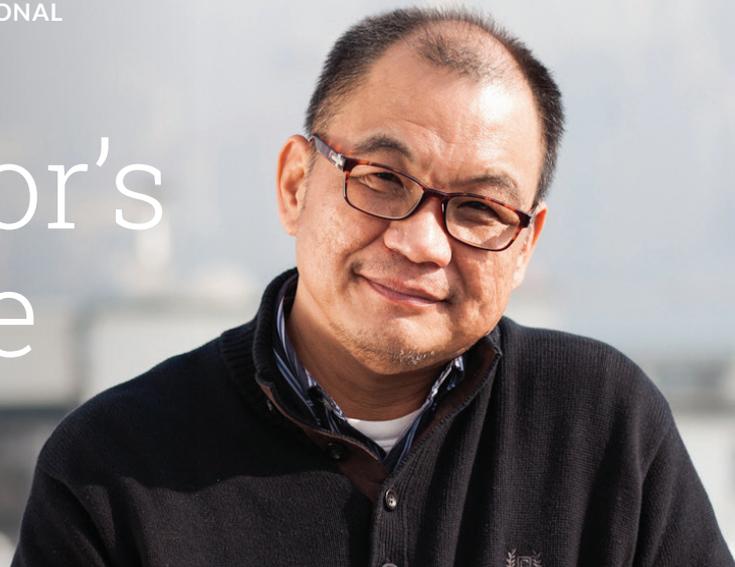




# Director's Update



LAWRENCE TONG

## The new millennial mission

The traditional definition of a missionary has been someone fully trained in a seminary and conversant in Hebrew and Greek, able to teach the Word of God. Such a person must be willing to go to the middle of Africa or the Amazon jungle or Himalayan foothills for the rest of their lives. OM broke that traditional view of the worker and the world with a simple qualification: If you have a willing heart, then God can use you. You might be 19 years old, but your unique way of sharing your faith, especially on a team, is needed alongside the traditional model.

A common response to the clear mission call is that anyone can serve God wherever they are; there's no need to go to the ends of Earth. However, the whole Earth is the Lord's, and our hearts should beat in rhythm with His love for all mankind. God indeed has plenty to do for those unable to go due to legitimate reasons. How do we then explain the many thousands of able-bodied and equipped young people who have no exemption from reaching the world, yet ignore God's vision? Christians who do go abroad as missionaries are in no way superior to those who actively invest their lives and talents in reaching their neighbours or colleagues. Perspective and

motive are everything. I have met—and know—high-powered business people who came to faith because of an invitation given by other business people to an Alpha course. I know of doctors, lawyers and others who came to faith in university through the patient and clear witness of classmates.

### It is now their turn

The essential Gospel message has not changed from generation to generation. However, God's messengers today need to understand the times and their unique possibilities. What are we going to do to capture the hearts and minds of the Millennial generation? Do not for a moment think they are a Western phenomena; Millennials are everywhere from Korea to China to Africa and Latin America. They share so much in values and worldview, and have only known a global digital community—a tribe, if you will. They are well-informed, independent thinkers. As I spoke to one such group, they were constantly Googling to verify my words! When we chatted afterwards, they had already used the Net to inform our conversation. We need to proactively utilise that to esteem and equip them. This generation is going to hold us to account,

both in our words and deeds and in how we entrust the Great Commission to them. That's a good thing.

Connecting with Millennials, whether believers or not, requires special commitment and gifting. I don't possess that skill set, and I haven't met many of my peers that do. In credibility, language and culture, they expect us to 'walk the talk' 24/7. They know that strategic mission today rarely means the Himalayas or Amazon, because the world is increasingly urban, young and wired. More than ever, we need young people to show us the way into that world where businessmen, artists and technicians best reach their peers.

A friend in China, a nuclear scientist, found the Lord in Scripture; in fact, he found all his scientific questions answered there. Whenever he would accompany me on visits with government officials, his credentials opened the ears of officials to hear whatever he had to say, including about Christ. Peers best reach peers, and we need a wide variety of workers for that reason. That shouldn't be such a revelation. So, to Millennials we say: Join with us so that we can journey together.

*Lawrence Tong*



## IN THIS ISSUE...

● Prayer for Ramadan ● Central Asia ● Lake Tanganyika ● Ghana ● Serbia ● Austria

## PRAYING THROUGH RAMADAN

Every year, many Muslims fast for one month from sunrise to sunset (according to the Muslim lunar calendar). In 2016, Ramadan is from June 6–July 5. Christians serving in the Arab Muslim world ask you to pray with them during this period, that Muslims will come to know Him. A 31-page guide to prayer offers suggested scriptures as well as prayer points from Christians living in each country listed. Please share this prayer guide freely with others. May our Great God lead you into praying His will for these nations. Download at:

<http://news.om.org/images/ramadan2016-a4.pdf>

<http://news.om.org/images/ramadan2016-usletter.pdf>

## EVANGELISM

### CENTRAL ASIA: LISTENING WELL

After turning down a job in translation to serve with OM, John\* thought it might be the end of using his skills. But by knowing Russian, the *lingua franca* of Central Asia, he is able to translate for and communicate with many believers whom other workers—who knew only local languages—can't. John shared, *"It's opened doors to encourage and train local believers as I translate training sessions and sermons and chat with locals."*



Being a native English speaker in a place where many want to learn English provides opportunities for meeting people. People come to John for English practice, but doors often open for talking about ethical choices in difficult situations, and how beliefs shape those. Miles\* and Ben\* profess to be Muslims but John challenges them about using deceit to get a job.

*"It's a sin; you shouldn't do it,"* he explained. *"What if you can't get a job without the required experience?"* they question. *"God is Judge. You might get your job, but God knows our hearts. It's wrong."*

Corruption is another topic that often comes up. *"You can't open a business without paying a bribe,"* John is told, but he knows others who have never paid a bribe. Pray that John and other workers would be distinctively set apart, causing others to question their own values and seek true answers found only in Christ.

## RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT

### LOGOS HOPE: A BETTER BERTH

Lake Tanganyika, the world's second-largest freshwater lake, is surrounded by Tanzania, Congo, Zambia and Burundi. Daily life for those living on its shores is focused on the water, as locals rely on boats for food, income and transportation. Similarly, the OM Lake Tanganyika team relies on boats for their service and outreach to villages along the shoreline.



A *Logos Hope* team has been serving alongside this other water-based ministry during the ship's recent dry dock and helped in building a much-needed jetty. The OM Lake Tanganyika team has a training centre located in the Nsumbu area; travel to the main base takes six hours by boat. The centre is located up a steep hill from the waterline so the team has to unload supplies at the ferry jetty, which adds another 40 minutes of walking.

Leaving the boat at the ferry jetty has also proven to be risky. *"One of our boats was stolen but, by God's grace, we found it in another village; they returned it,"* explained Charles Chansa, an OM Lake Tanganyika worker. *"With a proper jetty next to our centre, our boats and engines can be more secure."* Without tools, the locals showed where to find big rocks and worked together to move them into place. Within two days, the foundation of the jetty was made. *"It was nice to see the progress and the difference we made,"* said Miguel Amaro

(Brazil), as the team was able to get into the boat from the rocks the next day.

Further work is still needed and the team is trusting God to provide the funds to complete the work on the jetty. Donations can be made for the OM Lake Tanganyika Nsumbu Building Project through your local OM office.

## CHURCH PLANTING

### GHANA: LEARNING TO LOVE

In 2011, field leader Chris Insaiddo was travelling with his team to the north with a plan to hand out 10,000 Bibles. He hit a pothole and the rim of his tyre bent badly enough to need replacement. The team went looking for help; when they returned 30 minutes later, they found it empty and robbed of all the Bibles, two passports, and Chris's laptop.

Chris's opinion of the Fulani people in the area didn't end there. In 2014, a team from OMNIvision arrived to film documentaries. During their travels, they saw a Fulani who had kidnapped a young girl about 12 years old. The team later learnt that the Fulani man wanted to marry the girl to his 15-year-old son. When they asked why, the man told them that his son needed a wife to help him tend the family's cattle. Chris asked himself, *"How can a human being take a girl of 12 years and give her to a boy of 15 just for the two of them to follow the cattle in the bush?"* His first impression of the Fulani people was confirmed.

The same year, OM accompanied *Outreach America* to the 'overseas' part of northern Ghana—so called because the roads are inaccessible during the rainy season. A number of Fulani people came for help. It was then that Chris made a sobering discovery: When the Fulani people approached *Outreach America* for medical aid, the local people of the community drove them away.



"At that moment," Chris recalled, "I thought, 'What can we do to help these people?'"

Chris asked the outreach group to come again for a special ministry only to the Fulani people. The Fulani leader couldn't believe it, saying, "When you come, then you also know that we are human beings." Chris and his team kept their promise: They returned with medical supplies. All of the Fulani people came for medical care and the team fed them for two days. "It was during this time that I realised that they are a people that God loves," Chris said. "That shattered my previous mentality about the Fulani people." Now, OM is working among the Fulani, and—despite being a nomadic people group—they have asked Chris to start a church among them.

JUSTICE 

**SERBIA: KINDNESS DIVIDEND**

One man's refugee journey from Sudan to The Netherlands last year took him across the Serbian border at Šid. Mahmood\* had not forgotten God's



presence in a refreshment tent OM helped to run. Omer Volker described the scene, last October: "Can you imagine? Bread with jam at midnight; Psalm 23 being translated aloud into Farsi; prayer for a Kurdish Christian; an Iraqi girl singing "Father Jacob" in Arabic; parents dancing for us; volunteers worshiping in front of Afghans and Iraqis—there is hope in the worst situation. In moments like this, you feel God's peace come over suffering people."

Mahmood was struck by the atmosphere and carried the memory of this place with him to The Netherlands. Last month, Robert Strong\* from OM Netherlands posted:

"We have a walk-in for refugees in our church where, every Tuesday, my wife

and I talk with refugees. Mahmood from Darfur (Sudan) walked in. We had a very good conversation and gave him a Bible. Today, Mahmood attended church for the first time. After church, he accepted an invitation to our home.

Mahmood described his journey to the Netherlands. He had travelled through Šid in Serbia. When I heard that, I showed him a photo of the OM tent. 'Oh,' he said, 'I know that place! The Christians served us coffee and tea and sang beautiful songs with us. That was a happy place!'"

Please pray that Mahmood's spiritual journey will lead him to Jesus, and for the OM personnel still serving refugees at Šid and other Balkan borders. May God use them to touch many lives with His presence. An OM project, called *Safe Passage*, focuses on meeting refugees at their initial entry points, providing information as well as water, food and essentials. To give to OM's relief efforts, or for more information about how to get involved, please contact your local OM office.

MENTORING & DISCIPLESHIP 

**AUSTRIA: GOOD NEWS FOR KIDS**

Biljana\*, a Roma believer, has written a story for Roma children in Croatia, such as those she works among in Darda. An OM Eurasia Support Team (OM EAST) worker said. "To have an author who understands what children, particularly young girls, are going through now is significant." Biljana came to faith in Jesus when a pastor's wife befriended her on the street and invited her to church. There, she found an acceptance she had never experienced anywhere else. The pastor spoke of Jesus' offer of forgiveness and love. It's this same message of hope that Biljana loves to share with Roma children today. Through the change in his wife's life, her husband, Djeno, also came to faith. "When he accepted Christ, everything changed," Biljana said. "He stopped beating me, and we started to pray together."

For over two years, they prayed for God to send someone to work among the Roma in Croatia. Around the same time, OM EAST partners started reaching out to Roma villages, later supporting Biljana and Djeno, who is now the pastor of a small church in Darda, predominantly attended by Bayash Roma.

"In the beginning, I asked God: 'Why did I have to go through all these situations in my life?'" Biljana shared. "But now I know why; the people I am working with are going through all these situations."



Drawing from real life situations, Biljana's fictional book, *The Cat and the Custard*, points its readers to Jesus and addresses social issues and misconceptions

prevalent in Roma culture. It tells the story of a little girl called Ana, who realised her need of Christ's forgiveness and discovers a new way to live. OM EAST and their partners, the Roma Bible Union, will publish the storybook in Croatian this year with plans for additional languages to reach more Roma children in Europe.

"The biggest joy is seeing neglected girls who used to run after us are now helping work among children in the church," Biljana said. As more Roma boys and girls receive the Gospel, may they put their faith in Jesus and be able to say, just like Biljana did after both she and Djeno chose to follow Jesus: "That's when my story really began!" Please pray for wisdom as Djeno and Biljana serve the congregation in Darda, and as Biljana continues writing for the Roma.

Thank you for your prayers and support of OM ministries worldwide.

\* names changed



# The way I see it

THE NOMADS OF OUR WORLD • BY STEPHAN BAUER



The present stage of our Global Planning process is fascinating: There is a sense of excitement and creativity as we look forward together, yet mixed with many questions as we consider what we mean by 'least-reached' and 'vibrant local communities of Jesus followers'—and the implications for us all. As we work through these issues, though, let us never lose sight of the glorious vision of all the peoples of the Earth praising God. The mission of the Church is to make disciples of all nations and to keep proclaiming Christ where He is not known.

Consider nomadic people: Not all 'least-reached' peoples are nomads, but virtually all nomads are amongst the 'least-reached'. Perhaps we think of typical nomads as pastoralists—those that herd sheep, cattle, camels, yak, reindeer or other animals. Bedouin in the Middle East, Kyrgys in the High Pamirs or the Samburu in East Africa are good examples. There are other types of nomads, however. The smallest grouping is hunter-gatherers; and sea-nomads would be considered a subset of hunter-gatherers. The third key group is peripatetics or 'service' nomads: those with certain skills that traditionally they would offer in a symbiotic relationship to communities near where they settle for a season or longer. They may be horse-traders, artisans, coppersmiths, or have a whole range of other skills and services. Traveller communities in Europe are historically a good example of service nomads.

There are hundreds of nomadic peoples around the world and, while their nomadism may vary, as will the environments in which they live, they share a way of looking at the world. Ironically, you can be a settled nomad, which seems a contradiction, because it is all to do with worldview. This explains why millions of other people on the move, from refugees to migrant workers, are not nomads in this sense. A number of us may already be serving amongst nomads, unaware of their presence or the implications.

Nomads belong to a clan or tribe and do not stand as individuals. Their identity and security is tied to their clan, their allegiance to that clan and its moral codes. It will be a clan that has either presently, or has in the recent past, survived in an environment insufficient to support them and their chosen livelihoods over a period of years or seasons. The nature of their economic activity necessitates the need to be mobile, or at least for that to remain an option. It may be that some members of a tribe are mobile and others are settled, which better serves the tribe overall. The key is not whether they are mobile at present, but whether their immediate ancestors were and whether a mobile lifestyle remains an option.

The independence of nomads is a high value. A nomadic tribe values its ability to make its own decisions vis-a-vis the nation state and surrounding communities. In fact, they often have very little loyalty to a nation state. Ultimately, nomads see themselves as different from non-nomads, even if on the surface they appear similar. They don't see themselves as part of a settled system, hierarchy or class. They don't see themselves as part of that continuum, but standing outside it, even when living in the midst of it.

Nearly all nomads are amongst the 'least-reached', perhaps because they are often amongst the hardest to reach, whether a question of the tough environments in which they live, or whether we may need to radically re-think our strategies and approaches. We may see nomads as an extension to the urban-rural continuum, but if that is not how they see themselves, what does that mean for us as we long to see 'vibrant communities of Jesus-followers' amongst the nomadic peoples of the world?

Not all 'least-reached' peoples are nomads, but virtually all nomads are amongst the 'least-reached'.

*I have worked for many years among nomadic and other people groups in the Middle East.*