

Your Unique Engagement Plan

Before you begin, ask yourselves some “probing” questions regarding your church or organization:

- Is your church/organization truly committed to reaching a people group?
- How will you handle your commitment if there is a transition in leadership?
- Are you choosing your people group based upon their needs or yours?
- How can we ensure your commitment will continue if barriers/difficulties arise?
- How long are you committed to the task of reaching the people group (e.g. three years, five years, until there is a church planting movement among the people group, etc.)?
- When will you consider that your part in the task is finished?
- How often are you desiring and committing to send short-term teams in order to maintain strong relationships with your field partners?

People Group and Field Partner Identification

1. Definitions

- a. An “unreached” people group has a population that is less than 2% evangelical Christian.
- b. An “unengaged” people group may have some believers, but has no one intentionally working among them to make disciples and plant churches.
 - i. All of them have no churches.
 - ii. Some have no believers.
 - iii. Some have no evangelism tools.
 - iv. Some have no Scripture resources.

2. Discovery

- a. Conduct research of unengaged, unreached people groups (www.finishthetask.org) and prayerfully choose a country/region with a cluster of UUPG’s that match your church’s passion or preference.
 - i. Based upon your church’s composition.
 - ii. Based upon your church’s location.
 - iii. Based upon your church’s current mission interest and involvement.
 - iv. Based upon existing relationships both here and abroad.
 - v. Based upon previous travels and affinity.
 - vi. Within the country/region where you think your church might like to work, consider three or more unengaged people group(s) in need of engagement.
 - vii. Understand that while all UUPGs are capable of being engaged by someone, there will be those that will not allow direct involvement by your church members.

Write down those regions/countries that interest you and two or three UUPGs from those locations.

- b. Identify potential partnership organizations that are:
1. Currently working in the country or region where your interest lies,
 2. Interested in church partnerships
 3. Offer the level of involvement that you desire
 - i. The Issachar Initiative and Finishing the Task can suggest reliable organizations with a verifiable history of success in sustainable people group engagement.
 - ii. Consider a partnering organization with a solid indigenous presence.
 1. This ensures knowledge of the culture, language, and societal norms.
 2. This ensures continuity and commitment to the region.
 3. This ensures an indigenous, sustainable, and reproducible approach.
 - iii. Determine how workers will be recruited, trained, supported, and supervised.
 - iv. Prayerfully select an organization that offers on-site assistance for short-term teams and is also equipped to properly guide you through a long-term UUPG engagement process.

Write down three potential partnering organizations working where your potential engagements are located. Determine to contact a representative at FTT 2016 (or immediately afterward).

- c. Make a long-term commitment to evangelism, discipleship and church planting among your people group with the goal of seeing a self-sustaining, indigenous church-planting process among them.
 - i. Are the Scriptures available in the “mother tongue” of the people? What steps are needed to begin or continue that process?
 - ii. What is the “oral reliance” of your people group?
 - iii. What evangelism tools have been developed (JESUS Film www.jesusfilm.org, Global Recordings www.gospelrecordings.com, or Faith Comes By Hearing www.faithcomesbyhearing.com) in the mother tongue?
 - iv. Do church planting methods support the development of a long-term, sustainable movement?
 - v. What is the “oral reliance” of your people group?

Using the updated FTT UUPG list, determine the status of your potential UUPGs in Scripture resources and evangelism tools.

The Vision Trip and Continued Engagement

1. Take a Vision Trip.
 - a. A vision trip can be for you who find yourselves in any of the following situations:
 - i. You’re not yet sure if you want to make the commitment to engage, but you want to learn more.
 - ii. You’d like to visit a few people groups so you can choose the right one for your church.
 - iii. You’ve already decided to engage and you want to learn more about your people group so you can start developing partnership ministry strategies.
 - b. A vision trip is the best way to meet the people and explore that part of the world where you think you might be called to work. It will help you experience the lifestyle, understand the spiritual status, and catch God’s vision for His harvest among them.

- c. Your potential partnering organization should be able to assist you in the arrangements for this trip so it will meet your specific needs.
 - d. Who participates?
 - i. Logistically, it's easier to facilitate a small group of 3-4 people. It's also less overwhelming to the places/people you will visit.
 - ii. Ideally, the primary ministry leader (like the senior pastor) should be on the first trip along with 2-3 others (influencers) who will carry the vision back to your group or organization, but God will certainly use whomever you send!
 - iii. It is always recommended that your team include a woman if you ever intend women to be involved (and you should!). When recruiting future team members, a woman's perspective is extremely helpful.
 - e. How long is the trip?
 - i. A vision trip can be 7-10 days long. Often you need to take into account how many workdays will be missed and a weekend-to-weekend trip often works best.
 - ii. It may take two days of travel to get to the field, plus a day to recover from the jet lag. Once you arrive in a place, you'll probably have at least one more day of travel to reach the area where the people live.
 - iii. There is a reason many UUPG's remain unreached and unengaged! They are "out there."
2. Identify a "People Group Champion."
- a. Hopefully by the time the trip is over (or soon after), God will have shown you the kind of commitment you should make and with which people group.
 - b. It will be important to share what God has shown you so you can cast the vision to the entire church – a compelling presentation of what the team has seen and the vision God has given for reaching the people. Then you should start planning specific strategies with your partnering organization for reaching your people group (we will also help with this) and for getting others involved in the process.
 - c. Your "People Group Champion" is the person who will provide leadership for your efforts, recruit a team to carry out those efforts, and keep the needs of the UUPG before your church for prayer and other means of support.
3. Recruit a team to:
- a. Mobilize prayer support
 - b. Determine and implement clear parameters for conduct of the ministry
 - c. Cast a vision for engagement
 - d. Communicate with your field partnership organization
 - e. Develop and implement a funding strategy (see below)
 - f. Handle communications, logistics, training, finance, reporting, supervision, travel, and coordination
 - g. Once all the details of the engagement have been determined, sign a "*Memorandum of Understanding*" with your partnering organization that outlines the terms of one another's responsibility and eliminates the possibility of any future misunderstandings (See Resource Guide Appendix).

Write down the names of the persons most likely to join you on a vision trip.

When do you think your first vision trip might be scheduled?

Who has the greatest potential to serve as your “People Group Champion?”

Your Engagement Funding Strategy

1. Determine Your Budget
 - a. Annual Support for Workers, Training, Transportation, Tools, and Oversight
 - i. Support varies by region of the world, but you should plan on a minimum of two workers at \$200 per month.
 - ii. Training is necessary and you should inquire of your partnering organization concerning how it is conducted (length of training, content of training, and even ways in which you can supplement as a partner).
 - iii. Transportation needs will be determined by location. Sometimes a motorcycle is needed, but other needs may also be expressed (bus or train tickets).
 - iv. Tools that you may wish to provide may include a video projection unit or handheld audio devices. The partnering organization can let you know what their indigenous workers can use and what is available.

- v. Oversight is a necessity and should be provided by indigenous workers. Your partnering organization should be able to explain how this will be conducted and it is appropriate to have some costs included in the funding package.
 - vi. Total costs to fully fund a team for engagement will typically be no less than \$7,000 per year.
 - vii. If the costs seem a bit overwhelming, you might consider an alliance with another church.
- b. Short-Term Trips (costs to be borne by the individuals participating – see below for funding strategies)
- i. Airfare
 - ii. Passports and Visas
 - iii. Travel Insurance
 - iv. Immunizations
 - v. Meals, lodging, and transportation in-country
 - vi. Intangible costs such as loss of vacation, loss of work, or loss of time with family
2. Determine Your Funding Strategy
- a. How you choose to fund your engagement strategy is unique to your individual church culture.
 - b. Some choose to allocate a percentage of their operating budget. Others raise funds off-budget through an annual missions conference and monthly faith-promise.
 - c. With respect to the personal funds needed for short-term trips, many utilize the “principle of thirds” ... the church provides a third, the individual provides a third, and the final third is raised from outside sources.

What is your estimated “engagement” budget?	
Support: \$	Training: \$
Transportation: \$	Oversight: \$

What is your estimated “short-term trip” budget (per person)?	
Airfare: \$	Passport/Visa: \$
Insurance: \$	Immunizations: \$
Meals/Lodging/Transportation: \$	

- a. In any case, in order to fund a people group engagement strategy, sacrifices will have to be made and priorities will often have to be rearranged ... both corporately and individually.
- b. Pray ... ask for guidance ... and then act, trusting that God will provide. Biblical history shows us that often the provision does not come until God's people act in faith.

What ideas may you consider for funding your unique engagement plan?

Additional Notes:

This is just the outline of a master plan for engagement. There is no "manual" that can properly address every situation and obstacle that an engaging church will encounter in the course of taking the gospel of Jesus Christ to a people group that has never heard it (or had little exposure). Once you take your vision trip, you will be able to more intelligently work with your partnering organization to develop a long-range plan toward a sustainable church planting movement. Be assured that with your prayerful efforts and by God's marvelous grace, in one more corner of the world, there will no longer be a group of men, women, and children who lack access to the wonderful message of eternal life in Christ Jesus!