



2020 Ministry Inquiries

Cooperative Program

- 1. SBC entities, especially those which receive Cooperative Program funding share an equal responsibility in promoting and advancing the Cooperative Program, in compliance with the Business and Financial Plan, Section VI, Part C (*Cooperative Program Promotion – Each Convention entity shall report on its efforts during the year in promoting Cooperative Program missions giving*). Please describe IMB’S commitment to promote the Cooperative Program, providing examples.**

The IMB’s promotion of the Cooperative Program (CP) extends from Richmond, throughout North America, and to the ends of the earth in partnership with Southern Baptist churches to spread the gospel. God has used faithful giving through the Cooperative Program to bring Southern Baptists together to make the name of Jesus known among the nations.

Financial resources provided by Southern Baptists through CP giving provide more than 30 percent of the funding necessary for the IMB to partner with churches to take the gospel to unreached peoples and places. Southern Baptists’ IMB missionaries around the world are the primary representatives for promoting CP. The faithful, sacrificial giving of Southern Baptists to CP enables these missionaries to share the gospel, make disciples, and plant churches among unreached peoples and places for the glory of God. Through their personal relationships with Southern Baptist churches and partners, IMB missionaries help Southern Baptists understand the critical role of the CP in the Great Commission task as they communicate with churches through stateside assignment speaking engagements and regular updates from the field. Missionaries consistently share the specific ways CP giving make their ministry possible, such as a July 2019 report about [Gary and Carolyn Miller’s work in Hungary](#).

In his speaking and writing, IMB President Paul Chitwood frequently thanks Southern Baptists for their faithful and sacrificial giving through the Cooperative Program, such as in the April 2019 article [Cooperative Program: 50 Stories Above Johannesburg](#), which illustrates the impact of Southern Baptists’ CP giving. Other IMB senior leaders also regularly note the importance of the Cooperative Program and Southern Baptists’ support in their speaking and teaching engagements. Furthermore, through mission conferences, mobilization, training events, state convention annual meetings, and speaking opportunities in the local church, IMB staff and missionaries share regularly about the value of Southern Baptist churches cooperating and partnering together for the sake of global mission. As new church mobilizers join our team, their initial training includes CP promotion and appreciation a part of their regular interactions and local pastors’ conferences.

To highlight the importance and significance of the Cooperative Program, the IMB also promotes CP through partnerships with LifeWay Christian Resources, the North American Mission Board, the Woman's Missionary Union, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, the six Southern Baptist seminaries and Baptist state conventions — such as [Oklahoma's commitment to increase giving during a November 2019 missionary sending celebration](#).

On the web, IMB promotes CP through www.imb.org/cooperative-program/, which informs visitors on the purpose of the Cooperative Program and the process of how church giving financially supports SBC entities. It serves as a fixed reference point amid conversations with pastors and donors. CP-giving stories are also shared on social media channels, which both reflect the need and Kingdom impact of CP giving. Many stories are also submitted to produce 52 Sundays resources.

2. What are the expected outcomes of IMB's efforts in Cooperative Program promotion? When is Cooperative Program education and promotion presented in the on-boarding and training of new IMB missionaries?

When it comes to cooperative mission efforts, IMB takes seriously the responsibility and stewardship entrusted by thousands of Southern Baptists. IMB utilizes the generosity of Southern Baptists through the CP to fulfill the mission entrusted the organization by the SBC: to serve Southern Baptists in carrying out the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. Ultimately, God is glorified among entire people groups who, until now, had never heard the name of Jesus. Considering the billions of people who have yet to hear the gospel — and the 155,252 who die every day without a personal relationship with Christ — Southern Baptists realize the best way to fulfill the Great Commission is through a cooperative effort in praying, giving, going and sending.

All career/apprentice missionaries with the IMB are required to have seminary training, and all Southern Baptist seminaries require a course on the Cooperative Program. For all missionaries who serve with the IMB, the Cooperative Program is constantly and consistently promoted throughout onboarding and training of new missionaries and during all of our training, including Stateside Assignment Conferences.

Among the IMB's five-year goals, faithful CP giving directly impacts the IMB's ability to achieve success as it seeks to:

- Mobilize 75 percent of Southern Baptist churches prayerfully and financially supporting LMCO
- Send an additional 500 fully funded missionaries
- Mobilize 500 global partner missionaries on IMB teams
- Engage 75 global cities in comprehensive strategies

3. Please give examples of how the IMB’s personnel (fully funded, partially funded, and contractual), operate within the guidelines of the SBC Business and Financial Plan as described in Section VI, Part D (No Financial Appeals to Churches – In no case shall any Convention entity approach a church for inclusion in its church budget or appeal for financial contributions)?

According to IMB’s Field Personnel Policies (MFP-425):

To avoid misunderstanding and confusion, the following guidelines must be observed by personnel and representatives interested in securing special funds: The Board respects, affirms and encourages SB churches to give through the two established sources of support – the Cooperative Program (CP) and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO). The Board follows the SBC Business and Financial Plan, which states, "No Financial Appeals to Churches – In no case shall any convention entity approach a church for inclusion in its budget or appeal for financial contributions." The Board expects its personnel and entities to comply and we acknowledge that none of our personnel may go directly to a Southern Baptist church to ask for direct support. Board personnel must remain faithful to all other Board guidelines that describe procedures for the solicitation of fiscal resources.

... whenever personnel share the story of their ministry with constituent Southern Baptist churches, the financial appeal should always direct them to a continued and increased commitment to giving through the CP and LMCO. Personnel should – in visits to churches. and in other forms of communication with churches, such as newsletters, email and web sites – consistently support constituent participation through CP and LMCO. This applies to the church service or in any meeting of the church’s organizations, including Bible study, WMU, committees, and so forth.

... Regarding Southern Baptist Churches:

- We promote CP and LMCO. Period.*
- Make no direct or even subtle solicitation of funds.*
- Do not use newsletters or web sites to solicit funds from these churches.*
- Be particularly careful that prayer requests not be used as camouflaged appeals for financial support.*

4. Please articulate how IMB perceives the role of the Cooperative Program in funding IMB missionaries. What value does IMB place upon its partnership with Southern Baptist churches through the Cooperative Program?

The Cooperative Program is absolutely essential to the funding of the work of IMB, including the funding of IMB missionaries. While IMB is thankful for the gifts given through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, that avenue for funding IMB missionaries’ work falls far short of what is needed to sustain and grow Southern Baptists’ global missions efforts. The Cooperative Program makes is critically needed to fund missionaries, as well as covering almost all of the remainder of funding needed for the operations of IMB. IMB sees its partnership with churches through the Cooperative Program as a major part of the very essence of what IMB is and does.

As [IMB President Paul Chitwood wrote](#) in 2019: “The mission of the local church is to do her part to ensure that [Rev. 7:9] vision of heaven is fulfilled. Thankfully, Southern Baptists have known from the formation of our convention — and still know today — that the most effective way to carry out that mission is through churches cooperating together.”

Ethnic Participation

5. This past year a motion was made by Leroy Fountain asking the Executive Committee to give a progress update to ten recommendations adopted by the SBC in 2011 with respect to ethnic church and ethnic church leader participation in Southern Baptist life. The 2011 recommendation that specifically refers to our SBC entities is as follows:

“The Executive Committee to request from the Southern Baptist Convention entities to submit as part of its annual ‘data call’ [as described in Bylaw 18. E [12] a descriptive report of participation of ethnic churches and church leaders in the life and ministry of the respective SBC entity.”

Given this context, and using previous years’ submissions to this question as a model, please give a robust descriptive report of ethnic participation, including active involvement of ethnic churches and church leaders, across all levels and aspects of IMB’s ministry—such things as senior administrative staff, other professional staff, support staff, customer facing representatives, and written and spoken language resources—demonstrating progress, if any, in ethnic participation over the past eight years, 2011–2019.

The IMB is seeking to serve and assist all cooperating Southern Baptists. If we, as a denomination, are going to do our part to fulfill the vision to see a multitude from every language, people, tribe, and nation knowing and worshipping our Lord Jesus Christ, it will take all of us working together. As such, IMB is working to position ourselves more and more to serve and assist our growing and diverse constituency across the SBC. The IMB is thankful for a strengthening relationship and partnership with the 3,400-plus Hispanic American churches in the SBC. IMB’s Mobilization team has added a Hispanic mobilization role and will be adding Asian and African American mobilizing positions. The Hispanic mobilization role will be multiplying its efforts by training mobilization associates as leaders in churches among the Hispanic constituency. Of continuing importance is our efforts to help train, equip, and send Hispanic missionaries to serve in places where Hispanic heritage is especially helpful in reaching the target populations. God is opening an increasing number of pathways for Hispanic brothers and sisters to take the gospel to Muslim contexts, and we want to maximize this God-given opportunity moving forward. The IMB is thankful for a strengthening relationship and partnership with more than 3,400 Hispanic American churches in the SBC.

The IMB is committed to partnering with and ministering alongside the almost 3,800 predominately African American churches in the SBC. Our desire is to serve and assist our growing and diverse constituency across the SBC. This is a commitment from our leadership who has spent time with the National African American Fellowship as well as involvement in the Black Church Leadership and Family Conference. In July 2019, multiple IMB team leaders participated in and contributed to the conference, and IMB served as a sponsor of the event, which drew nearly 1,000 participants at Ridgecrest.

The IMB is also serving and assisting the almost 1600 Asian American churches represented in the SBC. The Asian mobilizing position will be to mobilize Asian churches across the US. Asians continue to represent a growing segment of our long-term personnel. IMB is committed to continuing to develop and deepen partnership with Asian American churches. In November 2019, IMB leadership

emphasized the importance of partnering with Korean brothers and sisters in Christ during a [three-day conference](#) near Richmond, Virginia. While Korean Baptists and IMB have a strong history of cooperation, the conference was the next step in further cementing this partnership in new ways with both Korean partners in Southern Baptist churches, as well as partners in South Korean Baptist churches.

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 thousands. IMB is working with partner churches to increase the number of missionaries sent from churches of various ethnicities. At the end of 2019 there were 222 Asian Americans, 13 African Americans, 45 Hispanic Americans, and 192 people from other ethnic backgrounds serving as IMB field personnel. IMB home-office staff also represent a variety of ethnicities.

6. How many non-Anglo mobilizers and missionary units are currently serving as IMB missionaries? Please provide an update.

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Caring Well Response

7. How is IMB making an effort to protect against sexual abuse? How does IMB plan to integrate aspects of Caring Well in its policies and practices, and engage its broad network of IMB leadership?

The International Mission Board has added the role of a designated Prevention and Response Administrator whose primary responsibility is to oversee and manage prevention and response efforts for child abuse (physical and sexual), sexual harassment (including sexual assault), and domestic violence. This includes overseeing all aspects of training (development of material, delivery of training, and ensuring compliance) for field and staff employees, specific departments, volunteers, investigators, Third Culture Kids, partners, and others. At least twice annually, IMB senior leadership sends all field and home-office staff reminders a) of the [IMB's policy on abuse and harassment](#); b) that IMB encourages anyone who has been a victim of abuse by its personnel to report it to authorities; c) and, in addition, that victims can contact IMB on a confidential hotline at (866) 292-0181 or email advocate@imb.org so that IMB can provide compassionate care to that victim and take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of others.

In numerous outlets, including [Baptist Press](#) and [IMB.org](#), the IMB has stated that it strongly encourages any church, entity, or other employer who is considering working or partnering with a former IMB personnel to contact IMB at references@imb.org to obtain a reference on that individual so that the IMB can do its part to help employers make wise and informed hiring decisions.

Following the 2018 SBC annual meeting in Dallas, Texas (since Fall 2018), the International Mission Board has undergone a rigorous examination of IMB's handling of past allegations of abuse and sexual harassment and IMB's present policies and practices. In May 2019, IMB trustees heard a [report from Gray Plant Mooty](#) (the firm conducting the examination), and IMB President [Paul Chitwood responded immediately](#) with an apology to victims and a pledge for IMB to lead the SBC in abuse prevention and response. IMB maintains publicly accessible Web pages with its [statement on abuse and harassment](#) as a resource for churches; and [frequently asked questions](#) about the external examination and related resource links.

The actions of the International Mission Board are consistent with the suggestions presented by the Sexual Abuse Advisory Group report and the Caring Well initiative. International Mission Board leaders are accessible for communication and collaboration with leaders of the Caring Well initiative.

IMB Specific Ministry Inquiries

- 8. What has proven to be IMB's most reliable metric for indicating future accomplishments or challenges to each of IMB's ministry assignments? Why is that metric the most important to watch as it relates to IMB's ministry assignment? Please report on this metric for the previous year.**

The most reliable and important metric related to IMB's ministry assignment is a metric that evaluates the state of the church among a given people group or in a particular place. The state of the indigenous church is IMB's most important indicator because it alone encompasses the 12 key elements of church health and forward progress: evangelism, discipleship, membership, leadership, biblical teaching, ordinances, worship, fellowship, prayer, mutual accountability, giving, and mission.

Healthy church tracking tools (both paper and software versions) have been developed that allow indigenous leaders to evaluate and move toward healthy churches. Because a healthy state of the church among a people group or within a place means discipleship, leadership development, and indigenous ownership of the missionary task will be in place, tracking this metric (more than any other indicator) helps IMB to know when it is time to celebrate an exit to partnership, entrusting indigenous leaders to continue the spread of the gospel and the planting of healthy Baptist churches.

Church health tracking tools are being used regularly by IMB personnel, who reported 13,898 new churches in 2018. While these are new churches and not all believers may yet be mature, healthy church tracking tools are helping ensure the key elements of health will be present in every church over time. We praise the Lord for the wisdom He has graciously given for the purpose of helping ensure that local indigenous churches are disciplined to health.

9. Please provide a status report on IMB’s missionary enlistment and training “pipeline”, briefly describing IMB’s missionary assessment process.

IMB’s missionary candidate assessment process includes three phases:

Phase 1 - Church phase: Once a candidate has expressed interest, he/she receive two questionnaires from the IMB; one deals with a personal testimony and missionary call, the other deals with personal lifestyle. Once the candidates have returned the questionnaires, a church evaluation form is sent to the home church of the applicant. The applicant meets with the church pastor who fills out the evaluation with a recommendation for the IMB to send or not send the individual. If the church does not agree to send the candidate, IMB stops the assessment/deployment process for the individual.

Phase 2 - IMB phase: Once the church recommends an applicant for missionary appointment, the applicant fills out an application. The application includes an eight-page autobiography; signed agreement with the Baptist Faith & Message; a written statement of the applicant’s personal belief; health assessments; references; and a background check. Along with the forms and assessments, the candidate participates in a study specifically about the Baptist Faith & Message, as well as the Deepen Discipleship study. During this phase, applicants participate in interviews with a candidate consultant and IMB leadership. The physical, emotional and spiritual health of a candidate determine specific timeframes and requirements during this phase.

Phase 3 - Field phase: Once IMB’s candidate consultant and leadership agree that a candidate is approved for appointment, candidates review available jobs posted by field leadership, if a job was not created for a candidate’s specific qualifications. The candidate may apply and interview for one to three jobs; the candidate’s resume is sent to the hiring manager on the mission field, and affinity leaders conduct interviews with the candidate. The candidates are encouraged to ask questions to the field on life, strategy, and teaming to determine if a position is a good fit for them. Once a career position is offered to a candidate, that candidate is presented to the trustees for appointment approval.

10. How are Southern Baptists engaging Unreached Unengaged People Groups (UUPGs) across the world? Are UUPGs decreasing in number and what expectations does IMB have for further engagement in the next three years?

At the end of 2018, there were 3,172 UUPGs with a total population of 236,652,741 which is about 3.1 percent of the world’s population. In 2009 there were 3,400 UUPGs. Since then, a quarter (845) have now been engaged through the work of evangelical organizations, with IMB teams engaging 116 of these. During the same period, the UUPG population has decreased by over 131 million to 236 million today. In general, IMB teams engage UUPGs with large population and enlist nearby national partners to reach the remaining UUPGs since the majority of them are found in countries with strict governmental control or where religious freedom is absent.

The UUPG concept remains relevant to IMB’s work around the world, even as we embark on a process of refining our definitions and engagement scale and process. UUPGs are people

groups where no one is implementing a church planting strategy. There must be no theology of missions or missiology which denies any people or place the proclamation of the gospel.

11. Please give a report for 2019 on areas of the world where the IMB has experienced success in partnering with local and indigenous churches and national Baptist conventions for the purpose of planting new churches? Please provide a sense of the process being used to transfer responsibility to indigenous leaders, develop associations, and work with national conventions?

Of the nine affinities representing the IMB work around the world, all are intentionally and successfully partnering with local and indigenous churches, networks, and national conventions for the planting of churches. We have found that when we begin the work with this partnership in mind, the transition is much smoother than when we are always directing the work. In some cases, this approach takes more time, and in other cases the ministry can transition more rapidly.

As one would expect, there are many factors regarding the rate of maturity. Transitioning the work does not mean we leave, but we may concentrate our efforts in ministries such as pastor training or theological education. When it comes to the fulfillment of the missionary task — entry, evangelism, discipleship, church planting, leadership development, exit to partnership — we should never abandon the work, but redefine our relationship. Step six of the missionary task (exit to partnership) allows us to come alongside as coworkers to take the gospel to the next village, next mountain range, or the next country.

An example of this would be our work on the island of Madagascar. Southern Baptist missionaries are still involved in church planting alongside local pastors and evangelists but also are working with the national convention to send missionaries to the northern part of the island. This is not outreach to another country, but it is definitely cross cultural and will require those called to plant their lives in rugged terrain among a people with a long history of ancestor worship and witchcraft.

The five Baptist conventions in the Philippines have organized the One Sending Body missions sending organization, and intentionally cooperating with the IMB in sending some of their personnel to serve as team members on IMB teams. This is happening to some degree all over the world. The Sub-Saharan Africa (Madagascar) and Southeast Asia (the Philippines) are two excellent examples of this transition process.

12. What are the total number of international baptisms and new international Baptist churches planted as a direct result of Southern Baptist missionaries for the following years?

Reporting Data Year*	Baptisms	New Churches Planted
2016	45,256	4,550
2017	46,495	12,005
2018	52,586	13,898

The annual report shows that the Baptisms category increased by 13.1 percent over the previous year while the New Churches Planted category increased by 15.8 percent.

**Beginning in 2019, IMB is labeling reports based on the calendar year the data was recorded. For example, the annual statistical report released in 2019 is entitled "Annual Statistical Report – Reporting on 2018 Data."*

13. What is IMB's process of engagement with recently graduated college students for short term mission assignment(s)? What is IMB's level of engagement with the Go2 initiative? Please explain.

IMB Mobilization recognizes that significant engagement with college students for the sake of missions deployment must begin long before they graduate, therefore we pursue an extended and long-term strategy.

We develop and maintain relationships with Baptist collegiate ministry leaders in churches, campus ministries, collegiate church plants, state convention leaders, and sending groups that partner closely with Baptist churches. We offer short-term and mid-term student going opportunities for these leaders and ministries to adopt and fulfill. We support these leaders and ministries by assisting with them in training events, connecting them with field personnel, participating in regional and state-wide enlistment efforts, and facilitating partnerships with the field. We actively visit and consult with churches and campus ministries through our nationwide network of 24 part-time student mobilizers and five full-time student mobilization leaders. In the fall 2019 semester, IMB's collegiate ministry team connected in one-on-one mobilization visits and calls with over 800 churches and student ministries. We regularly sponsor and participate in dozens of student mobilization events like Collegiate Week (conducted at Falls Creek in Oklahoma), Cross Conference, seminary mission emphases, and state convention student mission retreats.

We see our summer and semester-long service options as gateways to our Journeyman program (two years) and career missions. One of Dr. Paul Chitwood's first actions as IMB president was to reinstitute funding for our Hands On semester missions program. We offer as many as 200 of these opportunities to students each year at half the real cost. Our summer-long opportunities for students are successful and growing. For example, last summer we filled every request in the Americas affinity for their Summer Sojourners program. Nehemiah Teams continues to grow with over 180 students in Southeast Asia and Africa. South Asia has recently added scores of summer opportunities and we are eager to fill them. Europe has succeeded in filling dozens of ministry internships where students work directly with national churches.

We are building and maintaining partnerships with Baptist universities who work with us to mobilize hundreds of their students to work alongside IMB missionaries in opportunities from one week to a full semester. Schools such as California Baptist University, Union University, Oklahoma Baptist University and many others have dedicated staff to mobilize, train, and send students for going opportunities with the IMB. Growing arenas of partnership for the IMB are global studies programs and departments of schools such as Liberty University,

William Carey University, Samford University, and others which seek to engage their students in internships that combine their academic studies with mission action overseas.

IMB has a significant financial and promotional investment in the Fusion program of Spurgeon College (Midwestern Seminary) that offers high school graduates a unique and intense year-round program of missions training and deploys them to the “hard places” with IMB. Fusion translates the “gap year” experience into a four-year degree program that includes the equivalent of a full year of missions service. Many Fusion grads go on to become Journeyman and long-term missionaries.

IMB’s level of engagement with the Go2 initiative

Despite a time of transition in executive leadership, IMB has fully embraced the Go2 initiative and made significant investments of personnel, new opportunities, and promotion.

Dr. Chitwood has quickly moved to renew IMB’s commitment to engage and mobilize the next generations for missions. He approved the rebuilding of the Student Mobilization Team, renewed support for our program of part-time student mobilizers, and restored funding to our Hands On semester missions program. In a day when many churches and leaders had assumed that the Journeyman program was dead or dying, he led the field to increase the number of fully funded requests to the current level of 150. The age limit was raised to 30. More Journeyman requests will be added as we continue working in the Go2 initiative to fill the current needs.

Through the efforts of the Partner Relations Team in Mobilization, IMB has sponsored two Go2 vision trips in 2019 that have connected 34 collegiate ministry leaders with our city teams in Nairobi and London for the purpose of building a pipeline of Journeyman to these cities.

The IMB website now features a section devoted to Journeyman information and opportunities, which has become a landing page from the Go2 website. IMB’s new Communication Team is in the process of transitioning our promotion efforts on the web and social media to include more stories of mission action, including the efforts of student volunteers.

IMB is actively supporting the efforts of Lifeway to produce a “Collegiate Missions Playbook” drawing best practices and insights from the Summit network of churches and its track record of developing two-year missionaries. The Playbook is scheduled for delivery in time for the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

The Student Team at IMB is working to leverage Sending Celebrations, such as at the 2019 Oklahoma Baptist Convention fall meeting and in 2020 at Riverside CA, Richmond VA, and Montgomery AL to inspire students and spread awareness of the Go2 initiative.

IMB staff and missionaries are extremely thankful for the Go2 initiative and the much-needed challenge it presents to our churches and leaders. As much as we want to see hundreds and thousands of students line-up in the next few years to go for up to two years in service and partnership with IMB, we have even bigger dreams. Our president wants to see us increase the number of long-term missionaries by 500. That presents a huge challenge to

Southern Baptists not only in terms of financial giving, but perhaps even more so in beseeching God to raise them up from our churches. We want students to embrace a missional *life*, which may include a two-year term of service with IMB but does not stop with that.

We are still pursuing exponential sending. We are working with the field and with our USA churches and ministries partners to explore the ways for students and others to go and serve beyond our funded pathways. We believe God wants to use IMB and American churches to encourage and empower hundreds and even thousands of our sister churches and conventions across the world to send countless missionaries, especially students, to unreached peoples. Go2 could become a global initiative.

14. What role does Baptist Global Response (BGR) play in accomplishing the IMB's ministry assignment to "*assist churches in fulfilling their international missions task by developing global strategies, including human needs-based ministries...*?" Please provide an update on future plans and expectations regarding BGR.

Baptist Global Response (BGR) comes alongside the IMB and their field personnel to help them effectively and efficiently utilize human needs strategies (e.g. disaster relief and community development) in a way to provide access and impact global lostness among unreached peoples and places.

This partnering of BGR extends to our Southern Baptist churches as well who are passionate and seeking better ways to engage these same people groups. BGR provides training, coaching, consultancy, and even mobilized resources for our Southern Baptist churches seeking to engage unreached people and places through disaster response and hunger/poverty alleviation programs.

Currently we are working with individual churches, some Baptist associations, and multiple Baptist state conventions to provide equipping opportunities and channels of involvement in the most needy and lost areas of the world. BGR works to connect our Baptist churches, associations and conventions with strategic and viable opportunities worldwide to address both acute and chronic human needs. Most of these opportunities are through and with existing IMB teams and strategies around the world.