



**AFRICA
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CONNECT



04

**DO NOT BE
CONFORMED**
BY JOHN PIPER

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**IRON SHARPENS IRON:
WHY SERVE ON A TEAM?**

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**WORTH THE COST OF COMFORT:
PREPARING FOR LONG TERM**

WHAT IS A TIMO TEAM?

TIMO stands for Training In Ministry Outreach. It is a two year programme that trains new cross-cultural workers with a goal to share Christ. Living among people, learning language and methods of outreach, TIMO values putting into practice what you learn.

To find out more, visit: eu.aimint.org/TIMO





HOLDING IT TOGETHER

Following Christ is made up of challenges and tensions. A stark example in twenty first century Britain is the challenge posed by our post-Christian society when it says that each person has their own truth and we must never impose our beliefs on others. This leads onto: “Why do you still think it’s right to take your God-message to foreign peoples and places?” In AIM our answer is clear: we are completely persuaded that the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only answer, for the UK and for the whole world. Christ’s commission to take the good news to the world is still so real and so great that all nationalities must go – and that includes us in the UK.

In this issue of Connect John Piper looks at a very important tension; between enabling the gospel to take up home in a culture (the indigenous principle) and the need to be holy and separate from the world (the pilgrim principle). We are very aware that as we ‘go into all the world’ we go as fallen, sinful and weak people. So how do we hold these tensions together? To equip people to manage this, AIM has been running a training programme called TIMO for 35 years. In this issue you can read how ordinary people have heard God’s call to go, have responded, and with fear and trepidation have sought to be obedient. Time and again, TIMO has been proven to be an incredible tool that God has used to help train people to take the gospel to those who have never heard it. It’s only as they live a life of obedience, service and love for the Master that they can hold all of those tensions together.

Tim Heaton,
Mission Advisor

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JOHN PIPER

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DO NOT BE CONFORMED

CHRISTIAN LIVING

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.' Romans 12:1-2

Oh, how many questions this verse — Romans 12:2 — raises that need thoughtful, biblical answers. For example: How does the command not to be conformed to this world relate to Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 9:22, 'I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some'? How is becoming all things to all people not conforming to the world? Or how does the command not to conform to the world, that is, to be counter-cultural, relate to Paul's words in 1



“Paul was not confused. He was holding two Christian impulses — two principles — in balance.”

Corinthians 10:32–33? ‘Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.’ How does not being conformed to the world fit with not giving offense to the world? You can’t always do both. How does not being conformed to the world fit with pleasing everyone for the sake of salvation? You can’t always please people if you refuse to conform to some of their thoughts and ways.

So, the questions are many, and we will tackle some of them. My aim is to give you a way to think about these questions, to give you some categories that I pray will be part of the renewing of your mind so that you can prove and embrace the will of God.

The reason there are questions like these is not that Paul slipped up and got confused about what it means to follow Christ in a fallen world. Paul was not confused. He was holding two Christian impulses — two principles — in balance. When Christ came into the world, and lived and died and rose from the dead, and set the redeeming kingdom of God in motion, and unleashed the mighty gospel on the world — two powerful impulses, or forces, spread everywhere the gospel spread.





← THE INDIGENOUS PRINCIPLE AND THE PILGRIM PRINCIPLE

These two impulses are always in tension with each other. At times they push in opposite directions, and the great challenge is to find the biblical balance. Andrew Walls, in his book, *The Missionary Movement In Christian History*, calls these two impulses the indigenous principle and the pilgrim principle (7–9). In other words, the gospel can and must become indigenous in every (fallen!) culture in the world. It can and must find a home in the culture. It must fit in. That's the indigenous impulse. But at the same time, and just as powerful, the gospel produces a pilgrim mindset. It loosens people from their culture. It criticizes and corrects culture. It turns people into pilgrims and aliens and exiles in their own culture. When Paul says, 'Do not be conformed to this world,' and 'I became all things to all people,' he is not confused; he is calling for a critical balance of two crucial biblical impulses.

There are many ways to describe this tension. We say, Christians are in the world but not of the world. Jesus prays, 'I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world' (John 17:15–16). They are in the world — that's the indigenous principle. They are not of the world — that's the pilgrim principle.

SEPARATION AND PARTICIPATION

Or we say, Christians should be separate from the world and yet participate in the world. 2 Corinthians 6:17 says, 'Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing.' That's the pilgrim principle. But in another place, Paul limits the meaning of separation and says,

'I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people — not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world ... since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality...' (1 Corinthians 5:9–11)

That's the indigenous principle. Don't go out of the world. One impulse is separation, and one impulse is participation. Both are crucial.

ADAPTATION AND CONFRONTATION

Or we can speak of the impulse of adaptation and the impulse of confrontation. For example, on the one hand, Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4:11–12,

'Aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands . . . so that you may live properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.' In other words, adapt and don't make waves; do what's fitting and seemingly — live properly (euschemonos). So, Paul prays in 1 Timothy 2:2 'that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.' Quiet, peaceful. That's adaptation.

"...the gospel can and must become indigenous in every (fallen!) culture in the world. It can and must find a home in the culture..."

But on the other hand, Paul has a very different word to say in Ephesians 5:6–11, namely, confrontation. 'The wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not associate with them. . . . Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.' Expose them! This is not going to go down well. Which is why Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:12, 'Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.' That happens when you are 'not conformed' to the world.

- Adaptation and confrontation;
- participation and separation;
- in the world, but not of the world;
- do not be conformed to this world, yet become all things to all people that you might save some;
- be indigenous yet be a pilgrim.

I think what will help us navigate our way through these waters between excessive adaptation and excessive confrontation — overemphasis on the indigenous or the pilgrim principle — will be to understand the biblical roots of this tension. 🗝️

DESIRING GOD

This excerpt is taken with permission from a sermon by John Piper from the Desiring God website, www.desiringGod.org. © Desiring God Foundation.



Read more: eu.aimint.org/donotbeconformed



1-3 APRIL
TIMO: MINISTRY IN ACTION



MEET THE BRANSFORDS

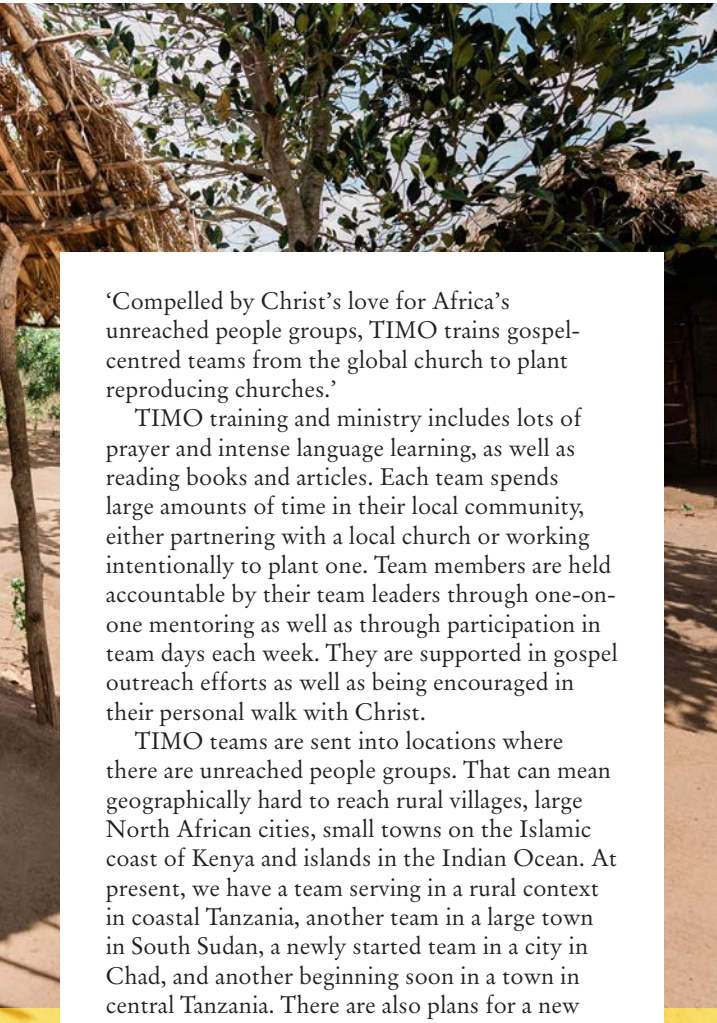
Chris and Beka both grew up in Africa with a desire to share the good news of Christ with unreached African people groups. Having led teams on the Indian Ocean Islands for 15 years, they are passionate about the role and importance of teams. Their work now includes coordinating AIM's Training in Ministry Outreach (TIMO) teams.

WHAT IS TIMO?

TIMO was birthed on a napkin in Edinburgh, Scotland, in the early 1980's, as Dr. Ralph Winter (a well known missiologist) and Dr. Dick Anderson (a former director of AIM) talked about mission strategy.

Out of that conversation came TIMO's first team, based in Kenya, in 1985. 35 years later, we've just started our 64th team in Chad.

Standing for Training in Ministry Outreach, TIMO brings together training and ministry. A new missionary joins a small, multi-cultural team with experienced team leaders and commits to living for two to three years in a particular outreach location. During those years they are trained for mission while simultaneously being involved in ministry among Africans. The goals of TIMO are summed up in its mission statement:



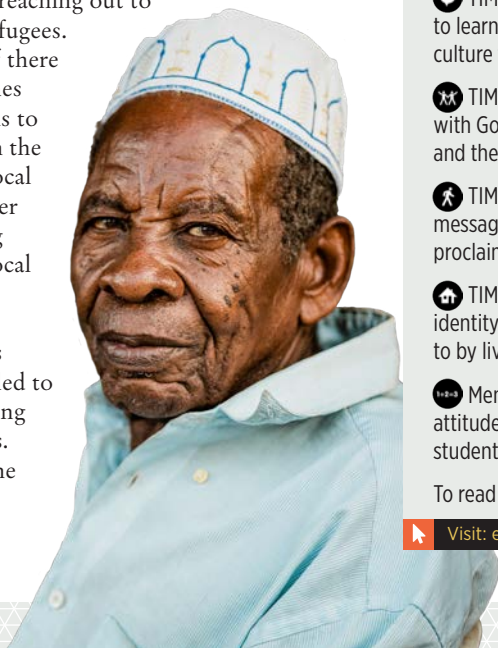
‘Compelled by Christ’s love for Africa’s unreached people groups, TIMO trains gospel-centred teams from the global church to plant reproducing churches.’

TIMO training and ministry includes lots of prayer and intense language learning, as well as reading books and articles. Each team spends large amounts of time in their local community, either partnering with a local church or working intentionally to plant one. Team members are held accountable by their team leaders through one-on-one mentoring as well as through participation in team days each week. They are supported in gospel outreach efforts as well as being encouraged in their personal walk with Christ.

TIMO teams are sent into locations where there are unreached people groups. That can mean geographically hard to reach rural villages, large North African cities, small towns on the Islamic coast of Kenya and islands in the Indian Ocean. At present, we have a team serving in a rural context in coastal Tanzania, another team in a large town in South Sudan, a newly started team in a city in Chad, and another beginning soon in a town in central Tanzania. There are also plans for a new team to begin in Belgium, reaching out to African immigrants and refugees.

In any given location, if there are any believers or churches in that area, TIMO’s goal is to partner with them to reach the unreached. If there is no local church, our hope and prayer is to move toward planting reproducing, indigenous local churches.

TIMO is looking for dedicated Christ-followers who are ready to be discipled to go and make disciples among Africa’s unreached peoples. Could it be you or someone you know? 🙋



1 APR • WEDNESDAY

Give thanks for the remarkable ways that God has worked through men and women serving on TIMO teams over the last 35 years. We stand amazed at the way he has used, and continues to use, imperfect people for his perfect plans.

2 APR • THURSDAY

Give thanks that people from the worldwide church continue to be compelled by God’s love to go and serve on TIMO teams in some of the most difficult places in Africa. Give thanks for sending churches who generously send missionaries to Africa.

3 APR • FRIDAY

Pray that the Lord of the Harvest would raise up more workers to go and share about all that Jesus has done for them among unreached people groups in Africa. Pray that we would have the joy of seeing more teams established and fruitful in their ministry.

TIMO VALUES

Each TIMO team is unique in their approach to outreach, but they hold shared core values.

- ✝️ Reaching the lost. TIMO works where the gospel is not already being proclaimed.
- 🗣️ TIMO believes it is critical to learn the local language and culture to proclaim the gospel.
- 🤝 TIMO is about relationships: with God, team, local believers and the host community.
- 🗣️ TIMO is about living the message: living and verbally proclaiming the same message.
- 🏠 TIMO teams share the identity of those they minister to by living among them.
- 🎓 Members bring learner attitudes: they come as students rather than experts.

To read more of TIMO’s values:

➡️ Visit: eu.aimint.org/go/timo



4-10 APRIL OUTREACH & EVANGELISM



WEEKENDFOCUS 4-5 APRIL

Pray for Petera and Francine, Malagasy missionaries who have joined the work among the Antakarana, as they settle in to life and ministry on Nosy Mitsio and adjust to their new surroundings. Pray that they will work well with the Orners and that both couples would be a support to each other.

6 APR • MONDAY

Pray for the Orner family as they return from home assignment this month. Pray that all the logistical details would go smoothly and that they would enjoy reuniting with their village and community on Nosy Mitsio.

7 APR • TUESDAY

AIM has plans to send a Harvest team to Nosy Mitsio later this year. As well as sharing the gospel with the Antakarana people in new ways, this team will train missionaries in farming techniques.

A group of people, some wearing hats and carrying bags, are gathered on a sandy beach. In the background, a small boat with a blue canopy is partially visible. The ocean is a vibrant blue, and the sky is clear. The scene is set on a tropical island, likely Nosy Mitsio in Madagascar.

SERVING TOGETHER

Steve Orner shares about ministry among the Antakarana following the completion of the TIMO team on the island of Nosy Mitsio in Madagascar.

Our family were the only AIM team members to return to Nosy Mitsio after our TIMO team finished, so we were keen to establish partnerships. A survey of churches in the city of Ambilobe, a city on the mainland where many Antakarana people live and do business, revealed that the churches have a heart for outreach but have not felt equipped to begin ministry. We visit Ambilobe frequently for supplies, so we have been able to meet and work with them. Last year we connected a church in Ambilobe with a church in Nosy Be (another island off Madagascar). A group of musicians came to Ambilobe to teach on worship and the importance of using the local dialects of unreached peoples. They were able to train the church as well as to write 17 original worship songs and record them to be used for outreach.

In December 2018 a Malagasy couple, Petera and Francine, who are from a different people group, joined us for a month to build relationships and learn about ministry on Nosy Mitsio. After their time with us they returned to their hometown and started to raise support to prepare to join us as long term missionaries. They should be part of our team and settled in Nosy Mitsio by the time you read this article. We are excited about the things that God has done and is continuing to do among the Antakarana. 🇲🇵

8 APR • WEDNESDAY

Petera and Francine are seeking to establish a schools ministry on Nosy Mitsio. Pray that the work they do with young people would plant a hunger for Jesus among the children on Nosy Mitsio.

9 APR • THURSDAY

Pray for church partnerships in the city of Ambilobe. Pray that the believers there would grow a passion to reach the Antakarana people living in their city and a wider vision to reach people who have yet to hear about Jesus.

10 APR • FRIDAY

In July a team from a church in Tennessee plans to visit for a short time to support and encourage the team on Nosy Mitsio. Pray for logistics and travel and that it would be an effective time for everyone.



WHY SERVE ON A TEAM?

Simon and Sue French look back on their experiences serving on a TIMO team among the Datooga in Tanzania. After the team ended, they stayed to serve the new churches until 2018.

Discussing what to wear to a traditional wedding, having group worship times, or working together to get a vehicle dug out of the mud were just a few of the shared experiences we had whilst serving as part of a team in Tanzania. Thinking back to our team, three words come to mind – fellowship, support and togetherness.

HOW DO WE LIVE HERE?

Our team was led by a Tanzanian couple who had lived and served among the Datooga for a number of years. This meant that we, as team members, benefited from having leaders who understood both the customs and culture of the Datooga, as well as the wider Tanzanian culture. Serving under Tanzanians meant the team gained cultural insights rapidly, and possibly to a deeper level than might have been the case had the team been under different leadership. We appreciated the insights that our team leaders had on local issues as diverse as how to cook bread on an open fire, to how to conduct ourselves when we visited the village chairman.

“They saw community happening in a group of Christians from a range of cultures and nationalities.”

Being on a team meant our neighbours saw first-hand how we worked together and related to each other. They saw community happening in a group of Christians from a range of cultures and nationalities. It also meant we met regularly, allowing time for knowledge to be shared and questions discussed. Language learning was a necessary focus initially. Having team leaders who were fluent in both the local language and Swahili, Tanzania’s national language, was helpful as we adapted to living in a country where most people spoke more than one language.



IRON SHARPENS IRON

‘As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.’ Proverbs 27:17

We learnt that in some areas our worldview and cultural behaviour differed from those of our fellow team members. We worked together with our team leaders to bridge those gaps. As we got used to overcoming cultural issues within our team, we acquired skills which we were then able to use in the wider community as we adapted to living among the Datooga. As with any group of people, we did not always agree about everything, but having a commitment to the team meant that any issues could be addressed together as we held a common set of values.

Our team officially finished in 2007 but we stayed in contact with our fellow team members for the following eleven years that we were in Tanzania. Throughout that time when we were faced with a cultural question that required a sensitive and considered response or we had a difficult decision to make, we knew just what to do. We contacted our former team leader for advice! As a traditional African proverb says, ‘If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.’ 🦋

THE FRENCHES

Simon and Sue served on a TIMO team in Tanzania from 2005 until 2007.





11-17 APRIL
TEAMWORK



WEEKENDFOCUS

11-12 APRIL

Pray that this team would develop deep and lasting friendships with local believers and the wider community in Torit. In doing this, pray the team would model gospel proclamation in every aspect of life, grow in their faith and have a greater heart for the lost.

13 APR • MONDAY

Many people in South Sudan struggle with alcohol addiction. Pray that the gospel would break the bonds of addiction and whole families among the Lotukho, Lopit, Laarim and Didinga would come to faith in Jesus.

14 APR • TUESDAY

Pray for the Torit team to build strong relationships with the local churches that they are involved with. Pray that the churches and our team would deepen their heart for the lost around them in South Sudan.



GROW, PARTNER AND GO...

A new TIMO team began ministry in South Sudan at the end of last year. They share about their location and their vision.

Torit is a cosmopolitan town where AIM's partner church, the Africa Inland Church South Sudan, has a strong presence. Located on lands traditionally inhabited by the Lotukho people group, many different peoples now live there, with groups becoming increasingly intertwined. But in the hills surrounding the town live many distinct and unreached people groups.

The new TIMO team is made up of four North Americans, David, Tessa, Love and Melissa. Together with the team leaders, Troy and Bekah Sammons, they have a goal to 'grow, partner, and go,' a slogan that was created during their orientation week. The team hopes to grow in their relationship with Jesus and in their heart for and understanding of mission, bond and partner with the local church, and together go out to the unreached of South Sudan.

With this goal to 'go' in mind, the team live in basic mudbrick and steel houses with water catchment and small solar power units, similar to the housing they would encounter in the surrounding villages. They are living on the same site as a local family from the church to help assimilate them to life with minimal privacy and to have readily available language and culture teachers. As they grow in language and culture they will explore partnering with local ministry opportunities in the town as well as pray for opportunities to reach the nearby unreached communities with the gospel. 🌍

15 APR • WEDNESDAY

Give thanks for the opportunities the team will have in Torit to meet people from different people groups. Pray that this will lead to people from traditionally gospel resistant groups encountering the good news.

16 APR • THURSDAY

Pray for the local family living close to the TIMO team, that they would be encouraged through their relationships with the team. Pray that they would support the team well, particularly as they help with language and culture.

17 APR • FRIDAY

Pray from Philippians 3:7-9 that the team would 'gain Christ above all else...' Pray that they would be able to find joy in their new circumstances, especially when they're missing material comforts and their home culture.



HOW TO SERVE EFFECTIVELY?

How do you run a TIMO team in a creative access location? We asked one of our former creative access workers and TIMO team leaders to share their thoughts.

Simply put, TIMO has to take a different form in creative access locations. Individual cross-cultural workers have to be creative about their presence in such places. The challenge is multiplied when applying for visas for a group of people and each location has different requirements.

We served in our country as business people and were fortunate that our team members were able to get visas as language students. That can look suspicious when some of the

team are way beyond the normal student age range, but God opens doors as he wills.

If team members are considering longer term work in a creative access context, they need to find some sort of occupation that is locally acceptable. With that in mind, there is an extra element to the TIMO curriculum which helps the team think through potential work options, depending on each individual's gifts and skill set. The TIMO curriculum also provides training in what is involved in developing a business plan and setting up a business in another country.

BALANCING ACT

Leading a TIMO team is typically a full time role. You need to find and furnish homes for each team member, walk them through culture shock, government bureaucracy, health issues, as well as how to learn a language and interact with the curriculum of the programme. Often new team members don't know a word of the



“But what a privilege to be a coach and mentor to a group that has a heart to serve him...”

local language, and need someone with them to buy the simplest thing. But what a privilege to be a coach and mentor to a group that has a heart to serve him and to grow in their ability to do so in a cross-cultural context!

The challenge for us was that we already had full time jobs running a business. We struggled with the tension of feeling we were never doing either role well and we looked at ways of trying to pare down what we did without losing the quality. God is gracious and we saw him at work through our business, and through our team members. It was an exciting time to be in that location and see evidence of the wind of his Spirit at work and bringing new life.

TEAM ADVANTAGES

A significant advantage of leading a team is that you have the potential for multiplying your impact in the community. We had people accessing our business services who started to show interest in spiritual things. We were often able to connect them with team members to spend time with them, and maybe help them with their language learning. In some cases, the team had the privilege of seeing them become followers of Jesus. One such client not only became a follower of Jesus herself but has been instrumental in pointing others in the same direction as well. Although our TIMO team has ended, we know that many of the contacts made through our business, and relationships with local people that team members developed themselves, are still in their prayers, and the prayers of their networks of prayer partners. And with social media, relationships can continue from afar. 🌍



18 APRIL - 1 MAY
CREATIVE ACCESS



WEEKENDFOCUS

18-19 APRIL

The harvest field is plentiful. Pray for wisdom for those in leadership to know where to place new teams, and creativity to find acceptable ways to have a presence and be a witness in creative access locations.

20 APR • MONDAY

There are still millions of people in Africa who don't know Jesus and in order for us to be effective in reaching them, we need experienced people who are willing to lead others. Without team leaders we are not able to start teams, so please pray for more team leaders for creative access locations.

21 APR • TUESDAY

Pray that AIM's regional leaders would have wisdom as to who they could ask to take on team leader roles. Pray that those who God is calling to lead a team would recognise and trust that it is God who equips them for the task. Pray that they will have the courage to step out in faith into new roles.

22 APR • WEDNESDAY

Pray for the many people who heard about Jesus through the TIMO team mentioned in the previous article. May God continue to work in their hearts, convincing them of the truth of what they have heard!

23 APR • THURSDAY

Praise the Lord that three members of the TIMO team are returning to work in the same country. Pray that God would equip and empower them for their new roles and continue to help them as they improve in the local language and show Jesus' love to those among whom they live.

24 APR • FRIDAY

Praise the Lord that many relationships developed by the TIMO team are continuing from afar, thanks to the internet. Pray for effective ways to share truth by this means and for wisdom and diligence for those who are trading messages in this way.

WEEKENDFOCUS

25-26 APRIL

Pray for a local Christian leader who boldly proclaims the truth, despite having been imprisoned for doing so. Pray for his wife and family to know a deep sense of God's presence with them through difficult times.

27 APR • MONDAY

Praise the Lord for his people who are present in creative access locations. Pray for divine appointments as they seek to be light in a dark place. Pray that they would have the courage to continue when the darkness seems overwhelming.

28 APR • TUESDAY

Pray for those who have become followers of Jesus, that they would be established in the faith and that they would stand firm as they experience persecution. Pray that they would know the support of other believers.

29 APR • WEDNESDAY

Whilst living in a creative access context, we met many women who were oppressed, trapped in difficult circumstances because of their place in society and the local religion. Pray that women would find freedom and hope in Jesus.

30 APR • THURSDAY

Give thanks for past and present TIMO leaders in creative access contexts who are willing to balance the needs of their own businesses and to support the team members in their care. Pray they would be able to take time to refresh and restore themselves as well as their team.

1 MAY • FRIDAY

Pray for those in creative access contexts working to develop successful businesses alongside their ministry objectives. As they navigate the complexities of being self-employed in a foreign language, pray they would be able to effectively balance both their ministry and business priorities.

IN THIS CITY

The Lord appeared to Paul in a vision while in Corinth saying 'Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.'
Acts 18:9-10

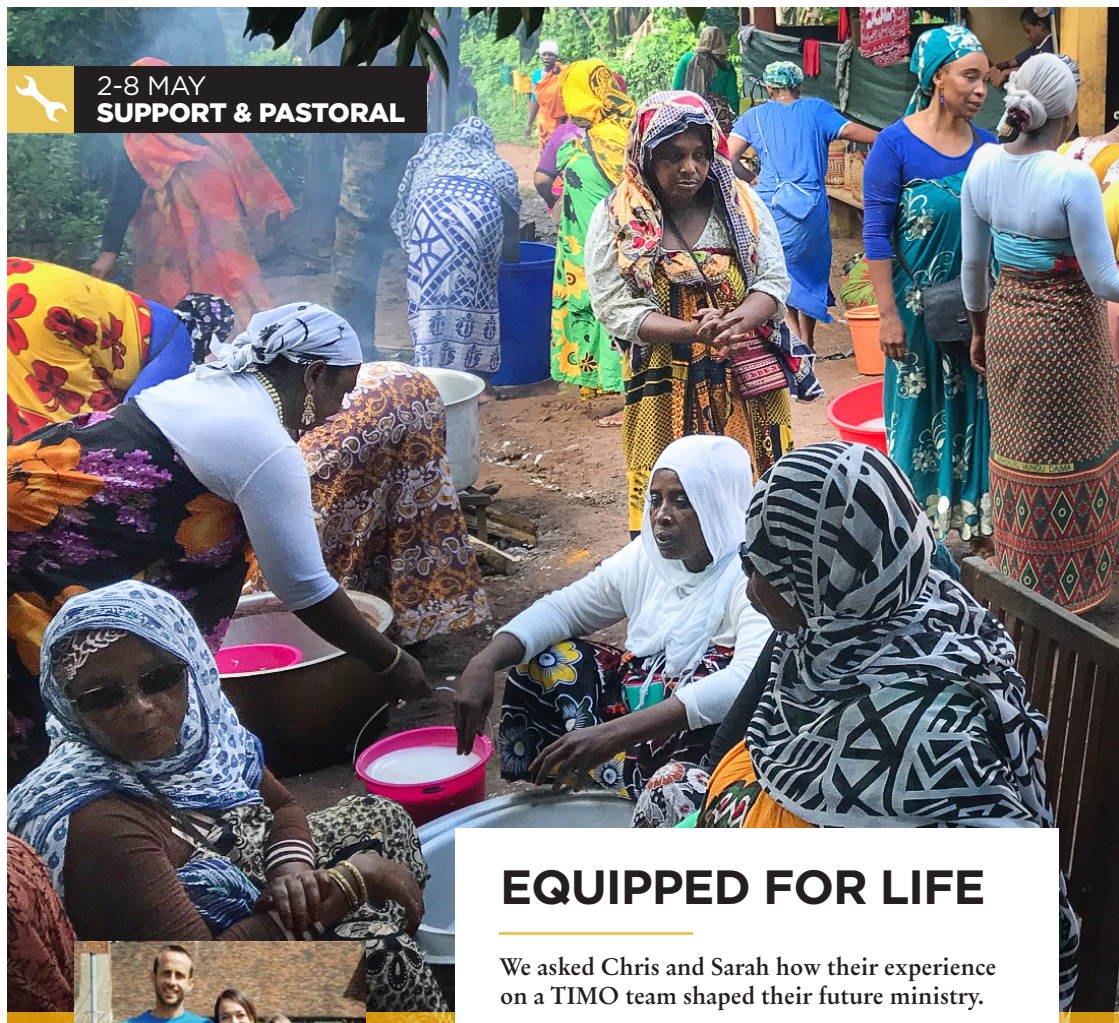


On our TIMO team, we had a team member who had never successfully learned another language before. He was, however, committed to the programme and forced himself to get out regularly and practise what he was learning with local people. He would go and sit in the tiny local shops and chat with the staff. Not only did he surprise himself with how well his language developed, but he had amazing opportunities to share spiritual truth. He discovered his gifting as an evangelist, and his warm friendly personality opened many doors for him in the local community. He had the privilege of seeing some shop staff become followers of Jesus.





2-8 MAY
SUPPORT & PASTORAL



EQUIPPED FOR LIFE

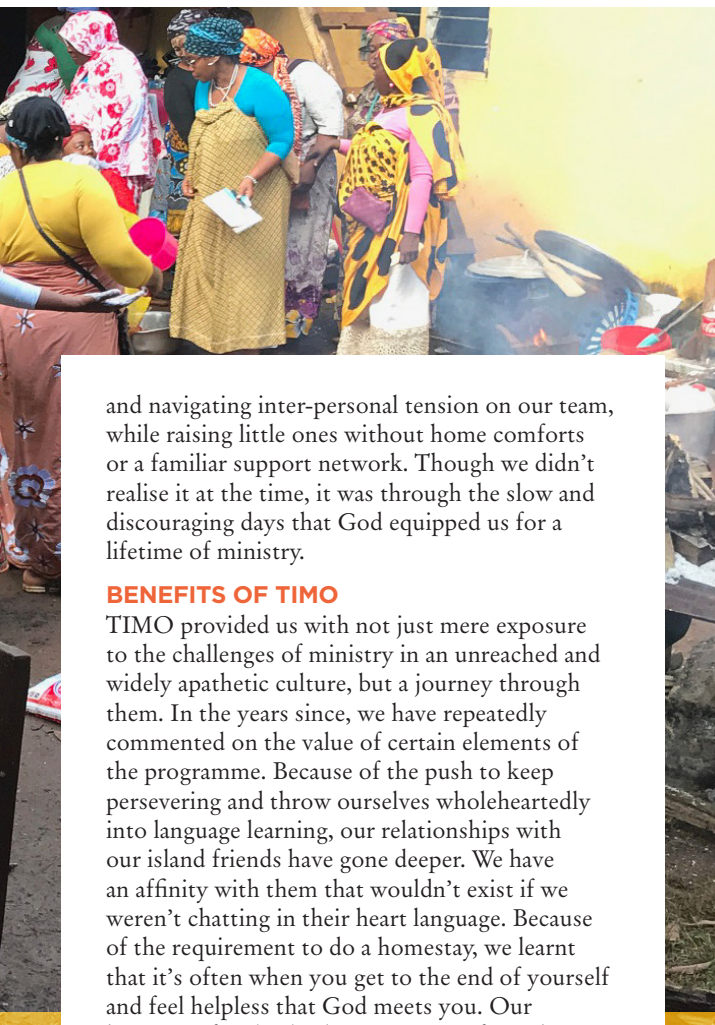
We asked Chris and Sarah how their experience on a TIMO team shaped their future ministry.

Ten years ago, we landed on the tiny island of Mayotte. With two exhausted toddlers in our arms and newbie enthusiasm to learn and serve, we embarked on our TIMO adventure. Of course, it didn't feel like an adventure for the duration of the two years. Yes, there were highlights, like realising my neighbour was sharing her secret fears with me, laughing at jokes in another language, or sitting alone in a sea of women and being mocked but being confident that the Spirit was with me. But then there were the mundane days; dripping with sweat, mopping floors, trying not to snap at each other, reviewing language cards and wishing we could do something 'useful' in the community. Those days didn't often feel exciting or noteworthy. It was a slow struggle of forging our identity in an alien culture, figuring out how to share real truth in a way that would be relevant



THE POWERS

Chris and Sarah served in Mayotte from 2010-2019, the first few years of which were on a TIMO team. Last year they, and their four children, moved from Mayotte to Nairobi to work in AIM's Southern Region office.



and navigating inter-personal tension on our team, while raising little ones without home comforts or a familiar support network. Though we didn't realise it at the time, it was through the slow and discouraging days that God equipped us for a lifetime of ministry.

BENEFITS OF TIMO

TIMO provided us with not just mere exposure to the challenges of ministry in an unreached and widely apathetic culture, but a journey through them. In the years since, we have repeatedly commented on the value of certain elements of the programme. Because of the push to keep persevering and throw ourselves wholeheartedly into language learning, our relationships with our island friends have gone deeper. We have an affinity with them that wouldn't exist if we weren't chatting in their heart language. Because of the requirement to do a homestay, we learnt that it's often when you get to the end of yourself and feel helpless that God meets you. Our homestay family also became some of our dearest friends and one of them grew to love stories of Jesus. Because of the encouragement to always do things in a contextualised way, we are more aware of how our own cultural baggage can hinder our witness. And, because of teammates who walked through difficulties with us and shared their hearts with us, we appreciate the importance of close community.

Our new positions with the Southern Region office feel like a world away from village life in Mayotte. Yet, while the region is diverse and each member's context has its own unique challenges, we feel we are better equipped to put ourselves in their shoes because of our years on the island. In our Regional Administrative Officer and Member Care roles, supporting workers so that they can thrive and their work can continue is our primary goal. 🙏

WEEKENDFOCUS

2-3 MAY

Pray that Jesus would make himself known to those who we grew to love on Mayotte and were able to share with, in dreams or through others. Pray in particular for our homestay dad, Sarah's language helper, our neighbours, and the young people who came to our community project.

4 MAY • MONDAY

Chris continues to be Unit Leader of Mayotte, from a distance. Pray for us to have the right vision for bringing new workers to the island and to balance our priorities well to give enough time to encouraging those who are still living and working there.

5 MAY • TUESDAY

The Southern Region office (where we work and which is confusingly based in Nairobi) is hoping to welcome new staff in the coming months. Pray for unity, clarity of roles and a positive working environment.

6 MAY • WEDNESDAY

Even though we've been living in Nairobi for a while, we are still not finished in the process of transition! Pray for our children to keep adapting well to building friendships in another new culture and for us to know God's peace as we figure out how and with whom to spend our time as we invest in building relationships.

7 MAY • THURSDAY

Praise God for the Africans we are meeting who have a heart and a vision for cross-cultural mission work. Pray that as an office we'd be able to effectively help mobilise many Africans for ministry across the region.

8 MAY • FRIDAY

Pray that God would provide what we need as we raise money to buy a car. This is important as it will enable us to navigate the dirt roads and hectic traffic here safely.



MEET KATHRYN

'Where other lords beside thee hold their unhindered sway, where forces that defied thee defy thee still today, with none to heed their crying for life and love and light, unnumbered souls are dying and pass into the night.' I can't sing that verse of Frank Houghton's 'Facing A Task Unfinished' dry-eyed because of how it describes the millions of people in our world who are living and dying without hope, because nobody has told them how to come to God and be saved. What can we do about this? We need to either go and tell them ourselves, or send others to do it.

DOWN TO THE DETAILS

Although I don't serve overseas, I love using my administrative skills to be involved in sending others to those unreached with the gospel. Missionaries are sent to the front lines of the spiritual battle, and nobody should be sent there unprepared, unequipped or unsupported. In the Personnel department of our Nottingham office we help AIM's missionaries to prepare for service and then support them throughout their ministry, right until the point where they finish their time with AIM.

As Personnel Administrator I am involved in the practicalities of how we do this. Tasks such as arranging insurance, updating the database, or answering emails could be done in any office, but knowing that doing these well frees up our missionaries to focus on sharing the gospel gives me a real passion for my work. I'm also able to serve our supporters by giving them fuel for prayer through updating missionaries' information on our website. Generally, my job is about getting the right information to the right people so that they can play their part as best as they can – whether they are missionaries on the field, my fellow staff supporting them from the office, or those supporting all of us in prayer.

WEEKENDFOCUS

9-10 MAY

Pray that as a Personnel team we will serve our missionaries with wisdom and love as we prepare, equip and support them in their ministry. Pray that we would be able to prioritise our many tasks well to ensure we give missionaries the care they need when they need it.

11 MAY • MONDAY

Once new missionaries have been accepted into AIM, the Personnel team works with them to find the right assignment. Pray that God will help us and our regional colleagues to discern the best placements for new members.

12 MAY • TUESDAY

To help missionaries prepare for life in Africa, we run an orientation course for them before they leave. Pray that the information new members are given on this course would remain with them and be useful to them when they are serving overseas.

13 MAY • WEDNESDAY

Pray for our new missionaries as they prepare for life on the spiritual front line. Pray they would be able to take in all they need to process before leaving the UK so that they would feel ready to begin their new ministry.

14 MAY • THURSDAY

When God calls a family to serve overseas our goal is to help prepare and support both parents and children. Pray for families considering service in Africa, and ask God to help us as together we work through the implications for all family members.

15 MAY • FRIDAY

Beginning life in a new place, living in a new culture, and building new relationships, all while learning a new language, can be exhausting. Pray that during their first months of ministry in Africa missionaries will look to God as their strength and anchor among all the change and transitions.

WEEKENDFOCUS

16-17 MAY

'Church' can look different in Africa: A gathering under a tree, a service in a building, maybe a meeting in secret. Pray that, however they meet, local believers and missionaries will be encouraged by worshipping God together with their brothers and sisters in Christ.

18 MAY • MONDAY

Life on the mission field is difficult, and missionaries can also face unexpected crises and suffering as they deal with spiritual battles. Pray that as we do what we can to help missionaries navigate these hardships, we will do it with wisdom and sensitivity.

19 MAY • TUESDAY

Part of the Personnel team's role is to provide our supporters with up-to-date, meaningful prayer information, including keeping missionaries' web pages current. Pray we will communicate well to fuel the prayers of those supporting our missionaries.

20 MAY • WEDNESDAY

Many of our missionaries return to the UK for short spells of leave or home assignment over the summer. Pray this time in their home country would be spiritually and emotionally refreshing, particularly meeting up with family, friends and supporting churches.

21 MAY • THURSDAY

Pray that missionaries on home leave would have opportunities to connect well with their sending and supporting churches. Pray for good times of pastoral care, as they update churches about their ministry and mission.

22 MAY • FRIDAY

After living on the mission field, moving back to their home culture can be a challenge for missionaries finishing service. Pray that those permanently returning will be supported well as they re-settle into life in their sending countries and seek God for what comes next.

COULD YOU HELP US?

AIM's role is to help and support the local church in sending missionaries to those who have yet to know about Jesus.

Often this involves a lot of administrative work that is not glamorous but is essential to ensure that missionaries thrive. The burden of practical considerations, like ensuring medical cover is in place, is taken on by Kathryn and our Personnel department, freeing up time for both the local church and their missionaries to focus on gospel ministry. Could you help sustain this vital work?

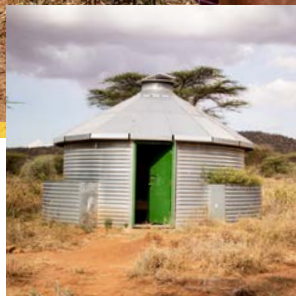
To partner with AIM financially visit eu.aimint.org/give, or contact our Nottingham office on **0115 9838120**.

For prayer information from the Nottingham office, download our prayer letter available at: eu.aimint.org/officeprayer.





23-29 MAY
OUTREACH & EVANGELISM



WHERE IT ALL BEGAN...

A missionary who has recently returned to the UK shares their mission story with us, and how it began with joining a TIMO team in Samburu, Kenya.

STEPPING OUT IN FAITH

I'll never forget the first time I went into my new home in Samburu, Kenya. As the sun began to set one Sunday evening, the team dropped me and my housemate off at the tin can that we would call home for the next two years. Swathes of curious neighbours, at that point strangers, had come to see who these strange white people were who had come to live there. After quickly unloading our things, the rest of the team said their farewells and were off. We had no phone network or internet connection, no idea how to find the path to any of our teammates' homes, and about six words of the local language at this time. If anything were to happen in the night like a snake bite or illness then we had no idea what to do. Despite being surrounded by people, I felt incredibly lonely, almost abandoned.



FROM STRANGERS TO FRIENDS

Well, we survived the night and strangers became friends, paths down the hill became familiar and communication in the local language became possible. But I never forgot that feeling. I realised that too often I live in such safety that there was never any need to depend upon God or to pray. But boy did I pray that night! Being part of TIMO enabled me to be stretched and challenged in ways I would never have agreed to if I had known about them beforehand! But that's the wisdom of God because I grew and learnt so much through those challenges. I learnt how important prayer is. I learnt how to depend upon God. I learnt how to be creative in making connections with people with the barest amount of language. I learnt how important community is and to be present in the important cultural and family moments there. I learnt how to share the gospel in culturally relevant ways. The list goes on and on.

A lot of these values and lessons run through the core of TIMO and its goals and values. Being part of that team has made such a difference to what I went on to afterwards. I joined another team, teaching English on the islands in the Indian Ocean and, whilst I learnt a lot there too, I kept coming back to the values that we had as a team in Kenya. They had become ingrained in me as I sought to make connections with people, took the posture of a learner, rather than a teacher, and discovered how to share the gospel through rich relationships in a culturally comprehensible way.

LIVING BY FAITH

As I go on from there, settling back into the UK, I realise how much the temptation is there to feel safe. But if I'm safe and comfortable all the time, then I won't grow; I won't realise the potential that I have as God's image bearer with God's message. I need to continue to step out in faith even as I return to work in the UK. For this reason, I am so thankful that I was part of a TIMO team in rural Kenya. 🙏

WEEKENDFOCUS

23-24 MAY

Pray for Chris and Beka Bransford as they develop the TIMO curriculum, recruit and train new leaders and as they seek to partner with the African church in this work. Pray that they would be encouraged by the stories of fruit being borne from the TIMO teams which are currently active.

25 MAY • MONDAY

Pray for Martin and Joy Koch as they continue the work among the Samburu. Pray for clear communication and faithful teaching of the truth as they share the salvation message with those around them.

26 MAY • TUESDAY

Pray that more Samburu men would come to believe the gospel and join the local church. Pray that God would raise up leaders from among them to lead the church faithfully.

27 MAY • WEDNESDAY

Pray for the Samburu men, women and young people who have made a declaration of faith and been baptised. Pray that they would keep growing in their faith.

28 MAY • THURSDAY

Pray for Rachel*, a new believer on the islands, that she would be filled with joy in knowing Jesus and that she would share her faith with her family. Pray too for Henry*, another believer on the islands, that he would continue to disciple those who have come to faith through his witness. Pray for wisdom, perseverance and courage.

29 MAY • FRIDAY

Pray for my former TIMO teammates, each serving in other work across Africa, northern, central, eastern and southern regions, that they would apply what they learnt in TIMO to their current work and be able to share the truth with people around them.

*Names changed for security reasons.



AN IMPACT FOR FUTURE MINISTRY

Steve Auld, who is now serving as a pastor, reflects on how his experience on a TIMO team shapes his current ministry in Belfast.

When I take a few moments to reflect on the experience of our TIMO team my heart just fills with thankfulness. We spent from 2009-2011 in northern Madagascar and those years have had a profound and shaping impact on the ministry I am engaged in today. Back in Madagascar if you'd asked me, 'where could you see yourself in ten years?' I'm nearly certain my answer would not have been 'in Belfast city centre as a pastor'. Yet in the providence of God here I am serving as the pastor of Great Victoria Street Baptist Church with a thankful heart for the impact that TIMO has had upon me.

My time in Madagascar shaped my ministry in several ways but here are perhaps three of the most significant:

1. IT HAS ENGRAVED THE NEEDS OF UNREACHED PEOPLES ON MY HEART

As a local church pastor, it can be easy to let your vision shrink down to just your own little corner of the vineyard. We can easily forget that we are part of something huge! The shockwaves of Christ's death and resurrection are still moving outwards to all peoples and we still need people to cross cultures to take that good news to the unreached peoples of this world. One of our defining values as a church is summarised as 'going to our city and the world with the gospel' and I am so thankful for how our time among the unreached has indelibly left its mark.

2. IT HAS TAUGHT ME TO TRUST THE RAW POWER OF THE GOSPEL, NOT IN THE POWER OF MY ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE IT

I remember about ten months into our time in Madagascar having some wonderful opportunities to share the gospel with the unreached people group we were living among. The problem was my language ability in this new place was still so basic. I'm someone who loves communication; I enjoy well crafted sentences and appreciate well chosen words. In Madagascar I had none of that to draw on, my powers of articulation and persuasion

were no more! I did my best in my broken, stilted new language but my gospel presentation was very basic. I remember thinking to myself, 'This is ridiculous, how is anyone ever going to get saved through this seemingly foolish message I'm trying to communicate?' And at that time God encouraged me through the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:21, 'It pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.' It is the power inherent in the gospel that saves, not the power of my presentation of it. This has been an important lesson as now I preach every week and hope in that power.

3. IT HAS TAUGHT ME TO DEPEND ON AND TRUST IN GOD WHEN I'M TOTALLY OUT OF MY DEPTH

Time and time again in Madagascar we felt so out of our depth. Dropped into the middle of an unknown village, trying to learn an unknown language and culture, faced with new challenges almost every day. All of this was used to cultivate a confidence in God that he can be trusted even when we feel so weak and so inadequate for what he calls us to. The lessons forged through some of those challenges have never left me and I am thankful to God for what he built in us during those days.

CONSIDER TIMO

So if you were to ask me would I recommend a TIMO team to someone in my congregation? The answer is yes, yes and yes, because of all the above reasons and many more that I could have listed. I have already commended this path to members of our congregation and will continue to do so in the future. 🌍





CHAD

Although it is the fifth largest country on the continent, much of northern Chad lies in the Sahara, so the population density is only about 20 persons per square mile. Most of the population relies on subsistence agriculture. Chad joined the ranks of oil-producing countries in 2003, raising hopes that the revenues generated would improve the country's economy.

Roughly 54% of the country is Muslim, 20% Roman Catholic, 14% Protestant, 10% Animist, and 3% Atheist. Much of the outworking of these religious beliefs reflect Chad's animist heritage, with animist ideas in particular blended into a form of cultural Islam. Muslims live primarily in the north and the Christians live primarily in the south, with religious freedom guaranteed in the constitution.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF CHAD

Chad is a landlocked country in north central Africa that has been inhabited since the 7th millennium BC. The formation of states began across central Chad in the 1st century AD.

Most of these states began as kingdoms, where the king was considered divine and endowed with temporal and spiritual powers. Although many states rose and fell, the most important and durable of the empires were Kanem-Bornu, Baguirmi, and Ouaddai.

Colonial rule began in 1900 when the French won a decisive battle and absorbed Chad into French Equatorial Africa, with the country only being governed as Chad from 1920. Chad did not flourish under colonial rule. Instead the French seemed to perceive Chad primarily as a source of raw cotton and untrained labour to be used in the more productive colonies to the south.

On August 11, 1960, Chad earned independence. The first president was Francois Tombalbaye. After two years, opposition parties were banned and Tombalbaye established a one-party system. This exacerbated ethnic tension which led to civil war. In 1975, Tombalbaye was overthrown, but the initial popularity of the rebels wasn't sustained and civil war resumed. Today Chad remains plagued by political violence and recurrent attempted coups d'état. As a result it remains one of the poorest and most corrupt countries in the world. 🇸🇩



THE KANEMBU PEOPLE

Today the descendants of one of the original states of Chad, the Kanem-Bornu, are known as the Kanembu people. Along with the Kanuri, a group using a similar language, they live in an area between the shores of Lake Chad and the Sahara. There are stable social structures among the Kanembu. Villages each have a secular chief and a religious leader, who provide material and spiritual guidance to the village. But they are still waiting to hear the good news of Christ.

Currently they practise a form of Islam, mixed with African traditional beliefs, and depend on a form of spiritism to meet daily problems. Spiritual leaders are often sought for their healing power or for their ability to communicate with spirits.

Despite their adherence to Islam, the Kanembu have invited AIM to live among them and to share the gospel with them. We're looking to establish a team based in a town in the centre of their lands. Initially language and culture learning will be a key priority for the team as they seek to establish relationships with their neighbours. Through these friendships the team will be hoping to encounter Kanembu men and women who are searching for truth and willing to engage in Bible study. We're looking for a few extra people to join others who have expressed interest in serving in this way. Is God laying the Kanembu on your heart? 🙏

HERE I AM...

Could you be a part of the work to reach the Kanembu with the gospel?

👉 Visit: eu.aimint.org/k-people

WEEKENDFOCUS

30-31 MAY

Praise God that after three years of praying and asking the Lord to provide labourers for this harvest field, he has responded by calling two families to work among the Kanembu. Pray he would send more members for this team.

1 JUN • MONDAY

Pray for wisdom as we seek to partner with the small local church in the town where we hope to place this team. It is our desire to clearly present ourselves as followers of Christ as we enter into this area. As such we want to identify well with the local church. Pray for a good relationship with the local pastor and elders.

2 JUN • TUESDAY

Pray for wisdom to know how to engage the local community. A government-built cultural centre has sat empty since its creation and we have been invited to teach English, French, sports – practically any activity that will specifically engage the local youth so that they are not drawn into the Islamic extremism that has troubled the region.

3 JUN • WEDNESDAY

Pray for housing for future team members. God has provided us with several contacts in the capital city from the Kanembu region who have offered to help find housing. Pray this process would be straightforward.

4 JUN • THURSDAY

Pray that God would be preparing the hearts of the local Kanembu people to welcome this team, but more importantly to welcome the gospel.

5 JUN • FRIDAY

Pray for the country of Chad, that President Déby would seek to provide the best possible quality of life for all his people. Pray that Chad wouldn't see more years of political upheaval but instead they would see improved economics and living standards.





6-12 JUNE
TESTIMONY



TO BOLDLY SHARE

A former TIMO team member serving in Chad shares what is it like to live there and share the gospel with those around her.

I was squished in the back corner of the full taxi van on our way to the capital of Chad. With plenty of time and a captive audience, I pulled out one of the little storybooks that I always had with me. I began to read the story of creation slowly out loud in Arabic and turned through the pages. The Muslim man sitting next to me began to peer over my shoulder so he could see the little pictures. The majority of the people in the van were also leaning my direction to hear what I was reading, as we travelled the bumpy road. Two rows up was an imam, a Muslim religious leader, and I wasn't sure what he would think

about the Bible story, but I kept reading in obedience to the Spirit's prompting. When I finished, the imam spoke over his shoulder in my direction, "Oh it is good to hear the stories of our prophets." I sat relieved and thankful that Chad was still relatively open to us coming and teaching the Word of God.

As a TIMO team we met weekly to pray and learn together. We shared what conversations the Lord had opened up that week and kept each other accountable to being intentional and bold with our everyday conversations. We read *Any 3* by Mike Shipman, and agreed that we would boldly share the good news of Jesus in some way with anyone, anywhere, at anytime. As was the author's experience, if we didn't share the gospel, people didn't generally come to Christ! The best way to communicate the gospel is through people's heart language, so we prioritised learning Chadian Arabic. We



memorised Scripture and practised praying in Chadian Arabic.

We prayed with our neighbours, but we also frequently and fervently prayed for our neighbours. We knew it was by the grace of God that hearts were softened and had the faith to believe.

One of our friends dreamt that Jesus appeared and told her to follow his testimony. When she asked him what that was, he told her there would be someone who would come and sit on her mat to tell her. There I was sitting on her mat ready to tell her the testimony of Jesus. Without having a lot of language, I was able to share Romans 10:9-12 as we had memorised it as a team. I was thankful God allowed me to participate. During our two years, we were blessed to see some of the first Muslims from our village come to Christ. One of the guys had laughed and told us, "A Muslim becoming a Christian? Impossible! To be Arab is to be Muslim." But after debating, engaging, and reading through the Scriptures, he came to faith, was baptised, and now faithfully shares his new faith with others. 🙏

WEEKENDFOCUS

6-7 JUNE

Pray that the difficulties of learning a new culture and language that come hand in hand with TIMO would seem less significant when team members consider that it's all so that others may come to know the saving power of Jesus Christ, that God may be known and glorified.

8 JUN • MONDAY

Pray for those who are currently considering joining a TIMO team. Pray that they would be excited about the opportunity to become immersed in a different culture and the way that this opens up avenues to share the gospel. Pray that language and culture learning wouldn't be off putting.

9 JUN • TUESDAY

Give thanks that TIMO teams are able to be established in Chad. Just over 50% of the population is Muslim, with varying degrees of adherence. Pray that we would have opportunities to reach more of the unreached Islamic people groups with the gospel.

10 JUN • WEDNESDAY

Pray that TIMO team members serving in Chad would be ready with the words of the gospel, willing to share the good news at anytime. Pray they would be open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit so they may exercise boldness and caution at the right times.

11 JUN • THURSDAY

Give thanks that Chadians are meeting Jesus through dreams and visions. Pray that they would find Christians to talk through their experience with and to be discipled by as they get to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

12 JUN • FRIDAY

Pray that more Chadians would recognise that to be Chadian or to be an Arab doesn't have to mean being a Muslim. Pray that the Holy Spirit would break through those barriers and that the teams working in Chad would have the joy of seeing many Muslim-background believers come to Christ.



13-19 JUNE
TEAMWORK



ON THE ISLANDS

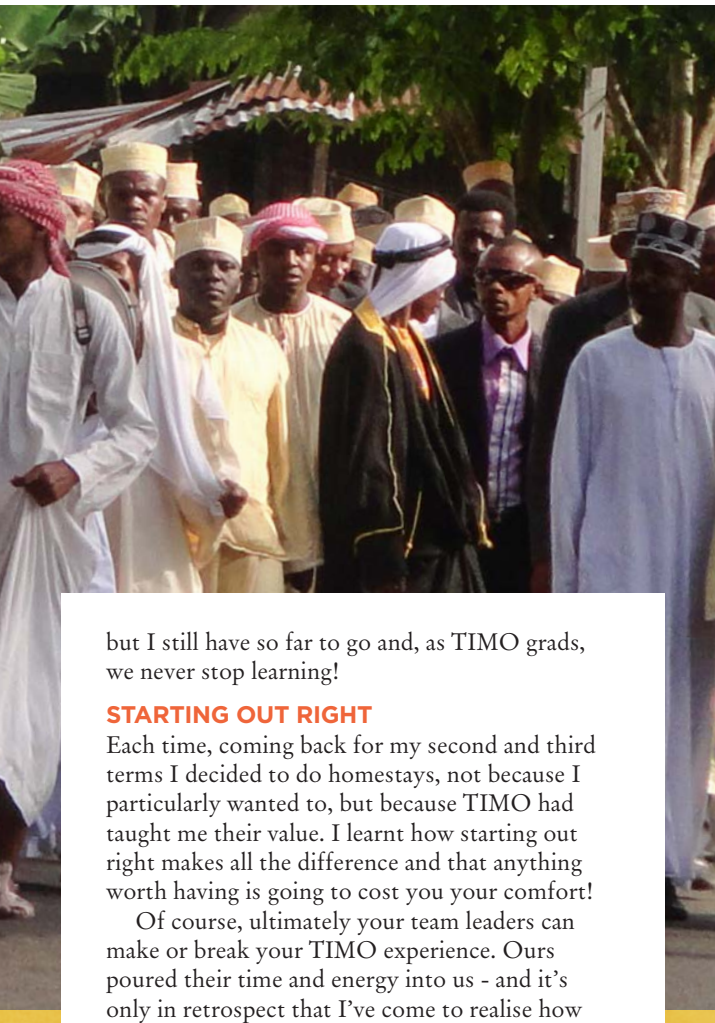
One of our team leaders serving on the Indian Ocean Islands shares how her TIMO experience fortifies her current ministry.

WORTH THE COST OF COMFORT

Although my TIMO experience now seems like a lifetime ago, I have without a doubt been forever shaped by it. It was an incredibly hard two years, and most days I felt like I was floundering way beyond my depth. I certainly spent much of it far beyond my comfort zone. But, I wouldn't trade it for the world.

TIMO set me up for the long haul, and the value it places on language and culture learning, being a life long learner, simple living, living among those we seek to reach, and working as a team, still shape my thinking and ministry today.

I quickly learned that TIMO sets a high bar in all these areas – that first week we learned that language learning would continue, and even more importantly we discovered that language learning happens in the context of relationships. Our first full day set the pattern for us of learning two or three new phrases, practising them till they'd stuck, then heading out the door to try them out on the first 20 people we found who would listen to us. These days, as leadership responsibilities squeeze my time, I struggle to focus on language. After over 10 years on the islands I'm competent,



but I still have so far to go and, as TIMO grads, we never stop learning!

STARTING OUT RIGHT

Each time, coming back for my second and third terms I decided to do homestays, not because I particularly wanted to, but because TIMO had taught me their value. I learnt how starting out right makes all the difference and that anything worth having is going to cost you your comfort!

Of course, ultimately your team leaders can make or break your TIMO experience. Ours poured their time and energy into us - and it's only in retrospect that I've come to realise how much of themselves they gave. We are a product of their sacrifice and service. They challenged and comforted us, modelled to and taught us, and pushed us beyond ourselves. At the beginning, we needed them just to survive, both physically and spiritually, but they were also the ones who showed us the way beyond survival to thriving in what can often be a challenging and hard place.

On the islands we now all work in teams, recognising that we cannot do this work alone. To stay here long term we need one another. Together we achieve goals we couldn't do alone, we sustain and fortify one another's faith, and our unity is part of our witness. And together we remember those verses we each learned during our first week on the islands, 'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up'. Pray with us that the harvest would come this year! 🙏

WEEKENDFOCUS

13-14 JUNE

We have Bible translation projects in each island language. Through Scripture apps and social media, we are seeing widespread access to God's word for the first time. Each app we have released has had over 1,000 downloads! Ask that God would use the Word as a hammer, as a light, and as a double-edged sword.

15 JUN • MONDAY

There are small groups of local believers but many remain bound by fear of what will happen if their families find out about their faith. Pray they would have courage and wisdom in how they express their faith.

16 JUN • TUESDAY

Recently one young believer was kicked out of his family because of his faith. Despite his family's harsh words and actions, he showed them love and forgiveness. Six months later, the family are responding to that love little by little. Pray for this man and his family!

17 JUN • WEDNESDAY

On this island we have seen very little fruit among women, with most showing little to no interest in spiritual things. Pray that God would lead us to women who are not only spiritually hungry, but will share what they are learning with their family and friends.

18 JUN • THURSDAY

We praise God for the significant number of long term workers we have on the islands. However we also have plans for several new teams to start over the next year. Pray that God would raise up new workers and provide for their needs. Particularly pray for mainland African workers.

19 JUN • FRIDAY

Pray that we would see God work as we pray for people in the name of Jesus. Pray that people would be healed and demons would flee, and that God would be revealing himself to Islanders through dreams and visions.



20-30 JUNE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



WEEKENDFOCUS • 20-21 JUNE

MEETING A NEED

A TIMO team leader working among a Muslim people group in the Tanzanian hills shares an item for prayer and praise.

As part of the TIMO programme, our team was encouraged to launch a development project. Our village leadership most keenly felt the need to improve the educational level of our local secondary school. Hill Country High ranked 89th out of 90 secondary schools in our region of Tanzania. Out of 35 seniors who sat for exams, not one qualified for post-secondary education. Our team could see the need, but none of us were professional teachers. What could we do?

On the day we were researching this need, a couple of team members and I joined a study group of first-year biology students. They were two weeks into their course without a teacher, sitting in a circle and trying to read in English the introduction page of their textbook. Almost all our team were university graduates including an ICU nurse and a professional chemist, and even though we weren't trained teachers, we gave it a try.

After our team taught four subjects the next academic year, the Headmaster came to thank me. His school had gone from the bottom of the region to 14th, and the regional government agreed to send qualified Tanzanian teachers to replace our team. God used our team of learners to connect with our village. And losing our teaching jobs freed us up to meet an even more important need... 🌍

22 JUN • MONDAY

Please pray that God would open the hearts and minds of the Hill people to understand and believe that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life. Pray that those sharing the gospel with them would have the joy of seeing many Hill people trust in him as their Lord and Saviour.

23 JUN • TUESDAY

Pray for the few local church groups scattered across this region to be united and see themselves as the body of Christ. Pray for local church leaders to embrace the vision of reaching the Hill people and to be involved in training believers from the Hill people to be disciple makers.

24 JUN • WEDNESDAY

As the team continue to prioritise abiding in Jesus as the foundation of their strategy, pray that they would grow in unity, wisdom, and discernment, and that the Holy Spirit would empower them to fulfil their part in his plan for the Hill people.

25 JUN • THURSDAY

Please pray that the Father would raise up disciples of Jesus from among the Hill people who would catalyse a movement of disciple-making disciples that would spread throughout these Tanzanian hills and beyond.

26 JUN • FRIDAY

For the rest of this month, please join the team in praying bold prayers for the next 18 months. Pray that by the end of 2021, 90% or more of all the Hill people will have heard the gospel and have easy access to a community of disciples who meet regularly to study God's Word.

WEEKENDFOCUS

27-28 JUNE

Pray that by the end of 2021 there would be at least 2% born again disciples of Jesus among the Hill people, meeting together regularly for fellowship, prayer, worship and Bible study. Pray too that among the Hill people believers there would be a unified vision to see their people come to know Christ and obey the Great Commission.

29 JUN • MONDAY

Pray that by the end of their term the team would have trained and equipped leaders from the south, east, north, west and central areas of the Hill people. Pray that these local leaders would be able to disciple believers in their areas and grow them into leaders who can then go on to train and disciple others.

30 JUN • TUESDAY

Pray that by the end of 2021 the team would see networks of disciples of Jesus across all areas of the Hill people, with groups that have multiplied to the 4th generation or beyond and have strong local leaders overseeing them.

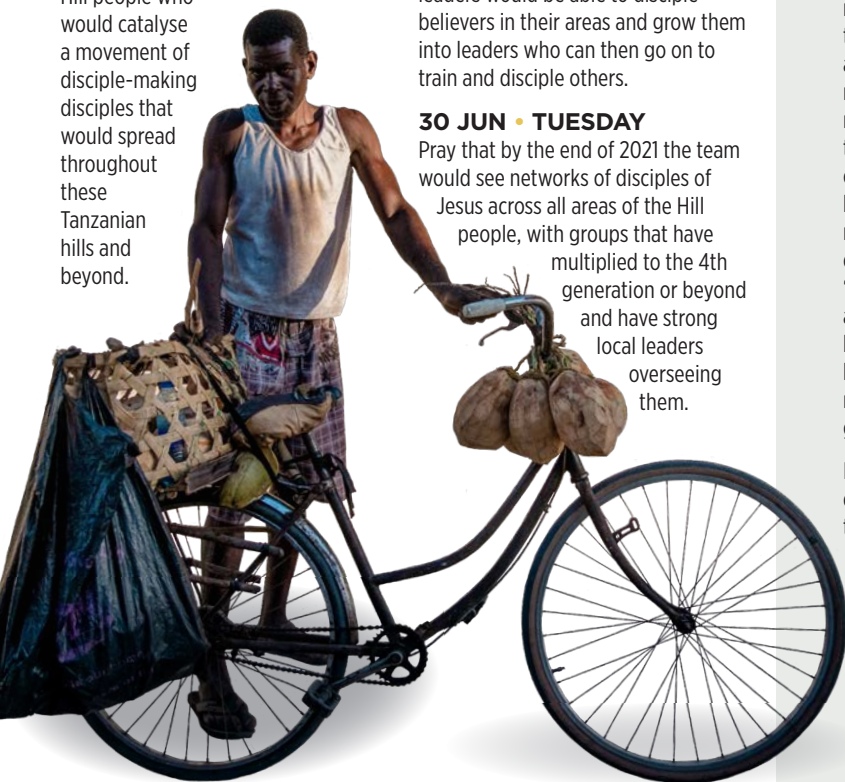
THE RIGHT TIME

We spent our first year among the Hill people learning their language, our second year filling the gaps in their secondary school, but in our third year we were supposed to start telling the stories of Jesus in the mother tongue of the Hills! We wondered how well that would be accepted in a 99.9% Muslim village.

After two years of learning and sharing, our team only had one real disciple, a man who had come to Jesus for deliverance from alcoholism. He changed his Muslim name to Isaiah, and as our Tanzanian teammates disciplined him, he brought one of his former drinking buddies to Christ.

This second deliverance made big waves in our village, though we didn't know it until one day when our team were in our open-air classroom learning the wild man story from Mark 5. My teammate Amanda had just amazed us all with a fluent rendition of this story in our new language, when suddenly three local men interrupted our class. It was Isaiah with his drinking buddy and that man's brother-in-law. Isaiah explained the emergency, "I know that Jesus saves alcoholics like me and him; but this brother here wants to know if Jesus can deal with really dark stuff—can Jesus get rid of a demon spirit?"

I just about fell out of my chair. I told him, "You have got to hear the story of Jesus and the wild man." So, Amanda told the story again. And again. And then and there in our open-air classroom Isaiah's friend of a friend met Jesus.



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About AIM Europe

Africa Inland Mission is a Christian mission sending agency. We have our roots in a small band of faithful men and women who, in 1895, followed God's call to venture inland to reach Africans untouched by the gospel. Their vision set the course of AIM for 125 years, as a community called and sent to live and minister among Africa's least-reached peoples. A call that still remains.

If you'd like to speak to someone about mission, contact us at:

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