



Missions Information at Urbana 18

If you are from, or currently in, the USA then no doubt you've heard of the InterVarsity Urbana Student Missions Conferences. Since 1946 they have been (basically) triennial events designed for students to "encounter God, experience his global church, enter into his call, and engage in community." No doubt many American members of our CMIW Community first recognized that God was calling us, or strengthened a call we suspected we had, through our participation in an Urbana missions conference.

At each conference, reliable world, church and missions information is presented. Researchers and the resources they produce are consulted for the preparation of plenary messages. Compelling graphics are prepared to present global facts in order to promote a common understanding of the current state of world, its profile and its needs, and to clarify efforts of the Church to faithfully live out the mission of God in all its cultural, geographic and social complexity.



Urbana 18, which occurred December 27-31, 2018, was no exception. For example, Dr. John Plake, Senior Manager of Ministry Intelligence for the American Bible Society, shared a groundbreaking study in the Ministry and Missions Leadership Track. 949 missionaries were surveyed in an effort to highlight key abilities every missionary needs to build cross-cultural relationships and accomplish the gospel's work when living abroad. Plake is a researcher with a pastor's heart, bridging the worlds of social science, business intelligence, and spiritual formation. Missions information is needed for leadership formation.

Urbana 2015 was the first time a #Hack4Missions was organized in conjunction with the Students Missions Conference. Here's the graphic they created after that event:



Also at Urbana 18, for the second time, students got a glimpse into how God could use a passion for technology through the #Hack4Missions. Aspiring software developers, digital designers, user experience analysts, game programmers, project managers, system administrators, graphic designers, and anyone else involved in building and shaping technology were challenged with the reality that more and more missions organizations rely heavily on technology to run their operations. Ali Llewellyn and Nick Skytland, Directors of the #Hack4Missions Leadership Team, were co-founders of NASA's International Space Apps Challenge and National Day of Civic Hacking, two of the largest mass collaborations in history. Why have a hackathon at a missions conference? Because the need for technologically-gifted, mission-minded servants has increased dramatically. Information workers are needed to tackle real-world technology challenges.

During the five-day conference, young people engaged in a kaleidoscope of experiences including 16,000-person worship sessions, Bible expositions, seminars, manuscript studies, testimonies from the global church, and prayer. They connected with mentors to receive prayer and guidance. Among them

were some of our next generation of information workers. Let's keep them in our prayers and, as we have opportunity, welcome them into our community to learn and serve with us.

Note this resource: A member of our CMIW Facilitation Team, Chris Maynard, helped to create this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVmTU13rgo8>. It challenges viewers to consider priorities for missionary sending and funding and was seen by students at Urbana 18.

"The world cannot be understood without numbers. And it cannot be understood with numbers alone." (Hans Rosling)

Why counting churches is fundamental but not the whole deal *by Larry Kraft*

The idea of Saturation Church Planting/DAWN-type ministry was birthed by Donald McGavran, the father of the Church Growth Movement. Here is a brief excerpt from his landmark *Understanding Church Growth* (page 7):

The multiplication of churches nourished on the Bible and full of the Holy Spirit is a sine qua non in carrying out the purposes of God. ... Though God's triumphant reign will not come in its fullness until Christ returns in power, it is clear that in this era the more who love Christ and live "in him" as part of his body, the more goodness and truth will prevail in their communities. Righteousness and peace will surely spread as sound churches multiply throughout the more than three billion persons who feel no allegiance to Jesus Christ.



How was this manifest in Brazil? The Protestant church began to grow vigorously in the early 1980's, averaging 2-3 times the population growth. At the Global Congress on World Evangelization (the AD2000 Movement in 1995 in Seoul), the Brasil 2010 Project, later renamed Brasil 21, officially set the goal to see an evangelical church within easy access of every Brazilian.

Brazil is immense and its regions very diverse-- with small river villages in the Amazon basin to mega-cities in the Southeast. It would be hard to set goals and carry out processes in all parts of the country simultaneously. Broad institutional participation would also be a challenge as there are million-member denominations with little felt need for partnership with others. Yet the need for systematic church planting was recognized, so goals were set and the Project was begun:

- A church for every 1000 people in each town and urban neighborhood, would require about 180,000 churches.
- A church in every river community (estimated 42,000).
- A church in every rural village (30,000).
- A total of 250,000 churches by 2010, meaning 180,000 new ones in the right places.

By 2010, there existed in Brazil about 205,000 churches (source: Operation World). Yet, the goal of 250,000 in the locations listed above had not been met. More than 100,000 new churches were still needed to reach that aspect of the goal. Here are some reasons for the failure:

- Much of the church multiplication occurred near existing churches
- Little emphasis was placed on crossing cultural and geographical barriers
- The greatest need for churches was in areas from which people were migrating and not to which they were moving, meaning a missionary call needed to be received and recognized to move against the natural immigrant flow.

Here now is a summary of the current situation (2019):

- About 25% of the population is Protestant (evangélicos) and 85% to 90% of the population calls itself Christian (including nominal, Orthodox and Catholic.)
- Violence and corruption continue at every level of government and society.
- Crime and drug use are ubiquitous.
- Although Protestant church growth continues to be strong, there is weak evidence of true Kingdom transformation, often even among those who consider themselves devout followers of Christ.

Here are a few examples of similar SCP/DAWN results in other countries:

- In the Philippines the SCP/DAWN numerical goal of 50,000 was exceeded in the year 2000 (i.e. 51,286), but not the access goal. Twenty-six thousand barangays, where 39 million people lived, still had no church.
- The evangelical Protestant population of Guatemala is estimated to be around 40 percent, making it the most Protestant country in Latin America. However street crime in all of Central America is rampant.
- El Salvador is considered one of the most violent countries in Latin America, but has an evangelical church for every 600 people
- 76% of Zimbabweans are associated with a Protestant church, yet who would argue that the social and governmental structures of Zimbabwe truly incarnate the Kingdom of Jesus?

So, what should Kingdom goals be? Counting churches is not enough. Nearly 60% of the new churches the world needs today must be planted among Unreached People Groups. UPG thinking must be meshed with SCP thinking, and it all must be infused with the expectation of Kingdom transformation.

National churches may be stretched to plant sufficient churches to reach the culture/ethnic/social groupings within their own borders. This is natural multiplication. Reaching the unreached requires supernatural, cross-cultural calling, whether by national or international workers. Workers from abroad need to focus on the unreached, but they often do not. For transformation, the whole Gospel must be preached. What does God expect and desire from His church – justice, honesty, generosity, love.

In Summary

There is no real evidence that more churches were planted as a result of the Brazil 21 effort. In fact, the growth rate may have declined during the time the Project was most active (i.e. the growth rate was already quite high before the process began) thus the church, researchers, and/or mobilizers should not take undue credit. However, the research and goal setting process in Brazil did have some positive results. Awareness of the need for new churches and where to plant them was affirmed. The reality was articulated and shared using sampling from different contexts, tying that to known census data. Where good research happened, churches and missions targeted the most needy regions. In addition, God has recently ignited believers from different parts of the country with a desire to address the overlooked (fisherman, river people, quilombolas, hippies, gypsies, etc.). The Research Department of the Brazilian Association of Cross Cultural Missions now focuses on these groups.

However, many cultural and social groups remain unreached. Brazil may be too large to bear a single nation-wide effort. There frequently exists a divide between those who multiply churches, those committed to cross-cultural missions and those committed to transformation, with little interchange or openness to cooperate between them.

How do we avoid these pitfalls? Set the right goals. Be humble, for it is God who brings the increase. And start with the righteous end in mind, with God-honoring social structures and healthy churches active in every arena. Using the paradigm of the Lausanne movement, let's measure what will lead to planning for the evangelization of every individual, for the number of new churches, for number of Christlike leaders, and for impact in every sphere of society. Let's measure and plan for the whole deal.

Here a link to a video on How to Develop a Prophetic Message from Research Information created by Russ Mitchell, a member of the Global Research Team of OC International:

<https://vimeo.com/onechallenge/review/300568969/103b5b6651>

Perhaps you will find it useful in knowing what to count and how to count it.

Would you and your team/organization like to:

- Pray for a world in need of Jesus' truth and love,
- Plan strategically to engage the unreached, and/or
- Present the work of the Great Commission to others?



Then you would certainly like to visit the Mission Info Bank: <https://www.missioninfobank.org/mib/>

It contains Research resources from and for missional Christian leaders

Please check them out.

See You There!

Reading this bulletin may be fun and informative, but not as satisfying as getting together with other Information Workers to catch up and swap stories.

Here are some upcoming occasions when we know there will be Information Workers present:

- The EMDC in Holland,
- The CAC in Turkey,
- Blue Med and V5:9 in Malta
- The WEA-MC in Malaysia
- The CONPLEI in Paulo Afonso, Bahia, Brazil
- The Encontro Sepal in Águas de Lindóia, São Paulo, Brazil

If you'd like to share a meal or just a coffee, please let us know at info@globalcmiw.org. We'll put us in touch with each other.



People Groups of Ethiopia Website

I am happy to announce that we have launched "The People Groups of Ethiopia" website. It is the fruit of a collaborative work which started five years ago.

The content of the website is both in the Amharic language (the national language of Ethiopia) and the English language. The purpose of this website is to encourage all ministries working in Ethiopia to be aware of the Status of the Gospel amongst each People Group in Ethiopia and to make reaching the least reached People Groups a top priority.

This is the address of the website www.peoplegroupsethiopia.net.

God bless you.

Samuel Kebreab

Who's Who in Missions Information

Special Profile: Clement A. Hloma

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

[CH] Well, I'm Clement. My wife Minda and I serve the Lord in the beautiful country of Chad. I praise the Lord for my eight children and my family.

2. [CMIW] **What is your current ministry?** [CH] I am a mission consultant. What this means is that I do research, I do analysis, I do interpretation, I do advising to the church community, and I do training on missions around a small mission resource center. We call it the Institute for Leadership and Development. We do research, mobilization, training, and also resource development in order to reach out to the unreached people groups of Chad and elsewhere.

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

[CH] Well, first of all, I have been pleased by our research, because through research we were able to connect with bigger groups like Operation World, Joshua Project (at a point), MANI, and many other groups. It's interesting to see how we added value to what was already being done, or we helped people understand the context for missions better. We helped the Church to realize that there was a need and we did assist, with the help of God, to motivate people on the mission field. When we started the situation was not as it is today. More people have now received the call for mission, many more people are praying, some are engaged, and so we are grateful. We are also grateful to see that some unreached people groups are already being reached, some have been adopted, and others have been identified in need of more effort. For these developments we are grateful. My greatest joy is to see people come to know the Lord as a result of our small efforts.



4. [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?** [CH] I hope to publish something about the state of the Church in Chad, looking at the challenges and also the opportunities, and inspire the Church to move forward. I dream to see more people trained for mission, to see the further development of younger researchers that are ready to take over from me or that have already taken over from me. To see MBBs, you know, strong in their faith and ready to carry on with the evangelization of their own people. And to see the leadership of the Church more informed about the realities and the challenges that the country is facing so that they will better prepare the Church to take on those challenges.

5. [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?** [CH] Well, first of all, more needs to be done in the Central African region, and I would like to help more in my region. I would also love to help our neighboring countries in particular. And then, I would be pleased to share the little that we know with the global community. I would love to be able to give our helping hand, even in a small capacity, to further the cause of the gospel. I would be pleased, for example, to contribute to the DACB (Dictionary of African Christian Biography) which has relatively little information on Chad, to get more biographies.

Information from the Word

Jesus said, *"This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces corn – first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. As soon as the corn is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."* (Mark 4:26-29) Do hidden things happen to our information once it has left our computers? May it bear fruit even if we don't know how!

This Bulletin is Now in Three Languages!



Due to the fine collaborative efforts of Duane Frasier of Joshua Project and Rodrigo Tinoco of Conectar à Videira, we are very pleased that our bulletins are going out in three languages - Spanish, Portuguese and English. If, with the help of God, we can keep this going, then in future we will ask God to add other major languages. If you would like to help, please let us know.



Final Details:

- This bulletin is produced by the Community of Mission Information Workers Facilitation Team 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".
- Back issues can be found at: www.globalcmiw.org.