

# AFRIGO

Encouraging the Church in world mission

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## WHY SHOULD I GO WITH A MISSIONS AGENCY?

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## AFRICAN MISSION AGENCIES

BY TSHEPANG BASUPI, SOUTHERN REGION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
AFRICA INLAND MISSION

**A**frica has been the centre of missions for over two centuries. Many missionaries came when Africa was considered a “dark continent” and laboured until Christianity was established. Today the landscape looks completely different than it did two centuries ago. Africa’s thriving churches boast over 182 million evangelicals (Operation World 2020). As the Church grows, so does the conviction that Africans should play an active role in gospel propagation.

This conviction has led to the establishment of African missions sending agencies. Over the last 50 years, God has been doing an amazing work, raising up and sending African missionaries across the nations. Many of these are being sent through indigenous African sending organisations.

### Why go with a missions organisation?

Why should missionaries go under the umbrella of a mission instead of independently? Well, mission agencies have gained a lot of experience working cross-culturally. They know what is needed for successful ministry among the lost and the training and preparation needed to ensure the missionary has a fair chance of succeeding.

They have also learned to navigate the path of sending missionary support and finances across borders, something independent missionaries have to

navigate on their own. An organisation like CAPRO, which has been sending Africans since 1975, will better prepare the missionary for the work across nations. Currently, CAPRO’s 700 African missionaries serve across 40 countries. Their success in sending – and retaining – personnel testifies to the fact that they have discovered and mastered the art of sending African missionaries.

Agencies give missionaries a sense of community and ensure that they join something much bigger than their individual ministries. The missionaries get to be in a team, to strategise and pray together, to share victories and struggles. Agencies also provide ongoing member care. Missions agencies are a platform through which Africans go as missionaries and benefit from accountability, vision, direction and member care.

### Missionary sending in the Bible

The first missionaries in the Bible were sent out in Acts 13. We notice they did not send themselves. The church affirmed their call and sent them out. Today churches still have a huge role to play in ensuring the gospel is taken to the ends of the earth. In Acts 14:26-28, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch to report on all that Christ did through them. This is essential in mission. After being sent, the missionaries return for a time of reporting and accountability with their sending churches. This highlights the role of the local church

in sending, supporting and caring for missionaries.

The African peoples are rising and taking a leading role in the mission of God. As they rise, so are African mission agencies. They are not there because it is the most fashionable thing to do. They are there to serve the many Africans who want to go. If God is calling you, look for someone who is already doing what you want to do and join in. A leader once said to me, “Don’t try to create a wave when you can ride on an already existing wave.” So don’t struggle with things others have already conquered. Join in and enjoy all their wealth of experience.

In this issue, you will be inspired by the stories of intrepid missionaries who went first alone and then with agencies. Oumar Mohammed went from persecuting Christians to becoming one; he then obeyed God’s call to take the gospel to Muslims. Sister Bella bravely went alone and is now serving under CAPRO in Kenya. Timothy Babweteera Nomwesigwa of Uganda shares how to find a mission organisation and how to know it is of good quality. I hope you will enjoy this issue’s offering of testimonies, insights and resources. Happy reading!

*Tshepang Basupi serves as a missionary with AIM International. He is married to Queen and they have two children. They are currently based in Nairobi, Kenya. He can be reached at [tshepang.basupi@aimint.org](mailto:tshepang.basupi@aimint.org).*



# HOW TO FIND A MISSIONS AGENCY

BY TIMOTHY BABWETEERA NOMWESIGWA,  
NATIONAL DIRECTOR, THE FRONTIER  
MISSIONS TEAM, UGANDA



**M**any of you have come to the realisation that God is inviting you to join him in bringing the Great Commission to fulfilment. You are excited and thrilled. But like me, reality is setting in.

Questions are coming up from everywhere: Should I actually go? Who are these remaining peoples? Where are they? How do I even get there (maybe you have never even crossed the border of your country)? How will I survive when I get there?

And so the task becomes daunting, and unfortunately we lose many potential missionaries and mobilisers in Africa at this point. They have no idea how to progress, and that's where many have concluded missions isn't for us (Africans) but for them (Americans or Europeans). But that's when mission agencies come in to bridge that gap, to bring to actualisation your heart to see the nations reached.

Mission agencies help you answer these questions. Their experience on the field with successes and failures means they know where the least-reached people are and how to get trained, prepared and raise support. Mission agencies are bridge-building specialists who help you get from where you are to people without the gospel. They may be just the answer to your prayer.

But how do I find a missions agency suitable for me? Write to a missionary who has been through the process or ask a trusted pastor or professor. In some countries, mission mobilisers are available to guide you. The type of agency you look for will depend on your need.

## How do you tell if a missions agency is good?

1. An agency should have some experience in the place it's serving. It should also have a commitment to help its missionaries that is exemplified with love and genuine concern for them, a faithfulness and consistency to the mission task, clear lines of communication, and clear strategy and vision.
2. Sharing the vision of the agency is important. Their vision shouldn't be a human vision, lest it becomes a self-seeking, self-glorifying, inward-looking cult; it should be a God vision that stirs passion for His glory. You can tell that an agency has a God vision if they work well with other organisations and seek out partnerships. This shows they acknowledge the magnitude of the work, whose work it belongs to, and the universal community of believers.
3. Mission agencies don't reach people; missionaries reach people. Thus, an agency's priority should be its missionaries – their preparation, training and ongoing care. A missions agency should cultivate a culture of friendship among its missionaries. You could go independently with a travel

agency but mission agencies uniquely offer community which benefits you holistically in areas of psychological and spiritual health, accountability and encouragement. Without this community of fellowship, frustration is easy, accountability becomes controlling and the roles easily turn from the agency serving the missionaries (who serve the unreached) to the missionaries serving the organisation.

4. I personally recommend field-driven agencies because they are often in tune with the needs of the missionaries and the work in the field; therefore, they are often flexible, understanding and come up with better field strategies.
5. Finally, you need to feel a sense of affinity or connection with this agency, and this can happen if you take short trips with them.

This list of qualities to look for is not exhaustive, but it can start you on your search for a mission agency. Other questions to consider include their emergency protocols and your children's education. Usually organisations have policies that you may want to review.

Through the ages, mission agencies have taken different forms, but they have always been instrumental in revitalising and nourishing established churches while planting new ones where they are not. History tells us that there hasn't

been a significant move of the gospel into new areas and peoples without a certain structure – in our time, called a mission agency – that is separate, yet connected, to the local churches. In the early church, these were apostolic teams such as Paul and Barnabas. Later, missionary bands and monastic orders carried the cross-cultural vision forward. Today, mission teams and agencies do so.

To join an agency is to make a commitment that will not only challenge your faith and lead to deeper places of growth and devotion but also will challenge your home church to exercise their missionary responsibility, bringing the worship of God among the nations. Just like me, finding the right agency may be the answer to fulfilling your growing conviction of reaching the unreached and obedience to His call.

**Mission agencies  
are bridge-building  
specialists.**



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 <http://www.thefrontiermissionteam.org/>

# ONE NURSE'S JOURNEY INTO MISSIONS

**B**ella Were found the remote hospital building in Garissa, Kenya, totally empty. Its vacant corridors had no patients for there were no doctors, no staff and no supplies to run it after a government programme had built it. But Bella, a nurse and intrepid young missionary, did not see an empty building; she saw a ministry opportunity.

So Bella moved in, making her simple home in one of its many rooms. She approached the local government who gave her some supplies to begin. She lived very simply, drawing water from a borehole and electricity from solar panels.

Her outreach took the form of praying for the patients who came to her, and she often invited young people to watch the Jesus Film with her and discuss spiritual things.

In spite of her efforts to stay in touch with her church and friends (when she could buy data and re-charge her phone), their love and care from a distance could not replace a sense of loneliness that grew every passing day.

Her tiny 'salary', if you call it that, came from friends back in Nairobi who believed in her missionary call and supported her. But no support in prayer or finances came from her family.

Bella was raised in a family dedicated to Islam. She was so immersed in Islamic doctrine that her first encounter with Christianity during her final year of primary school was a struggle. Her refutation of the gospel message through a school teacher continued into her years in high school. Though the gospel was preached, Bella assured herself with the thought, "I have no big sin. I'm a good person."

God continued to use faithful witnesses to woo Bella. In high school, her peers who were devoted and committed to Jesus Christ challenged her, and she found herself desiring

more of the Lord, which led her into Bible studies with them. During a weekend getaway, she surrendered her life to Christ!


In university, Bella's faith continued to grow through Christian Union. A year after graduation, her missionary friend invited her to visit the mission field. Bella spent two weeks in a village doing medical ministry. The Lord used this experience to call her into missions.

In this way, she came to live in the government hospital in Garissa, in the general area where she had visited her missionary friend. The town had no church and no Christians for fellowship. She knew friends who were with agencies and they seemed to have something she was beginning to want: a ministry family who would provide her that feeling of "we are in this together!"

Bella prayerfully began to explore joining an agency. She soon chose CAPRO, an interdenominational mission founded in Nigeria and now in over 40 countries. She joined their 40 workers in Kenya and has served under their umbrella for three years.

Bella shared some of the benefits she has found in joining an agency:

- They rarely allow you to go out alone. They mandate ministry in teams.
- They require and provide preparation, so you know what you will do and what to expect.
- They keep in touch with the outside world while you are in a remote assignment. You may have no internet, no data and no phone charge. But they are a bridge. At times they also bring in more partners, through their networks and events.
- They listen to your vision and build you up in that direction because they have wisdom and experience. They help determine next steps, give advice, recommend trainings and help to upskill you. They add value to the vision you bring to them.
- They help monitor your progress. They remind you of your goals – for example, are you still progressing in language learning? This helps you not to settle into the mundane routines of ministry life.
- They provide member care, debriefing you when you come out for breaks and when you transition back in.
- They provide mentors who have gone ahead and will help you along.

 <https://capromissions.org/>



## PLEASE PRAY:

- For Bella and a new team forming to serve in Somaliland; for the logistics, preparation, good strategy.
- For language learning in this new venture.
- For the Lord to lead every step of the way.



# THE JOY OF SERVING TOGETHER

BY VICTOR BAJAH



**O**umar Mohammed was obeying God's missionary call on his life to reach Muslims in Niger Republic. Considering the dangers, he felt God wanted him to go undercover. So he went alone, trusting God to show him, in time, which mission agency to go with.

As a lone ranger, Oumar suffered in many ways. He was often discouraged and had no one to share his life with. Though he desired spiritual counsel and fellowship, none

was available, and this created a chasm in his heart. He also had no sustained financial support and could not afford even basic needs like food and clothing. He was also exposed to government bureaucracy that demanded corporate entities to provide papers for him to reside in the country.

Yearning for encouragement, he began crying out to God, "I need people who will encourage me, help me to grow and push me in fulfilling the will of God for my life."

Living in Muslim communities was not new for Oumar. In fact, this ambassador of the gospel was born into a devout Islamic pedigree in Nigeria and raised among the Muslim Fulani people in his mother's Yobe State. His parents went through a great deal to school him in Islam, expecting him to become an Islamic icon to be reckoned with.

When his father had only a few days to live, he summoned his three sons, as tradition demanded, to pass on gifts. He gave the most senior a Quran, the second brother was given his secret *Tasbi*, but no gift was given to Oumar. At his mother's enquiry, the father explained that no human was good enough to hand gifts to Oumar; however, he would receive his gift from a supreme being instead.

After his father's death, missionaries visited his village and worked as teachers in Oumar's school. This was during a time of intense persecution of Christians. But their cover blew open when they were found sharing the gospel with students. This complicated their lives and those of many other Christians,



## 3 REASONS SOME GO ALONE AND 3 RESPONSES

### **It is safer to go undercover.**

Oumar heard the clear call of God to reach Muslims, but did not want to draw attention to himself by associating with an organisation, so he went alone. Yet today, Oumar is fulfilling his original calling with a missions agency.

If God is calling you to a location that is fraught with perils, prayerfully seek an agency that has the experience and competence to send workers into high risk areas. There are many with the infrastructure to do this kind of placement safely, sustainably and successfully.

### **The financial requirements of an agency are too high.**

Bella Were spent two years in the field alone before joining CAPRO in Kenya (see page 5). She says, "The requirements of agencies can be high, especially financially. But agencies are getting more diverse; for

example, there are missions that allow their people to do business as missions." She urges new missionaries to ask an agency they are looking into, "What are your financial policies as well as beliefs or philosophy about raising support? How many diverse approaches to financial sustainability do you allow?"

Peter Macharia of Kenya is an ordained minister with Africa Inland Church Kenya and has also served under AICK Missions Department for 15 years. He writes: "Use a holistic approach ... I have missionaries working to spread the gospel. One rears milk cows, which supports him in the field. Another sister has an Mpesa (mobile money transfer) shop, she gets very little money from the church, but the business has helped her network with many Muslim women. It is practical and fruitful" (AfriGO 5.3 p.8).



and Oumar was one of their persecutors!

One night, Oumar had a strange dream. He saw himself holding hands with the missionaries and walking along a path. They met an old man who asked him, “Where are you going with this people?” Oumar answered, “To show them around since they are new here.” The old man instructed him, “You should hold on to them, for these are men of God.” When he awoke, he was confused! He went through his Islamic rituals, hoping that would take care of his strange dream, but he grew more scared of what would happen because of the dream.

He also felt compassion towards the missionaries. He resisted the feeling moving in his heart, but the more he resisted, the stronger it grew. He prayed to Allah fervently to remove the feelings and hinder the dream from coming true, but nothing changed and his restlessness grew, so he visited them. They were surprised, but showed him love. Soon the three men bonded so well that a day never went by without Oumar visiting to hear about Jesus Christ.

One night as Oumar was sleeping, he heard a voice instructing him repeatedly to trust the Lord Jesus. He woke

and ran to the missionaries’ house, knocking rapidly on their door. They interrogated him about his purpose for coming in the middle of the night and Oumar explained his dreams and the voice, and they glorified God. That night Oumar placed his faith in the Lord Jesus and went home filled with joy and peace he had never felt before.

Oumar says, “After I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Saviour, I denounced Islam and every one of its rituals and ways. I have felt very different ever since. However, it gave birth to unprecedented enmity between me and my brothers, friends, and people in the community. I was subjected to every kind of humiliation.”

Oumar was marked for death, and intense persecution broke out on Christians in the village. Oumar escaped with his life but his irate family followed and took him back forcefully, intending to kill him. But the Lord opened a way of escape to the city of Jos. Christians there helped him and Oumar had the opportunity to undergo discipleship training and then attend Bible school.

## CALL TO MINISTRY

Oumar recalls God’s voice through Isaiah 61:1, backed by several dreams, in which he saw himself telling Muslims about the love of Christ and teaching them God’s Word. As he read God’s Word, he concluded the Lord wanted him to reach his Muslim brothers, such as Fulani, Kanori and Hausas in Niger Republic. So he set out, alone and undercover.

But in time, he began crying out to God, “I cannot do this work alone! I need brethren who will push me forward.”

The Lord answered his prayer and today he serves with the missions agency, SIM Niger. Much has changed since he began working in a team. His needs are better managed and cared for and the work is easier and better when done as a team.

That ministry has grown and today there is a discipleship centre for new believers who are facing persecution, including threats to life. The new Christians are given theological education, vocational training and other studies, then released back to their origins to share the gospel.

Oumar believes obedience is key to serving the Lord, and going alone on the field is not a good idea because no one can do God’s work alone. Much is done when the work is done together. He says, “The joy of serving the Lord together cannot be expressed with words, it can only be felt when we do it.”

### **My church is strong enough to send me directly, because a mission is a middleman.**

Even very large and well-resourced churches and church denominations are using missions sending agencies. The Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Nigeria boasts millions of members and thousands of churches. But do their local pastors supervise mission endeavors? No. The Evangelical Missions Society (EMS) is the missions agency of ECWA, and it takes leadership in equipping and supervising several thousand mission workers in 18 countries.

Missions agencies are not formed because the church is inadequate. Rather, they are formed because the church is so strong, raising up godly men and women to send to the ends of the earth. When the church is effectively fulfilling its tasks locally, then the missions agency can fulfill its tasks cross-culturally.



# ARE MISSIONS AGENCIES NECESSARY?

**W**hilst attending a missionary training school in the 1990s, one of the most popular missionary biographies among the students was Bruchko, the compelling story of American missionary Bruce Olson, who undertook an amazing pioneer missionary work among the Motilones in Columbia. He bought a one-way ticket to South America at the age of 19, without any church or organisation sending him. In a review of the book, Sam K. John observed, “It needed tremendous faith in God on the part of Olson to go into an unknown territory without the support of the family or the church or mission agency.”

Olson’s story sparked an interesting debate on campus about whether it was really necessary for every missionary to be sent by a church or mission agency since Olson had done seemingly very well by himself. After lots of research and intriguing interactions, we concluded that, though there are exceptions, it is best to be sent by a body.

One of the scriptures strongly used by many students to support the need to be sent was Romans 10:13-15: (NIV)

For ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’

Certainly, missionaries and their sending agencies are neither unnecessary nor a new phenomenon in the modern world. When the early church was forming, the Holy Spirit identified elders and teachers to lead newly forming groups of Christ-followers. But the Holy Spirit also called those such as Paul, Barnabas, Timothy and others, to be sent out by these local believers to the nations. These early apostolic teams were missionaries.

However, the biblical role goes back even further. In the villages and towns of ancient Israel, priests led the people to worship in the temple and local synagogues. But the Lord called another kind of person, the prophets, to travel near and far, prophesying from town to town, and often to the nations beyond Israel. It is in the tradition of the prophets and the apostolic teams that missionaries go out today.

A missions agency and missionaries are no more “unnecessary” to the local church today than the apostolic teams in the first century were unnecessary to the early church, or the prophets of ancient Israel were unnecessary to local priests. All are called and used of God.

Upon graduating from missionary school, I served as the Botswana field coordinator of the African Christian Mission and there I saw firsthand the many benefits of being sent by an agency. I also witnessed the havoc some “independent” or “lone ranger” missionaries were causing on the fields because they lacked cross-cultural training, among other things. Lacking the needed support, they often didn’t last long. Member care is a

significant benefit provided by a solid mission agency, in addition to ongoing training, financial services, visa and work permit acquisition, accountability, teamwork and fellowship, prayer support, among many others.

Many people still contemplate whether to go alone or to go with an agency. Agencies can take the form of denominational sending structures or inter-denominational faith mission organisations. Among both of these are general missions as well as specialist missions, such as Mission Aviation

Fellowship or Wycliffe Bible Translators. All organisations have their challenges, but the advantages of being sent by one preponderate over any apparent disadvantages.

I currently serve as the Director of OneWay Africa, which sends missionaries to the unreached. Our missionaries are so excited and grateful to belong to a family that stands with them. Throughout this global pandemic, they have continuously expressed their immense appreciation.

Furthermore, serving with the Ghana Evangelical Missions Association (GEMA), we have VISION 2040, a nationwide vision to see 30,000 missionaries sent by the year 2040. It also seeks to activate 30,000 churches to pray and send missionaries. We have thus been challenging churches and mission agencies in Ghana to strengthen their sending capacity to be able to commission thousands of new missionaries whom the Lord will call. We also sound this clarion call throughout Africa and the rest of the world.

🌐 <https://www.onewayafrica.org/>

🌐 <https://www.gemagh.org/>



Pastor Mensah baptising new converts whilst serving as a missionary in Botswana.



*Pastor Ray Mensah is the Director of OneWay Africa and President of the Ghana Evangelical Missions Association (GEMA). Ray and wife Cynthia served nine years in Botswana, gaining field experience in leading a strong, disciple-making movement. Ray is a passionate speaker, gifted mobiliser, a fire brand missionary, and a lover of Jesus Christ.*



# CALLED: DR. FRANCIS KASHIMAWO

BY MERCY KAMBURA

**W**hen you set out to go to a mission field, what do you expect to find? Definitely not a backslidden ex-missionary! And yet, at the end of our seven-hour treacherous trek up a mountain to Donkin in northern Nigeria, that's the story that greeted us.

We were welcomed with okra, cool mountain water, and the sad tale of the first missionary among the Mumuye people. After ministering alone for years with no tangible fruit, he fell away from the faith. The ruins of the foundation of the house he planned to build stood as an eerie testimony to his abandoned faith and its missionary mandate.

Why would a man zealous enough for the Lord to attempt such a venture fall away? My eyes opened to the reality of the lonesomeness that can sabotage an isolated missionary.

The Lord has saved me from such an experience; I have not worked solo from the time I committed to the Lord to serve him for just one year, as payment for the salvation of my family.

It was a foolish covenant to make, but I was a zealous new believer who daily hounded my family with scriptures to the point of being labelled "a persecutor of non-believers"!

Born and bred a staunch Roman Catholic, my probability of conversion was low. We had enough contempt for the Christians who carried Bibles to fill a cathedral. I wasn't planning to become one of those scripture-quoting nags. But the Lord doesn't respect the status quo. So He gave me a demon-tormented Muslim as a friend; suffer as he did, I couldn't help him and it broke my heart.

One day, he attended a meeting of CAPRO missionaries, and he was delivered! Now that conversion, I couldn't deny.

In my eyes, I wasn't 'good enough' for the good Lord, so I decided to clean my life up before becoming a believer too. In December 1987, alone in my campus room, I realised I couldn't clean it on my own if I tried – and I had tried. So I gave my life to Christ. I was now, officially, one of the Bible carriers I despised – and it felt terrific!

But I was also weighed down by the reality that if my twin sister died, she'd be forever separated from the Lord and me. My whole family was in danger of hell, and I wasn't about to accept going to heaven alone. I cried out, "Lord, if You save my family, I'll serve You for one whole year, exclusively." Within



six months, my family – including my brother in training to be a Catholic priest – got saved.

## God kept His word; it was time to keep mine

I started looking for CAPRO, the missions agency of the people the Lord had used to deliver my demon-possessed friend. After much convincing, CAPRO took me in for a short-term mission assignment. In my second week, I fell critically sick, and in that sickness, the Lord gently reminded me that I couldn't repay him for even one soul, even if I worked for a thousand years.

My one-year "contract" with the Lord has been renewed every year for 35 years. Working under a missions agency has been a huge blessing, especially in the area of missions training. I'm now CAPRO's Director of Community Transformation, based in Kenya.

When I recall the young, backslidden missionary, I can't help but feel that working with others has saved my ministry. What would I tell a young person who senses the call of God to GO?

- Learn to walk in teams.

Otherwise, it is very lonely on the field.

- Get trained. Training helps you contextualise missions, grow your walk and clarify your calling. Preparation and training are required for every profession; Christian missions should not be an exception.
- Build up your character. If you can raise the dead but your character is wanting, you're missing the mark. Your personal life of discipleship is more important than the miracles coming through your hands.
- Expect hard labour. Mission is not for lazy people, but the Lord is faithful.
- Whether with commendation or condemnation from men, do the work of the Lord.

<https://capromissions.org/>

## PLEASE PRAY:

- For the missionaries we plan to send to Somaliland; for partners to support them.
- For strengthening of the walk with partnerships we have.

# GO! NEWS OF AFRICA'S MOBILISING CHURCH

## SOMALI WORSHIP SERVICES AIRS ON ETHIOPIAN TV

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, an evangelical Christian, called for a time of prayer for the country in 2020. He assigned the task to the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia and as a result, the Evangelical Association of Ethiopia invited Somali missionary couple Abdi Duale and Kawser Omar (featured in AfriGO 5.1) to present a gospel programme on national TV. Addis Ababa TV aired it widely on May 10, 2020. A second worship time was broadcast on June 21.

Michael Madany, director of New Life Media Somali Christian website, Nolosha Cusub, says, "Join us in praising God for this unprecedented development. Never before have evangelicals or other religious groups in Ethiopia had such access to national TV. As far as we know, this is the first time in history that a Christian programme in the Somali language has ever been broadcast by a national TV station."

More programmes have since been written and presented by Abdi Duale. The husband and wife team, serving with SIM



Ethiopia, are partnering with the Horn of Africa mission to offer more broadcasts on Ethiopian TV via satellite. Pray that the millions who saw this worship service will be drawn to trust in Jesus Christ and search for more gospel messages in Somali on social media.

☀️ Somali worship service on Ethiopian TV:  
<https://youtu.be/VfvYHmWIM0o>

☀️ "How Social Media Enables Discipleship Among Least-Reached" (AfriGO 5.1): <https://bit.ly/3fPpqB8>

## VISION RECEIVED, VISION PASSED ON:

**The Birth and Growth of the Evangelical Missionary Society of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (EMS of ECWA)**  
**by Rev. Panya Baba. Reviewed by Joseph Paolo**

This book's plot is like the parable of the mustard seed: a very small thing grows to become something very big. It all begins with a sister in the Lord who has a heart for the lost in inland Africa. Through her prayers, the missions organisation SIM is founded; almost 60 years later in 1948, Nigeria's first indigenous mission, EMS, is born.

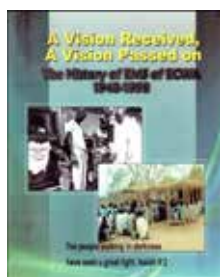
The author, Rev. Panya Baba, has been described as one of the fathers of modern African missions and the "greatest missiologist of the ECWA" (Evangelical Church Winning All) denomination.

From 1970 to 1988, he led EMS, which today has a workforce of about 4,000 missionaries.

Like missionary work anywhere, the work described is not without hardships, pain, suffering and even death. These trials characterised the first wave of missionary endeavors in Nigeria. However, much joy came with the first fruit and growth.

This is a relatively easy read. If you like the brevity of Mark's Gospel, you will find this book enjoyable. The author provides enough detail to move you along the first five decades of the founding of

EMS. The book is organised logically, and the chapters follow a similar structure: what is happening, the challenges, actions, and outcomes. The author is honest in reporting occasional conflicts between workers and how these were settled.



The book closes with an admonition for those in the field and also at home: "The most important lesson was to depend more on the Holy Spirit for direction.... Without His direction, the work would be in vain."

If you want to know what happens behind the scenes in founding a mission agency, this book provides insight into that. It will open your eyes to many ways you can participate in the Great Commission.

For the would-be missionary, this book provides a plethora of examples of servants of the Lord who have served sacrificially.

Pick up this book if you want to learn what God has done and is doing in response to prayer of ordinary people just like yourself. Find it as an e-book on Amazon: <https://amzn.to/2T2JlBb>.

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hear from you! We welcome your input in order to make the magazine relevant and empowering. Send your questions and ideas to [info@afriGO.org](mailto:info@afriGO.org).

## Mobile money: From their hands to yours

Across Africa, the use of paper money is decreasing while electronic transfers are increasing. The AfriGO team reached out to people from South Africa to Ghana, from Rwanda to Botswana, and found that every region has different systems and preferred apps for moving money.

Some purchase cell phone airtime and convert it to payments, others use banking apps and work from their bank accounts; still others use international companies such as World Remit or Mukuru Money Transfer.

What to use? There's no wrong answer, as long as the sender and the receiver agree on what they prefer, and the transfers are done safely. Most transfers are foolproof, provided that one types in the right numbers and confirms who is the recipient. For missionaries and missions, however, a few more steps should be taken to increase donor confidence.



1. Always acknowledge receipt of funds immediately, even if it is just a short message.
  2. At the time, or shortly after, reach out to the donor by phone, message or email to thank them for their gift, and be sure to mention if the gift is to be used for a specific need. Donors appreciate knowing they have been part of the ministry.
  3. If the donor requests that their gift be used for a particular need, be sure to use it in that way, unless you ask their permission. It is likely that a donor will be glad to see their money going to help a missionary travel for medical care rather than buy Sunday School materials, but they will be disappointed if they find out later the funds were diverted, and less likely to give in future.
- Lastly, take steps to secure your phone with passwords and PINs, and do not keep this information where it can be accessed by others. Your donor will not be pleased to receive deceptive requests for money from the thief who robbed your phone, nor garbled messages from your small child who is playing with it.

## Financial Integrity

A church was given a sum of money to build a Sunday School building, but when the time came to start building, the treasurer reported the funds were gone. What happened? Over time, the needs of the church ate away at the money. The pastor had to travel to a conference, the hymn books had to be replaced, an elder's daughter was sick. In the end, some of the money could not be accounted for at all. To some, there is no problem with aspects of this scenario. To others, it is a grave breach of trust.

Many people are reluctant to give because they aren't sure that their money will go where they want it to go. As a missionary or missions organisation, your relationship with donors hinges on financial integrity. It is biblical, it is ethical, it is lawful, and it is wise stewardship.

How can you have integrity in your financial dealings? One way is to become accredited through an organisation such as the AfCAA (see sidebar). Their stamp of approval marks you as a serious, trustworthy ministry. Another way is to have an independent bookkeeper audit your books yearly and make that information public. An audit can be expensive, so make sure to budget for it. In the end, your ministry will benefit because donors trust that their money will be used for what they intended it for. Most importantly, transparency cultivates trust.

Cultural reflections on fundraising video from Lausanne Global Classroom: <https://bit.ly/3hADLQw>.

## AfCAA Ensures Financial Integrity

The African Council for Accreditation and Financial Accountability (AfCAA) exists to "unlock Africa's potential through adherence to biblical standards." Similar to ECFA in North America, AfCAA is accomplishing a goal of gaining public trust in churches, Christian non-profits, and Christian-owned businesses.

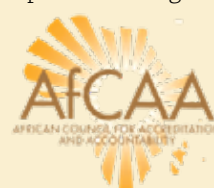
AfCAA's multi-disciplinary founders shared the conviction that Christians should lead the way in financial integrity across Africa. AfCAA Executive Director Winnie Njenga says: "Besides lending credibility to an institution's sound and transparent leadership and governance structures and processes, the AfCAA accreditation process is a value-adding exercise that helps in institutional strengthening."

Are you a missions agency, mission network or church that needs to improve your financial reputation and grow trust and confidence among your supporters? Consider accreditation through AfCAA today.

<https://afcaa.org>  
[info@afcaa.org](mailto:info@afcaa.org)



**Winnie Njenga,**  
Executive Director  
of AfCAA



### SHARE YOUR STORY

Are you supporting a missionary through mobile money? Are you a missionary, church or missions agency receiving electronic donations? If so, we want to hear your story.

With your permissions, we may share it with others who are venturing into the world of electronic support. Email: [info@afriGO.org](mailto:info@afriGO.org).





# PEOPLE GROUPS:

## AFAR OF DJIBOUTI

The Afar people have been in the Horn of Africa for centuries, their lineages reaching back to the Arabian Peninsula. Language scholars tell us that they were some of the first people living in the Horn of Africa. Djibouti is home to about 300,000 Afar, who make up more than a third of the population. Afar peoples also live in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and are variously known by the names Danakil, Adali and Odali.

The Afar are organised into clans with a leader over each group. There are two main divisions within the Afar: the Asaimara who dominate politically and live on the coast, and the Adoimara working class, living in the desert and Mbla Mountains of Djibouti. Traditionally they have been herders of livestock, though many have turned to farming, migrant labour and trade to support themselves.

The Afar in Djibouti are overwhelmingly Muslim –

99.7 per cent – having been exposed to Islam in the 800s (yes, 1200 years ago!).

The rural Afar live in hot, arid regions in camps surrounded by thorn barricades, which protect them from the attacks of wild animals or enemies. The area is known for volcanoes and extreme heat, with temperatures reaching 50°C. Lake Assal lies in the Danakil Desert below sea level, and is the lowest point on land in Africa. It is a salt lake, it is a source of income for some who harvest the salt and transport it by camel to sell.

The urban Afar are more likely to meet someone who can share the gospel. There are only a few known Afar believers, who are isolated from other Christians and can become discouraged. Scripture, including audio recordings, are available, as well as the Jesus Film. Labourers for this harvest are needed, as well as faithful prayer warriors to prepare the soil.

### At a Glance

- The Afar claim to be descendants of Noah's son, Ham.
- Although Islam allows polygamy, Afar marriages are usually monogamous; marriages between first cousins are preferred.
- Many pre-Islamic beliefs are followed in addition to Islam.
- A Feast of the Dead, Rabena, is celebrated annually; the spirits of the dead are believed to be powerful.

### Pray

- Ask God to anoint the gospel as it goes forth via radio to this tribe.
- Pray for the small number of Afar believers and ask God to give them opportunities to share Christ with their own people.
- Ask God to raise prayer teams who will begin breaking up the soil through worship and intercession.

Sources: Joshua Project <https://bit.ly/3fmETEQ> | Atlas of Humanity: <https://bit.ly/3u2DA38>.



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