



Global Connections National Conference 4-6 November 2009

Mission and Migration Summary Report

Key thoughts from the discussions:

1. Immigration is here to stay and equally impacts every community. This has implications for churches dealing with strangers in their midst, for agencies learning how to help them, measure them, etc. What are the strategic things about migration that will help us to deal with it? Feels this should be both a Global Connections and a Lausanne issue.
2. Immigration has always been with us, it's just now being focused on more.
3. Feel that churches should be the first to welcome immigrants/migrants, not the government - like Birmingham Churches Together and *Restore*. Would like to see more growth in this. For GC, how can it foster/encourage this amongst churches, especially in London and other multi-ethnic regions.
4. Would be good to have a forum to identify good practices and areas that have gone 'pear-shaped' so it's not too overwhelming for churches.
5. The mapping policy activity has already started this process, but should be a need for this information as a great resource to be more accessible.
6. Evangelical Alliance has started something like that "Welcoming Strangers", etc. to gather stories of migrants. Welsh EA also doing something.
7. Should be more effort into joining up the different agencies/bridging the divide to include the CCME (more ecumenical resource/forums)
8. We need to concentrate most on hospitality (alongside the official things). We need to be more open and hospitable within our congregations so we can learn how to offer it outwardly.
9. Links in with transience and mobility as sometimes it can take 3 years before people realise someone is new, need to be quicker on the mark to recognise this as people do not stay long in one place anymore.
10. Need to be careful how we use the word 'integration' because is there is a difference of integration amongst the church and the wider community? This needs to be discussed more before we aim to start 'integrating.'
11. Lots of good practice going on in different areas, but feels it best to take one, small initiative and marry it into other best practices and turn it into a clever training tool for churches across the country. GC could possibly prioritise what they feel are the primary issues and be the neutral platform to collate/present this so agencies can share it.

12. When we help people, feel it's important to make a point to find out about where others are from because it makes them feel valued for their identity and not just feel like someone who's always being helped. Need to help British churches practice this.
13. Would like to see more advocacy and perhaps large agencies like World Vision who have the ear of the government to help get these issues to policymakers so this good practice can also be shared upward as well. To help government look at how they fund services and make them more applicable and better.
14. Mark Oxbrow challenged us to look more at how many people are being agents of mission and how we as churches and mission agencies can equip them (e.g., international students, cross-cultural agency workers, Christian business people, etc.). God's people are travelling and migrating constantly across the world. Are we too locked into one method of practice? Need to get out of this.
15. EU produced a document that missed off Wales on the map on the front cover and this hit the news. Issues of territory come up when thinking of migration. Does land matter as much as we think it does? Will Wales disappear? Perhaps the land isn't as precious as we may think and definitely not how God thinks. Martin recommends the book called "Flood" that deals with key issues of migration.

*Notes compiled by Cat-Dan Lai-Smith (World Vision UK)
'Mission and Migration' Group Coordinators: Martin Thomas and Mark Oxbrow*