

BWA launches Global Baptist Mission Network

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STAVANGER, Norway—The Baptist World Alliance launched the Global Baptist Mission Network—a collaborative venture involving 23 inaugural member agencies—at its annual meeting in Stavanger, Norway.

The BWA Executive Committee approved the creation of the network at its March meeting after a group of 15 leaders from eight countries began work two years ago to develop a proposal for the “gospel collaborative,” General Secretary Elijah Brown said.

The inaugural network includes 23 representatives from mission agencies and initiatives in 17 countries with a cumulative total of 7,012 missionaries.

“It is the largest and most globally diverse mission network” in Baptist life, Brown said, adding additional mission-sending agencies and missional initiatives are encouraged to join.

The Global Baptist Mission Network will not be a missionary sending entity. Rather, the primary goals focus on building relationships, facilitating collaboration and fostering effectiveness.

Initial focus on two projects



Kang-San Tan, general director of BMS World Mission, will chair the steering committee for the Global Baptist Mission Network. (Photo /

Ken Camp)

A steering committee chaired by Kang-San Tan, general director of BMS World Mission, will lead the network. The steering committee will be responsible for adjudicating new members, forecasting future directions, planning an annual network forum, strategizing collaborations and organizing subgroups to work on agreed upon projects.

The network will begin by focusing on two projects, he said.

A mapping initiative will seek to identify and develop a global database of ongoing missions endeavors to avoid duplication and enhance collaboration, while identifying areas and groups without a gospel witness.

A website for this initiative is under development. Visitors to the website will be able to browse member organizations and where each is working. Users also will be able to search by region to see if work is being done in a particular area and by whom. Information provided on the website will be only what is publicly available or provided by each member organization.

The network will also work with Baptist Mission Australia to develop the “Many Places, Many Voices” initiative. Growing out of a [position paper](#) presented at a workshop during the 2022 BWA annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala., the initiative envisions a “polycentric, polyphonic missiology.”

Rather than only one part of the global Christian community taking responsibility for evangelizing the rest of the world, it proposes multiple sending points that reflect cultural, racial and gender diversity.

As an example, Scott Pilgrim, executive director of Baptist Mission Australia, spoke about more than 10,000 Nepalese refugees living in Hobart, Tasmania. Australian Baptists started a driving school to provide the refugees with the needed skill. Some of the driving students have

become Christians.

Some of these Christians are connected to the Nepalese refugee community in Germany and asked Australian Baptists about engaging them with the gospel. In response, Baptist Mission Australia has sent Christian Nepalese from Tasmania to Germany as missionaries.

Membership requirements

There will be two categories of membership in the network. The first phase is made of standalone mission organizations and mission departments within conventions or unions. The second category will be phased in later and will be comprised of mission professionals.

In addition to qualifying for one of the two membership categories, members must meet the following requirements: demonstrate a commitment to and passion for mission; agree with the vision, mission and values of the network; be actively involved in the network; and submit required forms and surveys to keep member information current.

Network members also must be current BWA members or must be endorsed by a BWA member body to join. Network members also are expected to make a financial contribution based on the member's annually budgeted income: \$0.00 to \$100,000 is \$250.00; \$100,001 to \$250,000 is \$500; \$250,001 to \$1 million is \$750; more than \$1 million is \$1,000.

The first annual network forum is planned to coincide with next year's BWA annual meeting in Lagos, Nigeria, July 7-12, 2024. During that forum, a new steering committee will be elected to continue the work begun this year.

BWA President Tomas Mackey voiced a commissioning prayer for the 23 inaugural members of the Global Baptist Mission Network.