

# Beyond Tokyo: an African Perspective

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In 2010, I came to Tokyo from Nigeria to participate in the Global Missions Consultation with 1000 leaders from around the world. Through it, I gained a better perspective of the Great Commission, the unfinished task, and the many avenues through which God is gathering His harvest. I met several global missions movement leaders, whom I had only heard of “by the hearing of the ear” (to use Job’s expression). I made collaborative connections that still continue today.

I felt connected to a global network focused on fulfilling the greatest mandate on earth, and I left with the certainty that the kingdom of our God and of His Christ (Rev.11:15) would prevail. Tokyo 2010 was a fresh impetus for global missions and not an end in itself. I continued collaborating with other Great Commission ministries, ministers and individuals through the Global Great Commission Network, GGCN ([ggcn.org](http://ggcn.org)).

## Discovering the Imperative for Collaboration

A valuable lesson I took away from Tokyo 2010 was the imperative for collaboration in order to fulfill the Great Commission. The different fields, the changing times and global socio-political realities presented a challenge to reaching the world with the love of Jesus. So many leaders and organizations approached the harvest from so many angles, but no organization had capacity, skill or the strategies to reach every group effectively especially in light of global realities. It became apparent that everyone needs to work together to finish the task.

The ministry that I lead, *Eternity Ministries* ([eternityministries.org](http://eternityministries.org)), experienced tangible fruit from this collaborative spirit. During the event, I visited the Create International stand. Create is

a ministry of Youth With A Mission (YWAM). I met Carol and Calvin Conkey, the then directors of Create Thailand. Calvin is also Director of the Global Media Network. From this connection, we later sent our Media Director to Create Thailand's Media for Missions training in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Later I attended a workshop by Dr. Paul Eshleman, the first director of the Jesus Film Project. He shared that while the "JESUS" film had enjoyed tremendous success, short film was the key media strategy in the years ahead. This was due to changing media consumption patterns and the shortening attention spans of consumers. YouTube was only five years old at that time, and its development in the last ten years confirms Dr. Eshleman's observations.

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Dr. Eshleman encouraged production of short, culturally appropriate gospel videos and discussion starters. I was introduced to [globalshortfilmnetwork.org](http://globalshortfilmnetwork.org). I also received digital content with some short films that I still use to teach and mobilize for missions.

Dr. Seth Kofi Anyomi, who was the leader of the African delegation and came to Tokyo 2010 from Ghana, shared that he also benefited from the consultation's collaborative culture. He said, "Tokyo 2010 brought multiple blessings.... I had the singular opportunity to network with many church and mission leaders in Africa. Lasting friendships have been formed. Some of these have transformed into ministry partnerships that are benefiting church and mission endeavors around the globe."

### **Amplifying Attention for Discipleship and the Unreached**

Leaders at the Consultation realized that while progress was being made in preaching the gospel, more needed to be done about discipling the nations, which was the key command of the Great Commission. Several papers and strategies were shared, including a plenary session

by Gbile Akanni of Living Seed. Tokyo 2010 seemed to be a major catalyst for the Disciple Making Movements and related efforts currently gaining traction around the world. This is a positive development, one that can only amplify and intensify as we race towards the finish line of our Lord's final command.

The attention given to the unreached was palpable. Statistics showed thousands of people groups yet to be reached or engaged. The concept of Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs) stood out for me. Thousands of tribes had no one looking in their direction. At Tokyo 2010, leaders and organizations were encouraged to adopt these peoples, pray for them, and consider ways to reach them with Scripture translation, relevant media/internet strategies and cross-cultural missionaries.

Reflecting on these aspects of the consultation, Rev. João Luis of South Africa said, "Tokyo 2010 helped me to change my focus. I decided to open and run mission schools in a few nations and mobilize churches to get involved in missions—in the Democratic Republic of Congo, ...[and] Brazil.... Thanks to Tokyo 2010 for opening my horizons and understanding!"

### **GGCN Africa—Vision, Values and Strategies**

After Tokyo 2010 I came on board as the Africa Coordinator. We developed this vision of the tangible expression of the GGCN ethos in Africa:

*A continent of connected, resourced and ignited individuals, agencies, churches, and networks making disciples of every people, and mobilizing, equipping and releasing every believer to make disciples locally and globally—every believer, making reproducing disciples of every people from every platform, and planting self-multiplying New Testament churches, leading to multiplication of disciples and Disciple Making Movements in Africa and beyond—until "this gospel of the kingdom is preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations." (Matt. 24:14)*

The grassroots vision of GGCN means that attention must be given to mobilizing the Christian "proletariat"—the masses in our churches—who do not see themselves as a part of God's mission force. At GGCN Africa, we are working to establish regional and national leadership structures that will bring the vision closer to each country/region, as well as galvanize the grassroots with a missional vision and training in disciple-making.

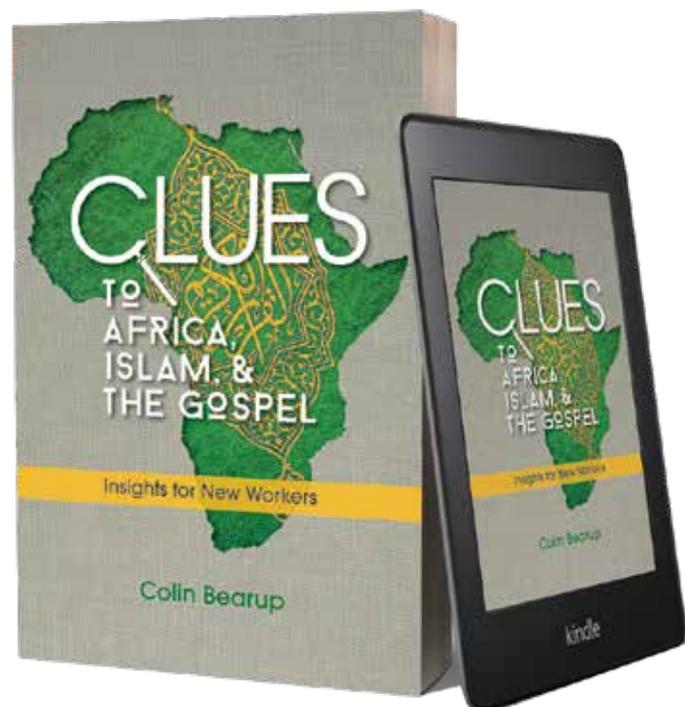
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In line with the overall vision of the Global Great Commission Network, GGCN, GGCN Africa seeks to serve, not to compete, with the Church in Africa, and encourage collaboration through the following avenues:

1. **Prayer:** Earnest prayer precedes, enfolds and undergirds every aspect of the work of GGCN Africa.
2. **GGCN Connect:** GGCN Africa promotes the use of *Connect* (GGCN's networking platform) as an avenue to network with other ministries, churches and individuals, and to benefit from the collection of discipleship resources at ggcn.org
3. **Training and Equipping:** Convinced that the primary challenge of discipling our continent's 1.3 billion people is the dearth of effective laborers, GGCN Africa seeks to multiply ignited laborers that can be moved out into the harvest. We accomplish this by providing contextualized, informative, transformative and catalyzing training to (and through) agencies, organizations, churches and individuals willing to collaborate with GGCN.
4. **Youth:** Serving in the world's youngest continent, GGCN Africa pays particular attention to collaborating with others to mobilize youth, youth movements, students, student movements, etc. to make disciples.
5. **Marketplace Ministry:** To help ensure that the Church in Africa is viable financially and able to pursue the missions enterprise without undue dependence, GGCN Africa encourages the Church in Africa to prioritize Marketplace Ministry and Business as Missions (BAM) models by equipping believers to thrive on their platforms in the marketplace and to make disciples therefrom.
6. **Nationals:** GGCN Africa focuses on networking, equipping and resourcing local African people and national movements to make disciples of their own peoples: i.e. Africans reaching Africans.
7. **Envisioning:** GGCN Africa helps promote a global perspective for inwardly-oriented African churches and organizations to help them look beyond denominational lines and embrace God's missional purpose.
8. **Technology:** We leverage technology to advance all of the above using the tech capabilities of Africans, especially believing youth.

Leaders in Africa and around the world who feel a connection to these avenues are welcome to connect with GGCN Africa to receive information about target areas and explore other avenues for collaboration.

It is our conviction that no one can accurately quantify the results of Tokyo 2010. May it please the Lord of the harvest to use all the efforts arising therefrom to advance His glory in the nations. MF



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