



“Correct Me If I’m Wrong”

*The quarterly bulletin of the Global
Community of Mission Information Workers*

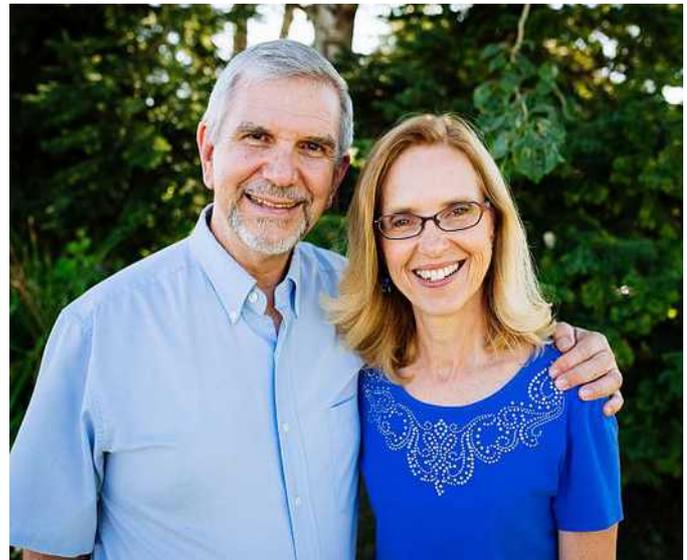
Volume 7, Number 3, July 2017

Bridging the Research Gap *by Jon Lewis*

One of the difficult realities of mission research today is that, just as more and more ministries recognize its importance and attempt to implement it, the mission-funding world has not shared that same recognition of its value, which has resulted in a lack of support for mission research. This disconnect between givers and users is significantly hindering the speed at which the Great Commission can advance in many parts of the world.

From my days as an MAF pilot in Africa through my current staff role at One Challenge International—and especially as a board member of Global Mapping International (GMI)—I have had a front row seat to witness the growing interest in mission research, particularly among ministries in the Global South. I attribute this interest to several factors. First is the increased complexity of our global context. No longer can all unengaged unreached people groups (UJPG) be identified and described by nice, neat polygons on a vector map. Thanks to dramatic, global demographic changes marked especially by recent migration patterns, unreached populations are now mixed up and embedded in dense city neighborhoods, urban slums, and once mono-cultural suburbs. Only through sophisticated research analysis can we determine where today’s Great Commission targets are truly located.

Secondly, the new diversity in ministry endeavor by both Global North and Global South ministries demands greater ability to know how a particular ministry emphasis can be most effective. The word “missions” today does not immediately mean evangelism or church planting activity, rather, it encompasses a widening field of related outreach endeavors. Knowing how to best team up with other ministries, coupled with a growing desire to be good stewards of scarce ministry resources, drives a heightened desire to use mission research for the best application of those resources.



A third factor enhancing mission research value is the global tsunami of big data that has resulted in a new understanding of everything from market trends to climate change. An entire millennial generation has now grown up in a world where reality is readily defined by the results of this type of major research effort. Is it any wonder that young global leaders today are more ready than ever to apply those same research efforts to their own ministry endeavors?

It has been especially fulfilling for me to see these trends culminate in the significant priority now embraced for mission research by such key African mission networks and organizations as MANI (Movement of African National Initiatives), NEMA (Nigerian Evangelical Missions Association), and MSL (Missions Supporters League.) And during the past year, GMI’s Global Associates program has only confirmed this growing interest in learning how to apply mission research to real, live ministry programs.

It is for all these reasons that the lack of similar enthusiasm for mission research by the funding community is such a shame. To be fair, many funders and funding organizations have certainly supported certain types of research for many years, but the data gathering that has interested them

most is what validates their particular investment. There is often an unstated assumption by funders that ministry leaders already know what to do and, therefore, all that is necessary is to be assured the financial investment in those leaders leads to desired outcomes. Although I am not diminishing the importance of project evaluation, I maintain many funders have yet to fully grasp the importance of helping ministry leaders apply adequate mission research BEFORE their actual ministry efforts are initiated and not just after the fact. Continuing to emphasize project evaluation research exclusively actually impedes Kingdom advancement by fostering grant proposals that ministry leaders know will produce results funders like, but will not necessarily achieve ministry goals that are the most strategic and needed for a given situation.

Fortunately, there is plenty of opportunity to correct this gap between ministry funders and ministry implementers. Here are some suggestions:

1. Encourage more articulation of the benefits of good mission research (such as what this digital publication is doing.) As the funding community becomes exposed to more examples of ministry success resulting from well done mission research, I'm confident it will produce a change of heart in what funding priorities should be.
2. Host specific vision trips for funders that focus on new applications of mission research. This should particularly be the case where ministries are tackling new and complex global contexts. When funders grasp a better perspective of the challenge in designing effective strategies for tough cultural or demographic situations, they will have a natural desire to assist in finding and then funding those best strategies.
3. Refuse funding that focuses exclusively on results evaluation rather than results design. Although this may seem a bit radical to ministry leaders desperate for support, when funders fully recognize the serious priority mission leaders put on mission research, they will quickly come on board themselves.

The priority gap between users and supporters of mission research may be a reality today, but joining hands to bridge the gap will result in a global mission-funding community that not only wants to see things done right, but also wants the right things done in the first place.

GMI's Knowledge Stewardship Grants

by J. Nelson Jennings

More so now than when GMI began 34 years ago, organizations throughout the global Christian community are practicing knowledge stewardship, what GMI has defined as the "Spirit-led process of acquiring and insightfully using information" for Kingdom impact. To enhance these organizations' services, upon its recent closing GMI distributed its resources through several "Knowledge Stewardship Grants." The recipients and resources are all listed on the continuing GMI home page at www.gmi.org, under "Meet the New Stewards." Here is that same list, with a few additional comments:



Nigeria Evangelical Missions Association (NEMA) – www.nemanigeriamissions.org

- 10/40 Map Suite: A set of maps featuring data overlaid with the 10/40 Window

One Challenge (OC International) – www.ocresearch.info

- Breakthrough Mentoring Suite: Includes the GMI Fellowship Program (for short-term research projects) and the Breakthrough and SearchLite training materials (for mission research)

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) – www.evangelicalfellowship.ca

- Webinar Suite: Select recorded GMI webinars on various information and research topics

LightSys – www.lightsys.org

- Historic Map Suite: Historical GMI digital maps to be displayed on MissionInfobank.
- GMI GIS Code: GMI computer code, tools, and training materials

Mission India – www.missionindia.org

- India Decision Suite: Research, books, and maps focused on supporting the church in India

Missio Nexus – www.missionexus.org

- Missiographics Suite: The Missiographic Infographics Service along with infographic books, videos, and devotionals (see missionexus.org/missiographics/)
- Mobilization Suite: The mobilization-focused books Searching to Serve and Go, But Go Wisely

Best Christian Workplaces Institute – www.bcwinstitute.com

- Retention Suite: The book Helping Your Missionary Thrive based on the GMI-BCWI Engage Research project, along with a calculator to estimate the cost to mobilize and send a missionary

YWAM–4K Mapping – www.4kworldmap.com

- People and Religion Map Suite: Maps featuring various social science datasets relevant to mission (see 4kworldmap.com/gmi-legacy/)

Onnuri Community Church – www.onnuri.org , en.onnuri.org

- Statistics Suite: The books Seeing Your World and Our Anchor in a World Adrift, along with GMI's "Global Briefing"

Clearly, these "new stewards" of GMI's bequeathed resources are internationally based, experienced mission practitioners, and well suited to the assigned grants. Pray for and contact these friends, that they might effectively carry forward the torch of knowledge stewardship.

One Man's View of Money in Mission Information Work

by Chris Maynard 2017-07-01



In 2005 God sent me into global church information. In 2007 I launched out from the security of my full-time secular job and set up a one-man company in the UK as an information management consultant. I settled on a schedule of fees: £1,000 (UK pounds) per day if the client could make use of my skills (I came from a high-powered job!), £200 per day if additionally the client was promoting justice, mercy or faith for more than a billion people (I have a global call), and £0 per day if the work was closely aligned with God's direction for my life in global church information. For simplicity all rates were to include expenses, so I would have to fund them out of my own pocket, but on the other hand I would include travel time when billing because that is time when I could

not be doing other things. I decided that all the information I produced would be free and licensed under "Creative Commons" (see www.creativecommons.org).

In 2008 I had one substantial secular contract that earned me a five-figure sum. By about 2009, now aged 54, I discovered that by God's grace, because of my careful financial planning over many years and because I have a prudent wife, I did not actually need to earn any money to continue to live happily. This is just as well, because I found it is not easy to earn money in mission information work. I noted that most of my new colleagues either support themselves as I do or have a group of faithful friends and family who provide at least a large part of what they need. Over 10 years I have been paid for about 50 days of work for three or four Christian organizations at the £200 per day rate. That averages out at £1,000 per year, which is way less than my expenses. Eventually after no money at all came in for 18 months, I wound up the company and no longer expect to be paid.

Travel expenses are significant in this work. Coming from secular work, it surprises me that even when invited to speak at a conference, the organisers seem to expect me to pay all my expenses including the standard conference registration fee. I can easily spend £1,000 on a trip to a conference, and I usually make three of those a year.

My advice to aspiring mission information workers is don't expect to make a living out of this work - certainly not enough to bring up a family. Expect to support yourself or find some faithful people with a secular income who love you and trust you. They have to trust you will be doing a good job for the Lord even when they do not understand what you are doing. At times they surely will not understand.

Should it be this way? Is the ox muzzled? At least we have the privilege Paul sometimes claimed of not charging for his work in the gospel.

Come One- Come All!!

The 8th Tri-Annual Lausanne Researchers International Conference



Where: The Dimesse Sisters; Karen, Kenya (Southwest Nairobi)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dimesse-Sisters-Karen/469235403107420>

When: April 30- May 4, 2018

This is the first time that this recurring event will take place on the African continent, and we are delighted to have such a warm and inviting venue available. There are many details yet to be determined, so do pray for the Steering Group as it develops the theme and program. In the meantime, please save the dates: April 30, 2018 - May 4, 2018. We hear that Kenya in April-May is lovely!

See You There!

Travel is costly. Our budgets, families and the environment take the hit. So, if we must be on the road, let's maximize the Kingdom returns.

One or more members of our Task Force will be at the following events:

COMIBAM: Bogotá, Colombia – August 22-25, 2017

Get-Together of Mission Information Workers – September 13, 2017 – Colorado Springs*

EMS Annual Conference: Dallas, Texas – September 15-17, 2017

GACX Global Forum: Minneapolis, MN – October 10-13 2017

If you too will be present, please drop us a note at info@globalcmiw.org. Perhaps we can share a meal or just chat over coffee. Who knows...maybe a face-to-face meeting will create the moment to form a new friendship, strengthen a relationship with an old friend, or provide the opportunity for the spark of a good idea to ignite.

* Three of our CMIW Task Force members, Larry, Stephanie and Chris, will be in Colorado Springs together in September. We would like to host an informal Get-Together for **Mission Information Workers to meet up for prayer and fellowship from 2:30 to 4 PM on Wednesday September 13th**. If you would like to be with us, please drop us a line and we'll get you the details once finalized.

Who's Who in Missions Information

Special Profile: George Gumah

1. [CMIW] **Please tell us about yourself and your family.** [GG] My name is George Gumah from Ghana. My parents migrated from the far northeastern corner of Ghana where Ghana shares a boarder with Burkina Faso and settled in middle belt of Ghana. The background of my parents is a mixture of Islam and Traditional believers with a few Catholics and nominal Christians. The story kept evolving as God transformed my elder sisters and brother whose encouragement and leadership led me to the Catholic Church at a tender age. My parents never went to church until they were over 65 years old. I witnessed all the charms, pots of herbs, sacrifices and libations my father practiced growing up, though they lived in the city. All these rituals were only because of fear of rivals and for protection of self and family. God had a different plan. Neighbours took me in and led me to another church where I had lots of

interactions with matured Christians and the word of God. I began to fall in love with Christian music, reading the Bible extensively and praying faithfully. I felt the dire need for an unknown God (to me) and the emptiness of my heart drew me closer. I was yearning for a meaningful relationship. Sickness and fear hunted my life but God drew me closer to Himself and set me free in the last year of my high school. I felt terribly sick with issues of the heart but God did not only save my life physically but gave me eternal life. My passion and desire for evangelism and missions birthed forth. I am married to Joanna Des-bordes whom I met doing campus ministry and outreaches to villages and schools. When we met, I asked her a question that I knew she would answer “yes,” and she did: “Are you willing to marry a missionary...like me?” We are now happily married and serving with the Pioneers-Africa missions organisation.

2. [CMIW] **What is your current ministry?** [GG] I am currently leading the effort to serve our over 145 missionaries throughout Africa and one in Asia in the capacity of Member Care Director. I am channeling my skills and experiences in research (geography/resource development and mapping) to contribute to mission’s research. I became an associate of Global Mapping International (GMI) in 2016. I was also inducted as the Missions Director for the Ghana Evangelical Missions Association (GEMA) in January, 2017 to serve the missions body in that regard. I have enrolled in a fellowship program with GMI to research into the ‘Perspective of Missions in the Ghanaian Church.’



3. [CMIW] **What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction?**

[GG] My greatest satisfaction in world missions has first and foremost been the desire and the passion to pray for global missions, missionaries and the UPGs. This is a frequent act of service I am grateful to be part of. I believe praying for the work of missions must not only be in a gathering but must be individually cultivated since the Master Jesus admonishes us to do that (Mathew 9:37,38). I do not know the impact, but I know the power of prayer! When I pray, I know missions will go on. Raising short-term teams from campuses and churches to complement the effort of long-term missionaries has also always been my great joy. I have seen the lives of many short-term missionaries transformed, many demonstrating a promising future to go, pray, give towards missions and be part of the missions sending force wherever they may be. My contributions in missions' research lately makes me feel responsible to learn from the old generation of mission’s researchers, network with mentors and young, vibrant mission’s researchers to see knowledge stewardship done in a better and improved manner. Globally, we need more partnership and collaboration in this field since information has become very fluid and technology widespread. We live in a more pluralistic and dynamic world now and I am happy to be part of a network of Christian researchers seeking to track these changes, research into new areas, explore ways and strategies of doing missions better and adapting to the ‘global village’ ‘glocally’. An ongoing research focus on the UPGs in Ghana has given me great satisfaction knowing that God is working in and through the lives of many believers elsewhere. This is so encouraging. The undeniable enormous task stares at us as we travel to the nooks and crannies of Ghana, to the remotest parts of this country. There is the evidence, however, of the Master at work. All hope is not lost!!!

4. [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?** [GG] In the next ten years, I want to develop my capacity as a mission’s researcher and be ready to take up more responsibilities in mission’s research and missions as a whole. I want to help in rectifying distinctive inaccuracies and weaknesses in global mission’s information and contribute to their interpretations. It’s my utmost desire to raise potential missionaries and mission’s researchers in the African context to contribute to the global effort. I want provide the African and global Church with the necessary field

information for engagement. Praying for the work of missions and the workforce is a constant act of service.

5. [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?** [GG] I would be willing to represent the CMIW community in any capacity as pertaining to my skills/specialties and my availability to do so. My interest is in research and mapping. I would also want to publish my papers and articles.

Information from the Word

In 1 Cor 9:8-18 Paul asks lots of questions about money. Verses 11 and 12 highlight a key point, *"If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ."* (NIV)

Do mission information workers have *"the right of support"* from anyone? Should we make use of that right? Or would that *"hinder the gospel of Christ"*?

Final Details:

- This bulletin is produced by the Community of Mission Information Workers Task Force comprised of Larry Kraft, Stephanie Kraft, Chris Maynard & Nelson Jennings. Please send any suggestions of issues to discuss or any other ideas to ["info@globalcmiw.org"](mailto:info@globalcmiw.org).
- Back issues can be found at: www.globalcmiw.org.