

Glossary of Missions Terminology

These terms have been mainly collected from www.strategicnetwork.org and www.urbana.org and have been compiled to work in harmony with the *Missions: An Adventure In Faith* bible studies by John Edmiston.

10/40 Window: The area of the world between 10 and 40 degrees latitude north of the equator that stretches from Northwest Africa across the Near and Middle East and Asia. It is in this part of the world that an overwhelming majority of the people groups are considered to be unreached with the Gospel.

Advocacy. The process of taking the part of a particular unevangelized population segment, and continually seeking opportunities to present their case for a larger share of Christian resources.

Affiliated Christians. Church members; all persons belonging to or connected with organized churches, whose names are inscribed, written, or entered on the churches' books, records, or rolls.

Alien Christians scale. A computed scale from 0-10 measuring culturally alien Christian influence on a people or other segment by estimating the number of Christians from other cultures who reside on its territory.

Biblical Mandate: Woven throughout God's Word is a redemptive thread which reveals God's heart is to bring all peoples, nations and tongues to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The mandate or command is for every believer to be involved in this process of taking the message of the Gospel to the nations (see Genesis 12:1-3; Psalm 96:3; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8).

Candidate: Someone who has applied to a mission agency. The candidate secretary is the one who corresponds with people who apply to a mission. Some agencies gather candidates interested in career service at a week or two of candidate school to orient them to the agency and to evaluate each candidate for acceptance. Once accepted by the mission board the candidate is called an appointee.

Christians. Followers of Jesus Christ of all kinds: all traditions and confessions, and all degrees of commitment.

Christian world. In the 3-tier schema, this is World C, consisting of all who individually are Christians.

Christopaganism: A mix of Christian and non-Christian beliefs; See syncretism.

Church planting: Starting new churches

Closed country. A country whose government or regime has closed it to some major form of Christian ministry from outside, usually resident foreign missionaries, visiting evangelists, or freely distributed Scriptures, Christian literature, tapes or videos or films, or other Christian influences from outside.

Closing country. A country still open to outside Christian influences but whose increasing restrictions suggest it will become closed within a few months or years.

Closure. The concept that the mandate of the church for world mission can be completed in a measurable way by evangelizing and/or reaching all peoples on Earth; not effectively invoked unless attached to some sort of deadline, the usual one being in the 1980s and 1990s being AD 2000.

Contextualization: Putting the truths of God into the context of the local culture. This involves seeing how one's own culture distorts your understanding of biblical truths, and then taking the universal truths and applying them in another culture.

Convergency. A concept describing the unstructured way in which the world evangelization thrusts of 7 major ecclesiastical traditions (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Ecumenical, Evangelical, Catholic Charismatic, Pentecostal-Charismatic, Fundamentalist) have converged since 1970 in stated aims, goals, terminology, theology, missiology, publications, periodicals, activities, cooperation, and programs.

Country. A term covering both sovereign nations and nonsovereign territories or dependencies or colonies which are not integral parts of larger parent nations.

Cross-cultural mission scale. A computed scale from 0-10 measuring the influence of cross-cultural missionary presence and activity within a people group or other segment.

Culture: The learned and shared behavior, attitudes, feelings, values and beliefs of a people. It includes everything that a group of people thinks, says, does and makes. This cultural package is transmitted from generation to generation.

Deputation: Commonly refers to the prayer and financial support rallying that career and short-term missionaries do before leaving for the field and during furloughs

Discipleship scale. A computed scale from 0-10 measuring Christian discipleship in a population segment by estimating the number of disciples.

E%. A computed estimate of the percentage of persons in a particular population segment (world, country, people, city) who have become evangelized.

Ethnolinguistic people. An ethnic or racial group within a single country, speaking its own language or mother tongue.

Evangelism. The church's organized activity of spreading the gospel.

Evangelization. (a) The whole process of spreading the good news of the Kingdom of God; (b) the extent to which the good news has been spread; (c) the extent of awareness of Christianity, Christ, and the gospel.

Evangelize. To spread the good news of Christ, with signs following, to preach, to persuade, to win for Christ.

Evangelized non-Christian world. In the 3-tier schema, this is World B, consisting of all non-Christians who have nevertheless become evangelized.

Evangelized persons. Individuals who have had adequate opportunity or opportunities to hear the gospel and to respond to it.

Evangelizer. A Christian who is active regularly in witness, evangelism, and winning others to Christ.

"Force for Evangelism". The effective evangelizing nucleus in the church, made up of active Great Commission Christians who are engaged in some form of evangelizing.

"Force for Evangelization". The total of all practising church members (their practice having various direct and indirect influences on evangelization).

Frontier Missionary. A full-time foreign missionary who works among an unreached people or an unevangelized population segment.

Frontier People. An alternate term for an unreached minipeople.

Global Desk. A central office within a Great Commission Agency charged with keeping the agency accountable to its goals as they relate to the unevangelized world, networking with other Great Commission Christians, and maintaining a clear electronic link with other global desks.

Global Evangelization Movement. A term describing the vast number of distinct agencies and plans directed towards world evangelization which have proliferated across the world since the year 1900.

Global Mission. The mission of Jesus Christ as it involves the entire world.

Global Plan. A global plan to evangelize the world is defined here as a documented, christocentric plan or proposal or purpose or program or scenario or similar variety that presupposes or starts from one or more of 10 central biblical themes (Great Commission, obedience of The Twelve Apostles, discipling the nations, global mission, worldwide witness and evangelism, world evangelization, End-times, Antichrist, Parousia, Millennium), which then articulates concern for the world's entire population, demonstrated in a call or appeal to Christians to implement or envision a plan with a number of concrete elements in it, which plan has adequate global significance by virtue either of its timing, or its context, or its novelty, or its appeal, or its persuasiveness, or its impact, or uniqueness of any of its elements, or its global size in cases where its sponsoring organization has work in over 50 nations of the world, or sends out over 5,000 foreign missionary personnel.

Global Statistics. Numbers, cyphers, and series of figures describing any aspect of the world, the Earth, our globe, its populations, its problems, its past, its present, and its future.

Globalist. A specialist in globalistics, one who consistently takes the global view and emphasizes the big-picture approach to world problems.

Globalistics. The professional study of the world in its entirety, with all its peoples, groupings, problems, and possibilities.

Globalized Mission. Mission agencies which profess to work for global mission, which utilize a veneer of global terminology, and which operate in budget-program isolation from other missions.

Globalized Evangelization. An organized attempt by a church or mission agency to reach the world by taking a successful local program of mission and evangelism and adding to it a veneer of global terminology.

Great Commission (used as an adjective). A descriptive term for persons or organizations or plans or activities of any nationality, denomination, or confession, and which are based on Christ's Great Commission and which are actively working to obey it, personally and corporately.

Great Commission agency. A church or parachurch or service agency which publicizes its raison d'etre as obedience to Christ's Great Commission.

Great Commission Christians. Believers in Jesus Christ who are aware of the implications of Christ's Great Commission, who have accepted its personal challenge in their lives, and who are seeking to influence the Body of Christ to implement it.

Hidden People. An alternate term for an unreached minipeople.

Idiom. A language whose speech community regards it as their mother tongue and which shares less than 95% common vocabulary with any other idiom.

Idol: Something considered to be sacred or holy; an abode of a spirit.

Idolatry: The practice of elevating created things to the place of God; the worship of substitutes instead of the true God.

Indigenous people: Culturally distinct groups that have occupied a region longer than other immigrant or colonist groups.

KGAP. Kaleidoscopic global action plan, built on the 2,000 existing global and non-global plans and attempts in part to deal with gaps in coverage of the unevangelized world.

Language Set. A grouping of language units sharing from 35-75% common vocabulary.

Language Unit. A grouping of idioms whose speech communities share from 75-95% common vocabulary.

Lexicostatistics. The study of languages by comparing lexicons (word lists) and finding how many words are shared in common by 2 or more languages.

Limited-Access Country. A country whose government or regime limits access by aliens foreign missionaries wishing to reside, usually by small or decreasing quotas or shorter residence permits.

Macro Region. UN definition of continent, dividing world into 8 such regions; previously named continental areas.

Macro Segment. A major population sub-grouping used in detailing the remaining unfinished task.

Magic: The manipulation of spiritual power through rituals which compel supernatural powers to act in certain ways.

Matching Up. The process of linking a particular unevangelized population segment with a particular nonresidential missionary whose vocation it would be to see that the segment becomes evangelized by AD 2000.

Megapeople. An ethnolinguistic people speaking a single mother tongue whose population numbers over one million.

Metropeople. An ethnolinguistic people resident in, and forming a distinct homogenous group in a metropolis.

Micropeople. A small close-knit homogeneous population segment.

Micro Segment. A minor population subgrouping used for local targeting in evangelization.

Minipeople. The largest people group within which the gospel can spread as a church-planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance.

Ministry Options. A list of possible or potential ministries or missionary or evangelistic approaches that a nonresidential missionary draws up, which he considers could be undertaken by various agents and agencies on behalf of his target segment.

Missiological breakthrough. A term employed as a synonym to minimum mission achievement, which in turn rests on Donald McGavran's well known concept of the basic, essential need for a people movement to Christ in a given culture.

Monovocational. In contrast to bivocational persons (describing tentmakers or missionaries with the dual vocation of (a) a secular profession in a closed country, undertaken in order to exercise (b) part-time Christian witness or service), monovocational persons describes missionaries whose main or only vocation and profession is full-time Christian service with particular emphasis on the ministry of evangelization.

Monitoring. The process of regularly tracking and recording the progress of evangelization in a particular unevangelized population segment, with special reference to measuring the impact of all Great Commission activities and influences.

Mother Tongue. The first language spoken in an individual's home in his early or earliest childhood; one's first language or native language.

Nonresidential Missionary. This concept describes a full-time, appointed, salaried or supported professional career missionary of any nationality, who is assigned by his or her board or agency in any country-through a matching process designed to concentrate on the priorities of first-time evangelization and to avoid gaps or inadvertent duplications with other agencies-to a ministry to one single unevangelized population segment of the unevangelized world (one metropolis, one people group, or one country). He resides with his family outside that segment or its country and is based in an open city with good international communications facilities for networking with all other concerned Great Commission Christians who are targeting the same segment, with the overarching objective of seeing to it that all persons in his population segment become evangelized by AD 2000.

Overarching Objective. The long-term goal, over and above all short-term discipling or evangelistic endeavors, of giving every person in every people group and population on Earth the opportunity to hear the gospel with understanding and to become disciples of Christ by the year 2000.

People or People Group. A significantly large grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, residence, occupation, class or caste, situation, etc. or combination of these. Examples of people groups are ethnolinguistic peoples, minipeoples or unimax peoples, micropeoples, metropeoples, and sociopeoples.

Note: This definition which was a result of a meeting of mission executives in Chicago in March of 1982, originally included the phrase "From the viewpoint of evangelization this is the largest group in which the gospel can spread as a church-planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance." We prefer to preserve this concept through other labels (unimax group or minipeople) thus allowing the term people group to have a broader meaning including all the other types of peoples listed above.

Polygamy: Marriage to more than one husband or wife simultaneously.

Population Segment. An expanded term for segment, emphasizing its composition as a population.

Power encounter: A confrontation between traditional powers and the power of God in some visible way, so that the supreme power is readily evident.

R%. A computed estimate of the percentage of persons in a country or other population segment who have become reached.

Reached. Having heard the gospel, understood it, and having had the opportunity to respond by joining an indigenous church or fellowship of his own culture.

Reached Minipeople. A minipeople with a viable indigenous church.

Reached People. An ethnolinguistic people with a viable indigenous church.

Reached Persons. Individuals who have had an adequate opportunity to hear the gospel and to respond to it, and also to contact a church of their own culture and to meet and join in fellowship with other believers.

Redemptive Analogy: A story or ritual in a society that provides an analogy with some aspect of the gospel message and so facilitates communication.

Restricted-Access Country. A country whose government or regime restricts access by foreign missionaries wishing to reside, foreign Christians wishing to visit, or foreign Christian literature, broadcasting or other Christian ministries or influences.

Scripture language. A language in which some Scripture activity exists, either distributing of complete scriptures (complete Books of the Bible) in print, radio, audio, or video versions; or partial scriptures, (ongoing translation and preparation of complete scriptures, or use of selections of texts in print, radio, or audio versions).

Segment. Any subdivision of the world's population (homogeneous or not), made for purposes of understanding and analysis; the most generalized English translation of the biblical Greek word ethnos (usually translated "people").

Segmentization. The process of dividing the world's population into meaningful small segments-usually countries, people groups, or cities-in order to assist with their targeting and evangelization.

Sociopeople. A people or population group defined primarily by some sociological category such as class, caste, occupation, age, abode; often regarded as a useful bridge people for evangelism.

standalone. This adjective as used here does not refer to individuals but to agencies or global plans which operate organizationally unrelated to the rest of the Great Commission World, i.e. with budget and program unrelated to those of other agencies; also used of a computer which serves only its immediate user without being linked or networked to other computers.

Statistics. The shortest and most compact form of factual description with regard to a population or situation.

Superstition: Beliefs and practices that are only partly believed in by the people but continue to be held.

Support: The finances and prayer you will need to ask others to give for your mission trip. A supporter is one who gives and prays. A support team is the group of people who supports you. They may or may not know each other

Syncretism: A blending of two or more irreconcilable systems of belief and practice; the incompatible mixture of biblical truth with unbiblical beliefs and practices.

Tentmaker: A cross-cultural witness who works at a paying, usually secular, job. Often they are able to gain entry into "closed" countries which restrict traditional mission efforts. Tentmakers rarely make tents for a living, like the apostle Paul did, but they all should have the intention to further God's work.

Term Can refer to the length of a missionary's time commitment to a mission organization. Many career missionaries serve successive terms of two to five years. Often they spend a period of months in their home countries between terms, usually called a furlough. A short-term can be as short as two weeks or as long as three years.

The Field Short for the mission field. A field is anywhere that missionaries do their work. Regrettably, field sounds like it's out in the country or on a farm. Most mission situations are not farms, and are usually urbanized to some extent. A field director is one who oversees those who are working together in a particular country, people group, or location.

Third World. Developing nations not politically aligned with either the Western (Capitalist) world or the Communist (Marxist) world.

Three (3)-Tier Schema. A stylized schematic representation in which, to enhance the understanding of world evangelization, the globe is divided into 3 slices or tiers or worlds and given the names World A, the Unevangelized World; World B, the Evangelized Non-Christian World; and World C, the Christian World.

U%. A computed estimate of the percentage of persons in a particular population segment (world, country, people group, city) who are unevangelized; equivalent to 100-E%.

Unevangelized Persons. Individuals who have had no adequate opportunity to hear the gospel or respond to it; persons who are unaware of Christianity, Christ, and the gospel; those who have never heard the name of Jesus.

Unevangelized Population Segment A measurable population community, or an evangelistically manageable population bloc, capable of being targeted by a missionary or couple with a view to its evangelization.

Unevangelized World. In the 3-tier schema, this is World A, consisting of all non-Christians who have not been evangelized.

Unfinished Task. The remaining task of the Christian church on Earth viewed as the church's responsibility within God's plan for the world; usually viewed as completing the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission.

Unimax People. An alternate term for minipeople.

Unreached. Having never heard the gospel nor having had the opportunity to contact an indigenous church or fellowship of his own culture.

Unreached People. An ethnolinguistic people who do not have their own viable indigenous church.

Unreached Minipeople. A minipeople with no viable indigenous church.

Unreached Persons. Individuals who have, or have had, no adequate opportunity to hear the gospel, or to respond to it, or to meet and have fellowship with other believers.

V%. A computed estimate of the percentage of persons in a country or other population segment who are unreached equivalent to 100-R%.

Vehicular Megalanguage. A language with a million or more speakers which acts as a trade language or lingua franca.

Viable Indigenous Church. Within an ethnolinguistic people or a minipeople, an indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people group without necessitating outside (cross-cultural) assistance.

World Evangelization. The term used for the goal of reaching the entire world with the gospel of Christ, or of giving every people group and population on Earth the opportunity to hear the gospel with understanding and to become disciples of Christ.

World A. In the 3-tier schema of the Earth, the unevangelized world, i.e. the world of all unevangelized individuals.

World B. In the 3-tier schema of the Earth, the evangelized non-Christian world, i.e. all non-Christians who have nevertheless become evangelized.

World C. In the 3-tier schema of the Earth, the Christian world, i.e. the world of all who individually are Christians.

Worldview: A set of presuppositions which we hold (consciously or unconsciously) about the basic make-up of our world; the central assumptions, beliefs, concepts, premises and values which are shared by a community. Because of the widespread acceptance of these assumptions within the society, the ideas are usually regarded as being nonnegotiable and beyond dispute. Worldview has been compared to glasses through which a community of people views reality. For example, if a people holds beliefs that a spiritual realm controls natural events (animism), they will draw different conclusions about an event from someone who does not believe in a supernatural realm.