

Africa Inland Mission Canada 2015 Annual Report



Dan Baetz
Canadian Director

52 Shepherds professing faith in Christ and being baptized after years of resistance to the gospel!

Accounts such as this point to a divinely complex and interdependent system: the Sovereign God who calls people to Himself - through the convicting work of the Holy Spirit; through Him who calls missionaries to serve; through His enabling so that those 'sent ones' share the gospel and persevere ('How will they hear unless they are told?') and through the ministry of churches across Canada who affirm and commission the 'sent out' ones - with faithful prayer and financial support. Add to the mix a National Office that seeks to 'hold up the hands' of those 'sent-ones' - as well as facilitating, leading and navigating the increasing complexities of the Canadian Diaspora and African ministry.

This report highlights several 'links in the chain' resulting in the sending, the sowing of the seed, the 'watering' and ultimately the reaping of the harvest! Thank you for your partnership in increasingly seeing 'Christ centered churches among all African peoples'. As we consider Vision 20/20 the call is to 'step up' in increased sending, giving and praying. The challenges are great, but our God is greater!

To God be the glory!



Ministry Moments: *glimpses into the lives and ministries of five o*



Holy Spirit Translation

Church planting is challenging in any new environment. The Samburu TIMO Team had the unique challenge of finding new locations for their church meetings 3 times because the group had outgrown the shade of each tree that had become their church! Through the ministry of the team, which included 3 Canadians (Courtney Bissell, Josh Mok, and Amy Ott (and her husband Jacob, an American)), a valley which had no church before now had a group of women and children meeting under a tree every week for worship and teaching from the Bible. Over the course of the 2 years, people who had never heard the stories of the Bible had the chance to learn who Jesus is, and a small church was started.

Courtney Bissell met with one young woman who hungered to hear more stories from the Bible. The team had a series of key stories from creation to Jesus' death and resurrection. Courtney found it difficult to share the stories with her limited fluency in the Samburu language. During their team's ministry the young lady received Jesus Christ as her personal saviour. When Courtney left and said good-bye to the young lady, she was apologetic that due to her language skills she was not able to explain the Bible in as much depth as she wanted to. The Samburu woman responded with a statement, profound in truth and significant in theological depth: "I have the Holy Spirit in me. You have the Holy Spirit in you. So when you were explaining the Bible, even though you didn't have the best Samburu language, I could understand everything that you were teaching me."

These words from a young believer in Africa are hopefully an encouragement to all of us who feel unworthy or inadequate to share the Gospel. Courtney took a huge step of faith and was willing to obey Jesus' call to go to the ends of the earth – and He was present through His Spirit to be the true teacher of this young Samburu woman.

Reaching Muslims Through Music

The music of 4 local guides playing their traditional music with drums and a wooden recorder-like flute floated through the night around a campfire in the Sahara Desert. Canadians K&K serve in North Africa

and took Murray and Diana Schmidt with them on a camel trek into the desert. The guides set up the traditional tents as the sun began to set. Supper was cooked on a campfire and the meal was followed by the ubiquitous mint tea. The music started after the dishes were 'washed' by the powder sand of the desert – the cleanest element around. The fine sand of the Sahara is a fantastic scrubbing agent.

After the men had shared some of their traditional music, K asked whether we could share some of our songs with them. Murray and Diana, along with their host family, sang several scripture songs which proclaimed the Gospel. K&K then provided translation into Arabic and explained the meaning of the Gospel which had been expressed through music. In all likelihood, this is the first time these 4 men had ever heard the story of Jesus Christ in any form. K&K take every opportunity that they have to share the Good News of Jesus with those they meet, and plant seeds in the hearts of the Muslim people that they meet in their day to day life.

Training for Trainers

Victor and Grace Chang from Toronto served for two years among the Beach people of northern Mozambique. While there had been seeds planted among this people group over the years, there had been little visible fruit. Grace went to a training for T4T (short for Training for Trainers). The goal of T4T is that the individuals who make a commitment to Christ are trained to, in turn, share the Gospel with their network of relationships. The goal is a church-planting movement among a people group where the Gospel spreads naturally through relational networks. The process begins with wide-spread seed sowing and sharing the Gospel broadly. Victor and Grace adopted the principles and were challenged to invite people to a commitment to Jesus Christ.

It is difficult for people within this tribe, who follow folk Islam, to break away from their religion and culture, which are so intricately woven together. Yet the Changs began to see fruit from their witness and were excited to see a number of people make commitments to Jesus Christ in the months leading up to the end of their two year assignment. God was at work! They were able to identify one local believer who had more background in Scripture and who has taken leadership over the small group. Upon their departure from Mozambique, only a handful of the many that had professed to follow our Messiah had finished all the discipleship lessons and have been faithful in meeting together for worship.

Our Membership at a Glance



11 Full Term personnel sent to Africa in 2015



30 members serving in Canada



57 children of Full Term members who have lived in Africa (up to 25 years old)

of our missionary teams.

Yet a church had been started and the Changs left with a prayer that the church would continue to grow. They write: "It's a good reminder to us that God is the One who grows these new seeds into mature plants that will bear fruit. Their spiritual growth is not dependent on us; it was never dependent on us. Who knows? Maybe with no foreigners present, these new believers will take the Good News and run with it." Please pray for the future of all these believers; that they will be faithful until the end; that they will stay in the race and finish well. Pray also for Mr. S (the church leader), that he will hold onto the vision to see his people reached with the Good News and that he will not lose heart.



Band of Brothers

Nosy Be is an island off the north tip of Madagascar. It is home to the Sakalava people – and the new home of a TIMO team which included a Canadian family (the Schoepp's) and a single Canadian woman (Michelle Vanderende). The Sakalava tribe had been dominated by the large Malagasy population of Madagascar and had not embraced the Gospel because it was associated with the Malagasy people – their language and culture. Scripture was read in Malagasy, music was sung in Malagasy and preaching was in the Malagasy language, which they did not understand.

When the team arrived, they met a group of 5 single young men who played in a local Sakalava band and enjoyed making the music of their people. As the team built relationships with this group they came up with a unique idea. They invited the band to put scripture verses to music in the style of music that the Sakalava would enjoy. Key verses were chosen and translated into Sakalava. Then the band used their creative abilities to put the words to music. The music served to work the Scripture deep into the lives of these 5 young men who were not believers in Jesus Christ. It also served as a means of communication during the team's outreach events. Through the catchy music, the Scriptures were being sung by people who didn't know the Truth yet. Shortly after the team had finished its ministry in Nosy Be the 5 musicians all declared that they had made a decision to follow Jesus Christ and were committed to serving Him for the rest of their lives. Now culturally relevant music can be used in the new Sakalava church which is emerging. Praise God for this new band of brothers who continue to proclaim the Gospel through music.

Teaching for Transformed Character

The long road of discipleship leads some to follow the call of God into church ministry. The equipping of church leaders at all levels – pastors, elders, women's leaders, youth leaders, Sunday School leaders – is one key focus for AIM International. Our desire is to see Christ-centred churches among all of Africa's tribal communities. This means that we need to help in the training of godly church leaders who are committed to teaching the Word of God with clarity, leading to the transformation of people's lives.

Canadians David and Heather Hildebrandt and Abram Kidd (and his wife Ashby, an American) serve at Nassa Theological College in Tanzania. The influence of their classroom teaching extends to many parts of Tanzania as their graduates have been launched into ministries in local churches, some of which are in areas where there is a significant presence of people who have not yet heard the Gospel. As they teach, the goal is not only to shape how the students understand, interpret and communicate the Bible, but also that the character of the students is transformed so that they live lives which exemplify what it means to follow Jesus in every aspect of life. The transformation of these students' lives are often only seen when they embark on ministries of their own.

An example of the impact that the Hildebrandts and Kidds have had is Pastor Lussana who graduated from NTC three years ago. Although he had originally requested to be posted by the Africa Inland Church as a missionary, he was asked to be the pastor of the Buhongwa church in the town of Mwanza. While this was not a missionary context per se, David encouraged him to reach out to the many people in Mwanza who had not yet committed their lives to Jesus Christ. He could consider Mwanza as his mission field. As of June 2015, the church had grown under his leadership from 100 to over 300 people and they have had numerous baptisms. As church leaders are effectively trained, they will go and make disciples within their new sphere of influence.



15 Short term personnel who departed for Africa in 2015



16 Appointees preparing to go



49 members serving in Africa



Ministry to African-Canadians

John P. Brown Director of Ministries to African-Canadians

"Mister, I know some of our Muslim people here badmouth you for your religion but I'm really glad for what you're doing. Why do you keep coming back to us?"

That was a question posed to one of our "MAC" Ministry to African-Canadian workers last August as a whole summer of children's outreach to Canada's least evangelized people group came to an end. "Because Jesus loves you and He tells me to love you," our AIMer replied. Obviously touched, the young father then said, "Fadlan ku soo laabtaan... please come back!"

That brief but powerful exchange beautifully summarizes the purpose of MAC:

In partnership with local churches and joining forces with like-minded missions, we will raise up a national team that by God's grace will proclaim the Gospel to unreached African-Canadians, develop strong African church leaders, and unleash the world missions potential of the African-Canadian Church.

Over the last year in MAC we have gained a greater understanding of the size and makeup of the African-Canadian population, now numbering about 750,000. We have maintained strong relationships with many African congregations and launched new partnerships in Toronto, Ottawa, and Halifax. A foundation has been set for grassroots pastoral training modules that we can carry across the country. And through summer camps, youth athletic clinics, and community sports leagues we are building ministries that share Christ with New Canadians who are lost and desperately need Him.

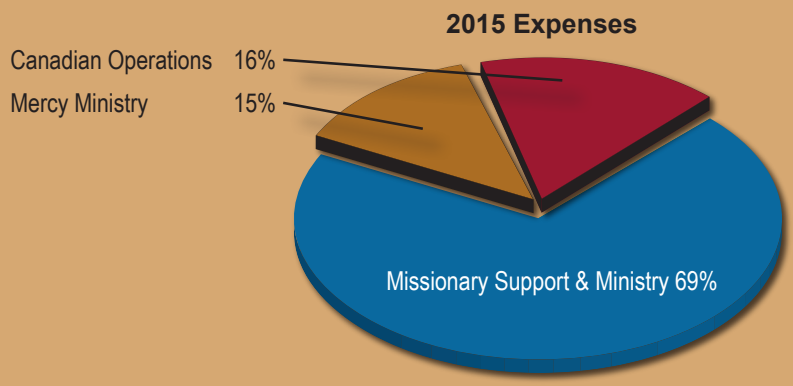
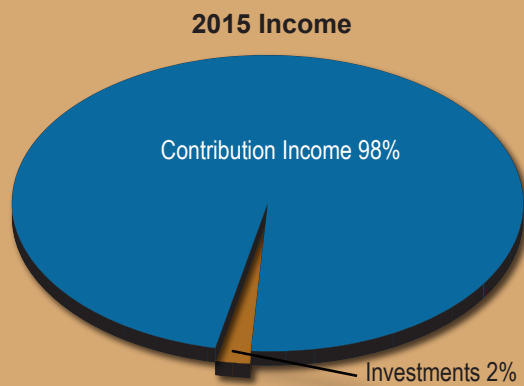
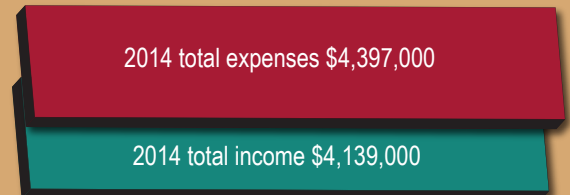


In 2015 the media and the federal election campaign woke Canadians up to the unimaginable needs of African and Middle Eastern refugees. MAC has launched training sessions to help mainstream churches reach out to the thousands of Muslim and non-Muslim refugees fleeing to Canada.

MAC's founding Director, Philip Gai, continued building the work through the year, especially in the South Sudanese community. In December Philip and Rachel Gai's unique gifts were recognized by World Vision and Philip became their Multicultural Church Coordinator. Nevertheless our MAC outreach team that began the year with two couples finished 2015 with three. In the coming year we are excited about seeing souls saved and African churches fortified!

AIM Canada Income & Expenses

From general missionary contributions AIM Canada deducts 12.5% for mobilizing and administration.



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