

Welcome to the Engagement Scales Toolkit

This framework has emerged from a collaboration between **Frontiers, IMB, Joshua Project, Engage Network, Vision 5:9, and Accelerate**, with input from practitioners and researchers from various parts of the world. It builds on the familiar “Engaged/Unengaged” language but aims to offer **greater precision, usability, and strategic alignment** for field teams, mobilizers, and researchers alike.

While the structure and core definitions are stable—ensuring consistent global use and comparability—this toolkit is still in **beta**. That means we’re actively gathering feedback from **key global mission leaders and practitioners**. We’re especially seeking insights from those serving in **diverse regions and working among people groups with a range of engagement levels**.

What We’re Asking

We’d like to invite your team, network, or organization to review the tools outlined in this first draft of the **Engagement Scales Kit** and provide general feedback **and/or** serve as a **pilot partner** to help test and refine these tools in the field.

Why It Matters

Your feedback will directly shape how this framework firms up to best serve the field and how we serve the broader Body of Christ.

We believe this tool can help **unify** language, strengthen local strategies, and **highlight where the gospel has not yet taken root**—so that no people group is overlooked.

Thank you for considering your role in shaping this effort.



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New Meaningful Metrics for Data

Why something new?

For years, our shared language was mostly two data points: Engaged or Unengaged and Christian/Evangelical %. Helpful, but too flat for today's realities. Two people groups can look the same on those metrics yet be in radically different places—one with multiplying churches and robust discipleship, another with little ongoing engagement. This booklet adds clarity by combining:

- **Phases of Engagement (8 phases):** a simple descriptive frame from Waiting (Phase 0) to Sustained Gospel Presence (Phase 7).
- **Engagement Strength:** an indicator tool (development in process) based on field surveys or activity apps that helps show how vigorous current efforts are within a phase.
- **Engagement Accelerators:** a self assessment tool suggesting practices teams can use to identify gaps, choose next steps, and catalyze movement to the next phase.

Our aim is a shared, globally usable language that honors diverse contexts, helps teams see the next faithful step, and gives mobilizers a clearer picture of gospel progress in a given people—without adding heavy reporting burdens.

A New Unengaged Peoples Definition

The development of these new scales began with a fresh look at the definition of **“unengaged peoples”**. Since multiple ministries and networks are now focused on this group—and the realities of reaching them are quite different from they were decades ago when earlier definitions were created—a revised and broadly accepted definition was needed. This updated definition provided the foundation for the conversations that ultimately shaped these scales.

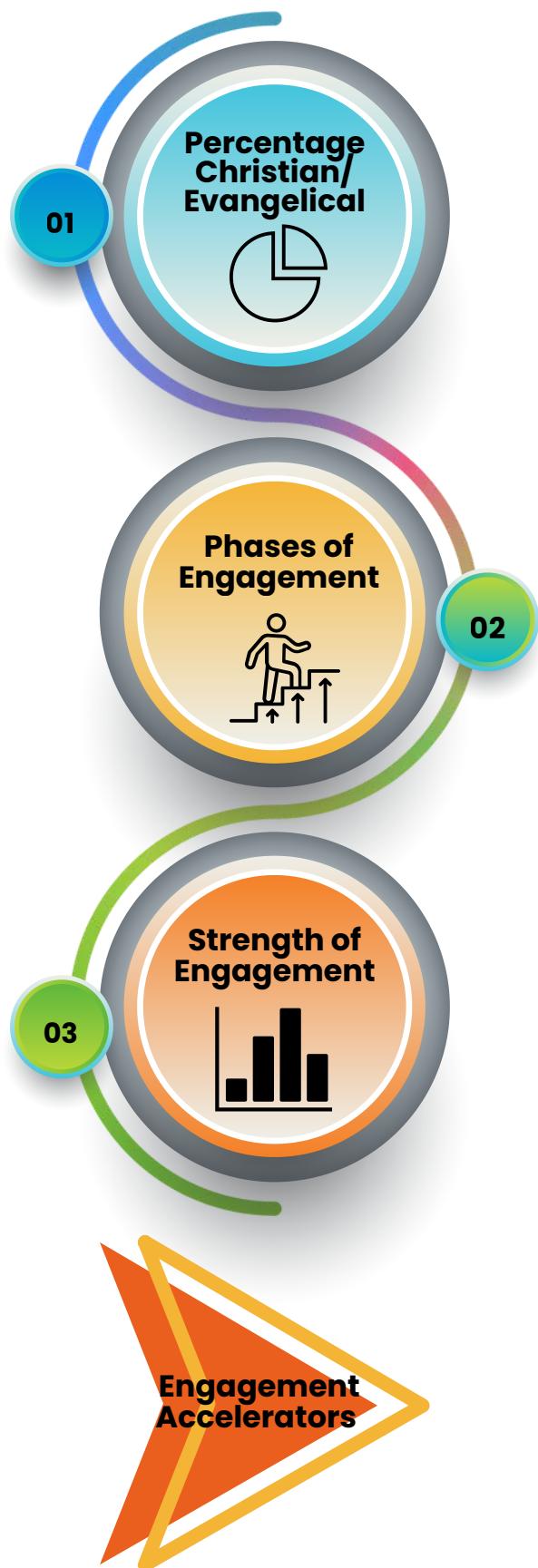
An unengaged people group is one where there are no known efforts focused on establishing self-sustaining churches consistent with evangelical faith and practice.

A people group becomes engaged when:

- **There is sustained activity to share Christ and make disciples**
- **There are efforts to establish self-sustaining churches**
- **The work occurs in culturally appropriate and locally relevant ways**



Three Dimensional People Group Progress with Accelerators



A numerical value or scale based on the people group's Christian-Adherent percentage and Evangelical percentage. It shows at a glance how much of the population identifies with Christianity or the Evangelical movement. This metric is purely quantitative.

An eight-step continuum that tracks where a people group stands in terms of the phase of the work. Each phase describes a milestone in gospel progress and is not always reflected well by Christian or Evangelical percentage.

A five-level scale that captures how robust or deep that engagement actually is, based both on quantitative events and qualitative reports, surveys, and feedback from field contacts. In other words, it shows not just that you've 'arrived' in a given phase, but how active and vital the gospel presence is.

Engagement Accelerators are tools for the field. The self-assessment tool serves as a diagnostic and prayerful planning aid, helping teams identify momentum factors —such as research, prayer, multi-node engagement or Scripture access—that can move a people group toward the next phase of engagement.



Why a Three-Dimensional View?

A group can be “engaged” yet weak and stagnant, or have a low evangelical percentage yet be vibrant and multiply churches. **This three-dimensional view adds depth, allowing us to see where a group is, how strong the work is, and how saturated the gospel is.**

Mobilization clarity

This clarity also helps mobilizers **match the right work and workers to each phase**. Early phases often require pioneers who are focused on access, language, research, and gospel entry. As progress advances, the center of gravity shifts toward leadership development, local sending, and systems that sustain healthy churches. The model makes these shifts explicit, allowing recruitment, training, and funding to align with actual field needs.

Example	Group A	Group B
Evangelical % (Saturation)	0.2%	0.2%
Phase of Engagement	5 – Churches Reproducing	2 – Evangelism
Engagement Strength	Active	Growing
On-the-ground signs	2nd-gen groups forming; local lay leaders active; regular baptisms; simple gatherings multiplying	Sporadic gospel conversations; a few interested households; limited Scripture access in heart language
What this means	Momentum exists; protect health and push toward 3rd–4th generation streams	Early traction; risk of stall without focused presence and resourcing
Priority focus (next 6–12 months)	Leadership development; empowerment and release of authority; sending to new segments	Same/near-culture evangelists; Scripture/Gospel access; consistent follow-up in multiple nodes
Accelerators to emphasize	Training & Equipping; Reproducing; Collaborative Engagement	Prayer; Scripture/Gospel Resource Access; Mobilization/Sending; Multi-node Engagement



Phases of Engagement



Phase 0: Waiting

There is no known reported engagement to establish self-sustaining churches, or; "0-R" - Previous efforts have not resulted in ongoing activity or have not been updated in three years. Sub-indicator "0-R" marks that a restart is needed.

Phase 1: Entry

Workers or near-culture believers gain access and begin laying relational foundations to share Christ and plant churches. The focus is on connecting, learning, and building bridges.

Phase 2: Evangelism

Regular, culturally relevant gospel engagement is taking place, with the intention of planting self-sustaining churches.

Phase 3: Discipleship

Individuals or small clusters respond in repentance and faith. Early discipleship stresses obedience to Scripture, laying foundations for self-sustaining churches consistent with evangelical faith and practice.

Phase 4: Local Church

Believers from the people group gather regularly, functioning as a local church that is consistent with evangelical faith and practice. Leaders from the people group are emerging among these churches.

Phase 5: Reproducing Church

Churches from the people group are sending out evangelists or church planters to plant new churches among their own people. Second-generation groups and churches are forming.

Phase 6: Multiplying Church

Generational church streams spread across the people group, reaching 4th generation or beyond of both churches and leaders. Church network structures remain lightweight, empowering localized oversight.

Phase 7: Sustained Gospel Presence

The people group has either: (1) 10% or more following Christ and worshipping in churches, or (2) several multiplying church planting networks led by believers from the group, who are sending workers to other peoples while continuing to mature at home.



Quick Start Guide

How to assign a phase?

Answer sequentially and stop at the first “no”. The highest phase “YES” determine the current phase.

- **Is there any known current effort with intention toward self-sustaining churches that is culturally appropriate and locally relevant?**
 - If No → Phase 0: Waiting. If prior work ceased or data is >3 years old → **tag 0-R**.
 - If Yes, continue.
- **Entry: Are workers or near-culture believers gaining access and laying relational foundations to share Christ and plant churches?**
 - Yes → at least Phase 1. Continue.
- **Evangelism: Is regular, culturally relevant gospel engagement taking place with the intention of planting self-sustaining churches?**
 - Yes → at least Phase 2. Continue.
- **Discipleship: Have individuals or small clusters responded in repentance and faith, with early discipleship emphasizing obedience to Scripture and laying foundations for self-sustaining churches?**
 - Yes → at least Phase 3. Continue.
- **Local Church: Are believers from the people group gathering regularly as local churches consistent with evangelical faith and practice, with leaders from the people group emerging?**
 - Yes → at least Phase 4. Continue.
- **Reproducing Churches: Are churches sending evangelists/planters, and do you see second-generation groups or churches forming?**
 - Yes → at least Phase 5. Continue.
- **Multiplying Churches: Are churches and leaders multiplying to the fourth generation?**
 - Yes → at least Phase 6. Continue.
- **Sustained Gospel Presence: Are there multiple streams of churches reaching fourth generation with evangelical doctrine and practice sustained locally?**
 - Yes → Phase 7.

When is restart needed?

A restart may be needed when past efforts among a people group **have not resulted in a lasting gospel presence and no viable witness remains**. This could occur if a team withdraws, believers disperse without continued outreach, or external pressures disrupt ministry. In such cases, the group **returns to Phase 0-R**.

Additionally, if **no new incoming data is received for a period of three years**, the group will be **designated as Phase 0-R**, signaling the need to reassess and potentially reinitiate engagement.



Engagement Strength

In addition to knowing where a people group is on the journey toward a sustained Gospel presence (the engagement phase), it is important to understand how **strong and sustainable** that engagement actually is. We currently have proposed two methods to assess this:

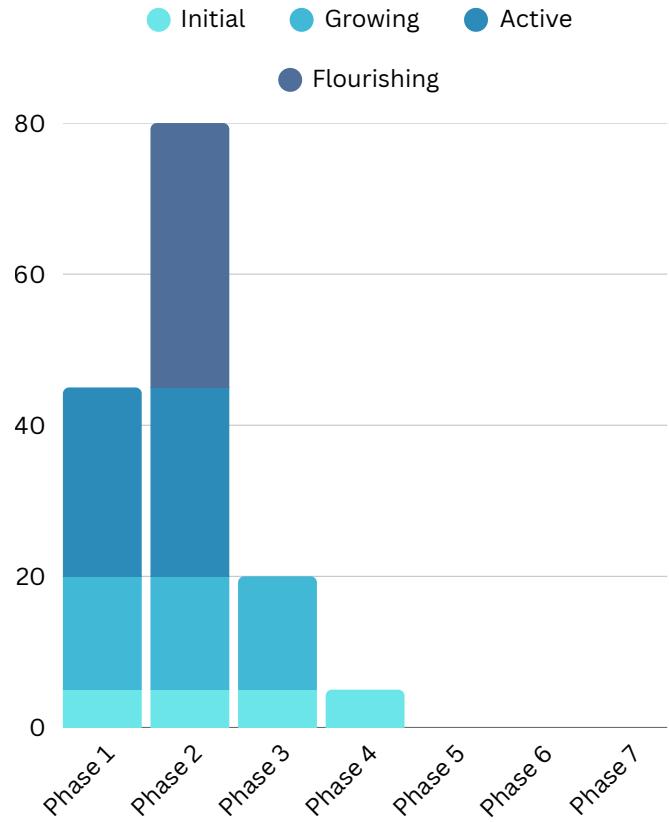
- **Secure Activity Tracking Apps**
 - Allows for real-time updates and long-term visibility of progress.
 - Requires internet access and willingness to record data digitally.
- **Field Survey Tool**
 - Designed for teams who operate in limited-access areas or choose not to record data online.
 - A quantitative and qualitative questionnaire that captures a snapshot of engagement strength through nine questions for the phase the people group is in.
 - Easy to use, even in remote settings.

Why Both?

- When both methods are coordinated it allows both survey sources to inform and populate engagement strength.

Engagement Strength Categories

- Unknown
- Initial
- Growing
- Active
- Flourishing



Example

In this example, the people group is currently in Phase 3, but notice that the strongest engagement appears in Phase 2 (Flourishing). This shows that while **earlier-stage ministry is thriving, the current phase is weaker and needs strengthening.**

To move forward, energy should be directed toward discipleship and church formation so Phase 3 becomes more stable and prepared for breakthrough into Phase 4.

Engagement Accelerators



What they are

Engagement Accelerators **highlight key factors that can help move a people group toward a stronger and more sustainable gospel presence**. They are not separate phases but domains of strategic engagement (e.g., prayer, Scripture access, training, collaboration) that can be leveraged differently at each phase. **Accelerators are diagnostic and catalytic**—they surface gaps, spark ideas, and focus next steps. They are not a scorecard, prescription, or one-size-fits-all method.

How to use them (simple team workflow)

1. **Identify your phase.** Confirm the current Phase of Engagement for the people group.
2. **Find the Accelerator Diagnostic Questions.**
3. **Pray and diagnose.** Prayerfully review the Diagnostic Questions; answer honestly with field reality in view.
4. **Discern and choose.** Think beyond the questions to the wider ministry domain. Ask God what 1-2 items from the 12 domains (or your own ideas) would most strengthen engagement and help you take a step toward the next phase.
5. **Plan and act.** Use the Accelerator planning worksheet (in the appendix) to assign the next step, identify partners, and set goals. Keep it small, specific, and culturally appropriate.
6. **Learn and update.** Note what happened, what you learned, and any phase-shift signals (e.g., new baptisms, new groups, leaders emerging). Could you share updates with your network and Mission Information Community?

Guiding principles

- **Context first:** Adapt ideas to language, culture, security, and local wisdom.
- **Sequence matters:** Choose actions that advance the phase rather than entrenching the current one.
- **Look for where God is already at work and join in.** Build on existing strengths—whether people, relationships, or approaches—and be careful not to replicate what's already succeeding.
- **Partner widely:** Involve local believers, proximate cultures, diaspora, and specialty ministries.
- **Keep it light:** This is a guide for prayerful creativity—use it to focus, not to add burden.



The Engagement Accelerators

Prayer

Sustained intercession aligned to the people group's realities, seeking God's guidance, protection, and breakthrough. Includes personal, household, and multi-church rhythms.



Scripture/Resource Access

Ensuring heart-language access to Scripture and gospel content in appropriate formats (print, audio, app, oral). Prioritizes distribution pathways, local stewardship, and feedback to translation/production.

Vision Casting

A clear, compelling picture of gospel advance for the people group that aligns teams, churches, and partners. Uses stories and simple data to set direction and sustain momentum.



Multi-node Engagement

Coordinated presence across channels and geographies (rural/urban hubs, strategic cities, diaspora, media, online). Prioritizes and adapts nodes as conditions shift to reach more of the people group.

Mobilization/Sending

Identifying, preparing, deploying, and caring for workers (local, near-culture, cross-culture). Includes simple pipelines, coaching, and member care that endure over time.



Collaborative Engagement

Shared prayer, learning, data, and mutual care among churches, agencies, and local believers. Clarifies roles through simple agreements and works together on crises and opportunities.

Meeting Needs/Compassion

Tangible expressions of love that dignify communities and open relational doors. Designed to "do no harm," be locally led, and connect naturally to long-term discipleship.



Critical Contextualization

Community-discerned application of Scripture that is biblically faithful and culturally meaningful. Regularly reviews forms and practices with diverse voices to guard against drift and syncretism.

Research/ Cultural Insights

An ongoing learning posture that maps language, worldview, social networks, migration, and pressure points. Insights are synthesized and fed back into strategy and practice.



Multiplying Efforts

Habits and systems that drive generational growth of disciples, groups, and churches. Emphasizes lay evangelism, identification and development of leaders, and the wise release of authority.

Training/Equipping

Reproducible formation for disciples and leaders in evangelism, disciple-making, leadership, formation, and stewardship. Delivered by practitioners and designed to be passed on.



Marketplace Involvement

Credible businesses that provide access, witness, and tangible blessing. Operates ethically, favors local ownership, and integrates workplace discipleship where appropriate.

Use the diagnostic questions on the next page to identify opportunities.



Accelerator Diagnostic Questions

How to use: Review all 12 questions. Identify 1-2 that expose your biggest gap or opportunity for moving toward the next phase. Brainstorm specific next steps. For additional ideas, consult the phase-specific questions in the appendix.

Prayer

Who specifically needs sustained prayer to move forward, and who can you mobilize to intercede alongside you for breakthrough into the next phase?



Scripture/Resource Access

What barriers prevent people from engaging God's Word in their heart language and preferred format—and how could removing those barriers accelerate progress toward the next phase?

Vision Casting

What compelling picture of gospel breakthrough could unite, mobilize, and inspire people to action toward the next phase?



Multi-node Engagement

Which geographic, demographic, or digital spaces remain untouched or show the most receptivity—and could engaging them unlock movement toward the next phase?

Mobilization/Sending

What type of worker does your current phase require and who needs to be identified, prepared, or sent to drive progress toward the next phase?



Collaborative Engagement

What would you gain by partnering more intentionally with other workers, local believers, or nearby churches to strengthen your capacity for moving to the next phase?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

How can tangible acts of love open relational doors and build trust that positions you for the deeper gospel engagement required in the next phase—without creating dependency or undermining local initiative?



Critical Contextualization

Where might your current forms or practices feel foreign, create unnecessary barriers, or drift from Scripture—and could addressing these unlock readiness for the next phase?

Research/ Cultural Insights

What don't you yet understand about how people think, connect, decide, or resist—and how could learning this remove obstacles to the next phase?



Multiplying Efforts

What's currently reproducing on its own versus requiring your constant involvement—and what would need to multiply to sustain movement into the next phase?

Training/Equipping

Who needs to be trained or equipped, in what specific skills or biblical foundations, to catalyze the breakthrough needed for the next phase—and who has the capacity to provide that training?



Marketplace Involvement

How can the work lives and business connections of believers—both emerging and established—create natural spaces for witness and sustainable presence that advance progress toward the next phase?



Appendix



Phases of Engagement

Phase 0	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6	Phase 7
Waiting	Entry	Evangelism	Discipleship	Churches Started	Churches Reproducing	Churches Multiplying	Sustained Gospel Presence
There is no known reported engagement to establish self-sustaining churches, or, "0 R" - Previous efforts have not resulted in ongoing activity or have not been updated in three years. Sub-indicator "0 R" marks that a restart is needed.	Workers or near-culture believers gain access and begin laying relational foundations to share Christ and plant churches. The focus is on connecting, learning, and building bridges.	Regular, culturally relevant gospel engagement is taking place, with the intention of planting self-sustaining churches.	Individuals or small clusters respond in repentance and faith, demonstrating obedience through baptism. Foundations laid for self-sustaining churches that are consistent with evangelical faith and practice.	Believers from the people group gather regularly, functioning as a local body that is consistent with evangelical faith and practice. Leaders from the people group are emerging among these churches.	Churches from the people group are sending out evangelists or church planters to plant new churches among their own people. Second-generation groups and churches are forming.	Generational church streams spread across the people group, reaching 4th generation or beyond of both churches and leaders. Church network structures remain lightweight, empowering localized oversight.	The people group has either: (1) 10% or more following Christ and worshipping in churches, or (2) several multiplying church planting networks led by believers from the group, who are sending workers to other peoples while continuing to mature at home.
Description		Typical Activities		Typical Activities		Typical Activities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global and regional prayer initiatives Desk & field research, ethnographic surveys Vision casting to potential partners Diaspora and "access point" identification 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prayer-walking & community mapping Language and culture acquisition Compassion or felt-needs projects Relationship building with local leaders Scripture translation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal witness & testimony sharing Small-group gatherings Discovery Bible Studies (DBS) Broadcast or social-media gospel content Literature / Scripture portion distribution Follow-up visits and Q&A meetings 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baptisms Scripture engagement Identify immediate discipleship needs Establishing rhythms of Scripture reading, prayer, and mutual accountability New believers sharing their testimony 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scripture portion distribution Follow-up visits and Q&A meetings 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching emerging leaders Delegating functions and roles to others Mapping and targeting gap communities Contextualized songs, stories, teaching Outreach or service to neighbors 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustaining leadership pipelines Regional elder gatherings Ongoing evaluation of doctrine and practice Church network maturity tracking Sending church maturity metrics 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued expansion into near culture groups and beyond Theological education rooted in practice Seasons of renewal and revival Establishing more structure for stability 	

Accelerator Planning Worksheet

People group: _____ Current Phase: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Step A — Select Accelerator Ministry Domains (choose up to 3)

Check the domains most likely to move this group toward the next phase; see the diagnostic prompts for each domain.

- Prayer Scripture/Resource Access Vision Casting Multi-node Engagement
- Mobilization/Sending Collaborative Engagement Meeting Needs/Compassion Critical Contextualization
- Research/Cultural Insights Multiplying Efforts
- Training/Equipping Marketplace Involvement

Step B — From Domain → Local Application

For each checked domain, summarize an insight from the field for why this is a gap or opportunity.

- _____
- _____
- _____

(Tip: Use the phase-specific diagnostic questions to surface gaps/opportunities.)

Step C — Action Ideas (brainstorm, then pick 1-3)

List concrete ideas for the domains above. Circle your top 1-3 to develop into plans.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Step D — SMART Plans (create 1-3 mini-plans)

Action Item	Objective	Controllable Measure	Owner	Due Date



Phase 0 Accelerators



Prayer

- Is there prayer for workers and intercessor teams to be mobilized?
- Are there simple prayer profiles available?
- Is there a prayer network for this people group?



Scripture/Resource Access

- What Scripture resources exist (audio, portions, NT, full Bible)?
- Is scripture available in a trade language that is accessible to most people in the group?

Vision Casting

- Is a simple people group profile available?
- Have the people group been adopted for prayer?
- Are you regularly sharing about the need among the people group?



Multi-node Engagement

- Have the key nodes been identified, including diaspora hubs in neighboring countries / global cities?
- Have you researched entry opportunities and barriers?

Mobilization/Sending

- Have you identified other networks working in proximity to the people group?
- Have short-term exploration teams been sent?
- Are easier access nodes being considered for mobilization?
- Are there low-barrier first steps—prayer groups, discovery nights, exposure trips, digital engagement?



Collaborative Engagement

- Are there like-minded ministries in proximity who can be partners for engagement?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

- Do we understand priority felt needs?



Critical Contextualization

- Do you have a basic understanding of the people groups worldview and religious practice?

Research/ Cultural Insights

- Have you completed online or historical research?
- Have you listed or mapped all strategic access points?



Multiplying Efforts

How are the following multiplying?

- knowledge of the people group
- resources for mobilization

Training/Equipping

- Do you have a basic understanding of how to share the gospel, make disciples, plant churches, and develop leaders in your own context?
- Have you been equipped to a healthy view of risk, resiliency, and safeguarding?



Marketplace Involvement

- Is there a viable legal, ethical, sustainable vocational pathway for presence?
- What visa, registration, or business structures are credible locally?

Phase 1 Accelerators



Entry

Prayer

- Are you praying by name for persons of peace and households?
- Has the initial area been spiritually mapped and spiritual strongholds identified?
- Are there more in-depth prayer opportunities through short-term teams or online resources?

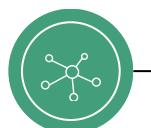


Scripture/Resource Access

- How is truth most frequently communicated in this context? i.e., print, oral, radio, by mouth, or digital/web
- What are the key resources needed for development at this phase?
- Has feedback been given on existing translations?

Vision Casting

- Are others vision-casting for these people group?
- Are the needs of the community being shared?

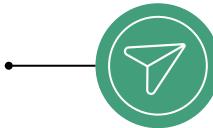


Multi-node Engagement

- Can you continue in this node long-term?
- Are 'nodes' prioritized by gospel access potential?
- What is the next node of engagement?
- Will sharing freely in this context affect my ability to stay here?

Mobilization/Sending

- Do you have enough workers for the current project?
- Are you mobilizing people to work through media?
- Are diaspora believers from this PG engaged as bridge people?



Collaborative Engagement

- Are there any near-culture Christians that can be mobilized?
- Does the people group have an aspired identity that relates to a geographically close Christian group?
- Can you help direct any local ministries to serve this people group?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

- Are compassion activities requested by locals and legally permitted?



Critical Contextualization

- Are outside workers aware that their actions could be perceived as offensive?
- Is there a growing understanding of how to interact with the different power structures in the community?
- Are entry strategies leveraging the resources already in the community?

Research/ Cultural Insights

- Have you confirmed the key access points for Christians?
- Have you completed in-depth ethnographic research?
- What are the key religious or cultural centers of the people?



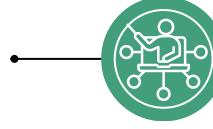
Multiplying Efforts

How are the following multiplying?

- Prayer
- Access Nodes
- felt-needs projects

Training/Equipping

- Do you know how to learn basic worldview?
- Do you know how to learn language?
- Is there understanding of helping without hurting?



Marketplace Involvement

- Are we prototyping 1-2 credible roles (teacher, health worker, trader, tech) to sustain presence?

Phase 2 Accelerators



Prayer

- Are you offering prayer to people you meet?
- Are prayer networks praying specifically for and during times of evangelism?
- Are you praying for those who have shown interest by name?
- Is intercession focused on specific households/segments and followed by intentional visits or calls?



Scripture/Resource Access

- Are Scripture and gospel resources available through multiple modes?
- Are the religious terms a barrier to understanding?
- Are you hearing of felt needs that scripture stories can address?

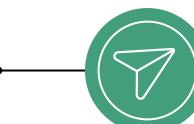
Vision Casting

- Are near culture or proximate believers aware of need for gospel witness?
- Are stories of interest/response being anonymized and circulated to sustain prayer?



Mobilization/Sending

- Are you recruiting to a variety of modes and nodes of evangelism?
- Do you have on-ramps for short-term evangelism trips?
- Are proximate believers active and mentored?



Meeting Needs/Compassion

- Do compassionate works open doors for group conversations rather than only individual?



Research/ Cultural Insights

- Have you identified cultural bridges for the gospel or redemptive analogies?
- Are you tracking gospel conversations and their responses?
- Are you learning of additional needs of the community?



Training/Equipping

- Is there understanding in how to bridge spiritual conversations?
- Is the team equipped to use cultural bridges and illustrations in sharing the gospel?
- Is there knowledge in overcoming objections to the gospel?
- Does the team naturally include Bible stories in conversations?



Marketplace Involvement

- Are there workplaces where natural relationship building takes places that leads to spiritual conversations?

Phase 3 Accelerators



Prayer

- Are new believers praying for their friends and family?
- Are they praying for new believers?
- Are they praying for leaders to emerge?
- Are they praying for families to journey in discipleship together?



Scripture/Resource Access

- What are new believers saying about the current scripture and resources?
- Do new believers see a need for more localized resources to be created?
- Are there dialects among the primary language that need specific resources?

Vision Casting

- Do new believers see the importance of sharing with their friends and family?
- Do new believers see the principle of spiritual reproduction?
- Do new believers sense discipleship is surrender to the Lordship of Jesus?



Multi-node Engagement

- Are new disciples providing insight into unseen influential nodes?
- Do new disciples see themselves as access nodes to their friends and family?

Mobilization/Sending

- Do you have sufficient workers to disciple new believers?
- Are you mobilizing new believers to share with their family and friends?
- Are proximate believers discipling alongside cross-cultural workers to transfer ownership early?



Collaborative Engagement

- Are you sharing testimony of God's work with others for mutual encouragement?
- Are you sharing best practices you are learning with other workers?
- Is there a need to collaborate with people who aren't frequently viewed as key to reaching a group?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

- Does meeting needs relate to discipleship rhythms?



Critical Contextualization

- Do initial discipleship lessons align with the culture's overarching worldview (honor/shame, power/fear, guilt/innocence)?
- Is baptism communicated and performed in a manner that is sensitive to cultural realities?
- Does the means of discipleship lean toward people needing to leave their community?

Research/ Cultural Insights

- Have common worldview obstacles that new believers face been identified?
- Is there a scripture set for new believers that addresses cultural issues?
- Has the best method been identified by local believers for scripture engagement?



Multiplying Efforts

How are the following multiplying?

- Disciples sharing their story and God's Story
- Confidence to facilitate discipleship gatherings
- Baptisms

Training/Equipping

- Are new disciples sharing their story with their friends and family?
- Can new disciples lead others in discipleship?
- Is baptism freely given and taken by those who follow Jesus?
- Is persecution or spiritual warfare happening?



Marketplace Involvement

- What is the new disciple's sphere of influence in the workplace?

Phase 4 Accelerators



Prayer

- Are local churches meeting for corporate prayer and fasting?
- Is there prayer for the community to recognize and affirm emerging leaders?
- Is there prayer for the community to remain bold and faithful in persecution/suffering/ challenges?
- Is there prayer for God to send out new church planters?



Scripture/Resource Access

- Does the church feel more comfortable using their local language or a trade language in their gatherings?
- Do further leadership development materials need to be translated into the local language?
- What language-specific resource is needed for further scriptural faithfulness?

Vision Casting

- Do your gathering rhythms emphasize obedience to scripture?
- Does the church have a vision to send?
- Does the church have a health diagnostic tool?



Mobilization/Sending

- Are you identifying communities that need new churches?
- Do you communicate that the church has a call to go and make disciples?



Multi-node Engagement

- Are local churches seeing other nodes and taking responsibility to engage them?
- Are churches forming primarily in one type of node at the neglect of others? i.e. rural/urban, young/old, and professionals/laborers

Collaborative Engagement

- Are churches beginning to network and partner to identify and expand into new locations or types of ministry engagement?
- If multiple churches exist among the people, to what extent are they actively seeking to collaborate?
- How is leadership balanced between the emerging leaders and outside leaders?

Critical Contextualization

- Are churches using local forms for worship and gathering?
- Have redeemed cultural practices been used in church gatherings?
- Do outsiders see the church gathering as foreign?
- Do church gatherings times or locations bring shame to their community or family?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

- Who is leading in ministry through meeting needs?



Research/ Cultural Insights

- Have churches identified other places where business, compassion ministries, or church planting is needed?
- How does the mode and method of gathering relate to those not yet in the kingdom?
- Are churches tracking qualitative and quantitative health metrics?



Multiplying Efforts

How are the following multiplying?

- Church leaders
- Church planters
- church-based ministries
- release of authority

Training/Equipping

- Are leaders emerging?
- Is the church growing in faithfulness to the New Testament in practice?
- Is the church reaching its friends and family?
- Is the priesthood of the believer being applied to all levels in the church?



Marketplace Involvement

- How is the church equipping those in the workforce to grow in their trade and be faithful witnesses?

Phase 5 Accelerators



Reproducing Churches

Prayer

- Is prayer happening for ongoing humility among leaders?
- How are the churches communicating prayer needs to the global body of Christ?
- Are churches praying for 4th generation church starts?



Scripture/Resource Access

- Are scriptures available in print or on audio devices locally?
- Does each church have a physical copy of the scripture?
- Is all the training needed for church planters available in the heart language?

Vision Casting

- Is there regular vision casting for planting more churches through developing and releasing more leaders?
- Have leaders been exposed to more fruitful fields to grow their vision?
- Do the majority of people see the call and promise of God to reach all peoples?



Mobilization/Sending

- Is there a pathway for equipping and mobilization?
- How are church planters being supported?
- Are there people in the church who see it their role to help send?
- Are sending structures and pathways needed at this point?



Multi-node Engagement

- Are some nodes currently more receptive to the gospel?
- Is there cultural baggage in some nodes that is becoming a barrier to releasing authority to emerging leaders?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

- Are the current felt needs ministries dependent on external funding?
- What is the sustainability plan?



Collaborative Engagement

- Are there clear channels of communication between churches for encouragement, accountability, and equipping?
- Are churches collaborating to accomplish more together than they could separately?

Research/ Cultural Insights

- Have common barriers to multiplication been identified?
- Are there other people groups that have similar culture that have reached phase 6 to learn from?
- Has the church qualitative tracking indicated a deficiency in meeting major health metrics?



Multiplying Efforts

How are the following multiplying?

- Leaders of leaders
- trainers
- a burden for unreached peoples/places

Training/Equipping

- How are emerging leaders chosen and equipped?
- How is training multiplying so that the whole community is being lifted together?
- Are trainers in the ministry of church planting?
- Does the training emphasize information or action?



Marketplace Involvement

- How are you equipping churches to see the sphere of influence of new families coming into as new market segments for additional church planting?

Phase 6 Accelerators



Multiplying Churches

Prayer

- Are churches praying for cross-cultural church planting teams to be sent out?
- Is there a prayer for the growth of biblical faithfulness?
- Is there prayer for the sustainability of the church multiplication?



Scripture/Resource Access

- Is the New Testament complete and accepted by local speakers?
- Does the network of churches need to work collaboratively to start a church-based translation project?
- Is there a need for an additional translation for a different dialect or religious background that are being reached?

Vision Casting

- Is God continuing to grow the network's vision?
- What are local leaders saying is next?
- Is vision casting coming primarily from the inside or still the outside?



Mobilization/Sending

- Are geographic and societal gaps identified for sending new workers?
- Are more experienced church planters contributing a small portion of their time to model for new workers?
- Is sending including pathways for a variety of giftings and callings to participate in God's mission?



Multi-node Engagement

- Are there strategic nodes that have not yet seen a breakthrough?
- How are different nodes connecting for collaboration and encouragement?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

- How are churches launching felt-need initiatives that reproduce without external subsidy?



Collaborative Engagement

- Are churches pooling financial resources to be able to respond to needs rapidly?
- Do church leaders gather for a regular rhythm of problem-solving and vision casting toward ongoing gaps?
- Are evangelists/church planters seeking to collaborate with others in addressing existing geographic or segment gaps?
- How are you communicating with the global mission information networks of progress?

Research/ Cultural Insights

- Have case studies of fruitful streams been documented?
- Has outside attention come because of the fruit that could affect the work long-term?
- Are there people offering money with underlying agendas?
- How are the churches growing in maturity?



- Have churches produced their own worship songs?
- Is there diversity in the ways that churches are gathering that reflects the segments of the people group who have been reached?
- Is leadership development happening in the context of culturally appropriate communities of practice?

Training/Equipping

- Has the network captured best practices and compiled a training pathway or package?
- When is a shepherding training pathway needed?
- How frequently do leaders of multiple generations of churches need to have peer learning and problem-solving?



Multiplying Efforts

How are the following multiplying?

- church networks
- cross-cultural sending
- problem-solving
- pastoral development
- new church streams



Marketplace Involvement

- How are the churches spanning and impacting new socioeconomic and societal segments that need the gospel and new churches?

Phase 7 Accelerators

>>>>>> Sustained Gospel Presence

Prayer

- Is the church actively praying for unreached areas and urgent justice issues as part of its regular prayer life?
- Has prayer become a mere formality instead of heartfelt intercession?



Scripture/Resource Access

- Is Scripture access expanding in print, audio, and digital channels, or plateauing?
- Is there local stewardship for updates, distribution, and new formats?

Vision Casting

- Is the shared vision still stretching us beyond maintenance toward new peoples and places?
- Are stories and visuals celebrating fresh breakthroughs rather than only institutional activity?



Multi-node Engagement

- Are rural, urban, diaspora, and media nodes all active, or are some drifting?
- Do we track node health indicators such as new groups, baptisms, leaders, and generations?

Mobilization/Sending

- Is our pipeline producing new near-culture and cross-culture workers, or has it stalled?
- Do sent workers receive consistent coaching, care, and re-entry debriefs that prevent burnout?



Collaborative Engagement

- Do regional fraternals still pray, share, and learn together, or have meetings become perfunctory?
- Are there living agreements for data sharing, benevolence, persecution response, and crisis care?

Meeting Needs/Compassion

- Have compassion initiatives become routine or dependency-creating rather than catalytic?
- Are initiatives opening doors into new nodes and households, or keeping us in safe spaces?



Critical Contextualization

- Are practices reviewed for biblical fidelity and cultural resonance, or have forms hardened?
- Do diverse voices, including women and younger leaders, help surface drift or blind spots?

Research/ Cultural Insights

- Are we still listening for shifts in worldview, migration, youth culture, and pressure points?
- Do new insights translate into strategy adjustments, or are we coasting on old assumptions?



Multiplying Efforts

How are the following multiplying?

- Sending structures
- Engagement of spiritual gifts
- renewal movements

Training/Equipping

- Are leaders multiplying, or has leadership concentration created bottlenecks?
- Do leaders receive ongoing formation in reconciliation, peacemaking, and healthy correction?
- Is theological education and training harming or expediting progress?



Marketplace Involvement

- Are marketplace platforms still opening credible witness and new geography, or mainly sustaining jobs?
- How is the church championing Christian ethics in business to reshape trade, city, or regional business practices?

Glossary of Terms

Core Framework Terms

- **Unengaged People Group:** An unengaged people group has no church planting strategy consistent with evangelical faith and practice underway. Engagement is occurring when:
 - there is sustained activity to share Christ and make disciples,
 - efforts to establish self-sustaining churches,
 - and work that occurs in culturally appropriate and locally relevant ways.
- **Unreached People Group (UPG):** A people group with less than 2% Evangelical and less than 5% Professing Christian. An identifiable group of people distinguished by a distinct culture, language, or social class who lack a community of Christians able to evangelize the rest of the people group without outside help.
- **People Group:** The largest group within which the Gospel can spread as a church planting movement. People groups are defined by language, religion, culture and caste primarily based on on-site definitions.
- **Phases of Engagement:** An eight-step continuum (Phase 0-7) that tracks where a people group stands in terms of gospel progress, from Waiting to Sustained Gospel Presence. Each phase describes a milestone that is not always reflected well by Christian or Evangelical percentage alone.
- **Engagement Strength:** A five-level scale (Unknown, Initial, Growing, Active, Flourishing) that captures how robust or deep engagement actually is, based on both quantitative events and qualitative reports from field contacts.
- **Engagement Accelerators:** Strategic domains (such as prayer, Scripture access, training, collaboration) that can be leveraged to help move a people group toward stronger and more sustainable gospel presence. They are diagnostic and catalytic tools rather than prescriptive checklists.
- **Self-sustaining churches:** Local churches that can continue to function, grow, and multiply without ongoing external leadership or resources. These churches have indigenous leadership, local decision-making, and the capacity to reach their own people.
- **Evangelical faith and practice:** Churches and movements that emphasize the authority of Scripture, the necessity of personal conversion through faith in Christ, the centrality of Christ's atoning death and resurrection, and active evangelism and discipleship.

Glossary of Terms

Phase-Related Terms

- **Phase 0-R** (Restart indicator): A designation indicating that previous efforts among a people group have not resulted in ongoing activity, have ceased, or data has not been updated in three years, signaling the need to reassess and potentially reinitiate engagement.
- **Gospel presence**: The active witness of Christ through believers, gospel proclamation, discipleship, and church life within a people group.
- **Sustained Gospel Presence (Phase 7)**: A people group that has either: (1) 10% or more following Christ and worshipping in churches, or (2) several multiplying church planting networks led by believers from the group who are sending workers to other peoples while continuing to mature at home.
- **Generational church streams**: Successive generations of churches that plant other churches. Second-generation refers to churches planted by first-generation churches; fourth-generation refers to churches that are four "generations" removed from the original planted church.
- **Church planting network**: A connected group of churches that share vision, practices, and relationships, working together to plant additional churches while maintaining lightweight, locally-led structures.

Engagement Descriptors

- **Culturally appropriate**: Ministry approaches that respect and work within the cultural forms, communication patterns, and social structures of the people group rather than imposing foreign or Western patterns.
- **Heart language**: The language a person learns first and feels most comfortable using, especially for matters of emotion, family, and faith. The language in which a person most naturally thinks and processes spiritual truth.
- **Trade language**: A common language used for commerce and communication between different language groups in a region. While not the heart language, it may be widely understood by many in a people group.
- **Near-culture believers/workers**: Christians from a geographically or culturally proximate people group who share similar language, customs, worldview, or religious background with the focus people group, making them naturally positioned to build bridges more easily than distant cross-cultural workers.
- **Cross-cultural workers**: Missionaries or workers from significantly different cultural, linguistic, or geographic backgrounds who cross major cultural boundaries to share the gospel and plant churches.
- **Proximate cultures/believers**: People groups that are culturally, linguistically, or geographically close to the target unreached group, often sharing historical connections, similar worldviews, or overlapping social networks.

Glossary of Terms

Strategic Concepts

- **Node:** A distinct geographic location, demographic segment, or communication channel (physical, digital, or relational) where gospel engagement can occur. Examples include rural villages, urban centers, diaspora communities, university campuses, or online platforms.
- **Multi-node engagement:** Coordinated gospel presence across multiple channels and geographies simultaneously—such as rural/urban hubs, strategic cities, diaspora communities, media, and online platforms—to reach more of a people group and prevent dependency on a single access point.
- **Diaspora:** Members of a people group who have migrated away from their homeland and live in other countries or regions, often in concentrated communities. Diaspora believers can serve as bridge people to their home culture.
- **Persons of peace:** Individuals or households within a people group who show unusual openness to the gospel, extend hospitality to gospel workers, and have natural influence within their social networks. They become key relational bridges for the spread of the gospel.
- **Entry strategy/access points:** Credible, sustainable ways for workers to gain and maintain presence among a people group—such as education, business, healthcare, development work, or friendship networks—particularly in contexts where direct religious work is restricted.
- **Spiritual mapping/strongholds:** The practice of identifying spiritual forces, cultural bondages, religious systems, and worldview barriers that resist the gospel in a particular people group or geographic area, in order to pray and work strategically.
- **Reproductive/reproducible:** Ministry methods, discipleship patterns, and church practices simple enough and culturally natural enough that new believers can immediately pass them on to others without extensive training or outside resources.

Glossary of Terms

Church Development Terms

- **Church multiplication** (vs. reproduction): Reproduction refers to churches planting other churches (1st to 2nd generation). Multiplication occurs when multiple generational streams spread across a people group, with churches and leaders reaching 4th generation and beyond, indicating self-sustaining momentum.
- **Multiplying church planting networks**: Connected groups of churches that have moved beyond second generation reproduction to fourth generation and beyond, with established patterns of planting churches that plant churches across multiple streams.
- **Lightweight structures**: Simple, organic relational networks among churches that facilitate communication, mutual care, and collaborative work without creating heavy bureaucracy, formal hierarchy, or centralized control that could stifle local initiative.
- **Localized oversight**: Church leadership and decision-making authority resting with believers from the people group themselves rather than with outside workers or distant denominational structures.
- **Priesthood of the believer**: The biblical principle that every believer has direct access to God through Christ and shares responsibility for ministry, worship, prayer, and witness—not just designated clergy or outside workers.
- **Emerging leaders**: Believers from the people group who are beginning to take initiative in evangelism, discipleship, teaching, and shepherding, moving toward recognized leadership roles in their local churches.
- **Leaders of leaders**: Mature believers who not only lead churches or ministries themselves but are actively identifying, mentoring, and releasing other leaders who will in turn develop additional leaders—creating leadership multiplication.

Glossary of Terms

Contextualization Terms

- **Critical contextualization:** A community-discerned process of applying Scripture that is both biblically faithful and culturally meaningful. It involves regularly reviewing forms and practices with diverse voices to guard against both foreign imposition and syncretism, allowing the local body to evaluate cultural practices in light of Scripture.
- **Redemptive analogies:** Cultural practices, stories, or concepts within a people group's existing worldview that can serve as bridges to communicate gospel truth, showing how Christ fulfills or completes what their culture has been reaching toward.
- **Cultural bridges:** Points of connection between the gospel message and a people's existing culture, worldview, values, or religious understanding that can help the gospel make sense in local categories.
- **Redeemed cultural practices:** Existing cultural forms, rituals, celebrations, or customs that, once examined biblically and cleansed of unbiblical elements, can be filled with Christian meaning and used appropriately in worship and church life.
- **Worldview:** The fundamental assumptions, values, and beliefs through which a people group interprets reality. Common frameworks include honor/shame cultures (focus on reputation and group harmony), power/fear cultures (focus on spiritual forces and authority), and guilt/innocence cultures (focus on laws and individual conscience).
- **Syncretism:** The blending of biblical Christianity with incompatible beliefs or practices from other religions or worldviews in ways that compromise essential gospel truth, resulting in a distorted expression of faith.

Glossary of Terms

Missional Practice Terms

- **Disciple-making/Church-planting movements:** Rapidly multiplying disciples and churches characterized by simple, reproducible methods, obedience-based discipleship, and ordinary believers immediately sharing their faith and making disciples within their natural social networks.
- **Discovery groups:** Small groups that study the Bible together inductively, discovering truth for themselves through Scripture rather than relying primarily on outside teaching. Participants commit to obeying what they discover and sharing with others.
- **Obedience-based discipleship:** A discipleship approach that emphasizes immediate application and obedience to Scripture as the path to spiritual growth, rather than focusing primarily on accumulating knowledge before action.
- **Member care:** The ongoing support, encouragement, spiritual nurture, conflict resolution, crisis intervention, and practical help provided to missionaries and church planters to sustain their health and effectiveness over time.
- **Mobilization pipeline:** The intentional pathway for identifying, recruiting, preparing, deploying, and caring for workers—both local and cross-cultural—ensuring a sustainable flow of laborers for gospel work.
- **Felt needs:** The practical, tangible needs that a community recognizes and experiences—such as clean water, healthcare, education, or economic opportunity—which can open relational doors for the gospel when addressed with dignity and wisdom.
- **Do no harm (principle):** An ethical commitment in compassion ministry to ensure that meeting needs actually helps communities rather than creating dependency, undermining local initiative, distorting local economies, or causing unintended negative consequences.
- **Communities of practice:** Groups of practitioners who share a common concern or passion and learn together through regular interaction, shared problem-solving, and collaborative work—applied here to leadership development happening in culturally appropriate, real-ministry contexts.

Glossary of Terms

Data/Assessment Terms

- **Christian-Adherent percentage:** The percentage of a people group's population that identifies with Christianity in any form, including cultural Christianity, nominal believers, and those who call themselves Christian regardless of their actual beliefs or practices.
- **Evangelical percentage:** The percentage of a people group's population who are evangelical Christians—generally defined as those who emphasize biblical authority, personal conversion, Christ's atonement, and active witness.
- **Gospel saturation:** The degree to which the gospel has spread throughout a people group, considering both the percentage of believers and the extent to which churches exist across all geographic and demographic segments.
- **Qualitative/quantitative metrics:** Quantitative metrics are numerical measurements (number of baptisms, churches, workers, resources). Qualitative metrics capture narrative descriptions, field assessments, and relational dynamics that numbers alone cannot measure.
- **Field survey:** A questionnaire completed by field workers to assess engagement strength through narrative descriptions and observations, designed for teams in limited-access areas or those who prefer not to record data digitally.
- **Activity tracking apps:** Digital tools that allow real-time updates and long-term visibility of ministry activities, events, and progress, providing quantitative data to assess engagement strength.
- **Beta testing:** The process of field-testing these engagement scales with actual people groups to refine the tool, validate its usefulness, and gather feedback before wider release.

Organizational Terms

- **Mission Information Community:** Networks of researchers, mission agencies, and field practitioners who gather, share, and analyze data about people groups and gospel progress to inform strategy and mobilization.
- **People group or people affinity coalition:** A coordinated network of ministries, churches, and workers focused on reaching a specific people group, facilitating collaboration, shared learning, and strategic alignment.