



You are Not Alone

The emails kept coming after our last newsletter! We had eight responses to Stephanie’s article in July about adverse reactions to a talk based on numbers. Each response was extensive, thoughtful and thought provoking. So we want to share them with you.

DON’T BE SURPRISED. The first message that came through from many respondents is that we should not be surprised by adverse reactions to our use of numbers. We are not the first to encounter this and we will probably not be the last. “Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you.” Several people shared their own experience.

Bob Waymire, a leading light in mission information in the late 20th century, is still following mission information work closely and praying for us all from his home in Northern California. In the late seventies Jim Montgomery and Bob gave a "research and strategy" report to their mission board. During a break after the meeting a board member (who was a friend) approached Bob and said half jokingly, "Why don't you guys go pass out tracts on the street corner, you'll do more good than all that research stuff."

Peter Brierley is a British church researcher, who has facilitated the Lausanne Researchers Conferences (see another piece in this newsletter about the one next year). He shared with us from his personal experience of many years in this work. “Alas, I have found many who have reacted to statistics such as you describe. It is not uncommon. I've come to realise it is part of a researcher's life.”

Another writer reflected: “I do appreciate that numbers and calculations based on them can never tell a whole story. But I still wonder why some of my brothers and sisters seem with such deep emotion to resist the place of numbers in the missionary enterprise. Perhaps I'm just not intuitive enough myself. I can rarely plot any plan forward without some quantification of the task ahead.”

And they were not the only ones ... but can we do anything to change the situation? Maybe. People also gave advice to help us understand the situation and to change it. I hope to return to the topic and share more about these.

UNDERSTAND THE AUDIENCE. There are things we can and should know about the source of this reaction to numbers. This will help us to improve the dialogue.

CLARIFY THE MESSAGE. Our experienced readers shared some techniques that will help us to smooth the path to get the message across.

Bertil Ekström and Tim Halls of the WEA Mission Commission (which hosted our talk) are among those who wrote to help us to understand the background and perspectives of our listeners. I hope to return to these last two points in a future article and share more of the wisdom of our community with you all.

Chris Maynard

P.S. For the curious, this was Bob’s answer to his half-joking critic: "Well _____, you let me know what is the best street corner, and the best time to be there, and some idea of their cultural distinctives, background and language of the people that frequent that street corner ... because we do want to be



most relevant and efficient so we'll need some basic info so we won't waste resources of time, money and materials, and then maybe that could be a good idea." After a good pause, and with a big smile he said, "Hey...you guys keep doing what you're doing. Thanks for sharing that with me."

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, 5 Jalan Stesen Sentral, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The 7th international Lausanne Researchers' Conference is designed to serve your ministry interests, passions and needs, especially if you're:

- A researcher from a mission agency;
- A staff member of a research agency;
- A member of a denominational Research Department;
- A Christian involved in social science or human science research;
- An early-career researcher with a passion for sharing findings and learning new research approaches.

Plenary Speakers:

- Dr Kang-San Tan, Director of CMS Asia, Kuala Lumpur. Lausanne Senior Associate for Buddhism
- Professor Ruth Powell, Director of the National Church Life Survey, Sydney, Australia.

Papers are Invited for Breakout Sessions:

The conference is designed to be a place for you to showcase your work and that of your organisation. We welcome seminar presentations from researchers of all levels of experience: from novice to expert. Papers will be assigned to either the 'Global challenges' or the 'Local responses' breakout streams although some papers will inevitably cross over. If you want to present in one of the seminar streams, please send us a brief synopsis of your presentation of approximately 250-300 words by 31st December 2014. Papers in Word format (or Open Office) of 5,000 words maximum, and/or presentations in Powerpoint format, should be submitted by 1st March 2015 to be sure of being included in the Conference Programme. Please send your paper to the following Conference organisers who will 'stream' the papers according to theme and interest.

Dr Peter Brierley: peter@brierleyres.com

Dr Todd Johnson: tjohnson@gcts.edu

Accommodation:

The Aloft Sentral is located adjacent to the Sentral train station and is only 29 minutes by direct train from Kuala Lumpur Airport. The hotel was completed in 2014 and offers comfort and flexibility at an affordable price. Due to the nature of our special arrangement with the hotel, discounted accommodation is based on shared-occupancy rooms.

Online Registration:

You can register and pay online via the website of Christian Research Australia. Please visit the Conference Registration page at:

<https://www.cra.org.au/products-page/conference-registrations/lausanne-international-researchers-network-conference-2015/>

and follow the instructions there. On-line payment can be made with credit card. For more payment options or questions regarding registration contact Peg Fraser at admin@cra.org.au.

Further Information:

Consult the Lausanne International Researcher's Network Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LausanneInternationalResearchersNetwork> for the latest updates.

Or contact Rev Dr Darrell Jackson, Senior Lecturer in Missiology, Morling College, Sydney and Chair of the Lausanne Researchers' International Network. Email: darrellj@morling.edu.au
Office: +61-2-9878 0201

Eurasia Media and Distribution Consultation (EMDC) is a multi-agency consultation that meets alternately in Asia and Europe. Minority language workers in the Eurasia region meet with media specialists (Radio, TV, Internet, Mobile, Social Media), IT Technicians, recording specialists, graphic artists, digital publishers and specialists in Orality and Ethno-Arts. EMDC 2015 will be in the Netherlands in April and expects around 350 people (100+ organizations). It will have over 40 workshops. Prior to EMDC there are 4 optional days of training in 16 Tracks including “**Research for Effective Media Communication**”.

For more information about the training see: <http://novmail.net/emdconorg/training-tracks/>
Contact: info@emdcon.org for more information.

Who's Who in Missions Information

Special Profile: Dr. Samuel Kebeab

1. [CMIW] **Please tell us about yourself and your family.** [SK] I met the Lord in high school and moved to

Addis Ababa (the capital of Ethiopia) to continue my medical education. I felt the Lord was calling me to full time work, but the Lord also clearly told me to continue with medicine. As a young doctor I was sent to Asosa in the far west of Ethiopia. We had to serve for two years in places where the government assigned us for the free university education we received. The town was a base for the Ethiopian army and the SPLA fighting in Sudan to the west. Later, two young Christian ladies arrived in the town to teach in the high school. They did not feel safe in such an army town, but they had our names as Christians. They came to the hospital and we pitied them for being assigned in such a place so near a battle front. I gave them my room in the hospital for a month and I shared with a friend. Two months later the war came to town and it was captured by rebels. A few of us Christians formed a group and we shared our food and resources. Sometimes we sheltered outside the city, sometimes in a church in the town, hiding from the rebels. If the rebels found us, they would force us to work for them – especially me as a medical doctor. After about a month the rebels left and by the Lord’s mercy we were safe. I remained good friends with one of those Christian teachers. Her name is Yodit and 9 years later we decided to get married. We have now been married for 15 years. We have no children, but we plan to adopt soon.



2. [CMIW] **What is your current ministry?** [SK] I work with Cityteam as Researcher for sub-Saharan Africa. I feedback to our directors on the quality and the results of our work. I also work with MANI (Movement for African National Initiatives) as the coordinator for the Horn of Africa. I am an elder and overseer in a Baptist church.

3. [CMIW] **What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction?** [SK] I give thanks that the Lord helped me to come up with Unreached People Group profiles that helped mobilize the Ethiopian churches. These came from a deep dissatisfaction within me. I saw that among the Borona where we were serving, there were at least two other people groups that were unreached and no church or mission agency was trying to reach them. I approached our church but they could not stretch. I asked myself, “How can I create awareness about these people groups in the churches of Ethiopia?” An idea came to do a survey of who the UPGs were in Ethiopia. I started from Joshua Project data and for a year or so I interacted with denominational leaders, church planters, etc. We made an updated list with profiles of each people. The Lord helped me, and now churches, ministries and individuals are using it. There is now an Ethiopian ministry with a vision based on this list to mobilise many church planters.

4. [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?** [SK] I see the benefit of research as a tool for mobilizing the church and I see the lack of it. So I want to fill that gap, not only by myself of course. I want to help the Ethiopian Church engage the unreached peoples here in Ethiopia

and beyond, and to evaluate ourselves: what do we have, what do we lack, do we reflect biblical principles in our lives and work? A strong church can do many things. I want to use more studies to help the Ethiopian church to reach a point where it can fulfil its calling. The Ethiopian church is a giant with a strong orthodox Christian heritage. I want to help stir up the giant!

5. [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?** [SK] I am already at work largely through the Ethne to Ethne strategic information team. I love to help people do mission research. I think we can do more research on Church Planting Movements and Disciple Making Movements – developing definitions and signs.

Are you or your organization doing BAM?

Are you among the growing chorus of practitioners and educators who wish there were more helpful resources, especially rigorous research which takes a hard look at what's working, what's not, and why?



**BUSINESS AS MISSION
GLOBAL THINK TANK**

If so, you may be interested in this Business as Mission Global Think Tank Report from the Scholarship and Research Issue Group entitled "Scholars Needed: The Current State of Business as Mission Research", <http://bamthinktank.org> (follow the links to Reports, then BAM Scholarship and Research)

This report is intended to help get scholars and researchers quickly up to speed on what has been done and what is still needed. It is also a call for the creation of an association of BAM scholars and an appeal for greater cooperation between Christian researchers and those who work in the closely related field of social entrepreneurship (SE).

Perhaps we Information Workers can do more to help BAM practitioners avoid some costly errors and improve the long-term impact of their efforts. ***What do you think?***

Information from the Word

Jesus said, *"The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light."* (Luke 16:8 ESV). Does Jesus want us to be more shrewd in our mission information work? What would that look like?

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".
- Editorial team: Stephanie and Chris; layout and distribution: Larry.