

# Dear PARTNERS IN THE MISSION,

At the IMB, our vision is a multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language knowing and worshiping our Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 7:9-10). In this Scripture, we see the victorious ending to the grand narrative that transcends this earth, and we rest in the certainty that this vision will come to pass.

For now, however, we find ourselves facing the greatest problem that has ever existed: lostness. And we have the answer, the good news, the best news of all: Jesus saves!

Despite humanitarian crises like wars, pandemics, and natural disasters, Southern Baptists send IMB missionaries to be steadfastly present among those who have never heard the gospel — people in hard-to-reach places, people in cities, and people who are dispersed and displaced around the world.

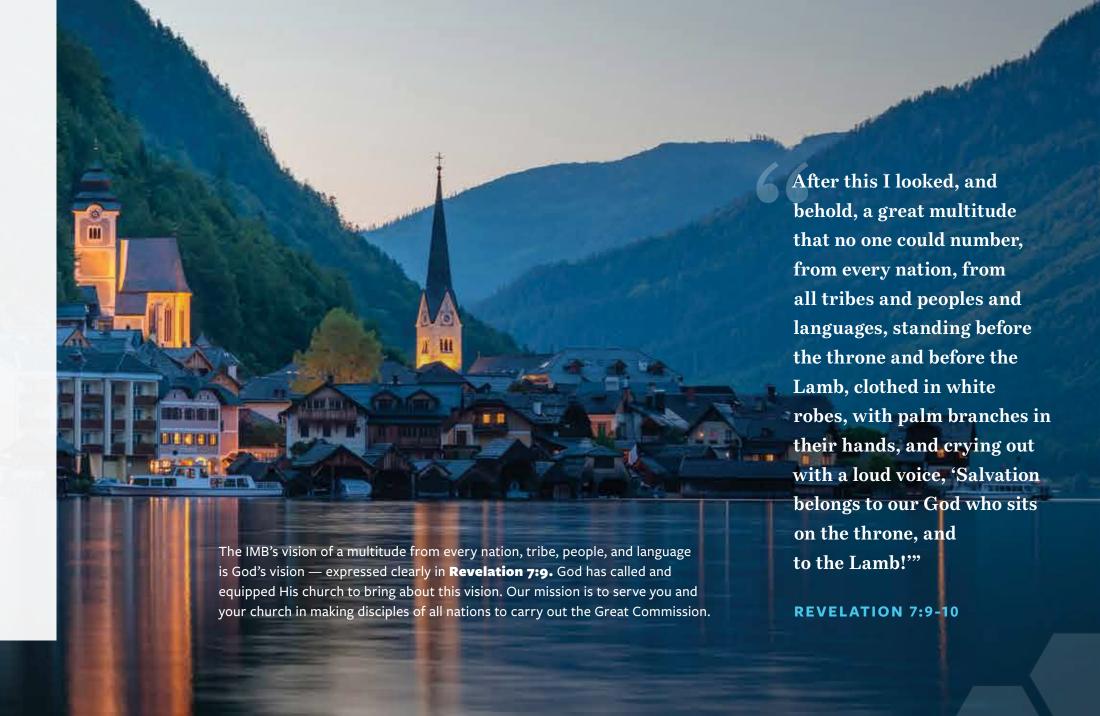
God has made our purpose clear. Together, we seek to take the gospel to every nation, all tribes and peoples and languages. Your Southern Baptist missionaries give themselves to this mission every day.

This Annual Statistical Report (ASR) is a global research report of how God has worked through your missionaries around the world in 2021. We celebrate that God has allowed Southern Baptists to have a front-row view of new IMB missionaries sent, new believers professing faith in Christ, new churches planted, and leaders trained for the task of carrying out the Great Commission to the ends of the earth.

Join me in praising the Lord for each salvation represented in the pages ahead. And continue to pray that the gospel will reach all who have yet to hear.

Blessings,

Paul Chitwood
President
International Mission Board



#### **2025 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

- Send an additional 500 missionaries Where God sends, the gospel thrives. Help us grow the work where there is not yet a witness for Christ.
- **●** Mobilize 500 global missionary partners on IMB teams

Together, we are strengthening the work of missionaries from other countries, offering our depth of experience, and laying the foundation for thousands more to go.

- Engage 75 global cities with comprehensive strategies God is building a bridge from cities to the world. As people migrate in the billions to urban areas, you enable us to greet them with the embrace of the gospel.
- churches to prayerfully and financially support the IMB The fields are ready for harvest. Let us inspire a generation to support and send where God has called us to go. Let us complete the Great Commission together!

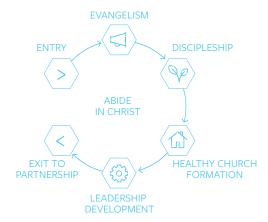
Mobilize 75% of Southern Baptist

• Increase giving to the IMB by 6% annually Our call to the nations is too important.

We must all respond with urgency. Sending more missionaries and reaching more people and places requires sacrificial giving.



#### **CORE MISSIONARY TASK - 6 COMPONENTS**



**Entry** is the component of the missionary task that considers how to access people who need to hear the gospel.

**Evangelism** is the responsibility of every follower of Jesus. Evangelism is an element in the job description of every IMB missionary.

**Discipleship** involves the intentional transformation of the heart, mind, affections, will, relationships, and purpose, without pitting the importance of one against another.

#### **Healthy Church Formation**

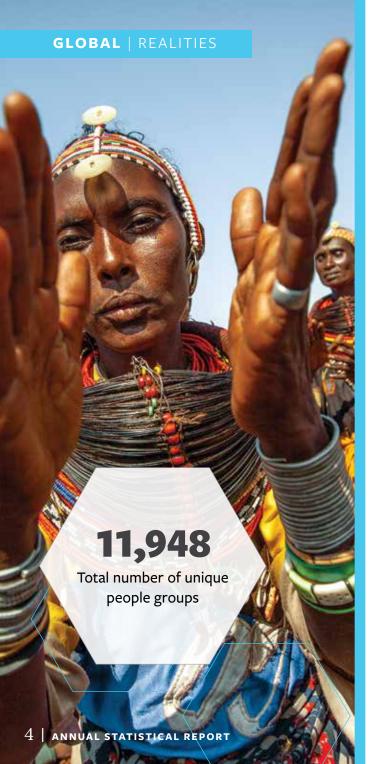
A church is a group of baptized believers in Jesus Christ who are committed to be the body of Christ to one another and who meet regularly to carry out the functions of a biblical church.

#### **Leadership Development**

As IMB personnel develop leaders in local churches, they prioritize training pastors/elders/overseers.

#### Exit to Partnership

The IMB's goal is to complete the missionary task in each people group or place and then to exit to partnership with the new churches from that place or people actively participating in the core missionary tasks and taking local ownership of the Great Commission.



# People groups?

**People group** lists are man-defined. When IMB talks about people groups, we refer to a strategic definition that helps us do our best to prayerfully build lists and track progress toward the God-promised vision found in Revelation 7:9 of a multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language knowing and worshipping Jesus Christ.

Currently, IMB defines a people group as the following: The largest group through which the gospel can flow and churches can form without encountering significant barriers of understanding and acceptance. One or more of the following factors may define or assist in the identification of a particular people group: Ethnicity, Language, Culture, Religion, Citizenship, Geography, Caste, Clan, Tribe, Self-Identity.

The reality is that people group lists do change and evolve over time, as boundaries, languages, and cultures change. The only constant is that a multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language will be before the throne one day. The Bible defines these four terms (nation, tribe, people, language) in several ways throughout the Old and New Testaments. We first see them together in Genesis 10:5 where peoples spread to various lands, each with their own languages and by tribes and clans in their various ethnic groups. Then in Genesis 11:7-9, due to mankind's pride and sin, we see God ordain the creation of a variety of languages and a scattering of peoples across the globe. The good news is that redemption history culminates, through the saving work of Jesus Christ, with this God-created diversity again united in the glorious collective worship of their Creator (**Revelation 7:9**).

As of December 31, 2021, IMB personnel and researchers have identified **11,948** unique people groups, which represent our best efforts to identify every nation, tribe, people, and language. Please pray for disciples to be made and churches planted among all these people groups in fulfillment of the Great Commission and the God-promised multitude seen in Revelation 7:9.

# Unreached Elnengaged?

The descriptors Unreached and Unengaged, as they are applied to people groups, are also man-defined terms. To allow field leadership to prayerfully identify priority peoples, IMB originally developed and maintains a constantly changing list of people groups in these two categories:

**Unreached peoples** are defined as people groups with less than 2% evangelical Christian populations. People groups come off and on this list as populations change, previous generations of Christians go to be with the Lord, or people come to saving faith. The list is designed to highlight, at any given point in time, possible priority people groups needing missionary effort.

**Unengaged peoples** are defined by IMB as people groups, to the best of our knowledge, having no evangelical presence, neither missionaries from outside nor local Christians from within, implementing a church planting strategy among that people group. When both terms, Unengaged and Unreached, apply to people groups (called UUPGs), they are tracked in a separate list to highlight the overwhelming need to see disciples made and churches started among them. Sometimes lists of UUPGs published by various organizations differ. This is to be expected, as this term is man-defined, and organizations may view different activities within the missionary task as engagement. For example, some organizations view attempted evangelism or human needs ministries as engagement. IMB has chosen not to count a group as engaged until there are missionaries on the ground working to implement a church planting strategy.

IMB also maintains a scale called the Global Status of Evangelical Christianity (GSEC). This scale from 0 to 6 combines the state of the Church (the presence of Christians and churches within a people group) with that group's current status of engagement (Unengaged or Engaged) and reached-ness (Reached or Unreached). This scale further helps IMB field leadership identify people groups that currently have the least possibility of having disciples made and churches planted among them.



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495,550 Opportunities to Respond

~~~~

176,795

New Believers

22,744

182,112

# 4,938 Unengaged 6,105 Engaged by Great Commission Partners Only 770 Engaged by IMB and Great Commission Partners TOTAL 135 Engaged by IMB Only

**3,175** 

Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

1,200
Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by

IMB teams

7,325

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

**93** 

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers

# **EVANGELISM**

 Gospel Witnesses
 592,408

 Opportunities to Respond
 495,550

 Seekers
 174,242

 New Believers
 176,795

 Baptisms
 107,701



217,564

Ongoing Bible Study participants

73,739
Being personally mentored

# HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION

| w Groups                  | 8,043  |
|---------------------------|--------|
| tal Groups                | 32,888 |
| w Churches                | 22,744 |
| 1st Generation            | 1,231  |
| 2nd Generation            | 1,606  |
| 3rd Generation and higher | 19,907 |

| Total Churches | 94,258 |
|----------------|--------|
| 1st Generation | 17,119 |
| 2nd Generation | 7,236  |

3rd Generation and higher **69,639** 

Baptized Believers Meeting **679,052** 

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training 29,632
Church Planting Training 85,293

Advanced Training **67,187** 

Other Training 102,855



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

33

Total global missionary partners sent from one nation to another to join IMB teams

**55** 

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **inside** their own country

368

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

**28** 

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **outside** their own country

#### From your American Peoples Leader:

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

The biblical imagery of the vine and branches is central to grasping the nature of our relationship with Christ. In John 15:5 Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

We understand from His words that our very life depends on our connection to Jesus. But it merits highlighting that the result of our abiding in Him is that we will "bear much fruit."

This is the heart's cry of our missionaries across the Americas—that we will bear abundant fruit to the glory of God. Yes, that fruit consists of Christian characteristics like love, joy and peace. But it also likely refers to the ingathering of new believers (John 4:35-36). We are praying for much fruit—godly character, new disciples, new groups, new churches, and new missionaries!







77,768

**Heard Gospel** Witness

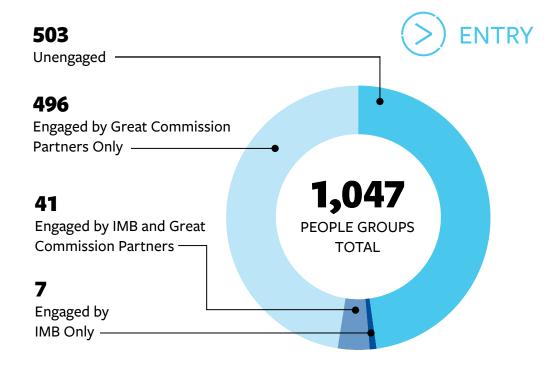
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1,072

22,173 New Believers

16 New Churches

483



Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

79
Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

338

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

> **7** New Indig

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers



# EVANGELISM

 Gospel Witnesses
 77,768

 Opportunities to Respond
 69,018

 Seekers
 811

 New Believers
 22,173

 Baptisms
 1,072



# DISCIPLESHIP

**4,451**Ongoing Bible Study

Ongoing Bible Stuc participants

**453**Being personally mentored



54	New Groups
133	Total Groups
16	New Churches
14	1st Generation
2	2nd Generation
0	3rd Generation and higher

Total Churches	111
1st Generation	108
2nd Generation	3
3rd Generation and higher	0

Baptized Believers Meeting **5,152** 



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training 132
Church Planting Training 332
Advanced Training 19
Other Training 1,400



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

15

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

5

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **inside** their own country

41

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

2

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **outside** their own country

#### **ENTRY**

My husband and I are new missionaries. When we arrived in a new town for our first assignment, we didn't know anyone. To meet people, we baked a lot of desserts and took them around to our neighbors to get to know them. We were proactive about developing non-threatening relationships in an area where gaining trust is a challenge. Through these connections, we now have three different Bible studies going with the hope of starting a church in this area of town.

#### **EVANGELISM**

I have been a missionary teaching evangelistic Bible stories in Brazil for many years now. Recently, one of my ministry partners, a young man from Peru, and I had the idea to make songs out of the Bible stories we taught each week. Then when COVID hit our part of Brazil, everything shut down. To my surprise, the young man used that time not only to create songs with the stories but also to produce them to be broadcast on the local radio station. Now the gospel story in song is being played in one of the largest concentrations of unreached and unengaged peoples in all of Brazil!



#### DISCIPLESHIP

My wife and I work with some great church-planting partners, Elidio and Arianne, who are training leaders to train others. As new people join the group, they are paired with someone who is a step or two ahead in spiritual development. Elidio and Arianne give assignments to lead in worship, look up Bible verses, serve as greeters, and make visits. This is a common leadership development model, but in this case, most of those being discipled are children and teenagers who are learning to pass on what they know to others.

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

My wife and I started a house church in Guadalajara, Mexico. After more than a year of training leaders for this church, it is now led by a national partner. They are growing and making an impact in their community. However, the story doesn't end there. The church caught the vision of multiplication and has now planted another church in a second area of the city.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Recently, I had the opportunity to gather a group of pastors, missionaries, and their teams for an enrichment training. We reviewed biblical stories of hope to use as we build relationships, and we focused on the main goal: that people would choose to follow Jesus as Savior and Lord. I watched them study the Word together and have "aha" moments as they discovered how they could use narratives as part of a pre-evangelism strategy to enter communities, and as they discovered their need to define their exit before entering in the missionary task. I saw 24 individuals put aside their preferences to seek God's best for their communities.

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

My wife and I are church planting catalysts to several national missionaries in central Mexico. We mentor and train them in the missionary task as we encourage them to reach out to new areas. This past year, we had to exit our ministry for many months. While we were absent, one of those partners used what we had taught them to plant a second-generation church without any help from us.

Approximate numbers calculated using IMB global population and evangelical Christian estimates, excluding the United States.

#### From your Asian Pacific Rim Peoples Leader:

"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:4-6)

As you read the statistics in this report and celebrate what God has done, may it stir within you an even greater desire to pray for those who have yet to "see the light of the gospel." (2 Cor. 4:4) Among the 2.3 billion Asian Pacific Rim Peoples, over 2.1 billion don't know Christ and will spend an eternity separated from Him. We MUST desperately cry out to God in prayer to do what He has already promised to do... together! Pray that He would glorify Himself through the spread of the gospel among ALL peoples and ALL places! (Matt. 6:9; John 17:5; Luke 10:2; Acts 4:27-29; Col. 4:3)





71,345 **Heard Gospel** 

Witness

12,356 New Believers

1,442 **New Churches** 

~~~~ 7,638



20,194

# 1,449 Unengaged 1,782 Engaged by Great Commission Partners Only 104 Engaged by IMB and Great Commission Partners 20 Engaged by IMB Only

**497** 

Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

**231** 

Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

1,123

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

3

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers

# **EVANGELISM**

 Gospel Witnesses
 71,345

 Opportunities to Respond
 57,118

 Seekers
 6,753

 New Believers
 12,356

 Baptisms
 7,638



## DISCIPLESHIP

35,206

Ongoing Bible Study participants

**4,817**Being personally mentored

# HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION

| New Groups                | 901   |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Total Groups              | 7,489 |
| New Churches              | 1,442 |
| 1st Generation            | 202   |
| 2nd Generation            | 48    |
| 3rd Generation and higher | 1,192 |

| Total Churches            | 8,836 |
|---------------------------|-------|
| 1st Generation            | 1,763 |
| 2nd Generation            | 818   |
| 3rd Generation and higher | 6,255 |
|                           |       |

Baptized Believers Meeting 141,207



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training 10,211

Church Planting Training 8,895

Advanced Training 1,088

Other Training 29,409



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

16

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

6

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **inside** their own country

**33** 

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

0

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **outside** their own country

#### ENTRY

Finding a clear platform to sustain long-term urban ministry is challenging. After our team prayed, the idea of a coffee roastery was born. The country where we serve is the fourth-largest coffee producer and exporter in the world. Café culture is booming here, especially among the younger generation. Even during the pandemic, the coffee industry endured. Each day, more coffee shops are opening. Our coffee business allows us to reach many people. From farmers to baristas, and everyone in between, we can build deep relationships naturally. In this part of the world, coffee and community are directly tied together, and we are grateful to be able to share the good news of Jesus with this coffee community and the city we have come to love.

#### **EVANGELISM**

In Mongolia more than 28% of the population lives below the poverty line. The pandemic devastated the local economy, plunging even more Mongolians into poverty. The poor were left in desperate situations. Our team initiated COVID-relief projects to help the poor in the capital city and the countryside. We provided food, coal and firewood to keep homes warm during the extreme winter months, when temperatures drop as low as -40F. These gifts opened the hearts of many, and we were able to share the gospel with 1,708 people. 161 chose to follow Christ!



#### DISCIPLESHIP

In our city there are several colleges and universities drawing young people seeking good jobs after graduation. Through social media exposure bringing new ideas, the youth are more open to the gospel. Normally, accepting the gospel takes several years here. This year we have seen five young adults baptized, and four are preparing to be baptized, more than in the past five years combined. New believers are in contact with our team through on-line discipleship, and Facebook posts where they are bold in sharing their new faith. One posted, "God change the way that I live, God change my behavior, my attitude, and God change me a lot. I am so thankful I am a child of God." Pray that God will continue to work through these young people and that they will take the gospel home to their villages.

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

On a recent church-planting supervision trip, our team shared the gospel and prayer walked in a rural area. Many in the surrounding people group came to know Jesus. However, they did not know how to start a church. They lacked the confidence and equipping to pastor and lead new believers. So, we brought them to a suitable location for help and training. The new believers prayed for God's wisdom and confidence to take care of God's people. We led them to study Peter's life together. One of the local rural pastors agreed to coach and walk alongside the leaders to start new churches in the area. Pray for these new church leaders.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Our team established a theological seminary to train Chinese pastors, missionaries, and other church leaders to rightly handle the Word of truth. Our prayer from the beginning was that God would raise up nationals to teach and lead in the seminary. God has been faithful; this year we had the first national faculty member teach a class, and three others currently co-teach alongside IMB faculty. Each of them is pursuing an advanced theological degree through partner seminaries. We continue to pray that God will use them to impact the Chinese church as they train others to interpret and apply the Scriptures.

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

As our family was forced to stay in the U.S. due to tightening visa restrictions this last year, we saw refugee leaders step up and take over all aspects of the missionary task, including leadership development. After visiting a relatively new area of ministry, one refugee couple asked to help serve there. That ministry saw more than 50 Central Asians baptized and 6 new leaders trained in the last 12 months.. An older training group has become too large to manage due to many new leaders being added, so several leaders in a different area are beginning a new group. This has led our family to transition to a new ministry as we began to see local ownership of all areas of the ministry. We will continue to support from a distance. It has been a joy to see how God is working among refugees to raise up leaders to reach their own people.

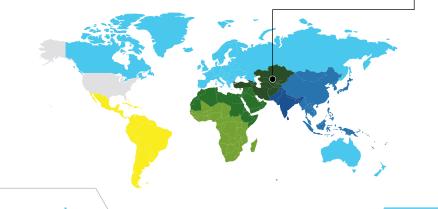
#### From your Central Asian Peoples Leader:

Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law (and so did the prophets): Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth." (John 1:45).

Muslims in Central Asia think that the coming Prophet (Deut. 18:15-19) was to be Muhammed. Yet, just as the Apostle Philip realized that Jesus was this Promised Prophet, increasing numbers of Central Asians are believing this truth, too. They hear the Good News from your SBC missionaries and God is drawing these Central Asians to Himself. Churches are being planted and disciples are being made.

Praise God! Thank you, Southern Baptists, for your support.





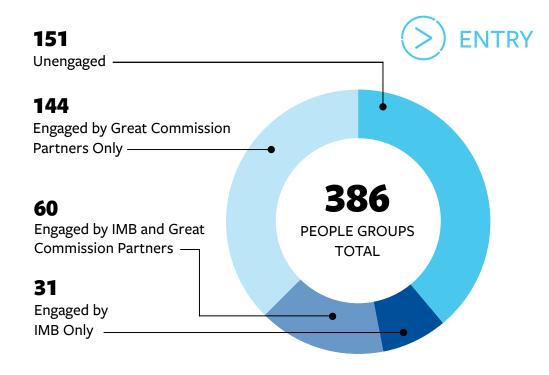
50,882

**Heard Gospel** Witness

~~~~ 668

2,142 **New Believers**  **New Churches** 

1,341



Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

**124** 

Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

**379** 

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

2

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers



# **EVANGELISM**

Opportunities to Respond
Seekers 4,838
New Believers 2,142
Baptisms 668



## DISCIPLESHIP

**7,586**Ongoing Bible Study participants

1,128
Being personally mentored



| New Groups              | 176          |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Total Groups            | 350          |
| New Churches            | 45           |
| 1st Generation          | 34           |
| 2nd Generation          | 11           |
| 3rd Generation and high | ner <b>0</b> |

| Total Churches            | 820 |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1st Generation            | 470 |
| 2nd Generation            | 178 |
| 3rd Generation and higher | 172 |

Baptized Believers Meeting 21,322



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training 268

Church Planting Training 421

Advanced Training 652

Other Training 2,295



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

15

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **inside** their own country

41

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

8

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **outside** their own country

#### ENTRY

We had a free medical clinic on Good Friday and gave away little gifts and a card with John 11:25 printed in the local language. Later when we visited one of the patients, her husband — a white-bearded, turban-wearing man — served us water and juice and waited for a chance to talk to us. Then he produced the Scripture card and began asking questions. The conversation quickly turned to the Quran, but we found opportunities to challenge what he said and speak truth. The next week when he brought his wife to the hospital again, he sat reading the Bible that is displayed in the hospital for a full three hours.

#### **EVANGELISM**

We began a meeting online for those who had shown interest in our local church. When we were finally able to gather in person, four people confessed their faith in Christ publicly. Three of them followed the Lord in baptism. One young man, a college student named Hakan, brought his friend Faruk to our Sunday gathering and Faruk believed. Then Faruk brought his friend Mert, and Mert also put his faith in Christ. Mert then brought his friend Eren, who is open to the gospel and now reading the New Testament.



#### DISCIPLESHIP

A local church has formed among an unreached group, with many believers having been baptized and wanting to be further discipled. The pastor and leaders scheduled a series of studies for men and women, teaching foundations of the Christian faith. A weekend conference kicked off the discipleship program for more than 100 attendees. After the conference, church leaders were matched with those wanting to go deeper in their faith to walk together through the series of lessons.

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

A leader told me about a church gathering hosted by a poor, often ostracized people group. They were people who had not bathed recently and who wore old, unwashed clothes. When the visitors arrived in their expensive cars and nice clothes, they were apprehensive, but after seeing the poor people's love for one another, their unity, and genuine love for the Lord, the visitors broke into tears and were speechless. The gospel brought these people together in a miraculous and beautiful way.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Our team has started meeting monthly to train church members from a Muslim background. These meetings are focused on helping believers grow in studying and teaching the Bible carefully. Both men and women attend, and the participants include local pastors, lay leaders and Central Asian believers from other cities. We are praying that the hearts of these men and women will burn within them as they study Scripture and that they will learn to faithfully feed themselves and others.

#### EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP

Out of the blue one day I got a call from a man named Vlad. I had only met him once, and that was years ago. He said he wanted to come to my house to talk. As it turned out, God had been burdening this older Russian believer and father of 10 to start learning the language of a Muslim people group in his community and to reach out to them with the gospel. This was an answer to our prayers to find more native Russian speakers as partners in our ministry.

#### From your Deaf Peoples Leader:

How can people have faith in the Lord and ask him to save them, if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear, unless someone tells them? And how can anyone tell them without being sent by the Lord? The Scriptures say it is a beautiful sight to see even the feet of someone coming to preach the good news. (ROMANS 10:14-15 CEV)

In a year of challenges and limitations because of a pandemic, we celebrate that God's work among the Deaf Peoples around the world was not deterred as he worked through our national partners in miraculous ways. As they joined with our IMB personnel we recorded more times that the gospel was shared, that people came to faith, and that new believers were baptized, than in the previous year. We are reminded that God has given us a work—but not just for us! As we train our national deaf partners in evangelism, discipleship, church-planting, and scripture translation, they soon understand that they are not objects of ministry, but indeed, co-laborers with us in the efforts to reach the Deaf Peoples of the world.





4,807 **Heard Gospel** Witness

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107

139 New Believers

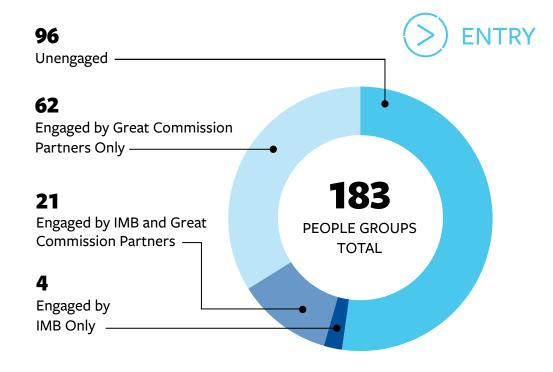
48

Received Leadership Training

18

**New Churches** 

29



Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

**25** 

Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

**181** 

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

0

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers



# EVANGELISM

Gospel Witnesses

4,807

Opportunities to Respond

2,142

Seekers

2,106

New Believers

Baptisms

107

139



## DISCIPLESHIP

1,900

Ongoing Bible Study participants

142

Being personally mentored



New Groups	20
Total Groups	37
New Churches	18
1st Generation	14
2nd Generation	4
3rd Generation and higher	0

Total Churches	196
1st Generation	175
2nd Generation	21
3rd Generation and higher	0

Baptized Believers Meeting **2,550** 



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training **22** 

Church Planting Training 15

Advanced Training 11

Other Training **72** 



# (<)

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **inside** their own country

**32** 

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

7

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **outside** their own country

#### **ENTRY**

Julia is a Deaf believer from Central Asia who recently determined that she needed to be bolder in her witness for Christ. Although she lives in a country that is not receptive to the gospel, she went on national TV this past year to share her testimony of faith in Christ for the 700,000 Deaf of her country to see. With the wise counsel of some of our IMB workers among the Deaf, Julia clearly shared what it meant to be a follower of Jesus and how others could come to know the same abundant life she had found. Many Deaf from her country have reached out to her to find out more about the Savior, Jesus.

#### **EVANGELISM**

COVID restrictions have kept many of our Deaf national partners from meeting in person this past year in Mexico. However, over that period the Deaf church in a Mexico City suburb continues to meet online. During this time, they invited people to join them in their weekly meetings. One of the leaders of this group is Ernesto and he had been involved in an inappropriate lifestyle for many years before coming to faith in Christ. Ernesto is now sharing his faith, and the vision of the Deaf church in Mexico, among homosexuals, leading them to know King Jesus and the lifechanging power He has—regardless of a person's past.



#### DISCIPLESHIP

Last year Kumari and Samart, our Deaf partners from Thailand, led Chaisee to faith in Christ. Chaisee had grown up in an evangelical church where her father was the pastor. Yet because she was Deaf she had never had the chance to "hear" the gospel message of what it meant to be a follower of Christ. When Kumari and Samart led her to faith, she desired to return to the hearing church where she grew up and ask her father to baptize her. Just a few months ago, Chaisee, for the first time, led a Deaf friend to faith and is now making her first disciple.

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

The pandemic did not stop our Deaf national partners in West Africa from forming a new church this past year. KD and Augustine have worked closely online with our missionaries among the Deaf to determine the right place, time, and strategy for reaching people in their country, and countries around them. Sometimes that means meeting outside under a tree and other times it may mean finding some sort of structure. What is clear is that Church has nothing to do with a building or place, but has everything to do with being the body and bride of the Lord Jesus.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

IMB workers among the Deaf in Indonesia are working closely with Deaf national partners to implement a strategy to reach over 2.7 million Deaf in their country. Arif and Indah are young leaders in a Deaf church plant on the main island of the country and are working to develop others to be church planters and Bible translators. A new training center and studio has been set up where they are coaching young believers with tools to reach other Deaf Indonesians, disciple them, plant churches, train leaders, and go out to the remote areas of Deaf communities with the good news of Jesus.

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

A key element of partnership is when national partners share fully the vision and responsibility for taking the gospel to the Deaf peoples of the world. In recent months our Deaf national partners in a large country in Asia have been working to help translate Scripture passages and stories into multiple sign languages for other Deaf people groups, who share a similar culture. These partners have been at this for years and they do fully share the vision and accept the responsibility for ensuring that Deaf peoples have access to God's truth in their own heart languages.

#### From your European Peoples Leader:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1.16)

While the Christian heritage in Europe was bright, the current reality is dim with just over 1% being evangelical. There is a need for tens of thousands of new laborers in God's harvest fields across Europe.

Will you pray for us as we seek to raise up 2,000 new laborers by 2025?





57,037 Heard Gospel Witness

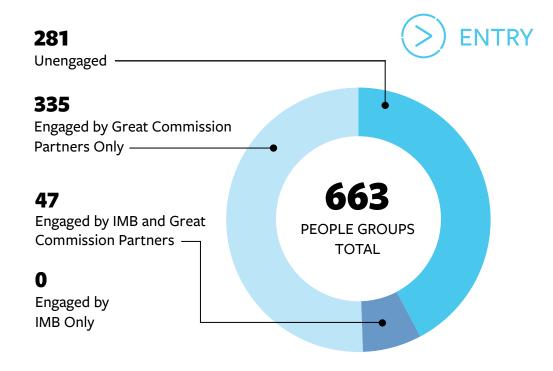
> ~~~~ 808

1,710 New Believers

40 New Churches



9,913



Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

98

Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

514

**Unreached People** Groups (UPGs)

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers



# **EVANGELISM**

**Gospel Witnesses** 57,037 Opportunities 45,067 to Respond Seekers New Believers 1,710 Baptisms

808



# DISCIPLESHIP

5,432

Ongoing Bible Study participants

239

Being personally mentored



32	New Groups
232	Total Groups
40	New Churches
33	1st Generation
6	2nd Generation
1	3rd Generation and higher

Total Churches	483
1st Generation	156
2nd Generation	53
3rd Generation and higher	10

8,185 **Baptized Believers Meeting** 



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training Church Planting Training **9,016** Advanced Training Other Training



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups inside their own country

**95** 

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups outside their own country

#### **ENTRY**

As COVID restrictions eased over the summer, IMB missionaries throughout Europe had the opportunity to reengage their communities through summer camps. During an English camp in the Czech Republic, Vera, a local church-planting partner faced a problem: they didn't have enough Bibles. "I have never seen in my life such an interest in kids knowing God," said Vera. "These kids have such a hunger for the gospel. They even chose to read the Bible instead of jump on the trampoline. I have never seen kids so hungry for God's Word!" More than 200 Bibles were given out at camps this summer.

#### **EVANGELISM**

While leading a training with local pastors in southern Moldova, a team consisting of IMB personnel and members of a church from Birmingham, Alabama, went into the village to demonstrate how to share the gospel. The field was ripe for harvest! During the 2.5 days of sharing the gospel, 32 people came to faith, and an additional 20+ people invited the local churches to come back and share stories of hope with them from the Bible. After hearing the gospel, a granddaughter sat next to her grandmother and said, "How come I've never heard this?" They wrapped their arms around each other as they prayed to receive Christ.



#### DISCIPLESHIP

A worker among a Muslim people group reports, "We began using New Hope trauma healing process in 2019 within our small house church. After going through the program, our group decided it wanted to switch exclusively to storying. Within 6 months our small group had doubled. Even through the COVID outbreak of 2020, our numbers have continued to increase. Today we have two house church groups which meet weekly, share stories, pray together, and support one another. Along with our two groups, we have trained more than 10 local young people who have led six other groups of their own, in three different countries." It is exciting to see generational growth from local believers.

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

After two years of prayer and the Lord's leadership, a new church in Belgium opened its doors in a crucial area, 100 yards from the city's train and bus station. Many Europeans travel exclusively by public transportation, so the church's location is strategic in reaching all those around it. The church will share the building with local partners starting an arts center in order to reach the community through art, music, and theatre lessons, film nights, art exhibitions, conferences, living room concerts, and camps.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Greek national churches are partnering to minister to refugees. In 2015, when a refugee crisis landed on Greek shorelines, IMB workers were committed to share the gospel with a movement-minded strategy and build a multinational team to work beside them. The fruit of this leadership development continues to be seen, as a refugee couple now leads the outreach and oversees several community development programs provided by Send Relief.

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

Jack and Julianna Hagan planted a church five years ago in a European seaside town, but the church couldn't quite get off the ground. Despite people coming to faith and being baptized, the Hagans couldn't find local leaders to take ownership of the church. They diligently prayed for God to raise up a leader, and they worked with a national denomination — the National Baptist Union — to train three men who showed interest. After years of praying and nourishing this church, the Hagans are confident they can hand off the church plant to the National Baptist Union and the leaders they've trained.

#### From your Northern African & Middle Eastern Peoples Leader:

He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

The Gospel is reaching into even the most difficult places. Two desert women who recently believed have caught a vision to share the Gospel in villages two hours past their own remote location, reaching out to women who would never have heard without the perseverance of workers who boldly go to the edges and stay there despite hardship. These new sisters can't read, but they and four generations of their family are now faithfully listening to the audio Bible. They have most recently started the book of Acts and love it!

We are so thankful to Southern Baptists for their faithfulness to give through Lottie Moon and the Cooperative Program so that many more could have access to the Living Water.



#### HIGHLIGHTS | NORTHERN AFRICAN & MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES



33,631

**Heard Gospel** Witness

271

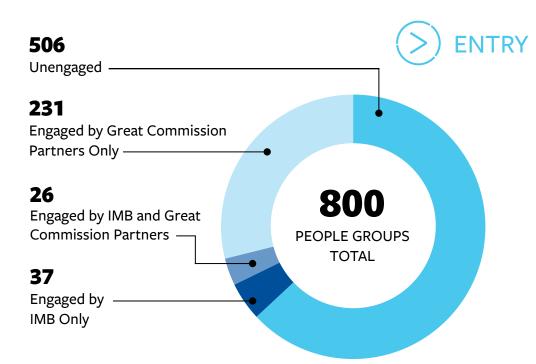
**New Believers** ~~~~

4,116

102 **New Churches** 



**273** 



Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

88

Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

**742** 

**Unreached People** Groups (UPGs)

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers



## **EVANGELISM**

**Gospel Witnesses** 33,631 Opportunities 25,698 to Respond 1,597 Seekers New Believers 4,116 **Baptisms** 271



## DISCIPLESHIP

1,028 Ongoing Bible Study

participants

300 Being personally mentored



New Groups	9
Total Groups	121
New Churches	102
1st Generation	66
2nd Generation	10
3rd Generation and higher	26

Total Churches	306
1st Generation	175
2nd Generation	50
3rd Generation and higher	81

1,761 **Baptized Believers Meeting** 



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training **144** Church Planting Training 120 Advanced Training 9 Other Training 908



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups inside their own country

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups outside their own country

#### **ENTRY**

Preparing to engage an unreached area of our city has been so exciting! What a privilege to work in a place that has such desperate need. In developing a business that is suitable for the area and looking to plant our lives there as well, we have had the opportunity to network, get to know locals, and share the good news. Thus far, we have found locals in our focus area to be remarkably warm and inviting. Please ask that as they invite us into their lives, that we would be faithful proclaimers and a reflection of the Savior.

#### EVANGELISM

My summer roommate told me about a local artist he had recently met, so I took my North African near-culture partner along with me to visit the artist in his shop. As we were talking, I noticed some Virgin Mary statues on display in the shop window. I asked the owner if he was a Christian. He replied, "no," —and my North African brother and I began to share the gospel with him. After we left the shop, our overjoyed brother said this was the first time he had shared with a stranger and later purposefully declared. "Let's do this all the time!" We've shared with others several times since.



#### DISCIPLESHIP

Our family has been walking with three local believers through a season of pressure and persecution. The intensity has ebbed and flowed but the Lord has been so faithful to grow our faith and our boldness during each trial. Together in their heart language, we are daily and weekly walking through books of the Bible verse by verse, as we seek to teach these believers a healthy biblical theology that points to Jesus so that they might also teach others for God's glory. Regularly gathering and devoting ourselves to all that the Lord has called us to is the main focus of our attention and prayer.

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

Coming out of an extended lockdown due to the pandemic, the Lord stirred in the hearts of three national believers to begin gathering for weekly Bible study. When others heard there was a regularly meeting group they quickly joined as well, and new believers were baptized. After a year of consistent study and prayer this group took the Lord's Supper together for the first time and began identifying as a local church. This was an unprecedented moment in the city, and the Lord continues to grow this group to greater maturity by the power of His Word and the Holy Spirit.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We have a local partner that we are working with who is eager to train, teach and read the Bible with believers and seekers. We read a passage with him, then he does the same thing with other followers. He just told me the other day, "Two of them are ready to lead Bible studies with new folks." Praise the Lord!

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

When COVID-19 first hit the country, our team was approached to lead some online trainings for expatriate churches here. In the last year and a half, we have worked with seven different churches training them in the core task, local worldview and specific evangelism tools to reach the local people. These groups from many different nations have started outreach groups and intentional ministries using the principles and tools learned. One group said that until they started trainings with us, they only thought of reaching other expats in the country, but now they see the bigger picture and are overcoming their fear of reaching the majority people around them.

#### From your South Asian Peoples Leader:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16)

At the turn of the 19th century, the year 1800, the fruit of William Carey's fledgling 'modern mission movement' resided in the heart of one South Asian believer, Krishna Paul. Now, over two centuries later, conservative estimates number evangelical believers over 35 million. Since the year 2001 when South Asia became IMB's first region, IMB personnel have invested training in tens of thousands of South Asian believers. Today, IMB's South Asian Affinity counts more than 800 partnerships with South Asian churches and associations that have reproduced to 2nd, or 3rd generation churches and beyond. The South Asian annual statistical report reflects the IMB's sustained, and multiplied investment in these partnerships over two decades. As gospel seed sowing and church formation are white hot across South Asia, please pray that your IMB personnel will leverage all our resources and energies toward disciple making and investment in leadership development as we maintain balance in the components of the Core Missionary Task.





223,075 Heard Gospel

Witness

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93,938

114,871 **New Believers** 

146,767

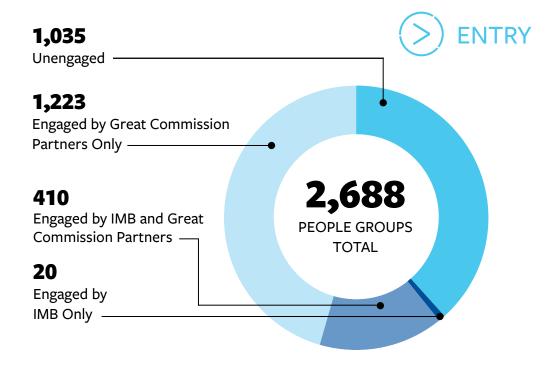
Leadership Training

Received

21,047

**New Churches** 

\*This number includes churches not reported previously that were started between 2017 and 2021.



**1,030** 

Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

449

Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

2,359

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

**70** 

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers



## EVANGELISM

Gospel Witnesses **223,075** 

Opportunities to Respond

208,096

Seekers

143,474

**New Believers** 

114,871

Baptisms

93,938



### DISCIPLESHIP

130,016

Ongoing Bible Study participants

65,644
Being personally

mentored



 New Groups
 6,752

 Total Groups
 24,216

 New Churches
 21,047\*

 1st Generation
 843

 2nd Generation
 1,518

3rd Generation and higher **18,686** 

Total Churches **81,764** 

1st Generation **13,082** 

2nd Generation **5,829** 

3rd Generation and higher **62,853** 

Baptized Believers Meeting **344,067** 



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training 17,903

Church Planting Training **64,721** 

Advanced Training **64,143** 

Other Training **65,323** 



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

0

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

2

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **inside** their own country

**17** 

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

0

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **outside** their own country

<sup>\*</sup>This number includes churches not reported previously that were started between 2017 and 2021.

#### **ENTRY**

Throughout the COVID-19 lockdowns IMB team members worked to envision, educate and coordinate multiple "hot coals" projects. In concert with long-term church-planting network partners these projects identified specific, qualified church planters for 3-9 month deployments among otherwise unengaged, unreached people groups. In many cases these projects required the development and organization of local cooperation and offerings in order to send and support the 'sent-ones'. While projects like these are proving effective in engaging unengaged unreached peoples of South Asia, please pray engagements will be sustained and result in churches among people we serve.

#### **EVANGELISM**

Annually, IMB personnel train thousands in gospel seed sowing. In one example more than 40 believers gathered to learn how to share the gospel in a way that is "reproducible," meaning that it's simple for others to learn and begin doing as well. After training, these local believers went out in small groups into multiple homes. Those who were more confident in sharing the gospel modeled for others, many of whom then began sharing themselves! Praise the Lord for this group's excitement about engaging their communities with the good news about the Savior.



#### DISCIPLESHIP

For years, we have been praying for the people from the M-Jo unengaged unreached people group to come to know Him. In December, God brought the first two people to faith from this group. This couple were the only known believers from this group. They quickly began to grow as disciples, and the husband has grown into a strong leader. At present he is discipling several groups of new believers in his village weekly and has begun to reach out to other M-Jo communities in an adjacent district! More families have come to faith and been baptized. Recently, that very same M-Jo disciple who was the first to believe was able to give baptism for the first time. He baptized his mom!

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

New churches have been established in multiple states as believers trained in church planting returned to village settings during the COVID pandemic. One example is James, a disciple in a local church. During lockdown, he migrated back to his home village and started sharing with his people. One by one, families started coming to faith. Two leaders from his local church went up to help strengthen the work and give James some more training in person. At that time, James baptized several more families and they all took the Lord's Supper together for the first time as a local church!

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Mature believers recently spent time training a group of believers that they have been investing in for over a year. They taught discipleship lessons with the goal to model for them and coach them in the work of making disciples. The main leader's passion and burden for the lost is growing!

He told the men discipling him, "If I would have had these tools 10 years ago, half of our district (around 1 million) would be reached with the good news." This man and his wife now have a vision for 100 healthy house churches in their district.

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

Derek recently walked through an "Exit Assessment" tool that guides leaders in evaluating the progress and health of churchplanting efforts in order to determine if it is time to "exit to partnership" in an area or to continue strengthening the work. He discovered four areas where local leaders were forming and leading churches, but also areas without gospel seed-sowing. He celebrated that God is raising up local leaders and he plans to go encourage them to press on. He also plans to equip local believers to share the gospel in areas where people have not yet heard the good news.

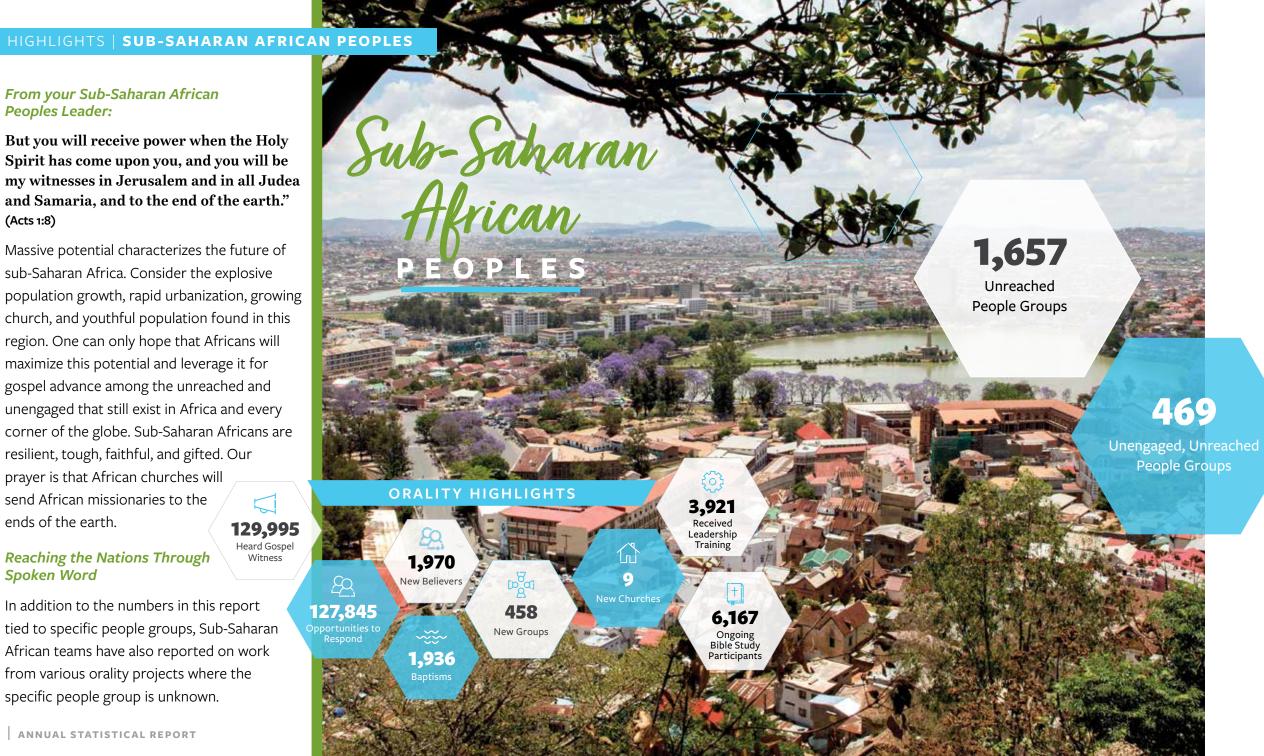
Peoples Leader:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

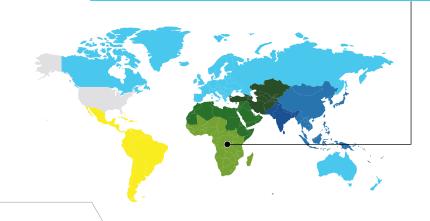
Massive potential characterizes the future of sub-Saharan Africa. Consider the explosive population growth, rapid urbanization, growing church, and youthful population found in this region. One can only hope that Africans will maximize this potential and leverage it for gospel advance among the unreached and unengaged that still exist in Africa and every corner of the globe. Sub-Saharan Africans are resilient, tough, faithful, and gifted. Our prayer is that African churches will send African missionaries to the ends of the earth. 129,995

#### Reaching the Nations Through Spoken Word

In addition to the numbers in this report tied to specific people groups, Sub-Saharan African teams have also reported on work from various orality projects where the specific people group is unknown.



#### HIGHLIGHTS | SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES



73,863 **Heard Gospel** 

Witness

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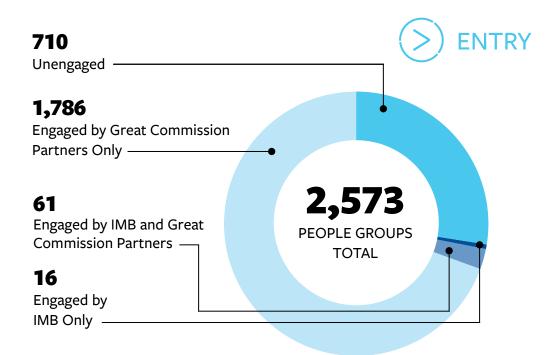
3,199

**New Believers** 

19,288

**New Churches** 

3,093



Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs)

**106** 

Indigenous peoples and urban centers engaged by IMB teams

1,657

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

1

New Indigenous engagements of people groups or urban centers



# **EVANGELISM**

Gospel Witnesses

Opportunities to Respond

Seekers

New Believers

Baptisms

73,863

61,692

14,656

19,288



# DISCIPLESHIP

31,945

Ongoing Bible Study participants

**1,016**Being personally mentored



99	New Groups
310	Total Groups
34	New Churches
25	1st Generation
7	2nd Generation
2	3rd Generation and higher

Total Churches	1,742
1st Generation	1,190
2nd Generation	284
3rd Generation and higher	268

Baptized Believers Meeting 154,808



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Training 855

Church Planting Training 1,773

Advanced Training 465

Other Training 3,182



#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

IMB engagement decreases as local ownership of the missionary task increases.

2

Global missionary partners sent from this affinity to other nations

1(

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **inside** their own country

**78** 

Indigenous people groups have self-sustaining ownership in the missionary task

2

Indigenous people groups are engaging other people groups **outside** their own country

#### **ENTRY**

After hearing for weeks of the dreaded virus, the Malagasy people's worst fears were realized — COVID had breached their borders. Gyms and warehouses were turned into make-shift shelters as hospitals were overrun, deaths spiked, and churches shut down. In response, our IMB team, along with a group of local believers, decided to act. We adopted one of the hardest hit shelters and asked permission to visit the patients and staff to pray, sing and share the gospel. Over the next six weeks, the story of salvation and healing spread throughout the shelter and beyond, inspiring the Malagasy president to grant special permission for those visiting shelters to continue even during the strictest lockdown.

#### **EVANGELISM**

Over the past five years, we've had the amazing privilege of having a front-row seat to the transformational power of God's Word in story form in the lives of individuals from over 40 people groups. As they have mastered God's redemptive story in history and then gone out to share it in their neighborhoods, we have heard testimony of an abortionist repenting and bringing her abortion tools and herbs to a pastor to burn, of twins who haven't spoken for years being saved and reconciled, of a confessed sorcerer repenting and bringing his witchcraft tools to be burned. We teach people to tell God's story, to tell it often, to tell it well, until it becomes a way of life for them.



#### DISCIPLESHIP

"Tell His Story" evangelism trainings began after I trained three national partners to lead workshops with selected participants from five churches. Now dozens of believers are sharing the biblical story of the demon-possessed man paired with their personal testimonies. For many, it is their first time sharing the gospel. I continue to mentor the original trainers and several new ones. They have carried out three workshops without my direct help. Numerous Bible study groups are being led in homes and local churches, and two preaching points were just started as a direct result of the trainings.

#### **HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION**

My IMB team has been doing evangelism for four years in a neighborhood of Dakar that has no church. Recently, a Baptist partner, originally from Sierra Leone, told me about other Sierra Leoneans in the very neighborhood we had been working in and praying for. Together, we started a Bible study group among them in that area, and we have been training the group in church-planting principles. Now, this fledgling church plant has a vision and a plan for planting Senegalese churches in that neighborhood and beyond.

#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Our IMB team began a StoryTogether project called "Bamako and Beyond" in Bamako, Mali. All the participants in this project serve in some form of leadership. This intentional but informal training has deepened their understanding of the metanarrative of Scripture. Some participants, like Moses, are trained pastors and have graduated from a local Bible school. He testified: "The impact of this training on my life has allowed me to understand better the events of the stories of the Bible and the plan of salvation for mankind. It makes it easy to evangelize with the Bible stories. We have three new groups, and 15 new believers." Fred, a faithful, mature believer, shared about his personal development: "The training has helped me understand the Bible even more! I have led at least 10 men to the Lord since the training has begun."

#### **EXIT TO PARTNERSHIP**

The Togo and Benin Baptist Conventions have grown to the point of sending their own national missionaries within their respective countries. Our own missionary presence has reduced in the last 10 years, but we are still working in partnership. Most recently, we are working together with both conventions to bring their missionaries together once a quarter. Iron is sharpening iron as they learn evangelism and discipleship through oral stories. Encouragement is happening as they come together with like-minded national missionaries. We are also filled with joy as we experience their growth and expanded vision for missions.

#### **READING THIS REPORT**

Readers should be careful not to make assumptions when reading IMB's annual statistical report nor to compare it yearto-year. For security reasons, the total number of personnel and close partners in each part of the world who provide data for this report is not publicly released. This means it will always be unclear how many individual report givers contributed to an affinity's numbers. In some missionary fields, our teams have many close partners, while other fields have few or no believers, let alone partners, to share in the work. This means that in some places providing opportunity to hear the gospel is the work of one or two individuals, and in other places, it can be hundreds.

Also, in each affinity, no reference to the amount of time spent laboring among a particular people group or place is given. Some teams labor faithfully for a decade to see a single person come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Other teams see multiple people decide to follow Christ in their first year. Some teams can stay in countries for years discipling pastors and leaders. Others are forced to leave after a short time by hostile governments, persecution, or health issues. Some teams see fruit in terms of local churches' ownership in the Great Commission and well-discipled pastors and leaders such that they transition to a peer relationship with local leaders and stop reporting those partners' efforts, shifting their team's focus to new Unreached People Groups that are resistant to the gospel. One year a team may show a multitude of gospel shares and churches and the next year minimal gospel sharing and no churches. All of this means that year-by-year comparisons of "faithfulness" and resulting "fruitfulness," even within the same affinity, should be avoided, as the circumstances behind any changes are varied and complex.

What we can say with certainty is that IMB personnel and partners, regardless of the difficulty of the soil, are laboring diligently and with their best efforts, trusting God with the results and striving to provide transparent, accurate, and trustworthy reporting. These field and personnel realities point to the desperate need for prayer.

Pray for the lost, pray for our personnel and their partners, pray for access and open hearts to the gospel, and pray for local churches to be formed.



Commit to praying regularly with us. Scan this **QR code** or visit **imb.org/pray.** 

#### **TERMS USED**

Affinity: Affinities are strategic combinations of all the world's people groups, which help facilitate the spread of the gospel based on shared culture, root languages, ethnicities, and other similar factors. IMB has found that having teams focus on these affinity groupings allows for more focused effort on similar peoples regardless of where they live.

#### **Great Commission Christian Partners:**

A Great Commission Christian (GCC) is a term used to designate partners, both international and domestic, who work for the fulfillment of the Great Commission and share evangelical alignment with the SBC.

Global Missionary Partner: A global missionary partner (GMP) is a national partner follower of Jesus, called by God to be a cross-cultural missionary, assessed and sent by their local church and sending entity, affirmed by IMB field personnel, and working in cooperation with an IMB field team.

New Churches: Any new church included in the Annual Statistical Report signals that a group of baptized believers has matured and been discipled to meet the SBC definition of a church. We report new churches during the year when they meet the minimum baseline for being called a church; the church was not necessarily planted in that year but may have started as a group years earlier. We follow the definition of church given in the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, specifically the first paragraph referring to the local church.

#### First, Second, and Third Generation Churches:

The term Generation explains the relationship between a parent church and any churches they plant, and later as those church plants become healthy and plant churches of their own – even to the 6th generation and beyond! IMB currently reports all churches in the 3rd or greater generation under the single heading "3rd Generation," which can be a very large number.

"Faithfulness" Data: "Faithfulness" data is data collected about those missionary activities that are the responsibility of our personnel and their partners. These activities include sharing the gospel, discipling believers, training pastors and leaders, as well as identifying and engaging people groups. IMB collects this data from our field personnel and partners so that we can hold one another accountable to be faithful to the tasks God has assigned to every follower of Christ.

"Fruitfulness" Data: Fruitfulness" data is data collected about what God is doing among the peoples and places of the earth through the "Faithfulness" activities of IMB personnel and their partners but is ultimately out of their control. "Fruitfulness" data includes results such as an individual receiving salvation through Jesus Christ and the forming of new local churches. All followers of Christ have a responsibility to be obedient and faithful to the commands found in Scripture, but fruitful outcomes resulting from a believer's obedience are caused by God. IMB collects this data so that we can glorify God by boasting in what the Lord is doing through our personnel and partners.

#### How is the data for the ASR collected?

IMB Team leaders regularly enter their own personal efforts and the efforts of frontline team members and close baptistic partners, as well as any resulting fruit from the Lord into IMB proprietary software that tracks and maintains all this data. Both the "faithfulness" data and the resulting "fruitfulness" data are entered on a people group basis. In addition, paper forms and other proprietary software that track precise locations of groups and churches, as well as their alignment with the 12 characteristics of a church defined in IMB's Foundations document, are used by IMB teams, facilitating thorough assessment and confirmation of the data that is received.

Throughout the year and particularly before the Annual Statistical Report is finalized, field-based researchers and liaisons from IMB's Global Research Department use computer software to look for any anomalies or incorrectly entered data and thoroughly review all field reports for completeness and veracity prior to submitting the report.

UNDERSTANDING THIS REPORT

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