



Getting the Numbers Across
 by Chris Maynard

Over the last three bulletins we have explored our shared experience of resistance to using numbers in missions. You can find the articles called: “Why the Hostility?”, “You are not Alone”, “Understanding the Resistance”. This is probably our final article on the subject. We will share four ideas from our community to help us get our message to a skeptical audience.

Admit it! We count what is important to us

Jim Haney finds that one response that seems to satisfy skeptics about numbers is, “We count what is important to us.” Whether that is the score in a game, or the fish in John 21. By extension, if someone does not care about how many people groups are without a gospel witness, or the rate of church planting and discipleship in relation to population growth, do they really care whether we are winning or losing the ultimate battle?

Invite objective criticism

As Bob Waymire writes, experience teaches us to ANTICIPATE certain responses, and helps us to be more wise in answering them. If you can show you are sensitive to people’s objections, their responses can become much more objective and helpful. During the AD2000 Movement Bob found there were lots of people in the audience from many nations. He would mention that, “we realize some of the information that will be shared, doesn’t match your experience where you are. We would appreciate if you would make a note of your observation, question, criticism or suggestion and pass them to one of us after the session. If you have specific information that you think will give a more balanced picture, please share it with us.” You want the audience to feel their observations are important and wanted.

Communicate both passion and humility

Chris Cooper wonders if we sometimes hide our underlying “passion” or “compassion” under the “objectivity” of our results. So we fail to connect spiritually or relationally with our audience. Are we really showing our audience what motivates us in this work? How are we showing our spiritual connection to God in this? On the other hand, sometimes our “passion” comes out as arrogance that “we know” and implies we can achieve results just by measurement and planning without recognizing God’s dominion. Or perhaps we show an impatience, unwilling to wait for God or for others. So perhaps ... framing our presentations with both passion and humility might help to bridge the gap.

Data doesn’t speak for itself. Give it a hand

Mark Avery comments that we analysts expect the data to speak for itself, but it rarely does so. We need to pay attention to four things: 1. Present the data within an understandable context-- either building a persuasive evidence case or telling a story. 2. Turn vague “issues” into here-and-now choices. 3. Create a grid of key choices to be made in the situation, with the options along each row. 4. Pull leaders together to select a pattern of choices that everyone can agree to. This can give a disoriented group a sense of purposeful direction. Mark thinks sometimes the mission information worker needs to connect with the angst of leadership, and he has found that “making choices clear” is a great way to do this.

Our thanks to all who participated in this discussion.



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Research Country by Country?

by Larry Kraft

“Without accurate, up-to-date information the Body of Christ in a nation is ‘flying blind’. Meaningful planning and resource allocations are in jeopardy as are effective evangelism and church planting. But where there is a national level information research function, and a service for getting information into the hands of those who need it, both the Church within the nation and outside can better reach the potential in qualitative and quantitative growth.” (Bob Waymire, National Research Mobilization Handbook, 1994, page iii)



In 1994, Bob came to Brazil and helped me lead training for Brazilian researchers. Here we are with a training group, Bob in front of me in the circle.

These words penned over 20 years ago by Bob Waymire are still true today. The Church needs good information about how it is currently manifested in every country in order to move forward in obedience to the Great Commission of Jesus to make disciples of all nations. Perhaps when the Gospel first arrived on the scene in a certain country, this type of information work was done by outsiders, visitors who didn't even live in the country. But, with time, as churches were established and began to mature,

this became the responsibility of those who are resident in that country. Ideally, it is the citizens of a nation who best take ownership for this process.

We in CMIW have a desire to encourage the research and information efforts in each country. We encourage national ownership of the process and of the information. After all, who is it for if not for those who live there, serve there and are responsible to reach their neighbors and co-countrymen with the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ?

We recognize that the strength, size and composition of the churches are different in every country, and perhaps even among regions in the same country. These differences stem from culture and context as well as from the fact that churches are in different stages of development. Surely, the national research function of, for example, the church in Libya will not look the same as that in Brazil, nor that in China as in South Korea.

Some questions that we, the Community of Mission Information Workers Task Force are hoping to answer in the coming months regarding national research functions are:

- Which countries have in-country, organized church research functions? Which types of data are needed or desired for each country?
- For which countries do we have little or no information generated on the ground?
- If necessary and/or helpful, how can we get a global picture and how can we ensure compatibility on a global scale of information that is collected for decisions which are made locally?

Many of our readers have thoughts and information on these questions. Would you want to share your ideas with us? How much is research on the radar of the Church in your country?

Please pray for this upcoming exciting event:

7th International Lausanne Researchers' Conference



Global challenges – local responses
Transforming Research for Mission and Ministry
Sunday 24th May to Thursday 28th May, 2015
Aloft Sentral Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Visit our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/GlobalCMIW> throughout the event for daily conference updates.

Who's Who in Missions Information

Special Profile: Molly Wall

1. [CMIW] **Please tell us about yourself and your family.**

[MW] I live and work near London in the UK, though I come from the USA originally. I have worked with mission information / research since 2001: for 8 years at the US Center for World Mission in California, and for over 6 years now with Operation World. But I suppose my pull towards missions began in my late schooling years – a strong conviction about wanting to be set apart for service came during secondary school, and God particularly directed me into mission service at the end of my university studies. I spent a gap year serving short-term in Latin America in the 1990s, followed by a string of different pursuits (graduate school, teaching and educational programme development, among others!). It wasn't until I came into contact with Dr Winter and the US Center that I learned about the unreached or "hidden peoples" – but since that time I have been strongly compelled to invest myself in full-time work that helps the least reached to encounter Jesus. I was raised in a Christian home and a strongly Christian community in Oklahoma, where my family (my parents, my brother and his family, and extended family) still live.



2. [CMIW] **What is your current ministry?** [MW] I serve with Operation World, a ministry of WEC International. These days I head up the team and ministry, which – with a small team – means I do just about everything from editing/writing to consulting with churches and missions agencies to filing to coffee-making! :-). I had the privilege of serving on the team that compiled the 7th edition of Operation World (2010), and again with our latest resource Pray for the World released just this month (April 2015).

3. [CMIW] **What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction?** [MW] The 50-year legacy of Operation World – across its 7 editions in so many languages and formats – is a humbling work to be part of. I see the power of this well-researched, thoughtfully communicated information to unite believers - from diverse backgrounds - in fervent prayer for the nations. What better way to find unity across cultures, denominations, and every line that divides, than before the Lord in prayer for His world? And the number of missionaries (and mission leaders) globally who point to the role of Operation World as a critical part of their journey into service helps us catch just a small glimpse of how God uses these resources to inspire prayer that leads to action. I do not mean to sound like an advert for Operation World – simply to share my own sense of satisfaction in the role I get to play in carrying forward a work that God has chosen to use in this way, at least until now. A side benefit – other than working alongside some really great people on this team over the years – has been the chance to interact with believers from almost every country (including some of you!), to hear their stories, their needs, and their concerns and hopes for their country. When I can then share what I learn with others, it feels like I get to continue the work of the early apostles who traveled from town to town sharing news of the churches in each place. I see a theme here I guess – I find satisfaction in being part of connection across the global body of Christ!

My time at the US Center for World Mission was a great chance for learning and contribution as well. I was able to have a small part in editing the latest reader for the widely used Perspectives course. But I also got to develop a course that helps us learn more about the key teachings and ideas from Perspectives from a chronological walk through stories from the Bible. It is called "The Blessing" and was made available free for download (in English, and I believe later also in Spanish, French, Indonesian, Chinese, Kinyarwanda, perhaps more). It takes a little to work to adapt the text for different contexts, but I enjoyed trying something new that hopefully makes the core ideas more accessible – and helps more people dive into Scripture itself for missions training (together with wrestling out answers to difficult cross-cultural questions!).

4. [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?** [MW] This is a daunting

question – for my generation at least, 10 years seems a very long time! Haha. I do dream about the future of Operation World, and how to see its 50-year legacy propel it forward into something shaped to meet the present and future needs of the global Church - it has changed so spectacularly across that timespan! I hope to see a more diverse and well-equipped team that can rely on the collaboration of mission information workers from each region (and eventually even nation!), and that can be made widely available to even more of the Church. The prayer handbook remains vital, but new and different electronic or other formats can surely help us both gather and filter the most helpful information more quickly, then communicate it across more languages and tools to the praying Church!

Having just finished our most recent resource (a shorter version of Operation World in simpler English, for non-native speakers and translators), we are now in a position to devote ourselves to some reflection, creative thinking, and a good exploration process seeking the counsel of trusted advisors and folks who use OW in a variety of contexts. We pray and trust God will guide and sustain us through whatever changes need making to position ourselves well for future service to the global Church.

5. [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?** [MW] I hope that many in the community find the OW resources a help to own ministry, but certainly if I or others on the team can provide help in other ways I would be willing to chat further.

Information from the Word

Joshua was faced with the problem an uncompleted task – the occupation of the land (see Joshua 18). Seven tribes had not yet captured an area to live in. Joshua recognised the problem. He had the vision to see a solution, but he involved the stakeholders in that solution. He commissioned research. He let representatives of the tribes decide on the boundaries. Then he took the choice of area out of their hands and gave it to God. Joshua, the people and God each played a part.

Final Details:

- This bulletin is produced by the Community of Mission Information Workers Task Force comprised of Larry Kraft, Stephanie Kraft and Chris Maynard. Please send any suggestions of issues to discuss or any other ideas to "cmiw@worksmail.net".
- Back issues can be found at: www.globalcmiw.org.
- Editorial team: Stephanie and Chris; layout and distribution: Larry.