



“Correct Me If I’m Wrong” *The quarterly bulletin of the Global Community of Mission Information Workers*

Volume 12, Number 3, July 2022

Mission Information Workers Conference

The CMIW announces its 2022 virtual conference on September 19-22 from 13:00 to 15:00 UTC each day. The purpose of the conference is to accelerate the development of the mission information community. The conference will focus on several topics, such as:

1. Training and Capacity Building
2. Global Data Initiative
3. Lausanne 4
4. WEA Mission Commission
5. HIS Data Standards
6. The Deaf and Mission Information

The final topics to be focused on will be determined by a pre-conference interest survey. Please share your thoughts with us here: <https://www.internationalsurveys.info/surveyor/index.php/432638?lang=en>.



Mark your calendar, [register for the event](#) and [participate in the survey](#). Thanks!

Qualitative Research in Mission

by Daniel Hoskins

There is a reason the Bible is mostly a compilation of stories—humans are narrative beings. We have always used stories to make sense of ourselves, as well as our relationship with God. Therefore, it is only natural that the missions community would use narratives as part of the way we come to understand our calling to reach the nations with the gospel. But as researchers, we know that proper investigation of a subject requires more than stories as personal anecdotes. And that is where qualitative research comes in.

Qualitative research is the way to transform narratives into real data and robust findings. It starts with well thought-out research questions that keep the researcher focused. Next, the researcher must develop carefully crafted interview protocols. These help them keep interviews on track, while allowing lots of room to discover unexpected things. But where the real transformation happens is in the analysis of data. Even the best raw qualitative data are little more than stories until they are coded, connected, and written-up. This allows themes to emerge collectively, while at the same time bringing out the deep nuance of rich individual experience.

Sometimes qualitative research is used as a means of exploration, something called Grounded Theory. The result is the emergence of new ideas which are thoroughly rooted in contextual realities of the field. Such a use of qualitative research helps the researcher move outside their own mental framework and into a local, indigenous one.

I distinctly remember how my interviews with Muslim Background Believers in Central Asia transformed my previous understanding of conversion to Christ. Those interviews gave me insights I could have never found otherwise.

Other times, qualitative research is less about exploring new ideas, but is instead focused on developing rich descriptions of something we already know about. For example, it is all well and good to know that there are five churches in a previously 100% Muslim area. But it is a completely different matter to be able to describe how these new believers live as a light shining in a dark and hostile place.

These observations mean that qualitative data and findings must be respected for what they are—perceptions of the qualities of something, not hints at its quantities. Modern society loves numbers, but qualitative researchers must resist the temptation to later quantify their data during analysis. The validity of qualitative research findings is rooted in proper design and execution, not from pseudo-statistical analysis of the data after-the-fact.

A qualitative approach is not the right answer to all mission research problems. But when used properly it can shine a new light in dark places, or paint bright colors on issues that previously looked black-and-white. That is why there will always be a place at the mission research table for those of us who love stories.

Of Brands and Baskets

by Stephanie Kraft



The Lausanne Movement has been described as the weave of a basket. The warp represents twelve geographical regions--the contributions of men and women in the Caribbean, East Asia, English, Portuguese and Spanish-speaking Africa, Eurasia, Europe, Francophone Africa, Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, North America, Oceania, South Asia, and South East Asia who are zealous to see Lausanne's 4-Fold vision of The gospel for every person, Disciple-making churches for every people and place, Christ-like leaders for every church and sector, and Kingdom impact in every sphere of society realized in their region, country, city, and neighborhood.

The weft of the basket are the issue networks. They alphabetically include concerns from the Arts to Workplace Ministry. Descriptions of the twenty-eight networks can be found on the Lausanne site (<https://lausanne.org/all-issue-networks>). Each network has at least one, and usually two or three, Catalyst(s) who give leadership to its development. The issue network with which we are most fully identified is the Research and Strategic Information Network.



Molly Wall, Larry Kraft, and Wanjiru Gitau are the three Co-Catalysts of the Lausanne Research and Strategic Information Network

During the week of June 13-17, 2022, two hundred Lausanne regional and issue network representatives and other Lausanne leaders met together in Queens, New York to renew relationships and refresh their vision for ministry into the coming decades. The meetings were called L4NY (Lausanne 4 New York). There were prolonged moments of listening to the reading of the Bible. There were times of testimony and intercession. There was intentional conversation about the best way to prepare the Movement and indeed the Church for the fourth international Lausanne Congress to take place in Seoul Korea in 2024.

Those preparations included an exposure to fresh thoughts about the Lausanne "brand." What do evangelicals think when they hear the word "Lausanne" in the context of global mission? Are the elements of the brand still fit for purpose? Participants were invited to speak into the content and clarity of Lausanne's communication. They also voted in a non-binding election for a new logo. Stay tuned!

Research enjoyed its own moment in the sun when Matthew Niermann took the group through an exercise of envisioning the world in 2050 with an eye toward seeing how the Church might serve in this likely complex reality. Participants were polled for their opinions. We listened to what the group was thinking. We prayed together to hear God's heart on the matter.

Indeed, the key word of the gathering was "together." Please know that you, as a member of this community called the Community of Mission Information Workers, were represented there too.

AMRI (Alliance of Mission Researchers and Institutions) Update

www.AMRIConnect.net



As of June 30, 2022, there are 25 institutions and 304 individuals formally associated with this alliance. Hallelujah! As part of the growing amounts of research material, all the available papers from the eight Lausanne International Researchers' Conferences held to date, which are archived on the CMIW site (see <https://globalcmiw.org/node/51>), are soon to be registered on AMRIConnect.

If you're not yet an AMRIConnect member, please do sign up, as membership is free for individuals. You'll learn about what God has done/is doing through information workers who presented at these Lausanne events. Visit the work of some old friends, and perhaps even make a few new ones.

Measure What Matters

Ever wonder if tracking your work matters? If you did track, what would you track? For whom would you track? What would you do with the information you gathered? Are there any dangers or best principles and practices in tracking your work? What's more, does God even care about tracking? What does the Bible say about tracking His Work?

If you have ever asked these questions, then the **Measure What Matters Field Manual** may be for you. Randy Murray and his team created a field manual that helps guide field practitioners in the area of "field data and information" related with God's Core Missionary Task. They touch on God's vision for the nations, the Core Missionary Task, a biblical rationale for TRACKing (Tracking, Reporting, Assessing and Coaching to Kingdom Vision), Quantitative and Qualitative assessing, critical relational dynamics in the research world, best principles and practices in TRACKing, and much more.

You can find **Measure What Matters** [here](#). You may also contact Randy Murray at RandyGMurray@gmail.com for more information.

Special Profile: Daniel Hoskins

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

Linda and I have been married for 35 years. We have four grown children and two grandsons. All of us currently live in the state of Arkansas, USA. But when the children were younger, we spent 12 years as church planters in post-Soviet Central Asia. So, I would say that each of us has an uneasy relationship with American culture.



It was there, in Central Asia, that I discovered my love for qualitative research, starting with informal ethnographic studies, then doing a distance learning program for my M.A. I enjoyed that so much that a few years later I decided to do a Doctorate, which I completed at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in the department of Religious Studies. My thesis was based on qualitative research with Muslim Background Believers in Central Asia.

2) [CMIW] What is your current ministry?

I wear a few different hats, but most involve research. First, I am the Director of Fruitful Practice Research, which is part of the Vision 5:9 Network. Our team is focused on discovering and promoting best practices for church planters among Muslim peoples. Second, I am a research associate with the Bethany Research Institute, in Minneapolis, MN. We are just beginning a new project to better understand how to train and prepare missionaries to be movement catalysts.

Also, from time-to-time I have the privilege of consulting on research projects that are initiated by national Christians in the Muslim world. And finally I love wearing the teacher's hat; ranging from seminars based on our Fruitful Practice research, to the Perspectives and Encountering the World of Islam courses.

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

That question is a hard one because I have thoroughly enjoyed all the opportunities God has given me over the years. On one level, church planting in Central Asia was a great joy, but it was also quite frustrating and difficult. Honestly, I don't know if I "contributed" that much to the church plant we helped start, since it was always the local believers who carried the real load.

On another level, being part of the Fruitful Practice project has been deeply satisfying. It has been a way to steward the experience of many church planters in the Muslim world and make their wisdom available to the wider community. There is so much our project has learned about effective church planting among Muslims, so much I wish we had personally known before going to the field. These things would have helped us, so I feel quite certain it will help others.

4) [CMIW] What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?

A major desire of mine is to help develop and mentor junior researchers, because I believe robust mission research is a key to gospel advance. At a couple of key moments in my own development, I was mentored as a researcher, so I would like to do the same for others.

5) [CMIW] Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?

Obviously, there is what I mentioned above. In addition, I love talking about research design, so I am always open to interacting with other researchers on project design or approaches to analysis, particularly qualitative research since that is my specialty.

Information from the Word

Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. (Ecclesiastes 5:2 NIV)

To rephrase this warning for mission information workers, “Carefully gather, analyze, organize, and disseminate information before pronouncing unfounded assumptions or uninformed judgments. God knows everything, and you do not. Don’t rush to publish or pass along unresearched information.” What instances can you recall, along with lessons you learned, of premature mission-related information you conveyed to others that you corrected later due to further quantitative and qualitative research data?

What an Opportunity!!

GlobalRize is willing to facilitate one more comprehensive national church database for free this year and one next year. This offer means: making the software available and helping set it up. Data entry must be done by the interested party, data ownership remains with that party. Example for Thailand: <https://thaichurches.org/directory/area/>. If you are interested, you can contact them through the GlobalRize website: <https://www.globalrize.org/>

Final Details:

- With the help of God this bulletin is now produced quarterly in English, Portuguese and Spanish.
- The Editorial Team is composed of Duane Frasier, Larry Kraft, Nelson Jennings, Rodrigo Tinoco and Stephanie Kraft.
- Please send any comments, suggestions or ideas to us at info@globalcmiw.org.
- Back issues can be found at www.globalcmiw.org/cmiiwbulletin.