

African and Filipino Believers Seek 'Church-Planting Movements'

Pioneers, an evangelical mission movement, is reporting that thousands of Christians from Ghana, Nigeria and the Philippines are asking to be trained in the principles of "church-planting movements" (CPMs).

Today, cross-cultural church planting is taking place in regions fraught with poverty and persecution. By necessity, the local church often takes root in its simplest form. In these places, churches are essentially groups of believers gathering in homes, under trees, or cafe back rooms to worship, pray, study the Bible and teach others to do the same. And it is in response to these realities that Pioneers has adopted the "church-planting movements" approach.

One of the principles that Pioneers teaches through its CPM Training Initiative, which was launched in 2010, is the importance of humbly empowering indigenous believers to become leaders of faith. As missionaries identify people who are interested in spiritual conversations, draw them into Bible studies and bring them to a point of decision, they are taught to do all of this in a way that prepares and equips new believers to go out and do the same.

"This year, we may see our African and Filipino missions partners reach a 'tipping point' in their embrace of church-planting movements," says Dwight McGuire, Pioneers' lead missiologist. "In post-training evaluations, participants are saying 'I wish we would have had this type of training five, 10, even 15 years ago.' And these people are telling other believers that they need to think about CPMs."

Through Pioneers' new initiative, more than 500 missionaries

and indigenous partners have been trained. These participants have stimulated the interest of thousands more. In order to see greater numbers of indigenous believers equipped, Pioneers plans to train well more than 1,000 Africans and 1,000 Filipinos—many of whom are preparing for ministry among Arabs.