base . . . and we realize that we must send missionaries to reach those people and places with little or no access to the gospel. In the development of each national church structure, one of the litmus tests of the effective penetration of the gospel in a culture is the moment when that national church actively strategizes to fulfill a vision for missions beyond their borders. This is an inherent part of BEING PENTECOSTAL!

In that light, it is vital that local and national churches understand the need for developing a plan for sending long-term missionaries. This is part of the work of the Holy Spirit in developing the national work, bringing it to new levels of missionary engagement as a movement; new workers will be called to go, and new senders will be necessary. Reaching the world will not happen without serious planning on the part of the national church—**Priority** level planning!

Part 2: Best Practices to Transition a National Church to Become a “Missionary Sending Force”:

1. A national church must have a conviction that to be fully indigenous, involves going “full circle” sending missionaries. Inherent in the idea of “self-propagation,” includes not only reaching one’s own country, but also reaching the world. Therefore, if we add the word “world-wide” to “self-propagation,” many of our national works are

not fully indigenous. A church becomes fully indigenous when it learns to send.

2. Take advantage of networking opportunities and learn from the experience of other countries, especially through WAGF events, forums, and opportunities to know other leaders.
 - A testimony from Romania: *“Acceptance early on by WAGF Missions Commission leadership enabled cross-pollination of ideas and a huge advance in structural development. Romania borrowed “statutes” for forming a legal entity (Agency) from Argentina, financial accountability programs and planning from El Salvador, ideas from Finland on how to do missions, borrowed forms and structures from the US church. These models and friends empowered the development of a national structure that is unique to our own country and needs!”*

Thus, it is important to help new vision for missions grow in a national church by offering suggestions for structures, dialog with other leaders, and desire to hear of the steps a new work takes.

3. Include World Missions Vision Casting as a part of national church events:
 - In General Council timeframe, include a session or a half day promoting seeing beyond national borders, missions vision casting as an integral part of the national church strategy.
 - National or regional conferences, on a yearly basis, using a structured approach to help local churches practice regular world missions giving.
 - Offering a structure nationally for recognizing and training new workers as qualified, approved missionaries.
 - Aiding new candidates in their first service programming and fundraising efforts.
4. New senders can facilitate the sending of initial missionaries by taking advantage and collaborating with multi-cultural Pentecostal church planting teams. New efforts do not have the critical mass to send out several workers to the same country. We can do much more as teams of International Pentecostal workers, if we learn to build bridges, help one another, and cast missions vision in all regions and national movements.
5. Work alongside other WAGF missions senders, in cooperation when possible, and in conjunction with the national church if one exists.
6. Seek experienced mentors when possible from sister AG movements who already have missionaries on the field in question. For at least the first year of ministry, having a local mentor where possible to assist with finding language and culture training suggestions or

The missionary task cannot be completed without the participation of all national and local churches in the Great Commission.

looking for lodging, etc. is of tremendous value. Here we can cooperate with one another and help each sending team grow stronger. The same goes for mentoring the administration of the missions sending structure.

7. The new sending force needs structures for mobilizing, training, sending, funding, and partnering.

Conclusion:

The missionary task cannot be completed without the participation of all national and local churches in the Great Commission.

number

6

Indigenous Church Best Practices

Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force

Biblically based, historically proven, indigenous church principles provide the missions philosophy to which WAGF MC is committed.

Justification:

Multiple contemporary philosophies of mission do not align with church planting principles found in the New Testament. Furthermore, biblically derived indigenous church principles have been instrumental in the growth of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship. Therefore, we encourage new senders as well as traditional senders to embrace these principles.

Part 1: Foundations and Definitions:

- 1. Theological Foundations:** Joel prophesied the coming of a day, first longed for by Moses, in which all God's people, young, old, male, female, slave, and free would be filled with the Spirit, enabled to proclaim the messages of God. That day came, recorded in Acts 2. When believers, among a host of others, are called to steward what God began among His people, the empowerment of all of God's people for His work among the nations. The Spirit is outpoured so that all can participate in, and be made instruments of, the salvation offered in Christ to the nations. Our convictions about the indigenous church flow naturally from Pentecostalism.

Our Pentecostal convictions, drawn from the New Testament Church exemplified in the Book of Acts, (Acts 14:23, and other references) are practically manifested in missional ecclesiology using "indigenous church principles" that come from people such as Roland Allen, Henry Venn, Rufus Anderson, Alice Luce, and Melvin Hodges.

While numbers of sending organizations and missions traditions embrace and practice the indigenous church principles to varying degrees, the theological antecedents of those principles clearly link them to Pentecost. Pentecostals believe the Spirit has been poured out for all, Slav, Korean, French, Fulani, and Chechen.

Indigenous church principles are historically summarized as the three-self formula: self-propagation, self-government, and self-support. In recent decades missiologists concerned with some

deficiencies in the breadth and depth of the application of the three selfs added others such as self-sending and self-theologizing. We will assume however, that these additions while valuable, are subsets of a fuller application of the original three.

- 2. Definition:** An indigenous church is a community of believers birthed in a specific context who are Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered to accomplish God's purposes for and through that community. Like the various churches described in the New Testament, particularly in Acts, these local and national communities of faith are to be Spirit-governed, Spirit-supported, and Spirit-propagated.¹

Part 2: Best Practices for Missionaries and Missions Agencies:

The indigenous church principles that focus on the “three-selfs” are equally valuable to the new church planter as well as those that find themselves working with established churches.

An indigenous church is a community of believers birthed in a specific context who are Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered to accomplish God's purposes for and through that community.

1. Indigenous church principles should be applied, to the degree possible, from the very beginning of church establishment rather than viewed as a goal toward which to transition at some future point in the church's growth.
2. Remember the missionary's primary function is as a church planter/pioneer (Two phases: a. evangelism, b. teaching converts including the training of national workers and leaders.)
3. A missionary is temporary in any local area; the church, rather than the missionary, must be the center of the work.
4. Avoid maintenance ministries; prioritize going to new fields.
5. Avoid measures that would stifle indigenous efforts.
6. Refuse to occupy a position that a national can fill even if they are not as experienced or skilled in the role as a missionary.
7. Avoid jealousy and empower others to take the lead. The missionary's spiritual ministry will always provide his/her proper place in the body of Christ whether he/she holds an office or not.
8. Be aware of the impact of the missionaries' presence and be prepared to withdraw at the proper time. Assume new roles.
9. Influence through spiritual leadership. Above all else, let the missionary maintain his/her standing as a “man or woman of God.”²

¹ DeLonn L. Rance, “Historical Perspectives on Pentecostal Mission Theology,” In Robert L. Gallagher and Paul Hertig. *Contemporary Mission Theology: Engaging the Nations. American Society of Missiology Series, No. 53.* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017), 180–190 (184).

² Items 2.2 – 2.9 are adapted from: Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1976), 126–129.

10. Christians should continue to live in their neighborhoods and pursue their occupations, being self-supporting, and witnessing to their family members, co-workers, and neighbors.³
11. Missions should only develop programs and institutions that the national church desires and can support. There are times when a missionary will play a vision casting role to help create desire on the part of the national church.
12. The national churches should call out and support their own pastors.
13. Church buildings, when used, should be built in the local style with money and materials given by the church members. (It should be noted that church buildings should not be assumed to be a necessity and, in some cases, may be a hinderance or a cause for unnecessary persecution).
14. Intensive biblical and doctrinal instruction should be provided for church leaders regularly.
15. All foundational training materials should be available, easily understood, and reproducible in the expectation of locals themselves doing the training.⁴
16. All ministries should be established in such a way that they can and will be run by locals.
17. Church finances are provided and controlled by local and national church members.
18. The new disciples should be taught to provide pastoral care for one another.
19. Missionaries should encourage and expect local believers to exercise spiritual gifts freely and immediately.
20. No outsider can fully contextualize the gospel and church life within a foreign context.
21. Remote leadership through the use of technology is no substitute for the development of local and national church leadership.

Conclusion:

Spirit empowered indigenous church principles remain foundational to our WAGF missiology and practice today in the 21st century.

³Items 2.10 – 2.14 are adapted from John L. Nevius “The Nevius Plan.” John Mark Terry, “Indigenous Churches,” In A. Scott Moreau ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 483–485 (484).

⁴Items 2:15 – 2.19 are adapted from Roland Allen. John Mark Terry, “Indigenous Churches,” In A. Scott Moreau ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 483–485 (484).

number

7

Short-term Team Trips

*Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in
London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force*

Short-term teams have value when incorporated into a long-term missions strategy.

Justification:

Short-term teams have become quite popular as a missions expression in many countries. The best practices articulated here will help the short-term team to support the long-term missions engagement.

Part 1: General Principals and Observations:

1. When short-term teams do well, they produce healthy outcomes for both the sending and receiving church.

- Many strong missions churches believe that short-term teams have helped them build better missions vision and response. Teams involve people in missions and they return from the field with a unique perspective and outlook. They normally result in a higher degree of enthusiasm and commitment by those that have participated in the experience. It is a great tool for mobilization. Churches that send teams tend to send more missionaries.
- Many long-term career persons have experienced a mission trip at a formative time in their life, most likely as a teenager or young adult. Short-term mission trips are a great way to expose people to a potential call.
- Short-term teams can be a blessing to the receiving church, both by exposing them to Christians and lay people from another culture.
- Short-term teams should support and prepare the way for long-term missions commitment and experience. They should be a “means to an end,” and not an “end in itself.”

2. Concerns related to short-term missions teams.

- If a church or country only sends short-term teams, the people will tend to not have an accurate perspective on missions. Potentially missions can become equated with only financial support and not the “call of God.” Often times short term

Churches that send teams tend to send more missionaries.

Short-term mission trips are a great way to expose people to a potential call.

participants come to believe that missions can be accomplished with short-term missions alone, leading to a faulty missiology.

- Another result of a church/country with only short-term expressions is that they could only go to where the church is either strong, and/or at least functioning. They would most likely avoid difficult places that require a long-term commitment, or countries where the church has a minimal existence and a largely unreached country. They would also possibly avoid places that have language barriers.
- A receiving country or local church that only receives short-term missions, can potentially equate missions with funds and special offerings, and not respect the ministry potential or even sacrifice of those coming to visit them.
- Often short-term teams have no missiological formation or reflection, resulting in a flawed praxis. It can indirectly lead to a de-emphasis on career missionaries and the need for incarnational ministry. It can indirectly lead to a de-emphasis on church planting and the proclamation in word and deed. (Church planting and discipleships take more than two weeks, two months, or two years).
- A disproportionate percentage of missions budget can be designated to short-term activities.
- A short-term focus can lack contextualization and cultural sensitivity, and the inability to submit to national leadership.
- Avoid a tourism mentality among those participating.
- Comment: the experience of a lifetime does not always convert to a lifetime of commitment.

Part 2: Suggestions and Recommendations for Best Practices to Correctly Implement Short-term Teams into a Long-term Vision:

1. Encourage the sending church to prioritize long-term missions, including the financial support focusing on the sending of long-term missionaries.
2. Communicate clearly the expectations for a short-term trip.
3. Intentionally connect the short-term with the long-term. Understand that ultimately short-term efforts will only be effective when linked to missionaries and national churches in long-term vision and activities.
4. Missionaries and their agencies should have the courage to “say no” to a team whose purpose does not connect with the strategic plan of the missionary’s ministry and national church goals.

5. Provide orientation and training for the short-term team, in order to facilitate positive long-term effect. The training should include spiritual discernment, cultural sensitivity, and basic missiology.
6. Create space in the team experience to hear the voice of the Spirit and experience Spirit-empowerment.
7. Provide debriefing that includes practical expressions of a deeper commitment to missions.
8. Short-term trips should prioritize time with career missionaries in order to develop a lifetime of missions commitment.
9. Short-term teams should build missional discipleship goals into the experience; therefore a trip should result in: increased prayer, increased giving to long-term missions, increased concern, increased personal witness, and increased commitment to global missions.
10. Channel the desire to visit other countries and conferences to also include missions mobilization activities.
11. Short-term teams should start close to your church home; look for cross-cultural opportunities in your own city and country to build missionary vision without the cost of an extensive trip.

Conclusion:

The WAGF MC believes that with a long-term, informed perspective, short-term teams can complement, edify, mobilize, and benefit the missionary enterprise and the local and national churches that send and receive them.



number **8**

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As diaspora Christians migrate, opportunities for planting the church among those communities and beyond can serve as a platform for further missions outreach.

Diaspora Opportunities

The diaspora provides opportunities to plant churches and do cross cultural missions. Diaspora populations can become bridges to reach all peoples.

Justification:

Even as God used the diaspora in different contexts in the Bible for spiritual purpose, so too He can use these movements of people today to accomplish His purposes. As diaspora Christians migrate, opportunities for planting the church among those communities and beyond can serve as a platform for further missions outreach. However church planting movements resulting from the diaspora does not absolve the church from its responsibility to send missionaries to those peoples and places with little or no access to the gospel.

Part 1: Biblical Examples of God's Spiritual Purpose Through the Diaspora

- 1. Abraham**—In Gen. 12:1–5, God asked Abraham to “intentionally” migrate to another land, as part of His redemptive strategy, unveiling a great blessing to all nations.
- 2. Joseph**—As God used Joseph to save the world through a “host nation,” Joseph recognized that “God sent me here . . .” (Gen. 45:4–8).
- 3. Mordecai/Esther**—Mordecai and his niece Esther were part of Jews that were “driven to exile” by war. This “forced migration,” enable them their diaspora missions to save the entire “Jewish Nation” throughout the 127 provinces of King Xerxes.
- 4. Daniel**—His spiritual influence changed a nation.
- 5. Nehemiah**—The book of Nehemiah illustrates how he took advantage of his “diaspora position” to obtain favor for his Jewish nation (Neh. 5:14–16).
- 6. Day of Pentecost**—Pentecost represents the Harvest. That was the beginning of the Church Harvest. God chose to birth the church among the diaspora Jews of the world.
- 7. Persecution of the Church**—the persecution of “the Way” resulted in: “they were scattered and went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). “So then those who were scattered because of the persecution . . . traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching

the word speaking to no one but the Jews alone” (Acts 11:19). “and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11:26). These diaspora people planted the Church in Antioch where the movement was first called “Christians.” This multi-cultural church later transitioned from a “diaspora” church to missionary sending church.

8. These Biblical examples provide strong historical antecedent and theological argument in favor of creating sustainable framework for the deployment of diaspora peoples in missions as complimentary strategy to fulfilling the *Missio Dei*.

Part 2: Observations of Benefits and Challenges of Church Growth Through the Diaspora:

There are several characteristics prevalent in most diaspora movements, be they “European,” “Latin,” “African,” or “Asian.”

1. **Economic Motivation:** A primary motivation that provokes the diaspora movement is economic: better jobs, better salaries, better social welfare programs. Religious persecution and violence can often be other motivations.
2. **Church Planting Opportunities:** A possible opportunity emerging from migration (when the diaspora comes from a country with a strong church) is aggressive church planting. As an example, London today hosts more than 50 Romanian Pentecostal congregations. One of the major London “mega churches” has over 70% immigrants.
3. **Cultural Comfort:** One of the tendencies of any diaspora movement is to maintain the culture of the motherland. They represent a culture within a culture—offering a bit of “home” when people are far away. One of the results of this duplication of “home” as such often tends to cause them to be somewhat closed to reaching the new and local culture. In order to belong to that diaspora church, one must accept that cultural package . . . and this is often an obstacle to local evangelism. To become part of the ethnic church that has been planted, one must adopt cultural mores from a culture that is “foreign” to the local national population.
4. **Multi-cultural Churches:** On the other hand, the diaspora churches are usually becoming bi-cultural entities. They want to maintain the bond with their motherland, but at the same time enjoy the benefits of a better life with greater economic blessings. It has been observed that they are VERY open to the need to reach other cultures, because of their immediate context. This openness makes them very warm to the message of sending missionaries to reach other cultures.
5. **Missional Minded:** It is a natural and very fertile ground for preaching and teaching missions. As one example, the generosity seen in

Romanian diaspora churches has made it common for Romanian missionaries to want to visit and recruit the friendship and sponsorship of these churches. If channeled correctly, the diaspora church can be a vital part of missions giving through the national structure. Work must be done to help the diaspora movements identify with the national mission's agency—to teach missions vision and help them take steps to become involved in support. Often the diaspora church is more powerful economically than the homeland church.

6. **Caution not to rely only on diaspora works:** On the other hand, it is inherently weak if missionaries only strive to seek support from diaspora churches that they perceive to be potentially economically powerful. Missionaries dare not ignore the homeland churches and primarily target the diaspora words for raising support. Both churches, “at home” and in the “diaspora,” need to be challenged to get involved in sending missionaries.
7. **Development of a sound missions structure:** Another characteristic observed is that often a diaspora church may have an independent nature, and may develop its own missions' sending structure— independent of any national organized plan. There may be little governance or missiological understanding in the resulting efforts. It is important to teach the benefits of teamwork and long-term strategizing in the diaspora church plants.

Part 3: Suggestions for “Best Practices” Regarding “Diaspora” Churches:

1. **Missional training before leaving home country:** Churches can attempt to identify people who are planning to immigrate, whatever the reason, and give them orientation that will equip them to have “missional objectives” in their planned intention.
2. **National church diaspora integration:** The churches of the receiving nation should work towards integrating this “spiritual people resource” into being a blessing in their country.
3. **Memorandum of understanding:** In the case of credentialed pastors/missionaries going to another country to plant a “diaspora church,” there should be a memorandum of understanding between the sending and receiving entities, which result in a protocol and process for integration.
4. **Networking:** The diaspora missionaries should be able to network with the national churches where they intend to open a diaspora outreach or outpost ministry, even while maintaining their uniqueness.
5. **Bridge building:** When it is not feasible to integrate a collection of diaspora church within the national movement, seek to build bridges of fellowship that can open doors for mutual understanding.

A diaspora church should not become the sole vision or missions outreach of a national work. While taking advantage of natural diaspora opportunities, a national church must continue to look beyond its borders and not sacrifice traditional and frontier missions outreach.

- 6. Outreach to migrant communities:** Diaspora churches are uniquely suited to reach other migrant communities and that strength should be nurtured.
- 7. Adaptation:** Diaspora churches should strive to adapt to and reach out to the host culture.
- 8. Missional vision:** Diaspora churches should strive to have missions vision that will result in them also becoming senders to places and peoples with little or no access to the gospel.
- 9. Reach the least reached:** Diaspora missions should not be restricted to North—South migration (countries more open to the gospel) but should also encourage East—West migration (countries less open to the gospel). These mostly Asian countries are beginning to attract economic migrants, and, in many cases, traditional missionaries cannot enter.
- 10. Discipling the diaspora:** Church planting among diaspora peoples can be an effective means of conserving the harvest of previous efforts from the sending nation.
- 11. Evangelizing the diaspora:** The diaspora church can become a tremendous evangelistic church in reaching the unchurched from their culture, as they seek community with their own home culture.
- 12. Continue frontier missions:** A diaspora church should not become the sole vision or missions outreach of a national work. While taking advantage of natural diaspora opportunities, a national church must continue to look beyond its borders and not sacrifice traditional and frontier missions outreach.

Conclusion:

Diaspora communities provide unique opportunities to not only extend the reach of the Church but also provide access to the gospel to those communities that surround them.



number 9

The Importance of Missionary Sending Structures

Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force

The WAGF MC has a goal that every national church movement develop a structure to send cross-cultural missionaries that is appropriate for them.

Justification:

While some local churches do have the ability to send cross-cultural missionaries on their own, most local churches participate in global missions through collaboration with sending structures. Those structures facilitate collective action on the part of many churches and individuals. Some have interpreted the sending of Paul and Barnabas from the house church network in Antioch as the sole biblical model for all cross-cultural sending. This document contends that the biblical and historical data is better understood as mandating a sending *function* but allows for freedom in the choice of the *forms* in which that sending takes place. The WAGF MC desires to see that sending function carried out through every WAGF national church movement in forms that are most appropriate for them.

Part 1: Biblical Foundations and Observations:

Since Acts 13:1–4 shows Paul and Barnabas embarking on what is traditionally called the first missionary journey from their work in the Antioch church, many often argue that the biblical model for sending missionaries is the responsibility of the local church. The implication of this view considers that other historical forms of sending, such as the formation of missionary sending agencies, is a pragmatic compromise and less than biblical. We will argue here that rather than limiting sending to the responsibility of a local church, Acts and other New Testament passages allow for a freedom of form to fulfill this biblical function of sending cross-cultural workers to plant the church where it does not exist.

First, one has good reason to think that the worship and fasting of the Antioch church leadership was precisely *because* they felt they had more to do from the Scripture mandate given to them than they could do with their structure of a network of multicultural house churches. Arthur Glasser observes:

The final characteristic of this missionary church was the nature of the burden that caused its various leaders to come together, not just to worship

the Lord, but to wait before him for the revelation of his will concerning their future service. From the response and instruction given by the Holy Spirit, we infer that their burden concerned a problem they were unable as localized congregations to solve. The fact that fasting is twice mentioned (13:2–3) underscores their sense of urgency . . ." (Glasser 2005, 301).

The Spirit's answer is people released to cross geographic and cultural boundaries to plant the church. Missiologists have noted that here in Acts one sees two redemptive structures: the local church and the missionary band. God works through both of these structures to bring salvation to the world through the unique strengths of each. The missionary band is smaller, mobile and, as one sees from the Acts narrative, tasked with planting local church structures where Christ is not known.

Two redemptive structures: the local church and the missionary band. God works through both of these structures to bring salvation to the world through the unique strengths of each.

Secondly, Acts 13:4 indicates the Holy Spirit sent and guided Paul and Barnabas. The Antioch church did not direct or made decisions for them. They were accountable to the Antioch church, supported by them, and reported back to them, but Antioch did not direct the missionary activities of their team. Paul's work, which Luke tracks throughout the remainder of Acts, comprises many workers, multiple teams, varying sources, and methods for support with Paul clearly in charge. Other places in the New Testament gives insight to how mobile missionary bands were sent. The verb *propempo* is always used in contexts of Christian ministry and with helping to provision people (see Titus 3:13 to speed them on their way, seeing they lack nothing; Acts 15:3 uses *ekpempo*; Rom. 15:24; I Cor. 16:6, 11; II Cor. 1:6 all use *propempo* with the idea of helping to send by provisioning; III John 6 speaks of sending on those who have gone out "for the sake of the Name"). Thus, it was not reliance on a single church to either send in terms of provision or to direct the work; rather it was the responsibility of many churches in many places to help those going forth to proclaim Christ while the mission band conducted their work in accordance with the call of the Spirit and their understanding of Scripture.

Part 2: Function and Form in the History of Missionary Sending: Freedom to Develop Appropriate Forms:

Ralph Winter, from his perspective of teaching missions history, makes this comment about the Acts 13 passage:

In fact, the profound missiological implication of all this is that the New Testament is trying to show us *how to borrow effective patterns*; it is trying to free all future missionaries from the need to follow the precise *forms* of the Jewish synagogue and Jewish missionary band, and yet to allow them to choose comparable indigenous structures in the countless new situations across history and around the world—structures which will correspond faithfully to the *function* of patterns Paul employed, if not their *form*! (Winter 1999, 222).

On this understanding then, Acts 13 does not set down a once-for-all, single model of missionary sending; rather Luke shows a *function* in the body of Christ, that some are tasked with taking the gospel across cultural and geographic boundaries to plant the church. From the perspective of Christian missions history, one can see that while the forms of both the local church and the sending of cross-cultural workers have changed over time, the functions of planting local churches, the ongoing ministry to their community, and the sending of missionaries to plant the church where it does not exist have remained the same. In terms of missionary sending, the church is not bound to a single kind of sending structure; instead each national council is free to develop structures that are most appropriate for their setting.

Part 3: Pragmatic Observations on Sending Structures:

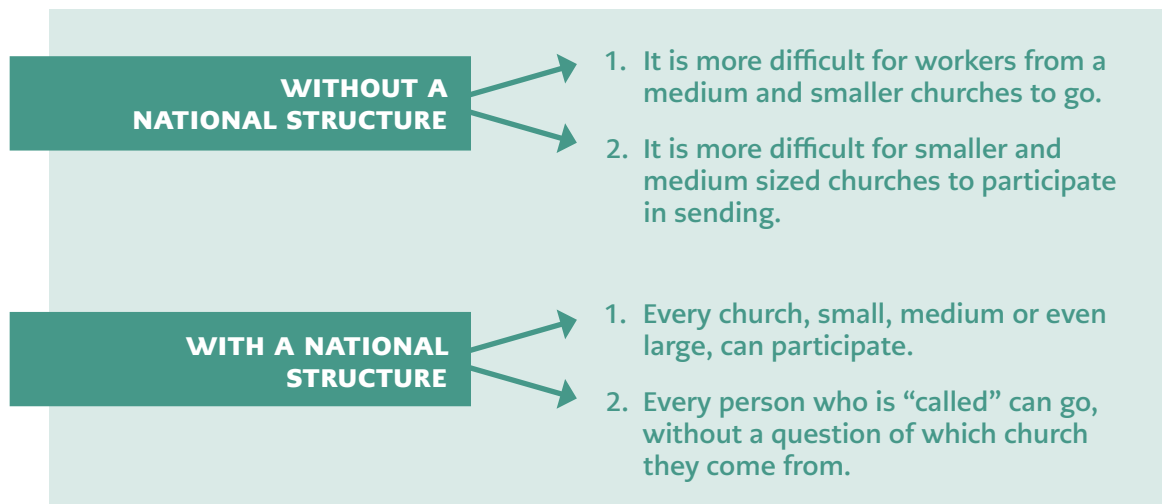
As this section builds a practical case in favor of a diversity of missions sending structures, it does not ask the question “Is one model more biblical than the other?” Rather it questions, “Which model allows the largest number of churches and people to participate, and does not limit involvement to just a few?” One thing is certain, God’s model does not wish to limit, but to expand the involvement of as many churches and persons as possible in His Great Commission.

National sending structures are vital to enable the church to reach the world.

- 1. It is the best way to involve the largest number of churches and people in the sending process.** To have a “local church sending model” limits in a pragmatic sense the number of churches that can send in a typical country to less than 5–10% of the churches.
- 2. It is the best way to ensure that those God calls the church sends.** What happens to a person from a church of 50 people, and God calls him/her to go, in a system where only larger churches can practically do the sending? That person would be forced to resign and change churches in order to be able to facilitate his/her calling. A system that causes people to break off relationship with their local church in order to find a way to go surely is not ideal.

One must remember that a large majority of the churches in the World Assemblies of God Fellowship are small or medium sized and from countries that have weak economies. This makes it more difficult for a missionary to be sent if he/she does not belong to a large church. Surely it would be best to have MOST and as MANY of the 370,000 churches in the WAGF network involved as possible, and not limit it to as few as 1,000 churches that could actively send under a “local church” only model.

3. **Is there one model that is best for everyone? Answer: No, one size does not fit all.** Each country differs from another. Some countries have very strong districts or regions with decision making being delegated to them from the national office. Some countries have weaker districts or regions where the national level makes most of the decisions. Some General Councils have thousands of churches and others have hundreds and others have a few dozen. Each country and situation are unique. Principles and ideas can be learned but each country must find its own unique solutions, identity, and structure that will be functional and work for them.



Part 4: The Five Most Common Current Models of Sending Structures:

1. **Local church as sender model.** The local church sends the missionary without the direct supervision of a national missions structure.
 - **Advantages of this system:** A missionary is directly related to his local church and does not have the pressure of raising finances. In some countries this may be the only model or system available.
 - **Disadvantages:** In many developing nations with weaker economies, small church find it difficult to send missionaries. A local church will control the missionary agenda, which often does not produce an indigenous church. As well, those God calls from medium and smaller churches in those contexts may not be able to go. From an international perspective, if several churches have several missionaries in the same receiving country, instead of "one voice," they have "many voices" in that country, and that can cause confusion and misunderstanding in some national church contexts.

2. **National Sending Structure/Agency with a “pool” or centralized fund system.** This is where churches give to a central fund, and that fund decides how the funds should to be administered. From our experience, it is very difficult to use this model in “start-up” situations in most “new sending” countries.
 - **Advantages of this system:** The missionary has less pressure in raising funds.
 - **Disadvantages of this system:** churches give to an office and not to a person and are potentially less motivated to do so.

3. **National Sending Structure/Agency with churches giving specifically towards the missionary.** A national structure with a functioning committee or commission makes decisions in approval of missionary candidates, and the structure of supporting and sending them. There is a central fund and funds are channeled through the missions agency, but unlike the pool system, the churches designate their offerings to individual missionaries and normally a small percentage (5 to 10%) of these funds covers the administrative budget of the agency.
 - **Advantages:** Potentially every church can participate, and every “call” can be considered to go. Churches have more motivation to support the missionary because they have a personal interest in giving to that missionary. Yet, there is still accountability and structure.
 - **Disadvantages:** The responsibility to raise the budget falls largely on the missionary. Though their local church may be able to provide a large percentage of their missionary’s budget. When it cannot, the missionary has to raise his/her budget when he/she comes home on “furlough or deputation.”

4. **“Hybrid” of a National Sending Structure/Agency combining working with local church.** This is a middle of the road model for countries with strong local sending churches, but that also need or want some type of national structure. The agency approves, coordinates, and is a contact and “voice” for the receiving countries, but the local church has participation and voice in important decisions. Some Latin and European countries have done this. They have a national department yet allow the local church to participate in information and important decisions, if they want to. However, the local church does not control the missionary. To the receiving church, the department and country sends the missionary, not just a local church.

5. **A Network of strong sending churches.** This serves as a potential model for countries where there are many large and strong autonomous churches. It also applies as a potential model for places that

When the national church develops a structure, the structure must serve the vision and not the vision serve the structure.

has a weak national church structure where most of the decision-making takes place at a local church level. We have not yet seen an implementation of this model, but it would serve as a unique niche and something that would be a potential hybrid and bridge providing some sort of alternative to a “local church as sender model.”

In this model, the missions sending structure serves as “network” and coordinator between sending churches (large ones) or districts (very autonomous). This could also serve as a potential model with very organized and autonomous districts or the local church does things on a district level, not on a national one.

Part 5: Best Practices Concerning Sending Structures:

1. When the national church develops a structure, the structure must serve the vision and not the vision serve the structure. National sending structures must strive to be relevant, and realize that the structure is only beneficial if it results in the growth and response of the national work in responding in sending missionaries.
2. The expectation for missionaries of the local church sending model is that they deliberately network with the body of Christ in their country of service. Networking in the home country with other local church senders will also help in the sharing of resources and information that can mutually benefit all local church senders.
3. In the development of sending structures, seek to maximize the involvement of as many members and local churches as possible in praying, giving, and going.
4. In the development of sending structures, seek to empower missionaries to be successful in the fields of service by being a bridge between the senders, receivers, and the sent.
5. Missionary sending structures need to allow the missionary team to make field-based decisions rooted in missiological principles and not be limited by the ministry agendas and philosophy of the sending base church.
6. In making decisions about methods of sending, one should not be driven by economic considerations alone.
7. A structure dedicated to cross-cultural missions should be distinct from that of a domestic church planting structure. History has shown that when cross-cultural missions combines with “home missions,” cross-cultural missions always suffers neglect.

Conclusion:

The missions sending structures of the WAGF network facilitate the participation of all AG general councils, churches, and members, to participate in the Great Commission.

number

10

Member Care

*Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in
London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force*

The missionary is
the most valuable
asset of any sending
missions agency.

Member care is an essential component of our sending structure, including strategies and options for response in a crisis situation.

Justification:

A missionary's well-being is an essential element for long-term effective service on the field. A healthy member care strategy for an agency will respond to the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of the missionary.

Part 1: Observations:

The missionary is the most valuable asset of any sending missions agency. While the call of God is paramount, requiring a willingness to give all for the cause, we recognize the need for holistic care of missionary personnel.

Biblical precedents for "member care" can be exemplified by the interaction between the Philippian church and Paul, in sending Epaphroditus to minister to Paul's needs.

Above all else, "member care" recognizes that the sent ones are "human beings," with spiritual, physical, and emotional needs that often can be multiplied in the stress and complications of many mission fields.

Part 2: Recommended Best Practices for Member Care:

1. Each missions sending structure should have "member care" as one of the essential components of its internal structure.
2. Member care should include training and practice in "self-care," care within the ministry team, pastoral care, professional care when necessary, and critical incident care in the event of emergencies.
3. Develop or improve an intentional strategy to support missionaries in ongoing prayer. As well, the missions agency leadership should bathe the candidates in prayer, standing behind them before the Lord.
4. Missions agencies as well as local churches should maintain regular ongoing communication. Today with modern technology, they can keep in regular communication with the missionary. Communication allows the missionary to know both that someone

cares for him/her and stands behind him/her in prayer. Agencies should prepare a form that asks questions regarding missionary health, ministry, concerns, spiritual growth, etc. Today communication can help alleviate a missionary's loneliness and give insight into his/her areas of need.

5. Caring for missionaries in the basic areas of self-care (emotionally, physically, and spiritually), family-care, and team-care (fellow missionaries working on field) will help encourage their longevity in service. Member care has many facets and varies radically from country to country. Many of the following suggestions require an economic outlay that may seem overwhelming. Even for those just beginning to develop "sending" strategies, the following questions should be considered by each missions sending structure.

- Some form of healthcare insurance is needed for all long-term workers.
 - If their home country has a health care provision in the work contract, that usually requires they must be physically present in their country (return home) in order to benefit. In such a case, do missionaries need to come back to their homeland for basic care, childbirth, or major medical crises?
 - On site, in many countries, there are private and international healthcare plans that workers can join by paying monthly fees. Are there local healthcare plans in the land of service that they can join? How much will it cost?
 - It may be that the host nation offers a national healthcare plan that they can use. This all varies from country to country, but a viable plan should be worked out according to the situation.
 - How should an agency handle emergency health situations? Can the emergency be handled locally and financed by the home country's insurance, can the agency buy evacuation insurance or have a fund to allow emergency travel back to the home country for needed care? One suggestion is to deduct a percentage of the missionaries support towards their return airfare as well the missions structure should have "emergency savings" to be able to respond to critical needs.
- Retirement Programs—Are there retirement program benefits in the homeland? What is offered for those who may live outside its borders?
 - Recognition of the sending agency/group as an NGO in the home country can offer the possibility of legal work contracts

Missions agencies and structures need to intentionally include member care in their supervision of missionary personnel.

and national benefits. Is the sending agency legally recognized by the local government?

- If so, a national pension plan is offered in many nations. Can the missionaries be part of such while living outside of the country? Does this require a work contract?
 - A work contract—Do the missionaries need a work contract to have governmental recognition in the land of service?
 - Retirement—Is there a national pension fund? Does the national church have a pension fund in which the agency can participate?
6. Crisis funds—Besides saving to potentially help evacuate missionaries from crises, a portion of the missions structures support could be designated to a “crisis fund,” for care and support beyond the actual emergency. Examples: to offer debriefing opportunities and/or counselling after Post Traumatic Stress events. What does the missions agency do to help missionaries readjust when back in country?
 7. Take advantage of networking and events with other agencies to find out what policies and materials they have put into place.
 8. Member care sometimes involves crisis intervention which consists of helping missionaries deal with traumatic events, family issues and grief, as well as resourcing counseling services.
 9. Visits—It is recommended that there should be pastoral visits from leaders or representatives of the missions agency on a periodical basis, as well as encouraging the same from the local church.

Conclusion:

Missions agencies and structures need to intentionally include member care in their supervision of missionary personnel.

number

11

Networking Where There is No National Church

Original prepared in Jan. 2020 in London by WAGF Best Practices Task Force

Networking between the WAGF sending entities seeks to plant indigenous local churches, with the long-term goal of developing an indigenous national church movement.

Justification:

Even as Paul grouped churches (for example churches in Macedonia, Achaia, and Judea), and as individual believers need fellowship in local churches, local churches need fellowship with one another. WAGF sending entities should network in order to plant indigenous local churches that result in a national organization. A national organization allows local congregations to celebrate with others of like faith, providing encouragement, correction, and participation in activities that connect them to God's mission in the world.

Part 1: Challenges and Realities of Working in a Country with no Recognized National Work:

1. In countries where there is a recognized national church, the initial work becomes a “clearing house” to receive workers from different WAGF entities, motivating unity among the distinct sending countries, and avoiding the potential of creating multiple expressions of AG churches among that people or country.
2. Current scenarios include contexts where there are AG workers from various sending countries in the same country, working where there is no national church, but they do not connect with each other. Sometimes this has resulted in the various sending countries having their own networks and contacts before they become “aware” of each other. Since these initial “expressions” of the church might be quite different from each other, it becomes very difficult to merge them together.
3. In the absence of a national recognized or even legal work, it is more difficult to network workers from a number of sending countries, and there is potential for confusion not only among the different workers, but among any national believers that might be their disciples. It is unhealthy to start multiple national works independent of each other. If all WAGF sending entities have a common goal of

working towards a single national church, it will promote unity and will facilitate church planting among that people and beyond.

Part 2: Best Practices for Networking Among Sending Agencies, for Forming a “National Church:”

Just because a country has challenges in having a legally registered national work, that should not be a hindrance to have a vision for a national church. They must work towards that possibility, recognizing that circumstances might change that would allow a “national work” to emerge.

1. Affirm that “house churches” can be a valid expression of the body of Christ and a traditional model of the church (buildings, government/legal recognition) does not invalidate the “body of Christ” for that context and situation.
2. Affirm and strive to have communication and networking between different expressions as they become aware of each other.
3. If a sending agency is going to enter a country with no national recognized work, they should communicate with WAGF missions leadership to find out what other countries or expressions might already be working in that area. If it is feasible, do not start a new expression without an attempt to work with others that are already there.
4. Consider multi-national church planting teams whenever possible. (Live Dead can provide a blueprint and model for this).
5. When a new field has multiple workers from multiple countries, and these workers have consensus to attempt some type of network or organization between them, make sure that it is “natural,” and that all involved have mutual acceptance and can comfortably work together.
6. International churches can be a tool for evangelism and church planting in some contexts. However, they should not be an “independent” work but strive to connect and network with others in the body of Christ in that country.
7. One possible model for countries with government restrictions is to organize nationally and join the WAGF even when that work has no legal recognition by the government.
8. Contexts with no national church occur in part because these contexts have been historically “resistant” to gospel outreach. In order to form a national church those WAGF entities working in that context will need to cooperate and network while recognizing that the formalization of a national church will take time to develop.

Conclusion:

Just because a country has challenges in having a legally registered national work, that should not be a hindrance to have a vision for a national church. They must work towards that possibility, recognizing that circumstances might change that would allow a “national work” to emerge.

number 12

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Missionary Training

To develop effective missionary training programs requires the identification of missiological principles and missionary competencies followed by the development, implementation, and evaluation of training models and processes of missionary formation.

Justification:

The processes of missionary formation are means utilized by the Holy Spirit to empower missionaries to fulfill God's personal and corporate call to make disciples of all nations. Training improves missionary effectiveness, longevity, and lowers avoidable attrition.

Part 1: General Observations:

All missionary training should lead to a deeper love and relationship with Jesus, greater dependence on the Spirit, more effective communication of the gospel to the lost, and a growing commitment to the planting and nurturing of the church.

1. Jesus, the Master teacher, dedicated three years to training His missionaries, the apostles, providing practical and high-quality theological education. If the apostles required training, the importance of training today's missionaries should be prioritized.
2. All missionary training should lead to a deeper love and relationship with Jesus, greater dependence on the Spirit, more effective communication of the gospel to the lost, and a growing commitment to the planting and nurturing of the church. Critical to missionary ministry is the learned competency of discerning divine direction and responding in obedience as empowered by the Spirit. As each missionary's call is unique, all missionary training should be customized to equip the missionary as a life-long learner to fulfill that call. All missionary training must be fully Pentecostal in content and form.
3. Missionary competencies include but not limited to: spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical health; biblical, theological, and missiological knowledge and practice, skills in cultural adjustment and communication, language learning, and contextualization; family and team life and member care; leadership development and training; missions mobilization skills; specific ministry skills (e.g. evangelism, church planting, spiritual warfare, counseling, education, relief and development); and practical life skills. To develop these competencies, training must integrate practical and academic formation utilizing multiple training models in the process of the missionary's

All of God's missionary people need to be able to read the Bible as God's missionary story and identify their role and responsibility in God's narrative including their individual and corporate participation in sending and supporting missionaries through prayer, giving, and other activities.

engagement in life-long learning including pre-field, on-field, in ministry, and professional learning experiences to match missionary, agency, ecclesial, and field needs.

4. Missionary training acknowledges the impact of culture and context on learning. For example, Western culture emphasizes concepts, policies, and procedures while many non-Western cultures focus on the relationships, social skills, and family life. Both aspects are important. Missionaries face different types of spiritual warfare. In some contexts, demonic activity is explicit; in others more subtle. Missionaries coming from other continents to Europe need to be prepared to meet a Post-Christian or even Anti-Christian context.
5. All of God's people require missiological training in order that mission vision and commitment saturate every local church from children to seniors.
6. All theological and ministerial training must be based on biblical missiological foundations.

Part 2: Initial Missionary Training Questions for Sending Agencies:

1. Who needs training?

All members of God's missionary people including:

- All local church attendees of all ages, local and national church leaders, missions executives, missions mobilizers, and missionary trainers of the sending church (i.e. the senders and supporters),
- the missionary (i.e. the sent), and
- all local church attendees, local and national church leaders, missions executives, missions mobilizers, and missionary trainers of the receiving church if one exists (i.e. the partnership entity).

2. What type of training?

- The content and delivery of missiological training should be contextual aligning with the learning needs of the students. All of God's missionary people need to be able to read the Bible as God's missionary story and identify their role and responsibility in God's narrative including their individual and corporate participation in sending and supporting missionaries through prayer, giving, and other activities.
- Missionaries need to be equipped with the competencies identified in 1.3. above and trained to their specific calling and task including specialized ministry training (e.g. Bible translation, church planting, leadership development, media, sport, art, Business as Mission)

- Training for partners in mission (senders and receivers together) creates a common vision under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and understanding the role of the strategies and goals. Partnership requires good mutual understanding and creation of common goals that emerge through an effective dialogue in the mutual formation process.
3. Who provides the training?
Diverse entities at multiple levels: local church, mission department/missions organization, theological/missiological training institution, and other partners in mission including collaborating entities in the field.
 4. How long should training be?
The requirements concerning the training duration depend on type and length of ministry. A short-term worker does not require the same training as long-term worker. Those serving to complete some practical task may not need as robust training as missionaries involved in church planting and Bible education ministry. Preparation for participation in a short-term ministry team may only require a couple of weekends. Other short-term assignments may require several weeks training. Long-term missionary service requires ministerial, theological, and missiological training including a special course of study for missionary candidates that may take weeks or years to complete. Training for partners in mission to build a common strategy to ultimately result in the receivers becoming senders may be accomplished through continual open dialog and through short seminars or training sessions that should occur periodically (e.g. monthly, annually).

Part 3: Best Practices for Missionary Training Programs:¹

1. **Needs Identification**—The missionary training program must regularly identify the learners’ needs, needs of the organization and all involved in the training process in order to adapt the program to the learners’ needs and ministry.
2. **Alignment**—The missionary training program must consistently aligns its methods and content to match the mission, values, and vision of the sending church/agency, the national church, and the World Assemblies of God Fellowship and re-aligns as changes occur.

¹ These best practices, with some modification, emerge from “Missionary Training Assessment: An Instrument for Evaluating and Improving Training Programs” In *Integral Ministry Training Design and Evaluation*, edited by Robert Byrnjolfson and Jonathan Lewis, 198–201. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library. 2006) 198–201.

To facilitate alignment missionary training leadership needs access to key decision-makers and executive leadership.

3. **Core Values**—The missionary training program must create an environment that intentionally allows missionaries and missionary trainers to:
 - Experience Spirit-direction, modeling, and participating in the spiritual disciplines including discerning God’s voice in prayer, in the Word, and in community, and
 - Experience Spirit-empowerment, living in total dependence on God for life and ministry, walking in the intimacy and fullness of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and promoting the exercise of spiritual gifts and signs and wonders in all phases of the training. Trainers demonstrate humility, adherence to solid biblical and missiological principles, a history of obedience to Spirit-direction and dependence on Spirit-empowerment in both teaching and ministry, and a commitment to creating a safe, “grace-filled” learning environment that builds community and provides opportunities for growth in personal and corporate spiritual life.
4. **Training Design**—The missionary training program employs adult learning theory and methods respecting the learner’s abilities and background. Training is grounded on a Spirit-directed, biblically based evaluation of the knowledge, skills, and character of effective missionaries. Learning activities help learners develop capacity for life-long growth in knowledge, skills, and character for ministry. The scope of the program assures training for all levels and roles in the organization. Trainers model cross-cultural sensitivity in training methods and manners, are required to be life-long learners, intentionally growing in knowledge and skill, and actively engage in ministry beyond the training program. Training values are made clear in teaching/learning process.
5. **Resource Stewardship**—The missionary training program makes careful use of spiritual, human, and financial resources measuring the cost effectiveness of training against improved ministry performance. Training techniques and resources are shared reciprocally with other trainers and organizations in order to collaborate with WAGF networks, receiving churches, receiving teams, sending churches, agencies, and schools.
6. **Evaluation Strategy**—The missionary training program has a clear, measurable, and feasible evaluation plan, regularly evaluating the program in terms of learning, behavior, and organizational results, assessing the extent to which training contributes to personal and organizational effectiveness. The evaluation of learners goes beyond

Due to the dynamic nature of the missionary enterprise and missionaries' changing needs, missionary training programs must continually adjust and change to be effective.

knowledge alone to measure skills and character, reviewing various program elements including time, delivery system, accessibility, user friendliness, and stewardship of organizational resources in order to make program improvements.

- 7. Accountability**—The missionary training program contains accountability procedures for reporting to all those that involved in the training process on the efficiency and effectiveness of the program including a review by a panel of peers.

Conclusion:

Due to the dynamic nature of the missionary enterprise and missionaries' changing needs, missionary training programs must continually adjust and change to be effective. This, while holding fast to biblical truth, universal missiological principles, and the need to equip those God calls and empowers for missionary service so that every people and person have access to Christ; Savior, Healer, Baptizer, and Soon-Coming King.

number 13

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The concept of the urgency of the harvest and the need for harvesters is clearly communicated in the Bible.

Missionary Selection and Recognition

Key practical steps for agencies for endorsing and appointing new missionary candidates.

Justification:

Missions agencies should serve a purpose of identifying, examining, affirming, and endorsing the call of God of new missionary workers before the national church.

Part 1: Biblical Impetus: Defining the Challenge:

The concept of the urgency of the harvest and the need for harvesters is clearly communicated in the Bible.

1. Matthew 9:35–38: The labors are few and we should pray for laborers. Both were of great concern to Him.
2. Matthew 20:1–7: He seeks to engage the labor force and there is a sense of urgency in the time of day and taking advantage of the time for harvest.
3. John 4:35: Seeing the urgency of the harvest.
4. Matthew 24:14: The sense of closure related with the harvest and eschatology.

Part 2: Observations for Recruitment and Selection:

1. **Agencies need to have a paradigm shift in missionary recruitment.**
 - There is a great urgency. The Church can harm the entire harvest if it does not engage *all workers, from all peoples, to all places, all the time*.
 - The Task here, therefore, is creating the platform and framework to “unleash” the entire Harvest force of the Church by engaging it strategically, and **removing all obstacles** to the effect.
2. **Missionary recruitment criteria.**
 - In evaluating the process, the following should be taken into consideration:

- **Relationship**—Relationship with Christ, the Church, the spouse, family, and leaders. Does the candidate demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit in his/her relationships?
- **Training**—The candidate must show competency not only in secular training, but also theological, missiological, professional, and as well potentially mentorship.
- **Calling/Passion**—Candidates must show evidence of their calling and passion through reaching the lost and their call recognized by spiritual leaders. They must also show affirmation to the Great Commission mandates.
- **Spiritual/Moral/Emotional**—Candidate must demonstrate stability and consistency in spiritual, moral, and emotional disposition. Pentecostal missions requires candidates to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Candidates must have a sound devotional lifestyle and emotional disposition. They should not be in debt at the time of appointment. Candidates must be emotionally and mentally sound, not having any form of psychiatric or physical disability (except allowed by competent medical authority).

3. Case study from one country on how they approve a missionary.

- The following is a model implemented by a few countries.
 - Step 1: If married, both spouses must be called. Then the single or couple must receive approval from their local pastor, the sectional leadership, and/or district presbytery before they can apply to the missions agency.
 - Step 2: The missionary candidate writes or contacts the director of the missions agency indicating his/her call to missions and obtains approval to continue the process.
 - Step 3: The missionary candidate submits a formal application with his/her educational resume to the missions agency and missions board.
 - Step 4: The missions board screens and interviews the applicant (single or couple). The screening process determines if the applicant has met all personal and educational criteria. The interview continues the screening process.
 - Step 5: The missions board recommends the candidate to the executive committee for appointment.
 - Step 6: The missions director deploys the appointed missionary to the designated field and supervises his/her work.

It must be understood that every country should develop its own protocol.

The bedrock of the Pentecostal heritage is dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Part 2: The Importance of Both Strategy and Dependence on Guidance of the Holy Spirit:

1. The bedrock of the Pentecostal heritage is dependence on the Holy Spirit. Most of the early missionaries did not have excellent training, or maybe would not meet the requirements of today, but they had a call of God and that pushed them towards paying a price and showing great commitment.
2. Though a missions sending entity might have a focus or priority on certain countries or unreached people groups, etc., there should still be a consideration of the personal call and conviction that a missionary candidate must have. To the best of the agency's ability, a candidate should not be turned down only because their burden or call does not coincide with a country's priorities (That does not mean that the person should not have to defend his/her call and be able to convince others of its genuineness).
3. The leaders of a missions sending entity must continually pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He will call people that missions leadership might not have called, and He has a strategy that missions leadership might not have implemented or considered.
4. Dependence on the Holy Spirit does not mean that missions leadership should not seek to have a strategy, and as well make plans, both short and long term, and goals, that would be part of their vision.

Part 3: Best Practices for Selection, Recruitment, Mobilization, and Endorsement:

1. It is important that the missions agency have a policy in writing (a Missions Manual), that will make the way clear for potential candidates on the pathway to become a missionary.
2. It is important that the missions agency have a policy in writing internally of their requirements and let potential candidates be aware of those requirements.
3. It is equally important that there be a degree of flexibility, to be able to respond to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in unique situations.
4. It is important that countries learn from each other (networking), but they should not "copy" the requirements of other countries because each country is unique.
5. Avoid creating unnecessary obstacles that are difficult to overcome. For example, in one country it might take two years to be ordained, and in another country ten. The requirement, therefore, of the necessity of being "ordained" might make becoming a missionary prohibitive. The intentions might have been good in having the requirement, but short sighted in understanding the impact it will have on potential candidates.

6. It would be good to have various missionary categories so that candidates, for example, who have spiritual maturity but not the Bible school education could be allowed to serve.
7. Acknowledge that the Spirit uses multiple means to initiate, nurture, and confirm the call to missionary service. For example, Paul “recruited” Timothy to join the missionary band.
8. The processing of each candidate is unique, requiring spiritual discernment on the part of leadership to determine whether obstacles or circumstances justify them not being accepted as a candidate.

Conclusion:

The Holy Spirit urgently desires to move all laborers into the harvest field. The missions sending structure should facilitate the process of mobilization and selection of missionaries, in such a way that it minimizes obstacles.



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Never Reached Wristbands

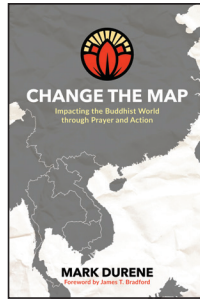
These blue and black wristbands are a continual reminder to pray for the Never Reached People Groups across Asia Pacific, to pray for more workers to reach them, and to ask God where He might even send you. Reversible.

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Micronesia	718-921	Vietnam	718-929
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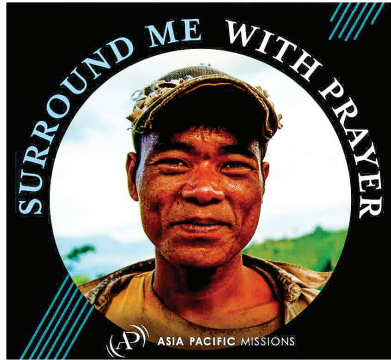
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Collection of practical resources • Pray that God would call Pastoral Care leaders in each area of Asia Pacific who are passionate for the workers.

CREATIVE ACCESS

- Pray that opportunities for business as missions platforms would open up and provide access to local entrepreneurial relationships for evangelists.
- Pray for believers ready to answer God's call with creative ideas to share the gospel with the never reached.

NEVER REACHED PEOPLE GROUPS

- Pray that God would reveal Himself through miraculous signs and break the power of false religion and spirit works.
- Pray for protection, empowerment and open doors for crisis-cultural workers and local believers to share the gospel with those never-reached people groups.

MEDIA

- Pray for missionaries creating tools and training Christians to use online media to extend the gospel to the never reached.
- Pray that the window to share the gospel among would open and Christians could share their faith in complete freedom.

TRAFFICKING & AT-RISK PEOPLE

- Pray that collaboration and support would develop among local and national governments to combat human trafficking, domestic violence and child abuse.
- Pray for connections with local churches and pastors to host in prevention and rescue for all levels of oppression and exploitation.

SURROUND missionaries and key ministry areas (KMAs) of Asia Pacific with prayer.

CHILDREN

- Pray that God would burden hearts in Asia Pacific and America, to guide a generation of children to serve God.
- Pray for children, who have experienced trauma, to receive physical and emotional healing by the power of the Holy Spirit.

COMPASSION, EDUCATION, & HEALTH

- Pray that compassion ministries for children and adults would have resources to meet physical needs in order to open hearts toward God.
- Pray for educational opportunities that may lift communities out of poverty and provide abilities to read God's Word.

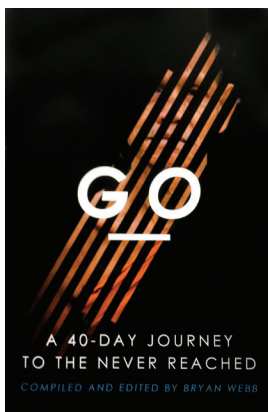
INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES

- Pray for the lead pastors and team members to plant International Churches in large cities throughout Asia Pacific.
- Pray for Malaga, Balikpapan, Semarang, Palembang, Batam, and Lubuk Koba - all cities in Indonesia where we have to plant International Churches.

SURROUND ME

Prayer brochure
 718-936 | 25 for \$7.50

The *Surround Me* brochure and map provides focused prayer points of key areas of missionary life and ministry, as well as links to videos of missionaries praying for those areas. We can't thank you enough for surrounding our missionary family in prayer.



GO: A 40-Day Journey to the Never Reached

Compelling stories written by missionaries who serve in some of the hardest-to-reach parts of Asia Pacific. This 40-day devotional will inspire you to join countless others who devote themselves to praying, giving, and going to the ends of the earth.

English 717-220 | \$9.99 Spanish 717-221 | \$9.99
 5 or more — \$5.99 each

Study Group Guide 717-217 | \$2.00

FREE DOWNLOAD of small group workbook and video series on this devotional at asiapacificmissions.org/gobook.



EMPOWERED

English 717-238 | \$4.99
 Spanish 717-240 | \$4.99

This is a 10-day devotional about how being filled with the Holy Spirit empowers us to complete the unfinished task. We are passionate about reaching the never reached and committed to planting the church everywhere it is not. This can only happen if we are filled with something other than our desires and call of God to serve – we need the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.



CHILDREN'S RESOURCES



Adventures in Asia Pacific

Set of 15 brochures 718-940 | \$4.50

These trifold brochures are the best resource for a children's ministry focus on missions. Each one has exciting games, interesting facts, and engaging stories centered around different countries and "Endangered Peoples" in Asia Pacific.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Indonesia 718-900 | Mongolia 718-908 |
| Japan 718-901 | Micronesia 718-909 |
| Thailand 718-902 | Vietnam 718-910 |
| Vanuatu 718-903 | Papua New Guinea 718-911 |
| Myanmar 718-904 | Taiwan 718-912 |
| Cambodia 718-905 | Polynesia 718-941 |
| Philippines 718-906 | Francophone Pacific 718-942 |
| Laos 718-907 | |

Toby the Tapir

A Soft and Adorable Stuffed Animal

These plush tapirs are a perfect match for AP's other children's resources, which follow the adventures of the cartoon tapir named Toby. Each stuffed animal comes with a tag highlighting a **Never Reached** people group for kids to pray for.

718-914 | \$6.99



Toby the Tapir Luggage Tag

\$2.00 each | 718-930

Made of premium and flexible PVC, durable and waterproof. Includes plastic hanging loops. Dimensions 2.125" x 3.375"



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