

Fourth European Member Care May 2003
Changes and Challenges in the world today
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War weary world?

There has not been a single day since WW2 when peace has reigned across the earth. Has there ever been in history?

(Erik's anecdotes: Kosovo & South Africa, April 2003. Challenge to my evangelical worldview!)

For Christians it is tempting to retreat behind Jesus' chilling prophesy: "nation will rise against nation" (Matt 24:7 & 8):

1. We shrug it off and assume that conflict is inevitable and we must let it take its course. (fatalism)
2. We explain it as God's judgment on a world that ignores his law. (punitive justice). Feeling hopeless and helpless.

Concerns for missionaries next to classic challenges:

1. victims are crying out for help, and for justice and peace to be restored. (Missions & restorative justice)
2. we seem to have an instinct that wants to try to remedy these situations and address them. Matt 5:9 Blessed are the peace makers. Member Care providers to take responsibility for people who sacrificially serve either practically, as peacemakers, as church planters etc.
3. How to interface with different practices, worldviews in the missions and Christian NGO community.
4. The nature of authority and what Christian leadership looks like.
5. Organisational structures and organizational ethics. (Christian)
6. Ethnic divides and peace making. (Sierra Leone, Kosovo, South Africa, Sri-Lanka, N. Ireland, Middle East etc.
7. Islam moderate; militant; suicide attacks.
8. Increased anti Americanism – increased USA army presence in former Eastern and central Europe, Asia, Middle East. (Time Magazine: brings with it a renewed effort for church planting from evangelical Christians).
9. Maybe more Christians are persecuted in our generation than ever before...
10. How to get along with each other's personalities...
11. Paradigm shifts: strategically involve: a. NSN (new sending nations), b. local church based mission initiatives, c. short-term missions, d. specifically post communist nations (JT Romania).
12. There are security issues for missionaries particularly for MKs and MK schools.

The above 12+ points could all do with workgroups or tracks in the next EMCC consultation. This EMCC IV is addressing also much needed topics. The core group has worked hard on presenting you good and relevant content and to put the suffering church in the spot light:

1. 2003 & beyond: walking with Jesus in all our challenges!
2. addressing the hidden topic of addictions
3. keeping different sources of stress on the agenda: teams, singleness etc.
4. special tracks: families, spiritual warfare, HIV, cross-cultural marriages.
5. staying healthy
6. role of suffering
7. a prophetic movement?

The Christian world is increasingly responding and ministering to those who have suffered conflict through NGOs, traditional mission agencies, short-term missions and more and more local church initiatives to reach out in missions.

1. 2001 (UNHCR – World Vision: Orange paper nr 3):
 - a. 39 different wars around the world
 - b. 23 potential hotspots where armed conflict could break out.
 - c. UN engaged in 14 separate peace keeping operations.

- 2002
 - a. Philippines
 - b. Yemen
 - c. China
 - d. Jordan
 - e. Pakistan
 - f. Afghanistan
 - g. Mauritania
 - h. Sudan
 - i. Syria
 - j. South Africa
 - k. Ivory Coast
 - l. Chechnya
 - m. Etc.

Missionaries killed, abducted, etc.

Media have been very silent about major war events:

- a. Colombia 30'000 killed every year, two million IDPs living in poverty 65% are children. Population 40 million. One terrorist group alone has an annual income of 600 million used from ransom, extortion and drug trade. 15'000 trained fighters, 30'000 automatic weapons, a small air-force and "owns" 16'000 square miles of land: no go area for government forces.
- b. Sierra Leone, 4.5 million people. 1999 rebels destroyed the town of Koidu, 150'000 people displaced. Freetown 5'000 houses destroyed, 3'000 children abducted. Several thousand killed.
- c. DR Congo, estimated 3.7 – 4.6 Million people killed during the past two years. Biggest genocide since WW2!
- d. Algeria (31 Europeans abducted since February 2003), Angola, Burundi, Chechnya 126 people abducted between Feb 2003-April 2003, Iran, India, Kosovo, Sudan, Peru, the Philippines, Uganda, Liberia, Ivory-Coast ... to name a few.
- e. Iraq, Northern Ireland, Palestine - Israel, Afghanistan etc.

Psycho-social effects are enormous and in most cases the psychological, sociological and spiritual frame work to address the challenge does not exist.

Hope?

1. South Africa - Truth & Reconciliation Commission... but reconciliation is now a dirty word in SA!
Japan - have made attempts to reconcile with prisoners of war.
Pope - apologized to Jews and people abused by catholic priests and for the silence of the church while people suffered.
Rwanda - MM Partner AEE reconciliation workshops.
Kosovo - World Vision peace initiatives
Sierra Leone - World Vision and others peace and reconciliation initiatives.
Chechnya - Paula O'Keefe, trauma centre for Chechnens.
Korea - Training workshops with church leaders & business men.

2. Member Care: MMCT WA – explain, numerous new initiatives for MC centers, national/regional conferences, services.
Publication of doing member care well.
Partnerships:
Ex: Le Rucher & EIHC (Edinburgh International Health Centre): intervention in Pakistan.
Just to name a few....

Member Care movement can make a difference!

Challenge: The Suffering Church – how to support

For new member care centers to be sure there is a “market demand” for the services they want to provide: research & strategic networking needed to prevent over capacity and duplication. Clear need assessments? Keeping track of initiatives.

Funding needs

Referring to one another: new and open initiatives needed & strategic partnerships.

Quality of services: counselling ACC, European law – legal liability

Crisis response capacity in Europe, coordination & training.

Cross continental networking and resourcing

Trust building with mission agencies/leaders

Appropriate Christian worldview training for missionaries and organisational/project planning

New demographics of missionaries: new influxes where US army settles and effluxes where militant Islam gains ground.

Security & Closing of MK schools. (Needs charting.)