



## TRANSCRIPT OF GROUP CHAT

### SESSION TWO

#### Global Connections:

Breakout group questions:

1. What needs to change in your organisation in light of what you have just heard?
2. How are you going to seek to make these changes?
3. Who else are you going to involve? (How can you make yourself accountable / who else could you collaborate with / where will you need help / where might you be able to offer help?)
4. How can you collaborate across the GC network?

#### Jen Charteris:

- Some orgs have been thinking about these issues for some time. But structures have been based around traditional models of ministry, (and western/male dominated) so the momentum for change has not been strong. Perhaps COVID will change that.
- COVID is an accelerator - so if you were going down, you'll go down faster; if you're working on change, it will happen faster.
- Is this the end of the 'professional missionary' era? We're seeing an increase in localisation and indigenisation, and increase in partnership working. We're more ready to admit that we can't do everything ourselves. Collaboration across missions especially in diaspora ministry.
- This crisis does take us back to the 'why' and that's good!

#### Jay Matenga:

Group 5:

Noticed trends towards local missions – churches wanting training in missions topics, e.g. reaching Muslims.

- People hungry for help to reach the cultures in their localities
- Need to be readily available to provide support/training
- Rethinking the impositional approach to outreach and shifting toward more of an alongside approach — people care for people

Financial strategies will need to change as the economic crisis hits. This will prompt more collaboration and shared initiatives.

- Also bringing the international expressions of the organisation to agree to collaborate in similar ways
- This happens on the field but tends not to happen at an organisational level

A lot of leadership change is going on, with some deep collegiality across senior leadership of missions orgs.

- Possibly see more amalgamations
- Opportunity for greater collaboration
- But Boards can struggle to understand the issues

### **Paul Cooke:**

Group 8:

- We need alternative economic model, but need help creating it -- where can we find this within evangelical Christianity? Could GC help?
- Ministers reluctant to preach/talk about money and poverty
- Generosity of church members giving to mission - their involvement in discussions
- Could GC help smaller organisations find Trustees etc. from more diverse backgrounds? (quite difficult for small organisations given smaller pool of contacts)
- Important increasingly to work together in collaborative networks
- Talking is good, but also need to invest resources and truly change structures

### **James Vaughton:**

Group 7:

What needs to change in your organisation?

- Shift from western based ministries to global partnership. Make sure things are less UK-run
- How can we learn from our friends and partners in the countries we operate in to learn from them?
- Moving online – continuing the move in this direction – accelerating change
- Economic question – how is mission funded when people come from the global south but do not have the funds?
- “Preserve the core, stimulate progress” – know your core function – what do we need to keep – this may help us
- Can we learn from each other – involve other organisations – listen to other organisations. Allow others organisation to speak into our organisations
- Is there a need to think about where need partner more?
- What if we decide our organisation doesn't need to exist anymore? Are we brave enough to ask if we are still needed?

## **Claire Franks:**

### Question 1:

- Increased digital delivery in training – friendship with likeminded in different places around world
- Hard to identify how your organisation is doing – those not in your organisations, specifically non-western voices to look at practises, websites etc. to help you see what requires change – also to realise need to be aware of history, stakeholders and supporters – take them all along with you to work together to maintain unity needed to bring whole organisation on board and be sensitive in how you do this.
- Prayer very important!
- Sometimes seems we are driven more by charity commission than promises of scripture.

### Question 4:

- How to connect across network - GC can help with how to move from charity commission to focussing on promises of scripture.

## **Jonathan Andrews:**

### What change?

- must work against rising inequality
- struggle to move away from white, middle-class mission; need to be more multi-ethnic
- roots in colonialism striking, known but how addressed is it; Board composition; Director level, including as give away leadership in regions it can make senior team less diverse
- there are many power dynamics at work; not just money but space to talk International organisations so UK (and other branches) have limited scope to adapt; this can create tensions

One support – receive and give – is openness to speak with others.

Keep talking to other organisation about who is doing what; this is a changing dynamic, especially re. diaspora ministries.

## **Stephen Carling:**

- We need to emphasise the 'relational' rather than the 'organisational'. "It makes me think of the incarnation and 'incarnational ministry'; so, how do we foster incarnational ministry in a post-COVID world?"
- COVID lockdown has actually opened many up to each other (via Zoom etc). How can the positives of this continue once lockdown 'releases' us?
- COVID has had an effect of our Mission 'HQ' delegating responsibility/authority to making decisions to the 'field' - including local church partners being more in the driving seat. How can this continue well?
- Quite some sharing on the place and importance of national/indigenous leadership.
- COVID has stimulated a fresh look at the stewardship of 'our' money/resources so as to stimulate and reflect a positive partnership with the majority world. Going forward, what should an interdependent relationship look like?

**Alan Butler:**

Group 2:

Concentrated a lot of the power basis of our own organisations. "Being a guest" suggested invitation, but is that the places where should be working? Some of us already work with indigenous partners and noted the focus and difference that brings. Some discussion around trustee board structures and accountability, where the power is, does it stay away from the cutting edge of mission. There were questions about whether this needs to change but potentially it conflicts with charity law.

**Michael Beresford:**

From many of the comments it sounds a bit like we know that change has to come; but we are all trying to mould and adapt our organisations to fit the emerging situation. I wonder whether we should think more critically about what God wants us to be and do? The obvious place to start is whether we actually need mission organisations in addition to the local church?

**Steven Green:**

I am not sure it is fair to accuse Protestant missionaries of being conquistadors. Throughout the Bible, a dominant theme is to let God's glory be known 'to the ends of the earth'. That has a geographical implication (and not just to the call to reach every ethnos). It's also hard to balance the command that we are to be good stewards of this earth, with the certainty that this world as we know it is passing away.

**Helen Pardoe:**

What needs to change?

- Economic Change
- We need to be looking at mission in a holistic way, as we see poverty hits harder we have to seek to serve needs.
- Self-sustaining mission is difficult but a way forward.
- Kingdom business means we do it in a different way, facilitating others to help themselves
- For many of our organisations the speed of change that is necessary is difficult. In the past this has stopped us changing all the time but now we need to change how do we create greater agility.
- Also, what does an alternative economic model look like for our organisations?
- How does being uncomfortable in financial terms being difficult impact us?
- Institutional and the place of mission

Rosalee's question about "why do we gather?": what is our role in helping the church think this through, how do we watch and get alongside? Many may feel they want to get back to being comfortable. How do we ask, "what are we here for?"

How can we influence the local church in UK?

Question: How can we continue to have these discussions?