

CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT FORUMS



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What is an Engagement Forum?

An Engagement Forum is a regional meeting of Jesus-followers. The four purposes are: a) getting leaders and workers from regional churches and gospel organizations to critically evaluate and update their current UUPG list, b) train gospel workers in field verification of UUPGs, c) give regional organizations the opportunity to adopt UUPGs for engagement, and d) establishing a Regional Engagement Team to track and support the engagement process.

Foreword

What God is doing all over the world is unprecedented! Never have so many come to Him, so many multiplying churches been birthed, or so many disciples been made. “Look around at the nations and be amazed. For I am doing something in your own day, something you wouldn’t believe even if someone told you about it” (Hab. 1:5).

Not only are many disciples being made within homeland and diaspora populations of Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and Tribals, but also new disciple-makers are leading the way in sharing Christ. They are from China, Laos, and Indonesia. They are from India, Uzbekistan, and Algeria. They are from Egypt, Brazil, and Argentina. Not only do three-quarters of the Lord’s people reside in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, we also know that the leading edge of missions is blasting forward from these. What languages will the largest numbers of today’s and tomorrow’s apostolic church-birthers speak? Spanish, Hausa, Arabic, Dinka, Hindi, Lao, and many others. In some places Majority World sending structures are still emerging, yes, and in other places they are already flourishing. And every place the gospel goes, the Spirit Himself is gifting and calling those who will extend it still further.

It is to prepare these gifted, called-out ones that this booklet is designed.

Those who live closest to people and peoples outside Christ have been positioned by Him to engage and reach them. They understand them better than most. They may share linked histories, languages, and customs, and God is giving you the privilege of inspiring them to declare His wisdom, long hidden, and now destined for their glory (from I Cor. 2:7). He will help you. He will be with you. He will enable you to envision, host, and execute Engagement Forums, just as He will enable those you help train to do what He has called them to do. Together, along with those they bring to Him, you will rejoice in the riches of His grace.

Thank you for being burdened for the unengaged peoples of your region. Because of this burden, you will now gather influencers who will be able to share the message of the unengaged to others. Among them will be workers who will actually engage the unengaged. Here you will learn how to prepare these in part by conducting an Engagement Forum. You’ll learn why it is so important, how to organize it, why prayer is foundational, and how to follow up once it is completed. Over and through it all, you’ll sense His sovereign hand holding you up and reminding you that it is not by might nor by power (nor even the best-led of Forums) that the battle is won, but by His Spirit. His Spirit has brought you to this moment, and He will complete what He has begun in you.

I and my team believe in you and are by your side to call upon if ever you would like. Let’s engage these remaining unengaged peoples and then reach them in God’s soonest time.

Mike Latsko

Mike Latsko
Team Leader
The Engage Network
mike.latsko@engagenow.world
www.unengagedpeoples.com

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SECTION 1: Before the Forum

Since 2022 a few hundred unengaged unreached people groups were adopted for engagement by organizations and churches located near them geographically. The overwhelming majority of those peoples go on to be engaged.

It has happened in nations as varied as Chad, India, Sudan, and Indonesia.

What's the secret? There's no secret, really. We found that when Christian leaders and gospel workers from a region gather for the purpose of looking deeply at which people groups are unengaged in their region, they will almost inevitably be moved to engage them.

It makes sense if you think about it. In every nation on Earth there are people who live farther away from the gospel witness than others. It's simple, unless you're very intentional, to become blind to these people. But when the Holy Spirit brings them to your conscious mind, you are likely to be moved. We believe this act of simply looking into the engagement status of people groups nearby moves Christians to action.

Engagement Forums are two- or three-day gatherings of regional leaders and gospel workers focused on four goals:

1. Reviewing the UUPG List for the region to confirm which people groups are engaged, which are not, and which require in-person verification of status.
2. Facilitating the adoption of regional UUPG by organizations and churches for engagement.
3. Training gospel workers how to verify engagement.
4. Establishing a Regional Engagement Team to track and support the engagement process.

What's the secret? There's no secret, really. We found that when you gather Christian leaders and gospel workers for the purpose of looking at the people groups in their own regions that are unengaged, those leaders and workers will be moved to engage them.

This booklet aims to provide basic knowledge and skills to conduct effective Engagement Forums. We present an overview, then step-by-step directions. We'll provide perspectives and recommendations, but feel the freedom to improvise elements based on your context.

We begin with “Setting the Stage” where we’ll look at general perspectives and preparations. After that we will get into normal routines, providing recommendations for assessing effectiveness, communications, and post-forum activities.

Overview

If the Bible doesn't stress the importance of engaging every people, then we shouldn't either. *But it does!* Yes, we want to reach all peoples in addition to engaging them, but until we engage, we cannot reach.

In the Great Commission¹, Jesus sends us to ALL the people groups of the world. He tells us to make disciples, to make Christ-followers. The New Testament word for nations here is *ethne* (or peoples). Notice the non-21st century nature of the command: it is reckless and all-encompassing! Jesus does not command us to focus on the few (or many) that we can reach easily or well; He sends us to gather worshipers from all people groups. . . all. . . *every last one*.

The command is massive in its scope! The church through the ages has been moving forward with it. Yet, with all the progress to date, we see people groups living without churches or gospel workers, outside the church's current reach. They are unengaged unreached peoples.

Why focus on unengaged peoples? Because Jesus told us to make disciples of all people groups, and the unengaged, by definition, have none. We focus on them because Jesus told us to.

This booklet describes the design and conduct of effective Engagement Forums. We have found these events to be effective in helping regional Christian organizations and churches thoughtfully consider the people groups in their proximity, and make concrete plan to engage them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Ultimately, the goal is not just to engage these people groups, but to see thriving, multiplying, Christ-worshiping churches among them. While that is the ultimate goal, this book focuses on the near-term goal of regional Christian leaders identifying the unengaged unreached people groups (UUPG) in a region, adopting them for engagement, and doing the good work of actually engaging and reaching them.

We've been amazed to see how Jesus is moving in our age! Our prayer is that this job-aid (Appendix C) will help you conduct an effective Engagement Forum in your location, and engage those peoples near you who live without a practical doorway to the gospel.

That Jesus may be worshiped in every tribe, nation, tongue, and people!

¹ Matthew 28:18-20: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

It All Starts with Prayer

As with anything worthwhile, this endeavor starts with prayer: careful, detailed, heart-saturated, authentic prayer.

Prayer is the breath of our living souls in Christ. Prayer is the advanced weapon that softens the enemy's lines. Prayer is drawing on the Living God for power to move ahead and the wisdom to do it well. Prayer is saying to our Lord that we can't do this, but it is also Him insisting that He will empower us to do everything He has commanded.

All authority. Have you noticed that the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 starts with the phrase, "All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to me" (NIV, 1978)?

It is fascinating that when our Lord commissioned us to go to all the peoples, He made a point of saying He had the authority to make it all happen. We are paupers in need of that power! Later, when we describe the process of running an Engagement Forum, we will talk in more detail about this essential starting place. We will encourage you to draw on global prayer teams that will pray with you, and to develop local prayer teams to prepare and propel your work.

The Biblical Basis for Focusing on Unengaged Peoples

[See Appendix A for one example of presenting the Biblical Basis for focusing on unengaged peoples at Engagement Forums. We present these examples just to give an idea, please feel free to address this in whichever way is most appropriate in your situation.]

This truth resonates right through the Bible: God desires that all peoples in every place have a chance to encounter Him and become worshipers. The engaged unreached have that chance; the unengaged unreached do not.

“Sing to the LORD, all the earth; proclaim good news of His salvation from day to day.
Declare His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.”
I Chronicles 16

“Let the heavens be joyful and the earth rejoice; and let them say
among the nations, ‘The LORD reigns’”
I Chronicles 16

“So that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name.”
II Chronicles 6

“Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise You.”
Psalm 67

“The time is coming to gather all the nations and tongues.
And they shall come and see My glory”
Isaiah 66

“And in His name the peoples will trust.”
Matthew 12

“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

Matthew 24

“Go, therefore, and make disciples among all the peoples.”

Matthew 28

“What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it?”

Luke 15

“I am an apostle to the peoples.”

Romans 11

“That the peoples may glorify God for His mercy.”

Romans 15

“In Him the peoples will hope.”

Romans 15

“You purchased people for God with Your blood from every tribe, language, people, and nation.”

Revelation 5

“I looked and saw a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all the tribes, peoples, and languages.”

Revelation 7

Unengaged people groups are not praising Him, declaring His glory, being made disciples of, glorifying Him for His mercy, rejoicing with His people, hoping in Him, or anticipating being among the great end-times throng of worshipers.

But we can do something about that by first engaging and then reaching them.

This truth resonates right through the Bible: God desires that all peoples in every place have a chance to encounter Him and become worshipers. The engaged unreached have that chance; the unengaged unreached do not.

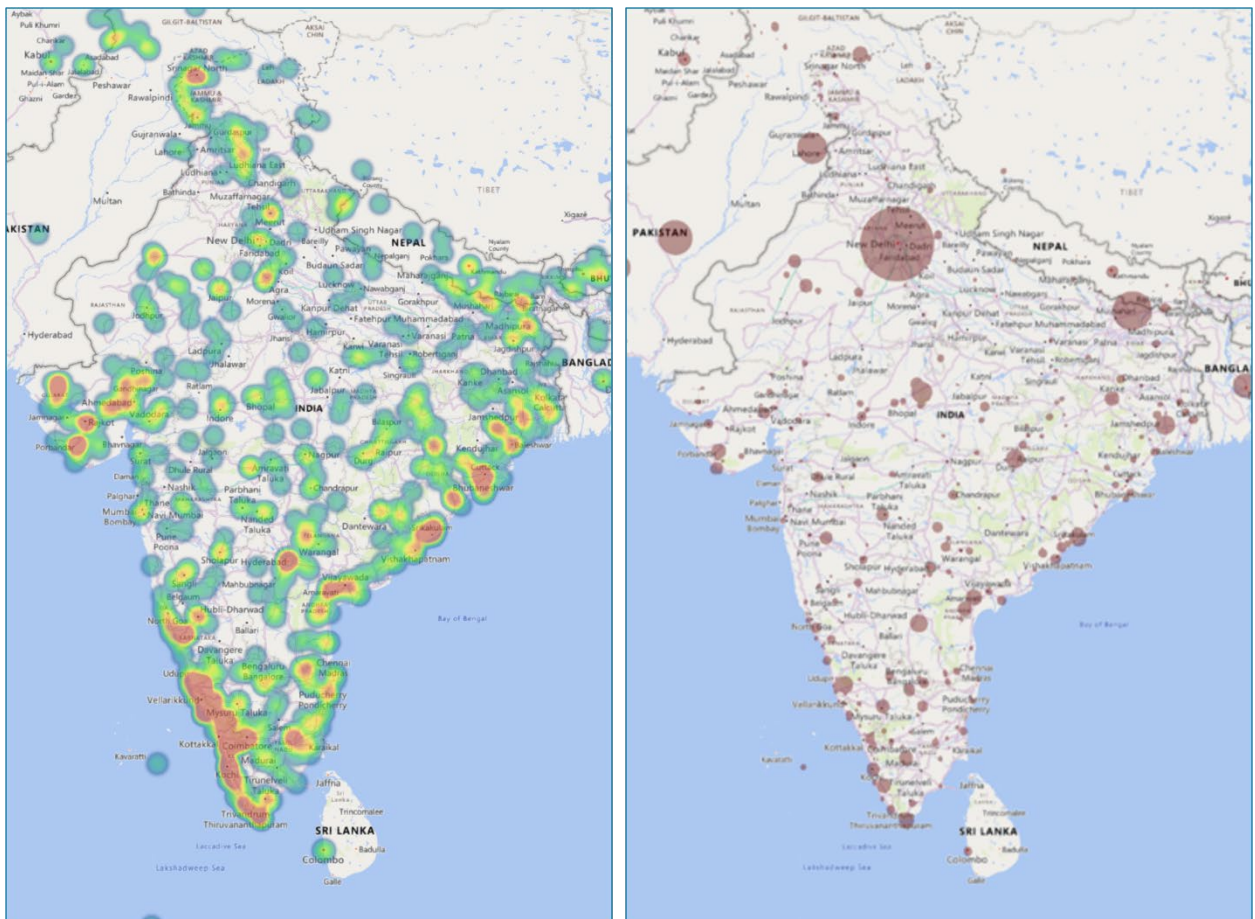
Practical Perspectives and Wisdom in Planning

As you begin to think about how you would conduct an effective Engagement Forum, we offer some perspectives from our experience.

“Go through the closest open door.” In this effort to graciously break into the lives of people in regions or peoples that are not yet friends, it is wise to carefully identify where you believe the Lord is leading, then find the “closest open door” nearest that people. How do you do that? We believe it is a combination of dependence on prayer, prayerful analysis and prioritization of needs, cultivation of relationships, conviction about the biblical emphasis upon all peoples, the careful practice of cultural humility, and going through the closest open door.

Prayerfully analyze and prioritize needs. We’ve already discussed the essential importance of prayer. The next step is analyzing the need in the region of interest. This is not easy work, but there are some principles that may help. From our perspective, need in the context of UUPG can be described in terms of the clustering of UUPG *and* population size of those UUPG.

Example: The maps below show two different views of India. The map to the left pictures the concentrations of individual UUPG, the one on the right pictures population clusters of UUPG.



A heat map (left) is helpful in identifying where distinct UUPG are clustered; the bubble map (right) provides a picture of UUPG population centers. We propose the cluster map is more helpful when considering UUPG engagement, for our focus is *peoples* not *people*. To be sure, we rejoice when as many people as possible come to Him within a people group!

Find the right partner in the region. Once there is a good idea of the location for your forum, the next step is to identify the right partner(s).

What characteristics are you looking for in a partner?

1. They will be people of influence within the region and people whose voices ring clear for Christ.
 - a. They know the region.
 - b. They know the key leaders in the region.
 - c. They can get the right people to the Forum.
 - d. They can keep in touch with people after the Forum.
 - e. They must be culturally humble:
 - i. When people encounter them, they think, “I was seen, I was heard, I was valued.”
 - ii. They can tailor language to audience respectfully.
2. They will be in roles which give them a platform to convene other leaders and workers together.
3. They are articulate and effective in gospel work.
4. They are committed to the priority of engaging the unengaged and can explain why.
5. They are effective presenters/communicators.²

Some things to keep in mind when considering regional partners:

Use existing connections. If you don’t already know a great regional partner, go to your colleagues in ministry across the nation and ask them about a potential partner.

Attend regional conferences or meetings. You may find collaboratively-inclined and vision-filled others at meetings focused on the area of interest.

Ask organizations already working in the region. They know the area. They have connections. Who do they know who might help?

Ask the Engage Network. No, we don’t know everybody, but we know a lot of people. We’ll do our very best to connect you to someone who can help you.

Decide your context. Most of our Engagement Forums have been the core of larger regional Christian meetings that also address other issues. In this way, we’ve been able to realize broader participation because many people do not yet see the importance of engaging the unengaged. But we have also been able to run focused Engagement Forums to great effect. In contexts where the regional leaders do not yet appear to be convicted about the value of engaging the unengaged, we suggest you work with your partner in the region to make the determination.

Sometimes, it is better to facilitate a larger conversation and conduct the forum in the midst of it, sometimes you can address the engagement issue in a focused approach. Your regional partner is best situated to provide informed opinions about this.

² In some cases, this individual may not be a primary presenter, if not, this fifth characteristic is not essential.

Keep in touch. It is easy to make the mistake of thinking that the Engagement Forum is a stand-alone event in time, and that if we do it well, the work is done. We've made that mistake before. At the end of a successful forum the group will rightly say, "The Lord blessed this time." You will have wrestled with the UUPG List for the region and improved it (greatly, in many cases). You will have a plan for following up and determining the engagement status of some UUPG. And most gratifyingly, most or all the UUPG in the region will have an organization that has committed to engage them.

But there is still a lot of work to do, a lot of talking and coordinating to be done!

Appendix C is a picture of the optimal process between the adoption of a UUPG for engagement, and the actual engagement. As you can see, there are many steps to that journey, there are many places a strong and equipped organization may be hampered in their effort to engage. Because of this, we strongly recommend that during the course of the Engagement Forum you set up some kind of communication network. We are not in this alone, The command is for all of us, not just some.

We strongly recommend you have regional participants set up some kind of ongoing communication and mutual support network. We don't individually own the command to engage--we are all responsible for it. We need to be ready to help each other as we work to engage all unengaged people groups.

If God Wildly Blesses...

If God wildly blesses, we see hundreds of UUPG engaged over the next few years. Our conviction is that these peoples will be engaged by individuals, churches, and organizations just like you, located in proximity to them. There will be exceptions, to be sure, and we look forward to collaborating with gospel workers from far away. But we are already seeing the Lord's people sending to the unserved nearby, and so are you.

Yes, if God wildly blesses, we pray that there will soon be scores of Engagement Forums—or events with Engagement Forum emphases—all over the world near clusters of currently unengaged peoples. Most will be sponsored by local churches and organizations. All will assure coordination of resources and communication for the fruitfulness we anticipate.

SECTION 2: During the Forum

The Four Main Goals of an Engagement Forum

The four main goals of an effective Engagement Forum are straight-forward:

Goal 1: Evaluate and update the unengaged in your region.

Goal 2: Train how to verify engagements.

Goal 3: Give opportunity to adopt towards engagement.

Goal 4: Establish a Regional Engagement Team to track and coordinate engagements.

Goal 1: Evaluate and update the unengaged in your region.

There is concern about how accurate the UUPG List is at any moment, and we share that concern! At the same time, we are seeing that the systematic effort of local participants to upgrade the list leads to significant benefits. First, the regional list is much more accurate than it was before, and second, the very act of wrestling through the process leads not only to local ownership of the need but also to the desire to do something about it.

This is counter-intuitive, but we've seen it time and again. When we ask local leaders this question "We know this list has some inaccuracies, would you help by studying it and making it more accurate?" We find that their hearts resonate with our own—they take the list, upgrade it, make it their own, and use it as the basis for their own engagement initiatives.

Goal 2: Train how to verify engagements.

Critical to ultimate success, the Engagement Forum includes the participation of the regional gospel workers who will do the actual work of verification and, in many cases, engagement. The goal is to equip workers to make challenging judgments about the engagement status of the UUPG, including equipping them to discriminate between similar conditions. Training will include scenario-based experiences that give learners realistic situations which provide authentic challenges for assessment.

The Verification Job-Aid (Appendix C) is provided to help improve the reliability of these assessment decisions.

Goal 3: Give opportunity to adopt towards engagement (within 12 months if possible).

It has been amazing to watch: the simple act of regional sending organizations and churches verifying the engagement status of nearby UUPG has moved them to engage. So the second goal of the forum, and the most important, is matching organizations and churches with UUPG. We

call this “adoption for engagement.” In the last year we witnessed more than 200 of these UUPG adoptions out of 8 Engagement Forums.

Of course, adoption is not the same thing as engagement. As we continue to reflect on this with our regional partners, we see this gap between adoption for engagement and engagement itself as a key process for continuing communication.

Goal 4: Establish a Regional Engagement Team to track and coordinate engagements.

The best level to track and coordinate engagements is regionally within the country. The Indonesian Peoples Network, for example, tracks and coordinates engagements within nine distinct regions. This approach rightly places authority and responsibility in the regional churches and organizations and certainly fits with the reality that the most likely (and best positioned) groups to engage UUPG are often believers who are closest geographically and culturally.

The Operational Foundation: Prayer

We believe prayer is the spiritual breath of a living soul, both a delight and a duty. But here is the thing: it is our most effective offensive weapon in this battle to see Jesus worshiped among all peoples.

Our purpose is to use prayer as our operational foundation and sustaining energy. We will depend upon our Lord utterly for fruit. Our goal is to have a prayer community that is global, kept up to date, passionate, faithful, and involved tactically in every effort. We depend on prayer in preparing for new challenges; we depend on prayer in the midst of current challenges, and we will be cognizant and thankful for God’s action relating to our prayers as we carefully give Him the glory.

What does all this mean to you?

We have a global prayer network to lift you up! Friends around the world are waiting to support your efforts both generally (praying for this Forum and what follows) and specifically (they want to pray for you and your team). We would love to pray with you for your Engagement Forum.

Please contact us at prayer@engagenow.world to get our global prayer team energized in support of your effort.

Set up a prayer team to prepare the way. Why not make your first real action be the formation of a prayer team in your region?

Setting up your prayer team...

1	Recruit an established prayer warrior to lead your regional team. Let him/her then recruit the rest of the team.*
2	Write the prayer team a letter helping empower them in the task and outlining what you want them to do.
3	At the Engage Network, we are careful to pray in the context of love for Jesus and utter dependence on Him. Consider making praise and thanksgiving important parts of prayer.
4	Be specific! Encourage the team to pray for Forum facilitators by name, for the venue, and for all the participants.
5	Invite them to pray by name for the UUPG in your region.
6	Consider adding musicians to play and sing during extended times of prayer.

***We do find that while virtual teams have value, those in person prayer times are all the more effective. Teams often use email or the secure app *Signal* to communicate.**

Prayer is the work. Our Lord owns the outcomes. Our part is obedience, dependence, and the labor He calls us to. Prayer is the right first step.

The Value of Regional Engagement Forums

Over the years, we've found that Engagement Forums are particularly effective for getting regional organizations convict and energize regional ministries toward their proximate unengaged. We can testify: When you gather regional Christian leaders and gospel workers, and they look hard at the UUPG in their own region, they are inevitably moved to engage them. This isn't a new phenomenon; God has wired us this way.

We can testify: When you gather regional Christian leaders and gospel workers and they look hard at the UUPG in their own region, they are inevitably moved to engage them. This isn't a new phenomenon; God has wired us this way.

In the one year alone, more than 200 of 1,586 UUPG were adopted for engagement by regional organizations and churches at Engagement Forums. This is a miraculous outcome, and we thank God for it.

Regional Engagement Forums have value because they are consistent with how God has formed us as new creations, and they cause us to see people who are currently outside the reach of the gospel. They also have value because they have proven fruitful.

We believe if you conduct Engagement Forums in your context, you will see results similar to those we and others have witnessed.

Organizing an Engagement Forum

Logistics versus activities. We will work with you on logistics for planning for the Forum. Generally, your regional partner will be better positioned to know the best arrangement for lodgings, venue, food, and other support aspects. And your partner will know the people better. This is a partnership, and everyone involved will need to do what is required to make it a success.

Who Should Participate in an Engagement Forum?

Ideal participants are influential leaders of regional churches, Christian sending organizations, and potential workers going to the unengaged. Numbers may vary, but we typically have 2-3 potential workers for every church or organizational leader present.

Leaders. There should be people in the room who are the influencers, who know the churches and organizations well, and who will recruit most of the goers.

Gospel Workers. These are those who will share Christ with those who haven't heard! They are humble and hard-working. They love Jesus and are zealous for His Name. In many countries, it is the pastoral and teaching gifts that are most admired, but for the work of engaging the unengaged, it is the missionary and apostolic.

Key Roles

The key roles for people in the conduct of the forum are:

- *The Engagement Forum Facilitator.* He or she runs the elements of the forum, articulates the value God places on the unengaged, upholds the biblical mandate, leads through verification of the regional UUPG list, and assures the entire process that follows the forum. The Engagement Forum Facilitator has all the qualifications of the Regional Partner (see page 10) and is a proven advocate for the cause of the unengaged..
- *The Regional Partner.* In some cases, the Engagement Forum Facilitator can also be the Regional Partner. This individual will invite all participants, head up logistical planning and lead follow-on activities (see description of qualifications on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**)
- *The Verification Trainer.* This uniquely qualified individual will equip Forum participants to assess the engagement status of the unengaged. Appendix C provides a job-aid to help learners with performance reliability in the field. Note that the Forum Facilitator may also fill this role.
- *The Regional Organization and Church Leaders.* These are persons of influence in their churches and organizations. They will leverage their authority to make important decisions not only about the Forum itself, but also about the engagement process that will follow.
- *The Regional Organization and Church Gospel Workers.* These will do the actual engagement status verification and, in many cases, may actually be among those who lead the actual engagement effort. All the key roles are important, but they mean little unless eventual goals go.

Leading a UUPG List Discussion

You'll often hear the question, "How reliable is the current UUPG list?" And the answer is always, "As reliable as we can make it. It's the best information we have, drawn from what local workers have told us. We know it's flawed, which is a key reason we're conducting this Engagement Forum. You're going to help us make it better.

Ask for Help. The current UUPG list is the best available, but it requires local work to make it as accurate as possible. Perhaps you will start the conversation with this quote:

(Facilitator) "The current UUPG list is flawed. . . It's the best we have until now—it was generated from input from local workers—but it really needs your eyes to edit it or to determine which people groups merit further research. Will you help us?"

This start to the conversation communicates two things: first, that we need help from those at the Forum, and second, that the original list is the product of a lot of work. Here is how we recommend continuing that conversation.

Leading the UUPG List Discussion

1	Have a copy of the region's UUPG list for each participant. Include both leaders and workers in the activity. Give it to all participants.
2	Review the four criteria for engagement (the Job-Aid in Appendix C).
3	Move systematically through the UUPG list, stopping at each name and asking, "Given our criteria, is this people engaged or not?" This process may take hours or days!
4	If there is a people group for which the engagement status is unknown, mark it for further research. This is a good thing. Your verifiers will pick it up later.
5	In some cases you will discover that UUPGs are actually engaged. This is great news! Please make sure to report this information, along with a person to follow up with, to reports@engagenow.world.
6	When you complete your assessment, it will be the best UUPG List in existence for your region! It will be a special document and serve as the basis of your and others' follow-through actions.

Transitioning from List Verification to Adopting Local UUPG for Engagement

As you are working through the regional UUPG List, the conversation almost always turns to, "How should we engage this people?" *That is a great conversation to have!*

A natural time to start talking about adoption is when you have completed the list verification process. One option is to schedule activities so that the verification process is completed at the end of the forum day. That is a good time to say, "This has been a great day! Thank you for your good work. Tomorrow's task is critical, and you need to be praying about it tonight. Tomorrow we will go through the UUPG on our list one by one and see if the Lord has laid it on any of your hearts to engage them." Then you can break for the day, and in the morning when minds are fresh, take on the vital work of prayerfully considering adoption of these UUPG.

Transitioning to the Adoption Conversation

1	Try to time verification work so it closes out a forum session.
2	Tell participants that the next task will be for each group present to prayerfully consider which UUPG they might adopt.
3	Suggest that we hope to see UUPG engaged within 12 months* of adoption if possible.
4	Encourage leaders and workers to pray about their organization's involvement.
5	On the morning you plan to have the discussion about adoption, start with a time of prayer. Pray for the regional UUPG by name.
6	Start the discussion, proceeding through the UUPG List in order. It might be good to start at the bottom of the list just to change up expectations.

***Discernment is required here. Will the 12 month suggestion trouble/alienate some participants? Use it as a guideline, and invite a conversation. If not 12 months, what do participants see as an appropriate timeline for these engagements?**

After the Adoption Discussion

Make sure to record all decisions to adopt for engagement! This key outcome allows the other participants to make appropriate plans.

After the adoption discussion, be sure to:

1. Create a Regional Engagement Council or Panel to coordinate engagement activity. This council should be made up of representatives from the Forum who want to see it through. Their task is to make sure communication about the engagements flows to all who wish to receive it.
2. Determine when UUPG with unknown status will be researched for verification. We've found it helpful to have one regional representative in charge of coordinating this effort for the entire region.

3. Please forward a copy of your adoption list to reports@engagenow.world. This database is used globally to coordinate engagement activities.

SECTION 3: After the Forum

How to Make the Verification Assessments

The criteria for engagement are not always easy to apply. We hope you'll find the Verification Job-Aid (Appendix C) helpful both during training and in the field. Let's consider now what these four engagement criteria are that have been proposed, vetted, and used by so many Christian ministries:

1. **An Apostolic effort in residence.**
2. **A commitment to work in the local language and culture.**
3. **A commitment to long-term ministry**
4. **Sowing occurring in a manner consistent with the goal of seeing a biblically healthy, multiplying church emerge.**

Navigating these Criteria. The first three criteria involve observations. The last one is an assessment of *how* the engagement is being conducted, and a judgment as to whether this will lead to the “emergence of a biblically healthy, multiplying church.”

Let's look at the four engagement criteria one at a time...

CRITERION 1: Apostolic effort in residence. Taking the gospel from where it is now to where it isn't now is the essence of the apostolic task (Liverman, 2006). There are many ways to accomplish this. An apostolic individual or group from a location near the people group may come and live among their neighbors to engage them. Or an apostolic individual or group may come from a nation far away. Either way, the criterion is that there be an apostolic presence among the people. There must be flexibility here. In some cases, there may be a long-term apostolic presence *near* to the people, and short-term workers actually resident among the people. If this is the way the Lord provides, we rejoice.

To evaluate this criterion as satisfied, there must be an apostolic presence in residence.

CRITERION 2: Committed to work in local language or culture. This means that almost all of the communication (Scripture, teaching, social interaction) is either in the education language, market language, or heart language of the people. For Scripture, there does not have to be a translated Bible if the people's culture is an oral culture. This is complex. Experienced others are available to help you make these assessments if you'd like—especially where there are not written Scriptures. The principle is constant: We're committed to work in local language and culture.

CRITERION 3: Committed to long-term ministry. The idea is that there is a commitment to the long-term, the apostolic presence is not a passing thing.

The primary workers must demonstrate a commitment to staying until the church is multiplying and self-sustaining. It is sufficient that they voice this commitment: “We commit to stay with these people until the church is multiplying and self-sufficient.”

Do we insist upon a specific time? No. But multiplication continuing after two years likely meets this criterion.

Another way to see this criterion met: If the church is vibrant, that people group is engaged whether workers are present or not. If it is not vibrant, that people is unengaged, no matter the presence of workers.

CRITERION 4: Sowing is occurring in a manner consistent with the goal of seeing a biblically healthy, multiplying church. This about *how* the work is being done (Liverman, 2013)—activities consistent with the best practices of disciple-making movements (Haney, 2006; Liverman, 2006). Consider these:

- There will be a strong focus on small groups,
- Multiplication will be an important goal,
- The Bible is central, and
- Prayer and fellowship are common

FINAL ASSESSMENT OF ENGAGEMENT. You need to have evaluated each of the four criteria as “yes” to assess the people group as engaged. Please don’t change your earlier decisions about individual criteria in order to approve the people as engaged. In the end, to assess a people group as engaged, you are looking for a healthy(,) multiplying church.

After the Forum: The Continuing Regional and Global Conversation

One reality that has made engaging the unengaged so challenging is that these people groups are among the hardest to reach.

Many times, the work has been started and then stopped.

Further, we all agree that the engagement status of UUPG isn’t just a regional concern, for The Great Commission sends us, the global church, to make disciples of all peoples, baptizing them, and teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded.

It is a regional challenge *and* it is a global challenge.

For this reason it is important that we create and maintain communication channels that have not existed before.

These communications must be free of historical impediments like regional bias, arrogance, and misplaced concepts of expertise. This is the global church’s challenge.

Maintaining Open Communication Regionally and Globally

1	We recognize that regional entities are closest to the UUPG and are key to the design of any communication or data collection processes.
2	Regional groups establish their own coordinating mechanisms, have the first information regarding engagement, and are well-positioned to help others if asked.*
3	Regional coordination groups that desire assistance should feel free to request it.
4	The Engage Network is, and should be, composed of individuals from across the globe passionate for the cause of engaging the unengaged, and offering resources to assist when needed.

***The global church is also interested and has a stake in the progress that is made.**

The Ultimate Goal

Worshippers. Worship.

We can debate about whether the utter hopelessness of a people living with no access to the gospel should drive us, or whether the beauty and majesty of our Lord should drive us, but one thing is surely true: Jesus is worthy of the worship of all.

The ultimate goal is that there are worshippers from every “tribe, tongue, nation, and people” around the Throne, because Jesus is worthy of such unanimous worship. This goal is to help provide justice to our friends who haven’t a realistic chance of meeting Jesus.

By your advocacy of Engagement Forums, you are leaning-in to that day.

Our ultimate goal? Worship.

There will come a day when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. And on that day, people groups will be represented in the throng of worshippers who today have never heard the name of Jesus.

Our ultimate goal? Worship.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. A sample script for describing the biblical basis for focusing on unengaged unreached people groups

Dear presenter, thank you for accepting the sacred privilege of identifying for your audience, from the Scriptures, why unengaged peoples must become a priority for the church and missionary community. Feel free to use passages other than or in addition to these 14. And describe them as you wish—these brief explanations are but a way one person might do so. Your way, before the Lord, will be best. At the same time, we've found these Scriptures and these kinds of explanations to be helpful in multiple contexts and cultures, and we trust your soul and those of your hearers will be strengthened by them. This is the foundation for everything else. So may the Lord Himself favor you and those who are before you, and may the unengaged be engaged as a result. Amen.

A Sample Script (Please feel free to adapt it as you see fit):

If the Bible doesn't stress the importance of engaging every people, then His people certainly should not. But it does, and for two key reasons:

1. He is worthy to be worshiped!

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing” (Rev. 5:12).

2. And apart from Christ, no person can be saved.

“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

3. Consider what the Scriptures say concerning the importance of all peoples hearing about Christ:

“Sing to the LORD, all the earth; proclaim good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.” (I Chronicles 16).

4. Note that all peoples are to have opportunity to hear about His wonderful deeds. All peoples are to have His glory declared among them. All peoples should hear the proclamation of His salvation not simply from time to time but “from day to day.” And all peoples, all over the earth, should have the privilege of singing to the LORD. We must engage the unengaged because until we do, they will not be singing, they will not be hearing His salvation proclaimed, they will not be declaring His glory, and they will not be admiring His wonderful deeds.

“Let the heavens be joyful and the earth rejoice; and let them say among the nations, ‘the LORD reigns’” (I Chronicles 16).

5. How can there be deep and lasting joy among a people unaware of the riches of the gospel of grace? How can they boast in His preeminence? It is mockery and deception to ask a people to be joyful and rejoice and say among the nations that God reigns when they have not heard what He has done for them in Christ.

“So that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name” (II Chronicles 6).

6. The missionary is not satisfied that most may know of Him. S(he) is grateful for all who do, of course, but to hear that the largest populations of peoples do, or that a fair number on this or that continent do, or that more know of Him than do not, does not douse the zeal of those who burn for the glory of the Lord to fill the earth as the waters cover the seas. All the peoples must know. All the peoples must praise.

“Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You” (Psalm 67).

7. If “all” meant 30, 60, or 90%, then the prompt to engage every people could cease, and the missionary be relegated to an historical footnote. But as long as “all” means “every” and the banquet house cannot be filled until all peoples are represented, then the church and missionary community must be diligent to fulfill our assignment. Let all the peoples praise You, O God; yes, let all the peoples praise You.

“The time is coming to gather all the nations and tongues.
And they shall come and see My glory” (Isaiah 66).

8. Who should decide which nations and tongues do not have the chance to see His glory? Should those of South America be bypassed, since they appear happy enough? Or those of Africa and Asia? No! All the nations, all the tongues, all shall come and see His glory. But the unengaged do not yet see and cannot yet see, until they are first engaged. We must engage them so they might see Him.

“And in His name the peoples will trust” (Matthew 12).

9. How can they trust in the One they’ve never known or experience the love, the forgiveness, and the glory of the One whose name they’ve never heard? How might they go deep with the One they’ve never encountered? No, let them trust in the name of the One whose goodness they’ve come to taste and see. Let them trust in the name of the One who has engaged them.

“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24).

10. Are unengaged peoples not part of the whole world? Are they not among the “all”? Has someone excluded them from among those with the right to hear? Let the gospel of the kingdom be preached to them. . . preached to all peoples. . . and then let the Lord of all the earth consummate history in whatever way He pleases.

“Go, therefore, and make disciples among all the peoples” (Matthew 28).

11. What then is our commission? To make disciples? No! It is to make disciples among all peoples. As long as there are peoples without disciples, our commission is unfulfilled, and there are no disciples among unengaged peoples. So let us engage these remaining unengaged peoples and make disciples among them all.

“What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it” (Luke 15)?

12. Most would rejoice at the well-being of 99 out of 100 sheep. But not this Shepherd. And not we. The presence of a single unengaged people requires the leaving of the engaged—even the grossly underengaged—in order to seek and to find. We entrust the engaged unreached to the care of capable others, while we go after, find, and engage the unengaged.

“I am an apostle to the peoples.” (Romans 11).

13. Which peoples? Those closest to our hometowns? Those farthest away? Those we come across by virtue of our travels? This apostle received a calling to all the peoples—no matter their population or location. This apostle, even toward the end of his career, looked to proclaim Christ to the unengaged beyond Rome. Let us follow his example, embrace this apostolic mantle, and be a blessing to all peoples.

“That the peoples may glorify God for His mercy” (Romans 15).

14. Which peoples do not have a right to glorify God for His mercy? The unengaged know nothing of such a God. The unengaged know nothing of such a mercy. The unengaged do not know of a God who does not give them what they deserve but rather is ready to give them what they do not deserve. Let us engage them so they might glorify Him for His mercy.

“In Him the peoples will hope” (Romans 15).

15. Not until they are engaged. The unengaged are “lost and without hope in the world” (Eph 2). They are separate. They are excluded. They are far off. But in Christ they are brought near and reconciled both with God and with one another. The peoples will hope when they are engaged and encounter the One they have longed for.

“You purchased people for God with Your blood from every tribe, language, people and nation” (Revelation 5).

16. It wasn't just people for God that He purchased with His blood. It was people from every tribe, language, people, and nation. The unengaged have people among them who have been purchased for God. But God does not yet possess them! Let us engage them that He might own them and that they might receive care under His banner.

“I looked and saw a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all the tribes, peoples, and languages” (Revelation 7).

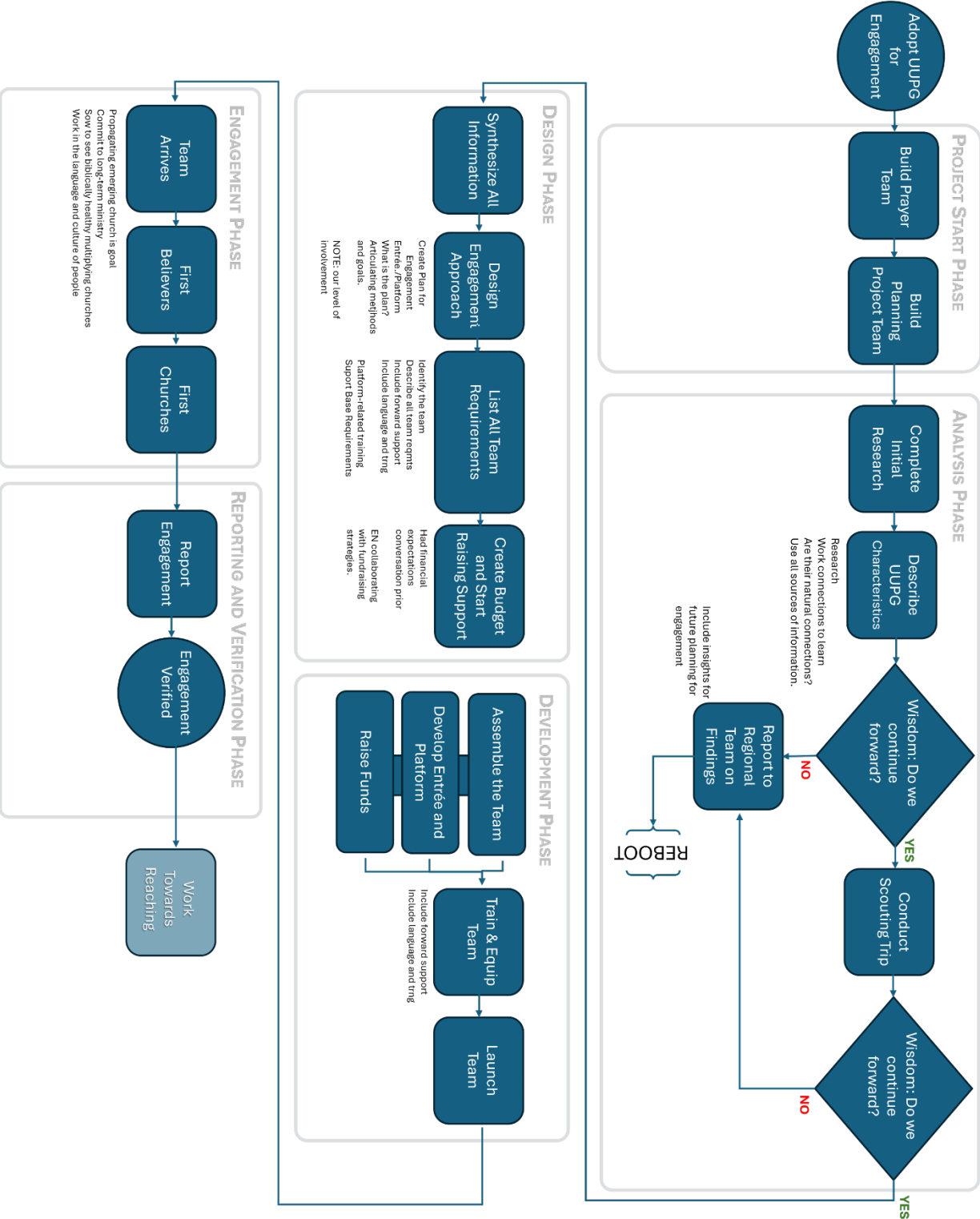
Perhaps no woman or man can count them, but He can. He knows everything about every one of them. He knows their personality, their strengths and weaknesses, and all they have feared and longed for all of their days. He knows their nation, tribe, people, and language. Let's engage these remaining unengaged peoples, so that each one can be part of that great multitude which no man can count.

God desires that all peoples in every place have the chance to encounter and fall in love with Him. The engaged unreached have that chance; the unengaged unreached do not.

Unengaged peoples are not praising Him, declaring His glory, being made disciples of, glorifying Him for His mercy, rejoicing with His people, hoping in Him, or anticipating being among the great end-time throng of worshipers.

But we can do something about that by first engaging and then reaching them. Let pastoral and evangelistic giftings be entrusted with the engaged unreached while we leverage apostolic giftings where Christ is not known. Others can complete what is begun while we begin what is unbegun. We will identify the peoples who have no chance and give them one. We will acknowledge that there remains no more work for us among the engaged unreached, and we will turn to the unengaged unreached where there is a wide open door of opportunity. We will first engage them and then reach them, to the glory of God and the praise of the riches of His grace.

Process from UUPG Adoption to Engagement



Job-Aid for Verifying Engagement Status

See directions on other side

PEOPLE GROUP NAME/COUNTRY HERE

DATE

ASSESSOR NAME HERE

Criterion 1

IDEA: The apostolic effort is present with the people. This can mean living with them, or in some cases, being within a short distance.

There is a long-term worker living among the people

OR,

There is a long-term worker living close enough to have frequent contact

NOTE: Short-term workers are often also meaningfully employed whether among the people or close by.

Apostolic effort in (near) residence?

Check if "yes" ✓

Criterion 2

IDEA: The work is conducted in the language of the people, and it fits the culture.

Scriptures are shared in heart or market language

AND

Practices fit the people's culture

Committed to work in local language and culture?

Check if "yes" ✓

Criteria 3

IDEA: Work is long-term. It stays until multiplying churches are established.

Workers state they are committed to stay with the people until the church is self-multiplying.

Committed to long-term ministry?

Check if "yes" ✓

Criteria 4

IDEA: The methods lead to a self-replicating, healthy church.

Demonstrated commitment to Scripture, fellowship, worship, prayer, and God continually adding new disciples

Sowing is occurring in a manner consistent with the goal of seeing a biblically healthy, multiplying church emerge.?

Check if "yes" ✓

This people group is engaged

Check if "yes" ✓

Directions for Completing the Job-Aid

For the first 3 criteria, you are making observations. For the 4th, you are evaluating methods. You do not have to check all the boxes to assess a criterion as met.

1. **CRITERION 1: Apostolic effort in residence.** The idea is that an apostolic witness is either living among the people or close enough to be present. Short-term workers can work with long-term workers to help meet this criterion.
 2. **CRITERION 2: Committed to work in local language or culture.** This means that almost all of the communication (Scripture, teaching, social interaction) is in either the heart or market language of the people. The language used in education is an example of a market language. If the culture is Oral, the Scriptures do not have to be written.
 3. **CRITERION 3: Committed to long-term ministry.** The work is designed for the long-term. The workers commit to staying with the people until the church is self-multiplying. The workers verbal commitment is sufficient to make this assessment.
 4. **CRITERION 4: Sowing is occurring in a manner consistent with the goal of seeing a biblically healthy, multiplying church.** This about *how* the work is being done. Look for an emphasis on:
 - Scripture,
 - Fellowship,
 - Worship,
 - Prayer, and
 - God's adding new disciples continually
-
5. **FINAL ASSESSMENT OF ENGAGEMENT.** You need to have evaluated each of the four criteria as "yes" to assess the people group as engaged. Please don't change your earlier decisions in order to make it so! Thank you.

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CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT FORUMS

The Engage Network is a collective of individuals and organizations who are passionate about seeing a healthy multiplying church among every people.



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