



Steve & Kathy Austvold, EFCA Mission Mobilizers Serving the NCD, NPD, and Beyond

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Dear Pastors and mission leaders,

The globalized world is the fourth of six issues that the Lausanne Conference cited last fall as one of the major challenges facing the church in the next decade. The topic of the globalized world affects everyone today. Each of the challenges and opportunities listed in this issue deserves much prayer and discussion. Here is their description of the globalized world:

The Globalized World. Mega-cities, Diaspora, New Technologies, Social Networking, Political Corruption and Uncertain Futures for the Next Generation, are only a sampling of the challenges and opportunities of a Globalized World that require us to establish NEW PRIORITIES for world evangelization.

Mega-cities: Operation World states that there are now 487 cities over 1 million inhabitants and 21 cities over 10 million population. The urban population reached over 50% for the first time in 2009. Hundreds of millions of people are now moving to into cities. This trend will continue so that by 2050, 70% of the world's population will live in cities. This will mean that many will have improved quality of life. There will also be greater social and economic mobility and openness to the gospel.

Diaspora: When people think of the diaspora, they think of the Jews, who were first exiled to Babylon. Wikipedia gives this definition, "the term *diaspora* carries a sense of [displacement](#); that is, the population so described finds itself for whatever reason separated from its national territory, and usually its people have a hope, or at least a desire, to return to their homeland at some point, if the "homeland" still exists in any meaningful sense." Some people are calling those who had to leave homes after Katrina part of the Katrina diaspora. Whether they are displaced in their own country or have to go into other countries, there are great opportunities to minister to these people.

New technologies: Operation World lists several technologies areas. 1) Communication technology. This is the digital revolution that we are all seeing happen so quickly with the growth of the internet, and the exchange of information that is changing the way we work-financially, politically, and socially. 2) Developments in computing and mobile phone technologies. This can lead to decreased face time, but it also has the possibility of allowing each person in the world to hear the gospel via new media. This is true especially for Father Zakaria Botros, who is ministering in the Middle East, where 70 million people listen to him weekly. 3) Medical technology. This includes new areas such as genetics and stem cell and cloning research. 4)Energy research. This area affects everyone. A breakthrough in energy technology will transform the world's economy.

Social networking: This is the new means of communicating today. We have gone from snail mail to email and now to texting and to Facebook and Twitter and Myspace and to online communities. Some



missionaries are now using social networking sites such as Facebook as their chief means of communication. Facebook has over 600 million users worldwide. Over 41% of Americans in 2010 had a Facebook account according to Wikipedia. It is second nature to young people who are far advanced over the boomers.

Political Corruption: We hear stories of political corruption regularly from around the world. I would like to add that the largest illegal activity in the world today is illegal drug smuggling, followed by illegal arms dealing and human trafficking, both of which are now tied for second place. Justice needs to be addressed wherever corruption takes place whether in politics or in business or in everyday life. There are many organizations, who are addressing the subject of human trafficking, including TouchGlobal's "Justice Initiatives".

Uncertain Future for the Next Generation: The next generation is facing great opportunities and new challenges. We as the church of Jesus Christ, must discuss how to reach this next generation for Christ and disciple them. The 4/14 generation is often the age group that is most open to the gospel.

As the fourth challenge for missions in the next ten years is laid out, there are many issues that are yet not discussed or raised in this key mission challenge. We as the church must discuss the opportunities that God is bringing to our church and to our community. It is a great time to reach the world for Christ in our generation! For further ideas on understanding our world and reaching our world for Christ, buy the book **Operation World** 7th edition.

Blessings,
Steve Austvold