DOES YOUR MISSION AGENCY HAVE A MISSION V

Posted on January 4, 2019 by Eddie

Category: Observations

This is the last post on this series and looks at the two most important questions that British mission agencies have to grapple with.

Should Our Agency Still Exist?

There are two levels to this question. The first is whether the work that the agency is doing in "the field" is still relevant or needed. As earlier posts in this series have suggested, it is easy for an agency to make the assumption that its work is important and relevant, but it is important to take a step back to consider whether this is really the case. In a sense, only Christians from the "target" country can answer this question and leadership teams have to find a way to bring them into the discussion.

Assuming that the work that the agency does is still relevant, the next question is whether the whole home-office structure is needed. A quick overview of British mission agencies shows that there are an awful lot of groups doing very similar things in very similar places. Merger is not an easy option, but it is something that agencies must consider. The financial and human cost involved in maintaining an agency is significant and it doesn't make a lot of sense to increase our efforts in the way that we are doing.

My friend Peter Rowan wrote an interesting article about the future of OMF a few years ago, which is worth reading.

What Is the Role of British Missionaries and Funding?

This is an area that Peter's article didn't really touch on, but it is one that I feel is vital, especially in an international mission agencies. In the changing world we cannot simply assume that the role of British missionaries or funds will be the same as it always has been. Picking up on Peter's article. OMF is an agency that was founded in the UK to take the gospel to the inland areas of China. Over the years its scope of action has expanded to cover much of south-east Asia. Today, the international headquarters are in Singapore and the agency has a significant Asian presence at all levels from international leadership to missionaries working on the ground. In this situation, it is vital to consider whether or not there is a role for British missionaries and what that role should be. I'm not for one moment suggesting that there isn't a role for Brits in OMF. It's simply that OMF provides a clear cut example of an agency which has evolved over the years and where the need for asking this question is obvious. Things may not her so evident in other agencies, but the question must still be asked and the answer will be different for every agency.