



Transforming Communities Together

Faith2Share Leaders' Retreat, Leadership Consultation
and Training Modules : 15 – 22 April 2016

Report



*This was the 16th Leadership Consultation run by Faith2Share since 2000 and the first time we had returned to Bangalore where our first major consultation was held in 2004 with 50 Emerging Mission Movement leaders. Since then the Faith2Share network has changed significantly in its shape and structure, but our commitment to working with mission leadership in the Global North and Global South has not changed, nor our three main foci of ministry which remain **discipleship, collaboration** and engagement with new and **emerging mission movements**. The theme for our consultation this year was **Transforming Communities Together: Building effective partnerships in mission leadership for global impact**.*

A week of three parts

Based on lessons learnt from our last Leadership Consultation in Ethiopia in October 2014 we retained the same basic structure and ran three events consecutively aimed to serve different constituencies within our membership. The week started with a three-day **Mission Leaders' Retreat** attended by 18 senior leaders, giving them an opportunity to enjoy fellowship, reflect and share on the Word of God, and just pause for a short while and use this time to be reinvigorated and re-energized. Our main **Leadership Consultation** started on Sunday 17 April and was attended by 57 mission and church leaders from 14 countries, the largest number of participants coming from South Asia. Finally we ended the week with fifteen **Mission Training Modules**, on Thursday afternoon and Friday, all of which were well attended and allowing us to tap



Network Members

AIMS Sri Lanka, Anglican Relief and Development Fund Australia, Antioch Mission, Asia CMS, Asian Outreach Alliance, BORN, Church Army Africa, Church of Nigeria Missionary Society, CMS Africa, CMS Australia, CMS, CMS Ireland, Friends Missionary Prayer Band, Global Teams, IGOSA, Indian Evangelical Mission, Isa-e Jamat, Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association, Mission Together Africa, Mission Together Inc. (Canada), National Mission Commission of Nepal, New Life for India, New Zealand CMS, SAMS Ireland, SAMS USA, SOMA UK, The Sheepfold Ministries

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into the vast amount of expertise that we have within the network.

The week was also divided into three parts in another way. In addition to the Bible studies and formal presentations we also had intentional time of prayer, discussion and networking. Many participants commented that they really benefitted from this time of informal interaction. The third element was a visit to five mission projects in Bangalore which provided first-hand experience of local mission work. These visits had a real impact on many delegates.



Finally, the participants themselves came from three different constituencies. The first group represented 20 of our 34 member agencies and movements although we missed seeing our members from Latin America and we felt that the CMS Mission Network was under-represented. Sadly due to visa restrictions, we were also not able to have with us any members or partners from Nigeria, Pakistan or Afghanistan. The second group, now a regular feature of Faith2Share gatherings, represented a

number of smaller and emerging mission movements, many of which have been part of *Faith2Share* for several years and have now become full members. They came from countries such as Nepal, Myanmar, Ethiopia and Kenya and this time we also had a good representation of believers coming from Muslim backgrounds. Several of the agencies represented have already expressed a strong interest of joining the *Faith2Share* network. The third category of participants came representing churches or dioceses, rather than mission agencies, and this reflects a unique role that *Faith2Share* performs in bridging the gap which sometimes exist between mission agencies and churches. It was really encouraging to see church representatives from Kenya, Uganda and parts of India itself, although we would have liked to have been able to engage a little more with the Church of South India and the Church of Nigeria (who have attended previous consultations).

Engaging with Global and Local Context

As mentioned above, in total 57 leaders attended the Leadership Consultation, representing 20 *Faith2Share* members and coming from 14 countries. As expected the largest group came from India itself but the other countries represented were Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, China, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, UAE, the UK and USA. Sadly there were only five women present but *Faith2Share* continues its commitment to see the number of female delegates increase. The full list of participants can be found in Appendix 1 on page 8.

During the consultation we were honoured to have a number of senior Indian church leaders participating in and leading our discussions. Bishop P K Samantaroy (right), the Moderator of the Church of North India, led two of our Bible studies and the introduction to the mission context in India was led by the General Secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India, Dr. Vijayesh Lal, and the General Secretary



of the India Missions Association, Dr. Wati Longkumer. Dr. K Rajendran of the World Evangelical Alliance also led two Bible studies and several seminars. The presence of these senior leaders was a rich blessing for us all.

On the Wednesday evening we held an Open evening when over 50 local mission and church leaders were able to come and meet the consultation participants over a meal after first listening to a presentation about Faith2Share and a key note address on 'life-long, whole-person' mission by Canon Francis Omondi from Kenya.

Going On – not giving up!



The demands on many of our senior mission leaders are very great and sadly burn-out, or consequent moral collapse, are not unknown. This was why the two day retreat with which we started our time in Bangalore was so much appreciated. During these days we were blessed by Dr. Prabhu Singh (left) from SAIACS who took us gently through 1 Corinthians 4 to explore Paul's recipe for keeping going in ministry without giving up. In four helpful talks we were encouraged to "look upwards", "look inwards", "look outwards", and "look forward". During the retreat we also shared in worship in four local churches in Bangalore where we were warmly welcomed and given a rich experience of Indian spirituality. The

overall aim of the retreat was to create space to "slow down" to listen to God's word and to others, to reflect individually and as a smaller group and to have enough time for worship and prayer and judging from the feedback of the retreat participants, we have successfully reached this aim.

Mission in Context

The three and a half days of **Leadership Consultation**, when our numbers reached their peak of 57, had specific focus each day whilst attempting to cover as many of the topics requested by participants before the consultation as possible. The focus for each day was:

- The mission context of India and the growth of Indian mission movements
- Transforming Communities
- Collaboration in mission for whole-life discipleship
- Church and agency together in mission – looking to the future

On the first day when we focused on India we were privileged to be given a very clear picture of the contemporary Indian religious context by Dr. Vijayesh Lal, General Secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India, and Wati Longkumar, General Secretary of the Indian Missions Association. They explained the challenging impact of rising Hindu fundamentalism and increased governmental restrictions on church, and particularly mission, activities but also spoke of the growth of the church and the real opportunities for mission that still exist. We were reminded that India is still home to the largest number of people groups who have had no access to the gospel. Three Faith2Share leaders representing large and small agencies then provided an overview of the growth of indigenous mission movements in India over the past sixty years or so. This overview was balanced by a very interactive session when all participants were able to share something of their own journey



in mission. The day concluded with two sessions which were more focused on the resourcing of mission leaders. The first was on mentoring (both being mentored and mentoring others) and the second was on the place of youth in mission. We were blessed to have with us the leader of one of our newest members, Harrison Mungai, from iServe Africa, a Kenyan movement which focuses on equipping and mobilising young East African Christians for mission. In this session he was joined by Stephen Edison from AsiaCMS who has been involved in mentoring the leaders of the South Asian Christian Youth Network (SACYN), Prakash Bhat, a younger leader from Nepal and Tusha Manna, an old friend of Faith2Share, who represents the 4-14 Window movement in West Bengal and spoke about how children can be involved in mission.

Transforming Communities

Our second day of Leadership Consultation took us straight into some of the more challenging aspects of seeing whole communities transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our prayers that morning were led by a Somali believer who has had to leave his home country to live in Ethiopia from where he is actively engaged in mission to other Somali people. It was appropriate therefore that this was immediately followed by a session entitled “Mission and violence in a world of many faiths”. We were very conscious during this session that we had with us mission leaders who have been and currently are ministering in places just as Somalia, northern Kenya, Afghanistan, and the Middle East (although sadly our Nigerian colleagues were not with us). The two leaders of this session (not named here for security reasons) challenged all those present to ‘sacrificial love for Muslim neighbours’. One of the disappointments of our time together was that only one participant felt able to respond to a specific challenge to raise up workers for this task of loving Muslims into the Kingdom. We pray that more will respond later.

In a second major session that morning Dennis Tongoi of CMS Africa and Tek Rijal of Vision Network Nepal both helped us to understand how mission can be a vehicle not just for changing individual lives but for transforming whole communities. Dennis has worked closely with the Disciple the Nations Alliance (DNA) internationally and in leadership of Samaritan Strategy, its African manifestation, whilst Tek has more recently led his team in response to the 2015 earthquake in Nepal and



seen how communities express their spiritual as well as their material needs after a tragedy. He told of one visit to a school run by Muslims where they intended just to give out relief but were then invited by the teacher to talk about their faith and what made them want to help others.

That afternoon participants split into five different groups going out into the community of Bangalore to see concrete examples of faith transforming communities. This included a ministry



which rescues the destitute and dying from the streets to give them dignity in death, a project working with ex-prisoners and the families of prisoners, an urban ministry organization and others. The evening de-brief proved how much participants had been inspired by seeing real examples of God's love in action.

Collaboration for Discipleship

Building effective collaboration between mission movements lies at the very heart of what Faith2Share is about so it was natural that we should devote most of one day to exploring this in a very practical way, but this year with a clear focus on discipleship. After a shorter introductory session by Prem James and Tim Brown of International Partnering Associates (IPA) participants worked for the rest of the morning in developing practical collaboration which hopefully will



continue long after the consultation finished. Prior to coming to Bangalore each participant had been asked to indicate in what areas of mission they were seeking partners to work with. These topics ranged from “Theology for lay people” and “Training” to “Church Planting Movements”, “Pastoral care of workers” and “Teaching English in India” – 18 topics in total. Through a process of consultation and negotiation we ended up with 12 groups meeting on a specific topic. Groups ranged in size from two to ten people. There was no reporting back but just plenty of time to listen to each other and then begin to form concrete plans for how resources could be shared, mutual learning could take place and active collaboration be planned. Two of these groups held second meetings later in the week and we will be monitoring how all the groups take forward these new opportunities for collaboration.

In the afternoon of this third day we continued to work on issues of collaboration but in two specific contexts, firstly in terms of the Faith2Share focus on ‘whole-life discipleship’ and then with a view towards ‘new models for mission sustainability’. Faith2Share was encouraged to continue its work on ‘whole-life discipleship’ and will be considering other consultations later this year. The issue of developing appropriate new models of missions which will allow for sustainability in mission for Christian communities around the world is also one that Faith2Share knows it will need to address further.

Wednesday evening was our ‘Open evening’ and we were pleased to welcome an encouraging number of mission and church leaders from Bangalore and close by who came to learn about Faith2Share and our consultation. The main speaker that evening was Canon Francis Omondi (right) of The Sheepfold Ministries, Kenya, who made an impassioned call for lives of total dedication (and sacrifice) to mission. He challenged to not see mission as a ‘career choice’ or a ‘season of ministry’ but as the only way of life possible once we have responded to the love of God in Christ Jesus. His call was underlined by his own life of dedication to mission in northern Kenya.



Together in Mission – Looking to the Future

The final half-day of the consultation took up an issue which has become more significant within Faith2Share, namely how churches and agencies collaborate in mission. The facilitators for this session were Simon Ponniah, until very recently the General Secretary of Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB), and Kasana Godfrey the Director of Mission and Ministries from Luweero Diocese, Uganda, Simon has been working closely with church leaders across India and invited Faith2Share



to facilitate a consultation between mission agencies and the bishops of the Church of North India in 2015. Kasana was a key part of a consultancy which Faith2Share conducted in 2014 to look at the links his own diocese has with other churches and agencies. Participants were convinced of the need for much better collaboration and coordination between churches and agencies but also aware that this will not

always be easy and will require intentionality in partnership. This final morning also provided an

opportunity to look at the future priorities for the Faith2Share network. The outcomes of this session are provided at Appendix 2 on page 9

Training Modules

The final two days of our gathering were devoted to Training modules on a whole range of different topics, mainly requested by participants. Most, but not all, of our leaders stayed on for this training opportunity whilst several others from India joined us. Each day there were two or three 'tracks' and participants needed to choose which modules they wanted to attend. The three tracks were:

- Discipleship and Partnership
- Leadership
- Mission in Context

In total 15 modules were offered. Examples within the discipleship and partnership track were, "Effective disciple-making movements" and "Loving Muslim neighbours"; within the leadership track "Women in mission leadership" and Training next generation leaders"; and within the mission in context track "Mission in the Punjab" and "Muslim background follows of Isa in mission".

Presentations materials from individual sessions.

Powerpoints, handouts and other materials from most consultation sessions (the Leadership Consultation and Training Modules) are now available to all *Faith2Share* members on our members' website. Members please log in to the Faith2Share website (please consult the *Faith2Share* office if you need your log-in details).

Appreciation

Planning and running a *Faith2Share* Leadership consultation is a major commitment for *Faith2Share* staff but we can only do it with the help of many other people who have contributed their time and talents to this event. Our special thanks go to John Wesley, Wati Longkumer, Stephen Dinsmore and Vijay Isaac who were part of the Planning team; to Raja Singh, John Wesley, Jackin Isravel and other **IEM** staff who performed miracles in providing visa support and arranging airport transfers, and other help in Bangalore; and to all the staff at **SAIACS CEO Centre** who made us feel so welcome. And last but not least we thank all our supporters and intercessors who were faithfully praying for the consultation and for *Faith2Share* work as part of our Annual Prayer Campaign.

Mark Oxbrow / Anton Ponomarev

June 2016



Faith2Share Leadership consultation 2016 Participants

Appendix 1

Kofi Ishmael Adjei	Torchbearers Mission
John Amalraj	Interserve India
Solomon Babu	India Missions Association
Niranjan Bardhan	IGOSA
Prakash Bikram Bhat	Global Outreach Day Nepal
Sunita Parajuli Bhat	DAI Nepal
Manik Corea	NAMS
David Davis	TEAM
Stephen Dinsmore	SOMA UK
Stephen Edison	AsiaCMS
Aruni Ferdinando	Anglican Inland Missionary Society
Sunil Ferdinando	Anglican Inland Missionary Society
Kasana Godfrey	Luweero Diocese, Church of Uganda
Vijay Isaac	Friends Missionary Prayer Band / Faith2Share
Jackin Isravel	Indian Evangelical Mission
Emmanuel Jinukuti	International Gospel and Social Work Mission
Eappen John	DAI India
Mostafa Kamal	Isa e Church
G P Kharchandy	Presbyterian Church, Shillong
Pranab Kishor Kumar	New Life for India
Wati Kumer	India Missions Association
Vijayesh Lal	Evangelical Fellowship of India
Martin Lalthangliana	Gospel Outreach Mission
NP Maharjan	National Mission Commission of Nepal
Tushar Manna	Manna Mission
Wondimu Mathewos	Mekane Yesus International Mission Society
Harrison Mungai	iServe Africa
Bashir	Ethiopia
Duncan Olumbe	Mission Together Africa
Francis Omondi	The Sheepfold Ministries
Mark Oxbrow	Faith2Share
Raj Patel	CMS
Heather Payne	Veritas College India
Simon Ponniah	Friends Missionary Prayer Band
Anton Ponomarev	Faith2Share
Paul RadnaKrishnan	Mahanaim Ministries
Tek Prasad Rijal	Vision Network Nepal
PK Samantaroy	Church of North India
Mrinal Sarkar	T-Shed
Phil Simpson	Global Teams
Gurpreet Singh	Morning Star Foundation
Raja Singh	Indian Evangelical Mission
Nancy Sturrock	TEAM
Aila Tasse	Lifeway Mission International
Thomas Thampi	Interserve India
Prince Thomas	NAMS
Sudarshan Thomas	Friends Missionary Prayer Band
Dennis Tongoi	CMS Africa
Finn Torjesen	TEAM
John Wambua	Diocese of Machakos, Anglican Church of Kenya
Robin Watson	ReachAcross
John Wesley	Indian Evangelical Mission
Mercy Wesley	Indian Evangelical Mission
Zohmingthanga	Indian Missions Association

Appendix 2

Session A : Feedback on the Consultation

(All comments are verbatim from the group reporters at the sessions on the last day of the consultation)

Comments from those attending their first Leadership Consultation



- Were able to listen, share
 - Everything is done with prayer
 - Created opportunity to share and work together
 - Messages were inspiring and challenging
 - Could find and meet with like-minded Mission agencies
 - Space was given for all and everyone was treated equally
 - Able to hear from both Asians friends and African friends as well
 - Effective networking and developing relationship (mentioned 4 times)
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- Able to see that others also are going through the same issues and challenges
 - Every session was flowing well connected and relevant topics
 - Stories which we heard were very encouraging and edifying
 - Mission visits were well planned and very helpful, good exposure (mentioned 5 times)
 - Great time of being together and no higher or lower
 - Presenters were also the participants
 - We were able to see our own failures and challenges
 - Wrong assumption in Missions were set right (came thinking India needs missionaries but there are thousands of missionaries)
 - Were able see how India has many Missions agencies and ministries
 - Open evening had impacted both F2S participants and the local Christian leaders
 - Mission sustainability issues were discussed and it should continue
 - The dichotomy of Global North and South was challenged
 - The absence of leaders from Global North was felt

Comments from repeat attenders

What was most appreciated at the consultation: Fellowship, encouragement; hearing new people.

We missed having a Holy Communion service together.

What we appreciate more generally about Faith2Share:

Connecting globally; strategic themes and materials; feel better equipped to train missionaries; Leadership briefings; Prayer – spiritual nurture.

Depth Discipleship consultations.

Exposure to different mission contexts. Building trust between Global North and Global South.

Building future leadership.

What Faith2Share should not stop doing: Networking; Meeting of mission leaders from larger and smaller mission agencies.

Opportunity for everyone to share. More Skype / Webinar meetings – especially at times of crisis.



Session B : Future of Faith2Share

Group for Smaller Mission agencies

- 1) Being a platform where more established and emerging movements can meet on equal basis
- 2) Systematic focus of the three foci of Faith2Share, not only theoretical but also practical
- 3) A delicate balance between local / regional focus and global gatherings; information and prayer sharing. Enabling partnerships globally – we want to go further in collaboration
- 4) The question of what Faith2Share provides is wrong – I want quality, not quantity. Trust God and trust each other. Not just welcome, but outcome
- 5) Inspiration, correcting the way we do things. Praying for each other. Trust, which results in working together in the future. We need to see more women.
- 6) The bigger picture but also doing things locally. Trust, relationships. Good practice (e.g. on the subject of sustainability)
- 7) Opportunity for indigenous regional networks (e.g. Congo) in addition to global meetings. Linking movements and churches with a clear focus. Time of retreat is very important – maybe half a day of prayer / rest / sightseeing in the middle of the consultation.



What would you like to see happen in the next two years:

I will come to the next consultation.

Consultation on whole-life discipleship in October 2016 in Ghana; start working on the comprehensive document on discipleship.

National consultation on mission in Nepal celebrating 16 years of mission in the country and also planning for next 5-10 years.

Leadership and sustainability meeting in Myanmar in April 2016.

NAMS will be looking to contribute to Faith2Share work in South Asia in a mutual manner.

Organise visits from other members.

Our agency will join Faith2Share as the full member, linking with Ethiopian mission networks.

Pursue the issues of sustainability in a more systematic way; would like to visit other Faith2Share members.

Value the networking and partnerships that have been formed.

Linking to the work with Muslims that other Faith2Share members are involved in.

Pray for local church outreach to Muslims.

Form South-to-South partnership.

Clusters for collaboration and sharing resources.

Consider forming Faith2Share India or Faith2Share South Asia.

More regional communication (newsletter)

Follow the migration trends regionally (e.g outreach to Indians in Africa)



Group for Larger Mission agencies:

- 1 - Collect and compile lay theology and share with others
- Helping in designing the ministry among the Muslims
- BAM as a strategy and a platform for cross cultural mission movements
- The neglected areas of ministries could be given more emphasis
 - o Sustainability of Missions and churches, Youth related problems and community development
- F2S should help in the implementation of different networking
- Bring in the really large Missions and Churches such as CSI and the Marthoma
- More efforts to integrate Mission and the churches
- 2 - We get more exposure when we come for F2S
- others are missing what has been exposed
- One week may be difficult to spend together, but 2 days just to focus one topic
- F2S should conduct more and more single issue consultation
- 3 - F2S team to do a remote research and share principles, attitudes, behaviour & culture that will help make post-colonial mission a relative rather than a rhetoric
- Staff should meet prior to the consultation
- Staff may help different Missions to keep up the single track focus

Church Leaders group

1. Contribution: Conduct whole life discipleship consultations
Share resource materials – training/ preaching
Partnership in training/ discipleship
2. Belonging: Collaboration – partnering
Strengthening mission work in Uganda
Share resource for networking - Invite local churches more
3. F2S priorities: Reach the church leadership – invite more church to be represented in these consultations
Strengthen the links for leadership development

Group for Network partners and others

What we want to see happen in the next 2 years:

- Sharing stories and photos.
- Connecting churches with those who are “outside”.
- Vision 5:9 resources on F2S website (+personnel)
- Links with other networks. Clarify relationship with IMA.
- Leadership briefings and calendar of events.
- Connecting to like-minded people.
- TEAM taking on full membership of F2S.
- Team of volunteers + seconded staff.
- More engagement in Latin America.



