

Church Planting Movements: Major progress since 2010

In 2010, approximately 100 Church Planting Movements (CPMs) were said to exist. In 2020, at least 1,035 movements are documented. **What happened to bring that change?**

Donald McGavran discussed people movements in Bridges of God (1955), where he emphasized that in such movements, groups are usually small; each believer is “instructed in the Christian faith,” and large numbers result through the “conversion of a series of small groups over a period of years.” He called for a return to the true mission focus of making disciples of “panta ta ethne, . . . and multiplying churches among them” rather than the current general focus on various Christian activities.

Footnote: Donald A. McGavran, (1986). "My Pilgrimage in Mission" (PDF). *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. 10 (2): 53–57.

I. CPM Progress by Tokyo 2010

The “Church Planting Movement” term was coined in the 1990s by David Garrison and associates. His Church Planting Movements booklet (1999) brought clarity and case studies on emerging movements in several continents. A CPM was defined as “*a rapidly multiplying indigenous churches planting churches that sweep across a people group or population segment.*” His book Church Planting Movements: How God Is Redeeming a Lost World (2004) discussed the continuing momentum of this missionary breakthrough.

In 2010, the existence of CPMs was not yet well known . About 100-150 movements (mainly among UPGs) were reported. Some were skeptical in the Tokyo 2010 workshop on CPMs, while others were inspired by the stories of breakthroughs.

Momentum grew at this and other global conferences. A new book, T4T (Training for Trainers): A Discipleship Re-Revolution (Jan. 2011), told the story of two movements in China, one of which had 1.7 million disciples in over 150,000 churches. Other workers began to see the God-size possibilities. A holy desperation from UPG-focused workers who had seen little fruit made many willing to re-examine presuppositions and methods in their search for fruitfulness.

II. Amazing CPM developments since 2010

A. Brutal Facts about Lack of Progress: The rate of evangelization and mobilization has diminished since its height in the 1990s. Specialized mission efforts have often replaced UPG focus. Mission efforts actually lost ground. **Footnote: Dave Datema & Dan Scribner. 40 Years Of Unreached Peoples Effort: Progress And Regress. Mission Frontiers. Nov-Dec 2016: 29-36.**

The total number of lost grew from 3.2 billion people in 1985 to 5 billion by 2015. While the percentage of unreached people groups decreased, the total UPG population grew from 1.1 billion in 1985 to at least 2.2 billion in 2018. Per Joshua Project, 3.15 billion people (42% of the world) in 7000+ UPGs still “do not have a local, indigenous church that can bring the gospel to the whole group without the aid of cross-cultural missionaries....” **Footnote: Justin Long. “The Brutal Facts.” 24:14 – A Testimony to All Peoples. Eds. Dave Coles & Stan Parks. September 1, 2019: 149-155.**

B. Major Progress in Church Planting Movement Momentum:

1) An updated definition that a CPM is “*the multiplication of disciples making disciples and leaders developing leaders [which] results in indigenous churches planting churches. These churches begin to spread quickly through a people group or population segment. These new disciples and churches begin to transform their communities as the new Body of Christ lives out Kingdom values.*”

When churches reproduce consistently to four generations in multiple streams, the process becomes a sustaining movement. It may take years to begin. But once the first churches start, we usually see a movement reach four generations within three to five years. In addition, these movements themselves often reproduce new. . . CPMs within other people groups and population segments.” **Footnote: Stan Parks.**

24:14 Goal: What is a CPM? Mission Frontiers. July-August 2019: 36.

2) An astounding number of movements have emerged: At least 1,035 sustainable Movements (some on every continent) are now thriving with over 74 million disciples in 4.3 million churches. Some have streams of 6, 7, 12 or even 20 generations of churches. Over 2000 additional efforts to start movements have also been launched. **Footnote: See 2414now.net.**

3) God is honoring forty years of prayer for people movements among UPGs by launching CPMs – and often among the hardest UPGs. Sadly, many mission leaders remain skeptical about the existence of so many movements, churches and disciples.

4) Church Planting Movement resources provide helps. Books, articles, equipping material sets, equipping programs, and websites have been produced. For example, *Mission Frontiers* magazine is mainly focused on CPMs. The materials are based on lessons learned in movements. Many groups are providing CPM equipping such as Zume, Launch Global, No Place Left, Beyond, ELife Church (Lubbock) and CPMs around the world. Many tool sets are available such as Discovery Bible Study sets for different worldviews, Heart and 4 Fields, Training for Trainers, etc. Numerous CPM videos are available online (e.g. on zumeproject.com and beyond.org).

C. Required Paradigm Shifts: Movements emerged only as traditional church DNA was set aside to allow CPM DNA to flourish. An abbreviated list of such shifts include: **Footnote: The list below combines aspects from these articles: James Forlines. *When Disciple Making Movements Are Misunderstood*. Mission Frontiers. Nov-Dec 2017: 36-39; Elizabeth Lawrence & Stan Parks. *2414 Report: Mindshifts of Movements*. Mission Frontiers. May June 2019: 26-29; and C. D. Davis, *Five Lessons the American Church is Learning from CPMs*. Mission Frontiers. July-August 2012: pp. 18-20.**

1. Make disciples rather than make church members.
2. Go out among the lost rather than invite non-believers to come to the church’s programs.
3. Disciple existing groups (e.g. a family, a group or a community) rather than just reaching individuals.
4. Measure growth by how many generations of disciples, leaders and churches are reproduced (e.g. how many children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren churches) rather than only how many individuals have come to faith.
5. Follow a plan only God can accomplish rather than a plan which is humanly possible.
6. Believe that God will bring a ripe harvest in the hardest places rather than believing “it can’t happen here.”
7. Pray and fast like never before. Movement leaders spend hours in prayer weekly before movements launch and sustain.
8. Follow an obedience-based discipleship approach rather than a knowledge-based approach.

9. Help the disciples learn directly from God through His Word rather than relying on the outside expert.
10. Every discipleship process must be immediately reproducible.
11. God can ordain ordinary and untrained people as disciple-makers who make disciple-makers and thereby become church planters.
12. True movements are leadership reproduction movements where leaders reproduce leaders who reproduce leaders (2 Tim. 2.2).
13. True disciples will share God's message and do God's good deeds. They will feed the poor, help the sick, make new disciples, launch new churches and ultimately change society from within.

III. A Major Development: The 2025 CPM Initiative of the 2414 Coalition (2414now.net)

In 2017, 70+ leaders (some from each continent) totally committed to launch movements met to seek God's direction. The meeting was possible because of growing trust among CPM leaders globally.

Two stunning things happened. First, movement data from around the world was shared and presented for the first time. The announcement that 585 sustaining movements now existed astounded everyone. Second, these leaders accepted God's call to work together to launch CPMs in every unreached people and place. The initial goal is to equip and launch movement catalysts to the starting line in every people and place by December 31, 2025.

The 2414 Coalition had emerged. The name is from Matthew 24:14 which can be translated *This Good News of the Kingdom will be heralded in all the world as a sacrificial witness to all people groups and then the end will come.*

Only God will decide when movements start. The 2414 commitment is just to do all God asks so movement initiatives start in every people and place by 2025.

Some momentum-building distinctives of the 2414 Coalition include:

- All involved believe CPMs are the most effective way forward.
- Global CPM research, provided by movements globally, shows amazing numbers of believers, leaders, churches, movements and movement efforts.
- Strategic segmentation of populations is underway to break each people group into segments of 100,000 people. This "next stage" segmentation of people groups emphasizes a more realistic ratio of required movement workers to population and helps define how many teams are needed among each people group.
- The majority of movement leaders are non-North American and are forming regional facilitation teams focused on launching movement teams to each segment in their region.
- An emerging equipping network is providing "on-the-job" CPM equipping, and mentoring globally. Phase 1 equips people to make reproducing disciples in their "home" culture and Phase 2 equips people to make reproducing disciples cross-culturally.
- Most movements have been launched by an outside catalyst (the far-culture person/s) and an inside catalyst (the near culture person/s) working together. Global collaboration continues to be a part of God's plan.
- Movements are now launching movements. Of the 1,035 now known to exist, 80% of movements (800+) have been started by the original 200+ movements. Having movement

teams in every people and place by 2025 becomes much more possible as movements send out workers.

A concluding encouragement from a key thought leader: *“News of CPMs happening around the world has challenged many . . . church leaders to reexamine, reframe and retool. The speed of movements, the depth of discipleship and commitments of the emerging leaders, frequently cause [leaders] . . . to take notice. This is because CPMs are different than our usual models, experience and traditions about what it means to be ‘church.’ . . . [T]his has brought an explosion of HOPE for a different future.”* Footnote: C.D. Davis, *Five Lessons the American Church is Learning from CPMs*. *Mission Frontiers*. July-August 2012: pp. 18-20.