



2017 GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Relative to the listed Ministry Assignment, please describe accomplishments in the past year that create "value added" to the Cooperative Program dollars that IMB receives.

I. Assist churches by evangelizing persons, planting Baptist churches, and nurturing church planting movements among all people groups outside the United States and Canada; and, provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada.

Significant progress continued during the last year in partnering with SBC churches to reach a lost world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The challenge of unreached people groups (UPGs) remains great. The most recent IMB GSEC report notes that the number of unreached people groups in the world is 7,037 at the time of completing this report (For more information visit: <http://www.peoplegroups.org>). These people groups are a tremendous challenge, and there is much opposition to the gospel among many of them. Yet, IMB missionaries reported 93,922 baptisms last year, and this number includes only those people groups and urban centers where IMB continues to have direct work, influence, and involvement.

The growth that was seen last year was supported by abundant gospel sowing through IMB missionaries. Nearly two million people heard a gospel witness, 1,154,540 had a clear opportunity to respond to the gospel, and of these, 175,290 accepted Christ as Savior.

In terms of discipleship and healthy church formation around the world, 340,787 people participated in ongoing Bible studies, more than 6,000 discipleship groups were formed and 6,138 new churches were started.

In addition to engaging people groups and establishing churches, IMB missionaries reported that leaders are emerging within people groups in such a way that they are continuing to develop churches through their own efforts, and some are engaging other people groups in their own countries and beyond. This trend is growing around the world in a variety of places, and we continue to give attention to how we can best steward and catalyze this reality around the world. In the end, people groups that have been previously reached with the gospel are now able to reach their neighbors, and the church is multiplying with a view to reaching other unreached peoples with the gospel.

II. Assist churches in sending and supporting Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers by enlisting, equipping, and enabling them to fulfill their calling.

During 2016, IMB partnered with thousands of SBC churches and assisted in the the development of missions strategies and helped churches strengthen field partnerships to see disciples made and healthy churches established among unreached peoples and places for the glory of God.

In 2016 Southern Baptist churches sent 122 new career/long-term missionaries and 156 new mid-term missionaries (terms less than three years) in partnership with IMB. We also renewed the terms of 22 ISC personnel which are typically added to our mid-term numbers making the total 178 mid-termers sent in 2016. Additional missionaries were sent through GC2, Southern Baptist Direct and the Macedonia Project programs allowing multiple pathways for sending. Through the Global Cities Initiative (GCI) launched last year IMB sent eight missionaries to join missionary teams in Global Cities around the world. Currently, we have more than twenty people who have been processed through our GCI but are waiting on visas or jobs, so the number being sent through GCI will increase in 2017.

IMB missionary personnel continue to reflect the geographic and church-size diversity of the SBC with missionaries having been sent from all 50 states and churches in size from a few dozen to multiple thousands. IMB is working with partner churches to grow the number of missionaries sent from churches of various ethnicities. At the end of 2016 there were 256 Asian Americans, 16 African Americans, 61 Hispanic Americans, and 202 people from other ethnic backgrounds serving as IMB field personnel.

III. Assist churches and partners to mobilize Southern Baptists to be involved in international missions through praying, giving, and going.

Southern Baptist churches gave a record \$165.8 million to the 2015 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. This offering represented the highest total in the 127-year history of the offering at the IMB. Gifts to LMCO were made by over 25,000 churches representing the geography, size and ethnic diversity of the SBC. Many of these churches went far beyond giving, though, committing with us to pray for missionaries and their work around the world. Increasing numbers of churches are wanting to send missionaries, and the IMB is working diligently to streamline systems and structures to better serve all the churches who are wanting to send.

The IMB in partnership with the WMU conducted a week of prayer emphasis towards the end of 2016 (Dec 4-11, 2016). The week of prayer focused on IMB work among peoples in the Americas, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, Central

Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the Deaf around the world. During this time, Southern Baptists made a concerted, unified effort to pray for IMB missionaries.

In an effort to relate more effectively with Southern Baptist churches and help them celebrate and pray for the sending of new missionaries, the IMB hosted 4 livestream Sending Celebrations in 2016. These livestream sending celebrations provided an avenue for every Southern Baptist to participate and observe a service for new missionaries being appointed and sent to the nations.

In addition to the sending celebrations, our IMB Training team continues to develop training resources designed for churches to learn more and be better equipped to join in on what God is doing around the world. These resources and training opportunities will continue to be introduced throughout 2017. For example, the IMB Training Team will conduct at least 4 missions intensives across the country in 2017. These events are hosted in local SBC churches but are open to all SBC churches. For more information visit: <https://www.imb.org/missions-intensives/>

IV. Assist churches in fulfilling their international missions task by developing global strategies, including human needs based ministries, and providing leadership, administrative support, and financial accountability for implementation of these strategies.

IMB Global Engagement led in strategic mission endeavors in nine specific affinities around the globe (Americas, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the Deaf) in 2016. One particular focus worldwide in terms of our Global Engagement work is an greater emphasis on our accountability processes. In 2017 we will implement a re-tooled accountability process as we seek to continuously strengthen and improve our work around the world. We want to continue to equip and empower our supervisors to lead well, to encourage our personnel to minister and function at a high level, and in all things to maintain a high standard and level of expectation as we serve Christ and steward the resources entrusted to us by the Southern Baptist Convention. In our administrative support services, we have consolidated and streamlined our processes in an effort to operate more efficiently across the IMB.

Human needs ministries in 2016 included 265 relief and development projects in 58 countries. BGR, in partnership with IMB teams around the world, continued to respond to the global refugee crisis in Syria and surrounding countries by providing food, water,

shelter and medical care to almost 200,000 displaced people. In Nepal, BGR also provided 496 permanent homes in five communities as it concluded its earthquake response there. Responding to a massive drought and resulting hunger crisis in sub-Saharan Africa, BGR conducted food distribution in several countries (Lesotho, Madagascar, and Nigeria) and provided precious plant back seed when the seasonal rains finally came in an effort to serve the communities affected by the drought. BGR and IMB continue to partner and fuel the spread of the gospel in many contexts around the world where spiritual and physical needs collide.

Based on the listed Ministry Assignment, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2017 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how you are accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

- I. **Assist churches by evangelizing persons, planting Baptist churches, and nurturing church planting movements among all people groups outside the United States and Canada; and, provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada**

The current world population is increasing exponentially, and so is the lost population of the world. More and more people are moving into cities, presenting unique challenges in an increasingly urban world. In addition to these realities, sustainable access among some of the world's most hard-to-reach people groups remains difficult. With this in mind, we anticipate exploring new and innovative strategies as it relates to our creative access efforts around the world.

With the many challenges before us, IMB is developing new ways to partner effectively with churches to engage lostness around the world. We are growing in our efforts to train and equip churches and will continue to devote considerable attention through our Training Team to strengthen churches and the missionaries that they send through the IMB. In terms of mobilization, we are currently working to streamline and simplify sending pathways for qualified and equipped Southern Baptists to serve on missionary teams. We are continually refining, reevaluating, and reviewing our processes, procedures, and policies to ensure that we are serving churches to the best of our ability and in ways that are most effective for the accomplishment of the Great Commission.

- II. **Assist churches in sending and supporting Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers by enlisting, equipping, and enabling them to fulfill their calling.**

The need is too urgent, the opportunities too great, and the stakes too high for any of us to settle for status quo in regard to the Great Commission. Right now, billions of people are being born and living their entire lives without hearing a clear gospel witness, millions of refugees around the world are risking (and many are losing) their lives in search for a better life, and countless others will join them in an eternal hell separated from God if they do not repent of their sin and trust in Christ for salvation. God has entrusted Southern Baptists with significant resources, a plethora of gifts and talents, and most importantly the good news of the gospel to join God in His mission to ransom a people from every nation, tribe, and tongue.

Therefore, we must explore new strategies, systems, and structures as the IMB and the SBC if we want to see more missionaries sent from Southern Baptist churches to engage lostness around the world. We are exploring and considering all the possible ways that this can best be done through the IMB alongside every entity in the SBC.

III. Assist churches and partners to mobilize Southern Baptists to be involved in international missions through praying, giving, and going.

As noted above, we must improve and grow in our communication with SBC churches as we seek to make them aware of the realities of the unreached as well inform and challenge them that they might join in the work that God is doing through the IMB around the world. One area of particular focus in the year ahead will be strengthening relationships with Southern Baptist pastors and churches. We want every Southern Baptist pastor to know how their church can partner with the IMB through praying, giving, going, and sending. We want to provide simple on-ramps for churches who want to go deeper in partnership with the IMB. Our Mobilization Team will be working to strengthen relationships, provide information through more avenues and channels, and ensure that we are communicating and making Southern Baptists aware of all the ways they can partner and work directly with the IMB.

IV. Assist churches in fulfilling their international missions task by developing global strategies, including human needs based ministries, and providing leadership, administrative support, and financial accountability for implementation of these strategies.

We must continue to discover the very best ways to effectively use limited resources. The need for effective human needs ministries that integrate proclamation of the gospel only increases with every conflict, war, and natural disaster in the world. We want to improve

the awareness of Southern Baptists as it relates to opportunities to address human needs in 2017. Baptist Global Response (BGR) is a key partner for IMB when it comes to human needs ministry around the world, and we hope to provide more communication and ways for Southern Baptists to work in and through BGR to address human needs around the world. We must increase resources, and use those resources in consistently effective ways, both in reducing earthly suffering, and in bringing the words of truth in Christ to those who so desperately need to hear that they might be saved from eternal separation from God.