



Churches and Agencies Focus on



“Finishing the Task”

Marcus Vegh with Becky Hill

*Editor’s note: we include this report in this issue of **Mission Frontiers** not only because this event is noteworthy of itself, but also because this partnership has extensively relied on the IMB analysis and recommendations summarized in our preceding article. The tally of 639 UUPGs reported here is an earlier version of the tally of 645 UUPGs highlighted on pages 8-13.*

Eighteen mission agencies – including four of the world’s largest – have challenged local churches to partner with them in “Finishing the Task” (FTT), a strategy to nurture church-planting movements among 639 unengaged, unreached people groups (UUPGs) over 100,000 in population. The “Finishing the Task” campaign was formally launched November 14-17, 2005 at The Cove in Asheville, North Carolina, where agency directors consulted with pastors and other leaders of 59 churches, predominantly from North America.

The 18 FTT partner agencies have trained “Brokers” to assist the partner churches.

Marcus Vegh is President of Progressive Vision, a partner agency of “Finishing the Task.” He served as Executive Producer of the November 2005 FTT conference.

At the end of the November conference, 41 of those churches immediately chose 70 UUPGs for their focus. In addition, 19 churches indicated that in the next 18-36 months they will host a regional “Finishing the Task” conference in order to recruit other churches to join them in reaching all 639 of the prioritized peoples.

Churches represented at The Cove included North Point Community Church of Atlanta, Saddleback Church of Lake Forest, California, Bethlehem Baptist Church of Minneapolis, Belmont Church of Nashville, Real Life Ministries of Post Falls, Idaho, and Northwood Church of Fort Worth. The four largest mission agencies in “Finishing the Task” are Campus Crusade for Christ, the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Wycliffe Bible Translators, and Youth With a Mission, who represent a combined total of more than 50,000 full-time workers in over 180 countries.

The 18 FTT partner agencies are seeking to equip local churches to take new responsibility for send-

ing missionaries, including those that they elect to send in collaboration with FTT partners. Partner agencies have trained “Brokers” to assist the partner churches; each broker can represent the strengths and resources of all 18 agencies. As a church engages with any Broker, the church taps into everything the partnership has to offer.

Paul Eshleman, a member of the “Finishing the Task” strategy team, comments, “We recognize

group in China, that’s going to take a different strategy. But whatever it is, our agencies are committed to serving the churches to help them launch

indigenously-led, church-planting movements.

A “Finishing the Task” CD-ROM has been developed to help churches select a UUPG. Also, a customized FTT deck of cards has been created to assist a church in weighing

the seven criteria in selecting a people group, including country, macro-religion, population, evangelical resources, threat level, freedom index, and physical exertion. Audio and video resources from the November 2005 conference

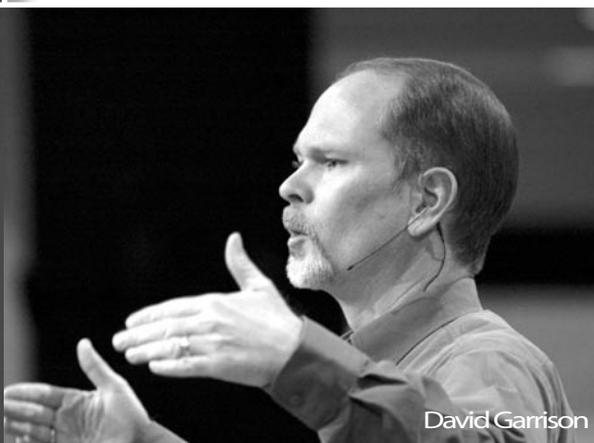


that from within the church, there are people that God will prepare and send that have the ability to go into these peoples. Our agencies are going to serve them and help to train them, equip them, and get those personnel mobilized out of the local church in North America and particularly from in region-national church partners, under the church’s direction and guidance.”

Eshleman adds, “Each church will need to be developing customized strategies for each people group. For instance, if it’s a Muslim group in very difficult terrain and hard to access, that’s going to take one strategy. If it’s in a mega-people

Seven Criteria in Selecting a People Group

1. Country
2. Macro-religion
3. Population
4. Evangelical resources
5. Threat Level
6. Freedom Index
7. Physical exertion



are expected to become available to partnering churches and agencies early in January 2006.

“Finishing the Task” Champions’ Training will be conducted March 14-16, 2006 at the International Learning Center in Richmond, Virginia. This training is offered to anyone seeking to serve as FTT “Champion” within a church, which will include coordination with a Broker, assembly of a team, and other tasks. To read the strategy for “Finishing the Task”, learn about how to engage your local church with a broker, join your agency to the FTT partnership, or register for the “Champion” training event, visit www.finishingthetask.com. 🌐