

NLM MISSION STRATEGY UNTIL 2020

“Where Christ Was Not Known”

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This strategy document was presented by the Executive Board as a proposal to the Norwegian Lutheran Mission’s General Assembly 2009. The General Assembly approved the strategy as providing directions for NLM’s international mission for the period 2010-2020. For the period of three years until next General Assembly, the budgetary framework for the international mission work will be held comparable to the budget for the year 2009.

This strategy document will be the foundation for NLM's international mission work until 2020. In addition, it will be necessary to develop specific action plans concerning the use of resources and personnel.

The challenges for world mission are still great. NLM cannot do everything. We have to find our role and take into consideration the work that is being done by other evangelical missions. We do not intend to prioritize areas where other organizations and churches already do good work. Nor is it our assignment to take responsibility for challenges that national churches can meet on their own. At the same time, we intend to cooperate in mission with national churches where this is natural.

Most fundamentally, mission is the work God does through human beings that he calls. That is why it is imperative that we seek God's plans and are led by him. Nevertheless, it is necessary to have a well thought-through strategy and to have specific plans for our work.

We are painfully aware that the challenges in mission are many. The world has certainly not been reached yet. We are perhaps living in the greatest mission era in history. We want to participate! But the work must be planned within the parameters of the resources with which the Lord entrusts us. We are not able to do everything. Therefore, we have to prioritize. This document shows the direction the Executive Board has concluded upon in faith.

A draft of this document was presented and discussed by the Council in the fall of 2008. The contents are in accordance with previously approved documents: “A Declaration Regarding Principles for Mission” from 1991, “Visions and Realities in Mission – A Plan for 1997-2003,” and a Vision Document for 2003-2009, titled “Lord, Show Us Your Way.” In addition, the General Assembly in Ålesund in 2000 approved “No Shortcut for the Gospel.” The General Assembly in Trondheim in 2006 made the decision to focus our work more intensively on the world's least reached people groups.

2.0 AIMS AND BASIS FOR MISSION

2.1 The Goal of Mission: The World for Christ

The goal of mission is drawn from Jesus' Great Commission. God's people are commanded to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:18ff). The purpose of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission is to “further the kingdom of God” (Constitution § 1), so that new people groups can hear the gospel. We wish to contribute to the growth of healthy churches of believers who through their witness and their lives serve their neighbors. NLM's mandate is to send missionaries that are called by God to serve him.

As a mission movement, our primary task is to win souls. The word of God makes it clear that there are only two options after death: eternal life or eternal damnation. Scripture shows us that there is only one way to salvation (John 14:6), only one name under heaven by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). That way and that name is Jesus Christ.

NLM intends to contribute to the building of Christian churches that have a solid foundation in the word of God and at the same time are open to making use of positive elements from the local culture. All believers belong to the people of God. Their local congregations constitute the community of the saints, and are characterized by right preaching and right administration of the sacraments.

NLM intends to prioritize the least reached people groups. By “least reached” we mean either people groups where there is still no Christian congregation or where the Christians need help from the outside to bring the gospel to others. It is still necessary to have missionaries in established partner churches, especially related to teaching, administration, and development aid. But the gospel must constantly move on.

Jesus' followers are also called to do “the work of Christ's hands” by caring for the sick, the poor, and the oppressed. Acts of mercy are an integrated part of the mission mandate.

NLM intends to run and support development projects that may give people better lives and opportunities to create a better future. We wish to contribute to a world of peace, justice, and hope.

2.2 The Basis for Mission

The basis for all mission is found in God's saving work in Christ Jesus. Through Christ's vicarious death on the cross, he has granted access to God for sinners that acknowledge their sin and repent. Through faith in Christ, the believer takes part in Christ's resurrection to a new life.

God's saving work is revealed to us through Christ and in Holy Scripture (John 3:16). “We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone” (the Formula of Concord). In the form given to us through God's chosen messengers of revelation – the prophets and the apostles – Scripture, in all its parts, is inspired by God. The basis for the work of NLM is the Holy Scripture and the creeds

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. NLM requires that its missionaries teach and administer the sacraments in accordance with the Scripture and the creeds (Constitution § 2).

We understand the word of God as law and gospel. Through the law, God's holy will and judgment of sin are revealed, so that every possibility of earning righteousness by our own effort is taken away from us. Through the gospel, God reveals his grace and shows us that he, through the death and resurrection of Christ, has done everything that is needed for our salvation. The central message is "the message of the cross." Faith comes through the "foolishness of what is preached" (1 Cor 1:18-23). A person is justified by faith alone, without works. Such a message entails a rejection of other religions, new age ideas, and secular ideologies.

God communicates his grace through the means of grace: the word of God, baptism, and the Holy Communion. We affirm that God in a fundamental way has tied the application of salvation to these means.

The era of mission will come to an end. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt 24:14). God will bring his kingdom to completion. It will be an eternally victorious kingdom, without sin and need. The multitude of the saved will be gathered in praise of the Lamb. The goal of mission is then reached.

3.0 IMPORTANT PRIORITIES IN MISSION

3.1 Priorities

The task of mission can be specified in many ways. Here we will direct attention to some concerns that we will prioritize in our mission.

3.2 The Least Reached

We wish to reach out with the gospel to the least reached nations and people groups

The purpose of NLM is to further the kingdom of God. Mission entails crossing boundaries. Our focus on the least reached is in accordance with the mission strategy to which Paul adhered: "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation" (Rom 15:20).

Paul's concern was always to reach even further. Even if there was plenty for him to do both in Antioch and in Jerusalem, he was told to hurry to go further: "Quick! Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me... Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles" (Acts 22:18, 21). It is important to do solid work in areas where evangelical work has been established. Teaching and development of leaders must be prioritized where new churches are growing. At the same time, we are challenged to move on to new areas.

The number of missionaries among those who have already heard about Jesus is still greatly disproportionate to the number among those who have never heard the gospel. According to statistics from the Joshua Project, an international organization that provides information

regarding the still outstanding mission task, 80-90 % of the missionaries in the world work among people groups that are considered to have been reached with the gospel. Only 2.5-4 % of missionaries work among the least reached one-fourth of the world's population. The majority of these people groups are Muslim.

Some of the least reached people groups are found in geographical proximity to our work and our partner churches. Other people groups are more remote, and it would require more resources if we were to reach them. The least reached people groups present us with demanding challenges and priorities.

It is also important to specify the target group in those areas where we work and focus our work on this specific group. This decision will give directions for language learning, literature work, radio work, and possible contributions to Bible translations. Most mission work in the world is done in international languages such as English, Swahili, and Spanish. Less resourceful groups do not master the common languages. When we focus on new people groups, the missionaries have to learn to use the local language.

3.3 Jesus' Followers

We intend to send people that serve God in word and deed

Jesus said to his disciples: "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). Mission and sending is a biblical concern. There was enough to do in the church in Antioch. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit worked so that Paul and Barnabas were chosen and sent as missionaries to new areas (Acts 13:1-13; 15:25; 26:17). The Great Commission calls us to go out. In order for some to go out, some have to send (Rom 10).

NLM intends to send people with a call from God to preach the gospel among the nations. Mission is not primarily to send money and provide financial support to poor churches. Biblical mission entails sending missionaries that use the word of God as a means of grace in preaching and teaching.

Those who are called to make people into disciples of Jesus must themselves be disciples. To have the mind of Christ is especially important when meeting people in new cultures. Missionaries are Christ's letter. They themselves have to live by the gospel they preach. They are role models and should be characterized by love, patience, openness, and generosity. It is therefore important to pursue friendships and good relations with non-Christians.

Our missionaries are called to be followers of Jesus. At the same time, the Bible says that we are weak jars of clay that are still influenced by our old nature. We all depend on the forgiveness of sins every day. Integrity, honesty, respect, humility, forgiveness, and an open mind are important attitudes when we meet people of other cultures. The missionary can be a fellow pilgrim through life with others – often with people that are taking the first steps on the way of faith.

When encountering people of other cultures, one should demonstrate frugality and a simple lifestyle. Coming from the West, we may unconsciously contribute to advocating materialism and

a consumer culture. We have a responsibility as stewards, a responsibility that also requires that we consider the environment.

Crossing boundaries is not problem-free, even when the intention is to help. We will stress the need to send missionaries that allow themselves to be shaped in God's school. The boldness of the missionary is rooted in the gospel that liberates and transforms. We are involved in mission trusting that God will do the work.

3.4 Ministry of Word and Spirit

We will emphasize the work of the Spirit through the preaching of the Word

NLM intends to be an organization of preachers. Through the preaching of the word of God, the Spirit creates faith in Jesus Christ. Preaching may take place from a pulpit, but it can also happen through teaching and in conversation with groups and with individuals. In tent-making work, pioneer work, and in areas that have restrictions on open preaching, missionaries will spend much of their time making contact and building good relations. This can be the beginning of a process that leads to conversion and living faith.

The main point of our message must be clear. Jesus preached like this: "The time has come, the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15; cf. Matt 24:14). God's kingdom, or the kingdom of heaven, is near. The foundation for salvation has been laid through Jesus' vicarious death for our sins. The resurrection of Jesus shows that the work of salvation is complete. All can receive forgiveness of sins and become partakers in Jesus' victory over death and the devil. The door to God's kingdom is open to everyone who believes. Through the preaching of the Word, the kingdom of God is constantly spread to new people.

Through the Bible, idolatry, personal sin and social injustice are revealed. Sin separates all people from God. People need to repent because they live in sin and commit injustice. At the same time, many people are victims of injustice and need restoration and justice.

We have been entrusted with a message that liberates, transforms, and gives hope for life and eternity. The Holy Spirit works through the word of God to liberate people and give them new life. Salvation leads people to a new and close fellowship with God and with other people.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). As Martin Luther says in his explanation of the third article of the Apostolic Creed, no one can come to faith without the help of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit works by applying the Word. He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 14:8ff). He glorifies Christ as Savior. In mission we may also experience that the message is confirmed through signs and wonders.

3.5 Love for One's Neighbor

We intend to demonstrate love and care for all human beings

Every individual person is created by God and loved by God. This gives infinite value to human beings. Jesus cared for all people. He saw their plight and their needs. In our work, we wish to follow in Jesus' footsteps also in this way (Mark 12:31). As Christians, we have a special responsibility for the poor, the sick, and the infirm. Many people live in conditions that are unacceptable, especially women and children. We intend to plant and cooperate with churches that accept a responsibility to do acts of mercy with the purpose of helping human beings that suffer.

The Christian value of human beings compels us to advocate for fundamental human rights and purposeful development aid. The work to eradicate poverty and injustice can take place at many levels. But missionaries must always remember that they are guests in a different country. They cannot be engaged in political parties, but encourage projects that can bring stable income and improved health services and education opportunities.

Development aid and acts of mercy reach deep into the lives of people that live in difficult conditions. This work must therefore be held to a high standard. To meet the demands for competence, we will consult with the target group and concentrate our efforts around certain professions. On some occasions, our role may be to assist the target group in communicating their needs to public authorities or other organizations that have competence in the relevant professions.

3.6 Local Identity

We intend to endorse the forming of churches with local identities

All people groups have their traditions. Their cultures and religions make up their framework of interpretation in their encounters with Christian preaching. What should be preserved of old traditions? What should be abandoned? Our mandate is not to spread the customs of the West. Much is valuable in local cultures, but there may also be some things that are irreconcilable with Christian faith and ethics. In this respect, the missionary has an important task in preaching and teaching, as a fellow pilgrim in life, and as a counselor. Close relations and knowledge of the local language will provide the missionary with good opportunities for supporting their national coworkers. We will prioritize the sending of missionaries that intend to serve for longer periods of time.

The church of Jesus Christ is built on the word of God. The living church is the pillar and foundation of truth. In this context, the Word and the Spirit are at work. On this foundation, the missionaries will offer guidance with humility and boldness. It is especially important to find, strengthen, equip, and educate local Christian leaders that can take responsibility for the church from the beginning. We may be obstacles to local development and growth by taking too much responsibility upon ourselves or by staying for too long in the same place. It will also be necessary to decide for how long the mission should be a supporter. It is usually profitable if the formal cooperative effort has a formal end.

4.0 STAGES OF WORK

4.1 Different Stages

Mission work consists of different stages. The role of NLM and the missionaries will be different at different stages. Through all the stages, we have to be clear about our goal: healthy churches that advance the gospel.

4.2 Implementation

The main criterion for the implementation of new mission work is that it should be among the least reached. There are different ways to define the least reached parts of the world. Some will argue that 72 % of the world is evangelized, whereas the remaining part, which counts 1.8 billion people, still have not heard. Another model focuses on people groups without a church, and those who adhere to this model argue that 39.5 % of the world's population are members of a people group without a healthy church. A third approach is to divide the world into religious groups, 33.1 % Christians, 20.4 % Muslims, etc.

The most common approach, which we have chosen to follow, is to count ethnic groups. We will then say that the world's population consists of 15,900 different ethnic groups, of which 6,721 are considered the least reached. Among these groups, less than 2 % are Christians. Around 4,000 of these groups are Muslim. Regardless of the definition chosen, this gives us some ideas about where our mission effort is most needed.

New work can often be related to earlier work and partner churches. We can move on to new people groups together with partner churches, or find new prioritized areas on our own. The initiative may come from the General Assembly, the Executive Board, NLM International, the missionaries, or local partners. Our combined effort should be reasonably divided between open countries and countries with restrictions. New initiatives must always be considered against the background of the tasks and responsibilities we have in the areas where we are already established.

When starting new work, thorough preparations are necessary. Does NLM have the required personnel and finances to take on a new initiative? Research must be done in the relevant areas. How can NLM establish in the area? Who will be natural partners? What kinds of work will be relevant? Decisions made by the Executive Board must be based on formal reports. The same applies to possible decisions in the General Assembly.

4.3 Cooperation

As the work bears fruit, NLM's missionaries will work in cooperation with local Christians and eventually with the local church. From the outset, it is important to develop local leadership. Development work should also take place in cooperation with various partners on the national and/or local level.

Depending on the local situation, cooperation between the mission and the church will take place based on a parallel model or an integration model. The parallel model entails that NLM has independent work alongside a local church. The integration model presupposes that the work of the mission is integrated into the church. It will often be natural to combine these models. For

example, the mission may be responsible for some independent projects, whereas the rest of the mission's work is integrated.

4.4 Phasing out

The goal of the work is to further the establishment of independent and sustainable local churches. Development projects also need to have clear goals that can come to realization within a limited time frame. It should be possible to discontinue the support we offer in various ways without destroying the local initiative. At all stages, it is important to consider what the mission's task is and what the locals can do best on their own. Some of the important questions in this context include: what serves the local church and the local population best? What are our tasks seen in relation to our resources and the mission's intent to reach out with the gospel to the least reached people groups?

Ideas about phasing out are discussed among NLM, the field, and local partners from the beginning of the work. The activities of the mission and the church should be the object of regular and open evaluations. These evaluations should include: extent of the work, organization, leadership, and coworkers. It is important that theological and spiritual aspects are the object of evaluation as well. The phasing out of the work must take place in such a way that it does not create big difficulties for the local church. As far as possible, phasing out should take place in mutual understanding with the local partner.

As is the case for our development projects, so we also intend to have overarching plans and time frames for all of our work. Plans for downsizing and for the use of resources are laid in cooperation with the church or other partners. Such a plan must also include time frames for financial support. The phasing out must take place in such a way that security and predictability are assured for the missionaries. NLM also intends to maintain the relationship with the partner churches after phasing out. That can happen through the assignment of missionaries, short-termers, visits, or contact between leaders.

When is a church independent?

It is difficult to define clear criteria for when a church is independent. The three-self model emphasizes self-support, self-government, and self-propagation. This entails that the church should be financially independent, be able to govern itself through its own elected bodies, and be able to evangelize and recruit new members. When a church considers whether it is independent, a fourth criterion is also important. The church must be able to interpret and apply the Bible as it faces its own challenges. It is necessary to focus on all these criteria throughout the time when the mission works in an area. Weaknesses should be counteracted; perhaps priorities and methods must be changed. We must always be aware that the presence of missionaries and financial support from the mission may have a hampering effect on the development of an independent church. Conversely, if the mission's support is phased out in a good way, this may contribute to the strengthening of the church. Later on, this church can be a tool for the gospel to reach new nations.

4.5 Partners

Even after “phasing out,” we will normally maintain a close relationship with the partnering churches. In some places, one or more missionaries may be given particular assignments. In other areas, the contact may take a different shape.

Young churches need to cooperate with other churches and institutions, particularly those that are rooted in the Evangelical-Lutheran faith. Both the mission and the churches can benefit from and enjoy contacts and fellowship with leaders of Bible-believing, evangelical organizations that share the same goals and priorities as we do.

5.0 WORK FORMS

5.1 The Work Forms Will Differ

The work forms will differ depending on NLM's resources and the opportunities and limitations that exist where the missionaries work. Important work forms are discussed below.

5.2 Preaching

Faith comes from preaching (Rom 10:14). Where it is possible and when it can be done responsibly, public preaching of the word of God is a central part of our work. The Spirit of God works through the Word in order to create faith in Christ. The preaching should be biblical, central, and comprehensive. The will of God and the saving work of Christ must be central. At the same time, the preaching must help believers live a Christian life in their local context.

5.3 Prayer

It is important to have good strategies and plans, but in spiritual work we are totally dependent upon God. Prayer is therefore an important presupposition for the success of our ministry. Through prayer we put ourselves in a position where God can work through us in the way that he wants. When it comes to the recruiting of new missionaries, we can pray to the Lord of the harvest that he will send out workers into his harvest field.

5.4 Building relations

Building relations is important for all mission work. This is especially true in areas where there are restrictions on missionary activities. In order to be able to address people, personal contacts are the best door opener. We have to understand people's situations and their needs. When trust and friendship are established, there will be opportunities for conversations about the deepest questions in life. Use of media as well as acts of mercy can also contribute to creating contact and trust.

5.5 Evangelism

“The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church and responsible service in the world” (The Lausanne Covenant). To evangelize means to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. Evangelism takes place through human beings who have experienced the power of the gospel for salvation. Evangelism may take place through dialogue and conversation, formally and informally. The story is a good way to communicate the word of God in all cultures. This applies especially to areas of illiteracy. The biblical stories are easy to retell. In addition, the biblical

stories provide a framework for the message. Biblical story telling communicates the message within the framework of a new world-view where salvation history is central.

5.6 Education

NLM intends to prioritize Christian education. Such education should be based on the Bible and the Evangelical-Lutheran confession. This education should include all Christians, but it is especially important to give good Christian knowledge to leaders. The education must not create a barrier between clergy and laity. The Bible emphasizes a church ministry that is based on spiritual gifts and where the priesthood of all believers can flourish.

Biblical education and education of leaders are fundamental presuppositions for the formation of an independent church. Bible schools and seminaries play important roles, and can often be run as cooperative venues. This education should stir to mission and evangelism so that the gospel is spread further.

Education should also include knowledge that gives people better opportunities to master their life in their profession, home, and society. It is important that the education is closely tied to the reality that the Christians encounter in their local environment.

5.7 Church-building Activities

The goal of the work is to see healthy churches consisting of Christians who want to be followers of Christ and who want to spread the gospel further. The church is the community of saints, where the word of God is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered. Rituals for baptism, communion, weddings, and funerals must be developed in the local language at an early stage. Worship on Sunday is central; but other activities, such as Bible study groups, choirs, children's work, and Sunday school are important for the church to function well. It is important to fortify the churches against liberal theology, syncretism, and unhealthy charismaticism, so that they can be firmly rooted when encountering different ideologies and religions.

5.8 Media Work and Bible Translation

Media work is an important part of our mission strategy. Radio is a wide-reaching medium, both in "open" and "closed" countries. The Internet opens new opportunities. Good Christian literature should be translated, especially for education purposes. It is important that churches have hymnals in their own language. This work must take place in close contact with local Christians.

When we are reaching a new people group with the gospel, it is important that the Bible, or parts of the Bible, is available in their language. Where this is lacking, Bible translation work should be prioritized. We welcome possible cooperation with Wycliffe Bible Translators International.

5.9 Acts of mercy and development aid

Acts of mercy are love for one's neighbor put into practice. We must emphasize the individual Christian's responsibility to care for their neighbors on an everyday basis. But the church also has a responsibility to perform acts of mercy, relative to the human and financial resources that are available. Both health services and education projects are important. Mothers and children are prioritized groups.

The goal of development work is that people may be enabled to improve life conditions for themselves and their community. Such work is primarily directed towards poor and marginalized groups. Aid is directed to all human beings, regardless of religious and ethnic identity. In the locally based development work, people should be encouraged to make use of their opportunities and resources so that they can have an income and access to the basic necessities in life. It is profitable if the development work takes place in close cooperation with the authorities.

Our various involvements in development work are referred to as “projects”, in order to underscore that our effort as an organization is temporary. Our task is to contribute to starting or strengthening a development process that continues under local or national control. It is important to heighten the awareness that we must be stewards of this earth so that we avoid shortages of resources, pollution, and/or climate changes that in the long run will destroy the conditions for life on earth.

It is often easier to receive funds for development projects than for purely evangelistic work. Nevertheless, we must strive to maintain a healthy balance between evangelism and development work.

5.10 Christian Professionals

Many of the least reached ethnic groups and people groups live in areas where it is impossible to work with missionary visas. These areas are often developing and in search of labor. Most of these countries will be open to giving work and work visas to Christian professionals. These professionals are not able to evangelize openly, but they are permitted to be Christians who live out their faith, build relationships, and live among the people. NLM intends to support Christian professionals who wish to work among the least reached people groups.

There is much unemployment in many areas where NLM works, and there is a great need for the development of business and industry. NLM is open to using new work forms to facilitate the creation of new jobs and development in areas where this is directed towards the least reached.

5.11 Internationalization

Mission work should take place in close cooperation with other churches and mission organizations that share our purpose and the biblical basis for our faith. In tent-making work and in the work directed towards the least reached people groups, it is profitable to cooperate through international networks. This ensures better use of our resources as well as continuity.

NLM intends to have good contact with evangelical movements that work on a biblical basis. There will be established an advisory structure that also includes leaders and resource persons from the cooperating churches.

5.12 Information about Mission

It is important for our mission organization that good information from the field be communicated in Norway. NLM's magazine “Utsyn” must prioritize this. The Internet is another efficient and useful tool for the sharing of information. Ownership and commitment are best achieved when there is close contact between sending groups and individual missionaries. Countries with restrictions present particular challenges regarding the communication of information. Most important is that all missionaries are surrounded by petitionary prayer.

5.13 Recruitment of Missionaries

Recruitment of missionaries must be grounded in NLM's needs, which to a greater or lesser degree are determined by the needs of the local partner churches. NLM will have an increasing need for people with high and specialized competence. When missionaries are assigned to a specific mission field, the mission should consider their individual spiritual gifts, skills, call, and education. There is a need for people with good knowledge of the Bible and a call to be witnesses of the gospel. As missionaries should know the local culture and language well, the mission will prioritize missionaries with a long-term perspective on their service.

The number of missionaries must be regulated within the economic parameters that the budget allows at any given time. It is important to have a long-term perspective on economic planning, so that unexpected and demanding cuts do not have to be made. If the work is concentrated around fewer areas and tasks, recruiting may become easier, and better continuity can also be assured.

It is desired that as many as possible of NLM's missionaries have a degree from Fjellhaug Mission Seminary. The education of missionaries is a process involving academic, spiritual, and social aspects. The missionaries must be familiar with NLM's theological convictions, and pledge loyalty to these convictions. A common education may help create spiritual unity among the missionaries, and at the same time ensure that they respect one another's spiritual gifts and tasks. It is especially important to prepare the missionaries for the first phase of a missionary term.

Healthy arrangements for the children of missionaries are an important precondition for missionary families to continue in ministry. Schooling and care for the missionaries' children are a priority. The transition to home assignments should also be facilitated well.

6.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS

6.1 Established Work

Today NLM works in several countries in South America, Africa, and Asia. We want to take responsibility for the work we have begun, but not in such a way that we create dependency or so that we in actual fact run local churches. In several of the countries where we are presently, we will in the future reduce the number of missionaries and keep only a few strategic positions. This will often be at educational institutions.

Today we spend approximately 75 % of our resources on established work. Our goal is to reduce this to approximately 60 % in the year 2015 and 40 % in 2020.

6.2 New Areas of Special Focus

Looking towards the year 2020, NLM will prioritize reaching Muslim people groups and the least reached, especially in East and West Africa, Indonesia, Turkish-speaking people groups in Central Asia, and the least reached people groups in China. This is in accordance with previously approved strategy documents.

Today we spend approximately 25 % of our resources on the new areas of special focus. Our goal is to increase this to 40 % in 2015 and 60 % in 2020.

We must apply these target numbers prudently, however, with consideration of the number of missionaries available and their individual spiritual gifts.

6.3 New Work

As a mission organization we will always be on the move and open to be called to new areas and people groups. In the period until 2020, we will be open to researching and possibly beginning work in new areas/groups if opportunities should open up.

6.4 Immigrants to Norway

It is also important to NLM to reach new immigrants to Norway. We will focus especially on people groups that belong to our areas of special focus in the mission fields. Here we will work in understanding and cooperation with NLM Norway and units that have a special focus on these target groups, such as International Christian Fellowship and Christian Intercultural Ministry.

7.0 CONCLUSION

This strategy report will give directions for NLM's international mission until the year 2020. The report is of a general nature.

The Executive Board will develop specific action plans for the individual areas/mission fields. This will take place in consultation with our missionaries and our national partners, who will be asked to develop plans for the work in their areas.

We pray that God through this strategy may continue to use us, so that God's kingdom can spread to even more people groups in the coming years.