



Mentornet #73

TRACKING PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL: Monitoring church multiplication indicators

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Tracking progress of the gospel is proving to be a widely-practiced facet of mentoring for reproductive disciple-making. On the place of simple maps in leading CPMs, see MentorNet ##51 & 52. Continual gathering of reliable statistics on the outcomes of church-planting efforts enable timely decisions, since leaders can better:

- Discern which populations are currently responsive and warrant more workers.
- Recognize unreached and unengaged social segments where churches exist.
- Discover highly-effective workers who can be coached for a greater impact.
- Uncover ineffective workers who require more training or should be deployed elsewhere.

In the Book of Acts, the apostles apparently gathered data on their work, for they were able to report on how the messianic movement was growing, both by adding and by multiplying:

- Numbers Baptisms and believers, by gender, added to churches (2:41; 2:47; 5:14; 11:24).
- Numbers of disciples by region, city and social class (Acts 6:1; 6:7).
- Churches by region (9:31; 16:5).
- Regions penetrated by the Word of God (12:24; 13:48-49; 19:20).

Monitoring report forms, compiled results, and reports to leaders consist of qualitative descriptions and of quantitative counts. To prove practical in the field, report forms must prove short, clear, easy to fill in, and readily available. Making such reports must be integrated in the normal activities of local leaders and mentors must submit them regularly.

Qualitative Descriptors

Every monitoring form and each tracking tool provides for indicating locations and concerned personnel.

Locators. Coordinators sort the report forms by geographical places and identifiable social groups that are legally and culturally meaningful. These data we may call 'locators'. They are of two kinds:

Place Locators: These may take the form of official and customary names, locality (region, town, village), gps coordinates, place codes.

People Locators: Official and customary identity, ethnicity, language, class, caste, people code.

Personnel. Line supervisors, trainers, mentors, apostles, evangelists and local leaders follow agreed plans frequently adjusted in response to mentoring results, and reported needs and opportunities. For example:

<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Function</u>
Coordinators	Compiles reports
Mentors (may also be a coordinators)	Receives reports
Local leaders (may also be a mentors)	Fills in reports
Trainees (may also be a local leaders)	Provide data

Quantitative Measures

Field personnel must keep simple counts that serve as “indicators” of gospel progress. Indicators show gains, losses and defections.

Indicators. These are counts of visible persons, objects and events that indicate, show or prove that invisible or immeasurable (1) *inputs* have been applied, (2) *activities* have been conducted and (3) *outcomes* have happened. Thus, indicators must be:

- Measurable – can be accessed and quantified.
- Verifiable – others can measure the same things and get similar results.
- Economical – it does not take too much time or money to measure.
- Informative – the measures reveal or prove inputs, activities and outcomes.

1. Sample Inputs

Input

Research results
Peoples penetrated
Teams in field

Sample indicator

Documents: statistics, maps, resources, workshops
Maps: peoples, places, languages, classes, castes
Personnel mobilized: names, places, dates, reports

2. Sample Activities

Activity

Timely planning
Mentoring practices
Churches obedient

Sample indicator

New contacts: communes, personnel, seekers
Generational chains: frequency, duties, content
Lord's supper taken: frequency and communicants

3. Sample Outcomes

Outcome

Believers
Disciples
Churches

Sample indicator

Baptized households: men, women, children
Worshippers: teaching, table, prayers and sharing
Leaders: appointed, mentored, empowered

Reports

The results of analyses based on compiled tracking tools serve several purposes: enable ministry directors to form strategic alliances; inform field leaders about needed decisions; fuel prayer in churches; update national and regional mapping; motivate donors to give more wisely; keep all focused more on genuine progress than on rationalising busy work.

Resources

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