



“Correct Me If I’m Wrong”

*The quarterly bulletin of the Global
Community of Mission Information Workers*

Volume 14, Number 1, January 2024

In this first issue of 2024, we highlight two organizations that use data to shape mission strategy. Please read the stories of One Challenge and Bethany International with an eye to see how your own organization operates in this space. Do you have a story to share about how easy / hard, successful / challenging, satisfying / frustrating it may have been to provide actionable data to your mission’s leadership? Please tell us your story in 400 words or less and we will share it with our community in our April 2024 edition.

Strategic Decision-Making in Our Changing World *by Dean Carlson (One Challenge)*

Discernment is essential for Great Commission leaders seeking to move with God in our multi-polar world. With unlimited ministry opportunities and increasing opposition, priorities must be prayerfully determined and strategies contextually designed toward kingdom fruitfulness.

Over the decades, One Challenge (OC) (<https://onechallenge.org/>) has sought to harness the power of information in strategic decision-making. Our strategy statement reads: “We ask how God is at work, then assist the body of Christ to bring God’s transformation to lives, communities, and nations.” “Asking” involves intentional, attentive prayer and great questions to discover how God is at work.



From the founding of One Challenge, asking strategic questions has been central to our service to the body of Christ. Over 70 years ago, Dick Hillis (OC’s founder) asked what it would take to see indigenous churches multiplied throughout Hunan Province in China. When invited into new countries of service, honest questions have helped OC leaders distill priority needs in the body of Christ, discern ministry fit and seek God’s confirmation.

Over the decades, an inquisitive mindset has been ingrained into OC’s DNA and the elements of research, motivation, training, and mobilization have served OC members well in developing ministry strategies. In the 1970s, OC workers assisted the body of Christ in the Philippines to survey unchurched barangays (communities) across the country and draw church leaders together around the goal of a church in each of the nation’s barangays (projected to number 50,000 by the year 2000). This catalyzed the DAWN (Discipling a Whole Nation) movement resulting in the multiplication of Filipino churches from 5,000 in 1975 to over 70,000 today.

Bob Waymire, OC’s first director of research, wrote in the early 1980’s: “The right information in the right hands at the right time has a powerful effect.” OC has seen indigenous leaders – equipped with Scripture and powerful information – stir the body of Christ in their nation to action. In similar ways, OC has helped key leaders investigate the status of the Great Commission in their nations, leading to national surveys and saturation church planting initiatives in countries such as Guatemala, Zimbabwe, Romania and Nepal.

Succeeding generations of OC leaders have used missiological research to inform intercession, highlight the rise of majority world missions, uncover best practices of healthy church growth, discover effective indigenous models of leader development, track disciple-making movements, and a host of other applications.

In 2011, OC formed our Global Research Team, now with 14 researchers, serving a spectrum of strategic initiatives from the Global Church Planting Network to the Community of Mission Information Workers (<https://www.globalcmiw.org/>). Ultimately, we strive to help grow and equip a locally led, sustainable church research function in every nation.

Research in OC, however, is not reserved only for specialists. Each OC leader is encouraged to apply a learning mindset to the assessment of ministry outcomes and identifying of ministry best practices leading to greater kingdom impact. Mission information – prayerfully applied – gives our leaders a deeper understanding of their current ministry landscape, surfaces emerging trends, guides long-term planning, helps in allocating resources, enables risk mitigation and allows for adaptability in our ever-changing context.

As we aim for the fulfillment of the Great Commission, leaders of all kinds would be well-served to harness the power of information in strategic decision-making. By prayerfully asking great questions together, may we discern what the Holy Spirit is doing and collaborate courageously like the leaders of Issachar, “who understood the times and knew what [Israel] should do.” (I Chronicles 12:32)

Research for Strategic Sending *by Kerry A. Olson (Bethany International)*

Bethany International (<https://bethanyinternational.org/>), along with its Globeserve network of over 300 missionary training schools worldwide, has historically utilized Joshua Project data to inspire engagement among our North American missionaries as well as international missionaries with unreached people groups around the world.

The comprehensive data and research regarding unreached people groups have enabled us to identify areas with the most significant needs. This, in turn, has allowed us to strategically focus on church planting efforts in regions where the Church is either absent or has minimal presence.



I recall a ministry hub meeting in an Asian country with national partners, where we discovered that two organizations were independently targeting a very remote unreached people group (UPG). As we examined the data together, it became evident that this UPG, with a population of 450 and no known Christians, did not warrant engagement from both organizations. One partner had two workers ready for deployment, while the other had workers still undergoing training. Consequently, we unanimously decided to reassign the latter workers to a different UPG, avoiding unnecessary duplication and making more efficient use of human resources.

In another ministry hub meeting in West Africa, partners swiftly recognized, based on the data, that a significant people group was attracting multiple partners' attention in the northeast region of their country, while the northwest region had a scarcity of churches. Consequently, adjustments were made to ensure a more strategic allocation of frontline workers to where their presence was genuinely needed.

Through our Engage500 initiative, initiated in 2015 and completed in 2020, we employed people group data as a guiding tool for strategically deploying new workers. We have also occasionally

contributed by updating information and providing photographs of people for specific unreached people groups to Joshua Project. Furthermore, we've shared stories about the work of God among these UPGs.

In conclusion, people group data empowers both individuals and organizations to strategically engage with the world's remaining unreached peoples through the provision of data, research, networking, and valuable resources. It serves as an invaluable tool for those dedicated to making a difference in the lives of those who have yet to hear the gospel.

One Challenge and Bethany International have a history of seeking and utilizing data for planning and evaluation. Research and researchers are valued. What experiences have you had as a data gatherer that have strengthened, or frustrated, your group's leadership? Please send your story to <info@globalcmiw.org> by March 1st for inclusion in our April 2024 bulletin. Thank you! The Editorial Team.

MIW Training Corner

Vanderbilt University Prompt Engineering Specialization

If you want to learn more about using large language model Artificial Intelligence effectively, there is a prompt engineering specialization, made up of three related courses, on Coursera.

There is a free 7-day trial and financial aid

available. The videos are informative, and the course would be well-worth auditing. The instructor uses ChatGPT but says the techniques will work with any large language model.

<https://www.coursera.org/specializations/prompt-engineering>



Global Orality Mapping Project (GOMAP)

How do you know the degree of orality reliance for your audience? The Orality-Reliance Survey quantifies the level of orality reliance based on 15 valid traits, and scores those tendencies to

identify key factors in your program design. Global Orality Mapping Project (GOMAP) maps all remaining Unreached People Groups with an open source security enhanced platform continually updating data, and provides high impact instructional templates. Get in touch for more training information and how to use GOMAP. Danyal Qalb (Director of Research). <https://i-os.org/research/>



CMIW Conference

The Community of Mission Information Workers announces its **third virtual conference** for the first week of June 2024. The purpose of the conference is to accelerate the development of mission information and the mission information community. The conference is sponsored by the Community of Mission Information Workers (CMIW), Lausanne Research & Strategic Information Network and Harvest Information Standards (HIS). Look for more information in the April edition of this bulletin.

Materials and updates will be made available leading up to the conference. Registration will open in April. If you have never attended the conference, e-mail miwvcon@gmail.com for communication.

Special Profile: Valeria Ortiz

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

My family is small, composed of my parents, my brother who is married with three adult children, and myself. I am single and returned to Argentina in 2020 to accompany and provide support to my elderly parents, who are facing significant health issues.

I have served for years in the local church in Argentina in various roles, including youth leader, pastor's assistant, coordinator of local and international social projects. I have been actively involved in the mission mobilization ministry across different organizations based in Argentina.



In 2012, I was sent as a missionary to serve with AIM in Brazil. My role has been as the Coordinator of Mobilization for Latin America since then.

2) [CMIW] **What is your current ministry?**

I am currently serving as a missionary with the Mission to the Interior of Africa - MIAF (Africa Inland Mission - AIM - South America) at the Latin America base in Londrina, Brazil.

I have two areas of focus: as the Coordinator of Mobilization for South America and as part of the member care team, specifically focusing on single missionaries in the field. My responsibilities include forming partnerships with other Latin American organizations to facilitate missionary sending to unreached people groups in Africa.

In the Ibero-American Missionary Cooperation - COMIBAM, I serve in the research department. I worked on a research project to create a catalog of organizations and missionaries sent from Latin America to the world. This tool helps identify unreached people groups and regions with a greater need for missionaries. Currently, I am part of a new team of professional researchers conducting ongoing research, such as studying workers serving among unreached people groups in Asia. We are working on presenting the collected data from a survey on Latin American churches' involvement and missionary sending to unreached fields. Additionally, we are planning to conduct research for member care to identify the needs of missionaries in the field.

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

Nothing brings me more satisfaction than witnessing individuals who feel called to missions arrive on the field, and I have been part of that process. Mobilizing, supporting, caring for, training, and sending people with a calling is my greatest joy. Being able to share the entire process, seeing what God does in the hearts and lives of those serving in cross-cultural settings, listening to and caring for those in preparation or already in the field, brings me joy, excitement, strengthens my faith, and makes me grateful to God for choosing me to serve in missions.

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

I aspire to continue growing and acquiring new tools to carry out my tasks, whether in mobilization or member care. I understand the need for God's empowerment in these areas, but having knowledge to be more effective is also important. I want to be a bridge for those seeking my help to fulfill their calling, providing wise, loving, and Godly guidance.

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

As part of the COMIBAM community, we would like our research team to provide data and information that can benefit all churches and agencies, providing clarity on the work and missionaries actively serving. This includes specific data on people groups in need of missionaries to gain access to the gospel and cease being "unreached." We also aim to share data that aids in specific mobilization and identification of the needs of missionaries in member care.

Information From the Word

by Jennifer Poling

"In those days Caesar Augustus ordered that a census be taken of the entire Roman world... And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth of Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David." (Luke 2:1-4 NIV)



God used information gathering to place Mary and Joseph exactly where He had planned for Jesus to be born. How have you seen evidence of God's hand, both in how information was used and in how He used the information gathering process?

Note

CMIW bulletins include links to important websites related to the bulletin content. The CMIW Editorial Team is vigilant about security concerns. While most hyperlinks are spelled out, extremely long links are embedded in the text. We encourage readers to always examine embedded links before clicking as a habit of secure electronic reading.

Final Details:

- With the help of God this bulletin is now produced quarterly in English, Portuguese and Spanish.
- The Editorial Team comprises Duane Frasier, Jennifer Poling, Larry Kraft, 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/cmiwbulletin.