



5 Year Plan for 2013-2018

2013 Version

Vision Statement

Our vision is to see the urban poor and their communities transformed by the power of Christ.

Mission Statement

We are an international movement - a network of teams living in urban poor communities, primarily in Asia, participating with our neighbours to bring hope, justice and transformation through the presence and power of Christ.

PREAMBLE

This document represents an attempt to be accountable as a movement to our shared vision and mission (above), and how we perceive God's Spirit leading us to live towards them in the coming five years. Rather than imposing top-down agendas, hopefully it equips our leaders as they provide resources, support and guidance to keep us moving towards our vision.

CB Samuel recently told us that we must plan, and we must also remain open to God intervening to change our plans. Thus we commit ourselves to this plan, knowing that we need to both faithfully walk along its path, and also hold it lightly, ready to take another path whenever God clearly leads.

The main focus of this document is how we want to change, for example to improve our effectiveness, to try new things, or to adjust the balance of emphasis on different values and principles. As a reminder to not diminish what we are doing well or lose sight of our on-going main focus (of living out our principles and values among the poor), those are explicitly stated first.

The plan was first drafted at ILC 2012, and has been refined considerably in consultation with wider Servants. The new International Coordinating Team (commencing in 2013) will work out more details of implementation (who? when? how? for each strategy point).

*The main goals statements are presented in shaded boxes, and related strategies are listed below each box. Some strategies contribute towards several goals, and this is specifically pointed out in some places. All points are numbered for ease of reference. To reflect decisions of ILC 2013, **Priorities** are highlighted green, and **new or changed paragraphs** have blue side borders.*

GOALS

A. **KEEPING ON (continuing what is core, & going well)**

- A.1. Servants will remain faithful to our core business as expressed in our vision and mission statements.
- A.2. Servants will continue adequate focus on what we already do well.

B. **MINISTRY (our outward life among the poor)**

- B.1. Servants will continually seek to **become more wholistic**, that is, use the full range of our team and individual gifts, responding to people in diverse contexts, to live out of a Jesus-centred gospel perspective.
- B.2. By 2018, Servants will have several clear well-developed **areas of expertise**.
- B.3. By 2018, Servants will be **travelling with** emerging or existing **communities of faith** amongst the poor in each field team's location.

C. **COMMUNITY (our inward health and organisation)**

- C.1. We expect to **grow in strength and depth** so that field teams will
 - be diverse demographically, theologically and culturally
 - have 8 or more members
 - be deeply communal – robust, mature, forming and re-forming
- C.2. We expect to **grow in number** of members and teams, in response to needs God brings to our attention, and to facilitate the ministry of those God is calling to join us
- C.3. We plan to better **support and develop sending teams**, recognising that their challenges and roles are quite different from field teams

D. **MESSAGE (our prophetic voice to the non-poor)**

- D.1. By 2018, Servants will be exercising a **prophetic voice internationally and locally** on our principles and values, as well as other issues such as environment, non-violence, unifying Christian traditions, and contextualisation of faith
- D.2. By 2018, Servants will have **alliances/ partnerships** with key groups worldwide
- D.3. By 2018, Servants will be **catalysing indigenous movements** to serve and advocate for the poor
- D.4. By 2018, each team will have the capacity to **send or host interns**

STRATEGIES

A. **KEEPING ON (what's core & what's going well)**

A.1. Servants will remain faithful to our core business as expressed in our vision and mission statements.

- A.1.a) Ensure that our review, reporting and planning processes (eg personal review forms, team retreats, and ILC reports) are primarily tuned to living towards our stated vision, mission, principles and values.
- A.1.b) Periodically review the steps to joining process including content at orientation communities, to maintain the focus on our stated vision, mission, principles and values.
- A.1.c) Leadership at all levels will serve and support teams and workers to fulfil these core commitments.

A.2. Servants will continue adequate focus on what we already do well.

- A.2.a) Carefully consider the resource cost and potential loss to existing ministry, alongside the potential gains and desired effects, when considering new initiatives.
- A.2.b) Things we are doing well now include:
 - living among the poor, and participating in authentic relationships with them
 - communication between ILC & ICT, and participation by ILC in wider issues
 - pastoral care and self-care rhythms
 - communication of news and prayer points to supporters and wider public
 - financial management

B. **MINISTRY (our outward life among the poor)**

B.1. Servants will continually seek to **become more wholistic**, that is, use the full range of our team and individual gifts, responding to people in diverse contexts, to live out of a Jesus-centred gospel perspective.

- B.1.a) Establish a process to **regularly reflect on wholism** (a check-list? what's missing? what's taking over?), perhaps for use at ILC, Forum or team retreats.
- B.1.b) Encourage **story-telling and sharing experiences**, to connect specifically to values and principles;
- B.1.c) Begin by renewing our focus in areas of **evangelism and works of the Holy Spirit**.
- B.1.d) If there is consensus on need to focus on strengthening or developing a particular area, nominate an **"international year of ..."** some years.

B.2. By 2018, Servants will have several clear well-developed areas of expertise.

- B.2.a) Invite **each team to identify 1-3 areas of expertise** they have or are developing, and name a point-person for specific areas. Include these names/areas in our “Servants Contacts” list.
- B.2.b) **Identify gaps and develop needed expertise** to increase effectiveness of teams on the ground (for example, through research, practice, or input from elders).
- B.2.c) Compile our gathered wisdom into “**best-practice**” **papers** on a few identified areas which are relevant to several teams and contexts. They should be practical tools for teams (eg include stories, reflect on similarities and differences for various contexts, and be honest about failures).
- B.2.d) Appoint/name a (Servants-wide) **point-person** for various specific areas of expertise.
- B.2.e) Ongoing formation to **identify and develop personal ministry focus** for each team member.
- B.2.f) Intentionally **increase sharing of learning** between and within teams, through Forum, ILC meetings, website and on-line interaction, and visits by an international leader or team mentor.
- B.2.g) Establish an **online database of documents** about fires, disaster response, land rights, health, etc, and distribute easy instructions on how to search for existing documents and how to upload new documents.
- B.2.h) Develop alliances/ partnerships with “**benchmark groups**” who are modelling best practice relating to identified areas. Include contact details for such groups in our “Servants Contacts” list.

B.3. By 2018, Servants will be travelling with emerging or existing communities of faith amongst the poor in each field team's location.

- B.3.a) Encourage **each team to discuss and develop its own strategy** to build up faith communities among the poor, according to local context and team members' gifts and calling.
- B.3.b) Encourage teams to sensitively pursue **insider/ indigenous/ contextualised examples**, that is, faith communities deeply connected with the local culture and/or dominant religion, rather than clearly separated from it.
- B.3.c) **Share stories** around “how is faith expressed and shared?” This could become another “area of expertise”, employing the above strategies.
- B.3.d) Find creative ways for our **local partners to share their stories** so they are accessible to others, eg have a team member write them up in English.

c. **COMMUNITY (our inward health and organisation)**

C.1. **We expect to grow in strength and depth so that field teams will**
▪ **be diverse demographically, theologically and culturally**

- C.1.a) **Strengthen recruiting where needed**, to make a more balanced mix of home cultures among new members possible. Initially focus on Australia and Europe, and inclusion of ethnic Asians wherever they live.
- C.1.b) Explore ways of attracting members from **other ages and stages**. More members in their 50s and 60s will add balance and wisdom to our communities.
- C.1.c) Recognising the challenges involved, welcome a **diversity of theology, spirituality and Christian traditions**, while remaining Jesus-centred.

▪ **have 8 or more members**

- C.1.d) Sending teams develop a robust approach to **recruitment and pre-field formation**.
- C.1.e) Field teams and Asia Co-ordinator make sustainability and team health a priority for **retention of current team members**.
- C.1.f) **Field teams with fewer than 8 members allocate adequate time and energy to hosting internships and field team visits.**
- C.1.g) Field teams in need of more members to consider hosting the next **Asia-based Orientation** so that undecided candidates may have a greater chance of choosing that team.

▪ **be deeper communities – robust, mature, forming and re-forming**

- C.1.h) Have a system in place for **ongoing formation and skills development**.
- C.1.i) Encourage **cross pollination of ideas and experiences**, for example through inter-team visits and visits by an international leader or team mentor.
- C.1.j) Each team to identify or develop good resources and ensure easy access, to promote **spiritual and emotional maturity and resilience**
- C.1.k) Each team to identify or develop good resources and ensure easy access, to promote improved **communication and conflict resolution skills**

C.2. **We expect to grow in number** of members and teams, in response to needs God brings to our attention, and to facilitate the ministry of those God is calling to join us

- C.2.a) Come to a settled place about the **desired size and structure** of our movement – learn about and apply research on maximum size and appropriate structures or other characteristics of a group, in order to operate relationally.
- C.2.b) In response to needs and opportunities, explore **establishing new teams**: possibly 3 new teams in Asia, 1 new Western team, and 1 new sending team.
- C.2.c) **Publicise intention** for new teams on the website, in 'I See' and in *Servants Quarters*.
- C.2.d) Hold **three orientations each year** (2 in Sending team countries, 1 in Asia)

- 2012 – 2 orientations (Jakarta, Vancouver)
- 2013 – 2 orientations (Lucknow, Vancouver)
- 2014 – 3 orientations, (Asia, Vancouver, Australia/NZ)

C.2.e) Each sending team to hold a **gathering, festival, or similar event**, each year, providing input and a sense of community, for those journeying towards Servants, and to help those who have left stay connected.

C.2.f) If **Schneider's recent book** sells well in English, have it translated and published in other languages (French, Dutch).

C.2.g) **Strengthen sending teams**, to ensure capacity to recruit, mentor and send out members for the expected new field teams.

C.2.h) **Strengthen support structures** for new and existing field teams.

C.2.i) Document reflections on recent **experience of establishing new teams** (Jakarta, Yangon, Kolkata, Lucknow) and apply relevant learnings.

C.3. **We plan to better support and develop sending teams, recognising that their challenges and roles are quite different from field teams**

C.3.a) Identify input/training for specific roles and on-going care of sending teams

C.3.b) Build stronger liaison between sending teams for mutual support and learning

C.3.c) Re-write steps-to-joining for high-involvement sending team roles

D. MESSAGE (our prophetic voice to the non-poor)

D.1. **In 2018, Servants will be exercising a prophetic voice internationally and locally on our principles and values, as well as other issues such as environment, non violence, unifying Christian traditions and contextualisation of faith**

D.1.a) **Develop our stance** (policy, values, practices) in these areas, for example the environment and unifying Christian traditions, so we maintain integrity in the values we espouse.

D.1.b) Recognising **climate change** as a huge and growing issue especially for the poor, include it more strongly in our Principles and Values, develop a range of possible responses, and each team choose measures to implement to limit or even reverse environmental impact.

D.1.c) **Produce needed resources** (including video, print and digital resources) and be intentional about promoting our vision, principles and values widely.

D.1.d) **Collaborate with training institutions** in researching, teaching and publishing around these topics.

D.1.e) Utilise **local opportunities for prophetic input** (for example, in NZ Parihaka day offers an opportunity to engage with others about non-violence)

D.1.f) Catalyse more **groups like “creative world justice”**

D.1.g) **Publish/ circulate the expertise documents** produced in B.2.c, through our various networks.

- D.1.h) Identify **key Christian leaders in Asia**, and support and mentor them as appropriate, in their efforts to advocate for the poor.
- D.1.i) Field teams to consider relationships with **middle-class churches/ Christians in Asia** (where this doesn't conflict with their strategy in B.3.a).
- D.1.j) **Sending team members** to consider joining local **Asian churches**, or partnering with Asia-based Asian churches (eg Bruce Elder's church in NZ partners with a church in PP).
- D.1.k) Each sending team to have an **effective advocacy strategy**, in order to be known and valued among missions, missional communities and new-monastic circles in their country.
- D.1.l) Sending teams could **profile their country** in terms of issues people are passionate about, and which aspects of Servants' work and mission are currently most prophetic, to prepare field members for speaking into their home culture while on home leave.
- D.1.m) **Publish our stories**, through selectively taking up opportunities for writing books or using other media, or for others to write books or make documentaries etc.

D.2. In 2018, Servants will have **alliances/partnerships** with key groups worldwide

- D.2.a) Prioritise relationships with international groups, by considering existing and potential local alliances, and potential for synergy/ collaboration/ mutual benefit.
- D.2.b) Each team to identify and develop at least one synergistic partnership (two way relationship).
- D.2.c) Invite key people from such groups to forum and for team visits.

D.3. By 2018, Servants will be **catalysing indigenous movements** to serve and advocate for the poor

- D.3.a) Hold **training days in Asia** with middle-class churches and Christians.
- D.3.b) Build **relationships with local Christians** who are being incarnational.
- D.3.c) Hold one **orientation each year in Asia**, to give opportunity to locals to attend.
- D.3.d) Teach/learn more about **scaling and replicating** in relation to indigenous movements.

D.4. By 2018, each team will have the capacity to **send or host interns**

- D.4.a) If at all possible, each **field team** has an **intern coordinator** (not their only ministry focus).
- D.4.b) Each **sending team** develops **short-term group facilitator(s)** for preparing and debriefing interns, and perhaps also travelling with them.
- D.4.c) Field teams to also **offer internships to local Asian Christians**, to inspire and equip them to advocate for the poor in their own churches and networks