

In Others' Words

Editor's note: In this section, we report on two meetings that occurred in November 2012, which would not be possible in a Summer 2012 issue were it not for production delays. We hope you enjoy the fresh report and we apologize for any inconvenience.

Ethnê to Ethnê

Ethnê to Ethnê is the only global forum focused on frontier missions, and they hold a gathering every three years (the first two took place in 2006 and 2009 in Indonesia and Columbia respectively). In November 2012, around 400 from the network met in Seoul, Korea. Most of the delegates were practitioners from various frontier mission contexts. A unique contribution of the Ethnê gathering is that indigenous believers from frontier fields were invited to participate and speak into the network. The focus of the 2012 meeting was on a new strategy to develop what are being called "Ephesus Teams" for major unreached peoples and people clusters. The idea behind these teams is to create a virtual hub for cooperation—a landing place, so to speak, where new players can be brought in who are committed to the same vision. In contrast with a network or partnership, which may have a more general purpose and are usually more relational in nature, these teams have the singular focus of working together on an ongoing basis to see a church-planting and disciple-making movement take place. They are nonetheless "virtual teams" with no direct "command and control," though they may have one or more facilitators. The strength of the concept is that it allows a common strategy to be developed and owned across multiple ministries. The weakness is obviously that virtual teams tend to struggle in areas of communication and accountability. One answer to this is that some teams are beginning to use social-networking software with a project-management component. Examples of such software are Podio and Wrike. For more information on Ethnê to Ethnê, see www.ethne.net.

Global Network of Mission Structures

Following the Ethnê meeting, the Global Network of Mission Structures held a roundtable discussion to look at priorities for 2013. The purpose of the GNMS is to be a global-level forum for cooperation between mission sending agencies. The following projects were proposed for the next two to three years:

1. **Resource Sharing Survey**—An annual online survey of 2,000 mission agencies, looking at what agencies have to offer to one another and what their needs are.
2. **Global Directories Project**—A crowd-sourcing online tool that will enable mission agencies, mission

training programs, mission leaders and mission resource providers to update their information.

3. **Global Strategy Study Groups**—15 strategy evaluation task forces that will annually review global progress in particular areas of mission work and make recommendations to the mission community.
4. **Global Engagement Survey**—An annual survey of missionary engagement among 4,000 indigenous unreached peoples and 30,000 population segments, conducted by regional and national engagement task forces/committees.
5. **Global Mission Journal**—An online professional mission journal and international committee of editors that will assist non-Western mission leaders in articulating in English their perspectives on current global mission trends and strategies.
6. **Light the Window Prayer Campaign**—Coordination of prayer updates from the field among unreached peoples in the 10/40 Window, and crowd-sourcing the translation of those updates.
7. **Virtual University Consortium**—An online virtual university that will enable mission training programs to upload their courses into a common system for use by missionaries and missionary candidates around the world.
8. **Agency Management Tool**—Development of an online tool that will feature modules for financial accounting, donor management, ministry tracking, etc.

Beyond these collaborative projects, one of the primary purposes of the GNMS is to assist emerging mission structures, including both national and regional mission associations, as well as non-Western denominational mission departments. In this connection, several projects were discussed, including a special meeting in Ghana for developing national mission associations in Africa. More information about the GNMS can be found at www.gnms.net. **IJFM**