

# PLANNING EXERCISE

## FEBRUARY 21, 2019 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

“In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.”  
– Dwight D. Eisenhower

This document presents a planning exercise for use by table groups on Thursday morning. In keeping with President Eisenhower’s comment, the objective is to engage us as church leaders in hard thinking about meeting key challenges for us to carry out TEC’s mission. Our objective is NOT to write a long-range plan, but to grapple with the challenges we face collectively as we try to advance the Gospel in our time, cultures, and locations.

### *Exercise 1 – Language, Literacy, Disability and Mission*

#### *I. Schedule (90 Minutes)*

Opening remarks – Presiding Bishop and President, HOD

Introduction to Planning Problem & Explanation of Background Materials for Table Groups – Russ Randle

Background: Secretary Barlowe – Costs & TEC Experience with Interpretation & Translation

Table Groups – Each individual will review and respond to the questions for their state and diocese – 10 minutes

Table Groups – 30 minutes -- Pick one diocese known to at least one person at your table and prepare collective recommendations; write them down.

Report – 30 minutes - - Rotating through tables, we will try to have two responses to each question; all written responses will be collected and later collated.

#### *II. Background Materials*

##### *A. Native Language Issues.*

##### **Act of the Apostles: Chapter 2:5-12 (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup> Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.

<sup>6</sup> When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. <sup>7</sup> Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?” <sup>8</sup> Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?

<sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and

Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome <sup>11</sup> (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” <sup>12</sup> Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

### **Book of Common Prayer (BCP); Thirty-Nine Articles:**

#### **XXIV. Of speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the people understandeth.**

*It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have public Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood of the people.* BCP. P. 872.

#### ***U.S. Census: Language Use in the United States: 2011 (attached as PDF)***

The U.S. Census tracks languages spoken at home by people five years old or older. The Census notes that there are 6,909 languages in the world, and from various academics sources, “the Census Bureau created a list of 381 languages, with less detail provided for language rarely spoken in this country.” That publication is posted separately.

**Honduras Census:** <https://www.statista.com/topics/2904/honduras/>

**Estimated Population:** 8.3 million; 56% urban; Life expectancy 73.6 years

**Languages:** The official and most widely spoken language in Honduras is **Spanish**. In fact, Honduras is sometimes referred to as Spanish Honduras. The population of Honduras is made up of about 18,000-70,000 hearing impaired persons. They use the Honduran Sign Language to communicate. According to the world’s Ethnologue, there are 10 languages spoken in Honduras. Out of these, there are *five indigenous languages* which are often spoken. They include **Garifuna, Miskito, Sumo, Pech, and Jicaque**. The **Garifuna** is spoken by about 100,000 Hondurans of the Garifuna population. Garifuna is affiliated to the Arawakan dialect and also contains borrowed Carib and European dialects. **Miskito (Miskito)** is a language spoken by the mesoamerican ethnic group. Approximately 29,000 Hondurans speak Miskito. **Pech** is part of the Paya languages. Less than 1,000 people in Honduras speak Pech.

**Immigrant languages** in Honduras are **Arabic, Armenian, Turkish, and Yue Chinese**. Arabic is the most widely spoken immigrant languages. About 42,000 of the Honduras population speak Arabic. The numbers of people who speak Armenian, Turkish, and Yue Chinese are 1,300, 900, and 1,000 respectively. Another immigrant language which is spoken by inhabitants of Bay Islands is Creole English. <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-honduras.html>

**Literacy Rate:** The literacy rate percentage of adult female at 15 years old and older was 87.03 in 2014 while the percentage rate of adult male of the same age range during that same year was 87.40. <http://visionlaunch.com/6-staggering-honduras-literacy-rate-statistics-and-facts/>

## ***Colombia Census:***

With a population of over 45 million people, Colombia is among the most populated countries in Latin America. The population of Colombia is ethnically and linguistically diverse, with over 100 languages spoken in the country. Colombia is also home to a large number of Spanish speakers. Spanish is the most popular language spoken in Colombia, and is spoken by more than 99.2% of Colombians. In addition to the Spanish, there are several other languages spoken by the Colombians. 65 of these minor languages are Amerindian in nature. Amerindian languages are groups of indigenous languages of the Americas. The 65 Amerindian languages spoken in Colombia can be grouped into 12 language families, including Arawakan, Cariban, Tupian, and Quechuan.

<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-colombia.html>

**From Wycliffe Bible Translators:** <https://www.wycliffe.org/blog/featured/wycliffe-101-the-how-and-why-of-bible-translation>

***What does it mean when Wycliffe says that someone hears or reads God’s Word in their “heart language”?*** A “heart language” is the language that someone thinks, prays and dreams in. Most often it’s the language that they learned at their mother’s knee. Many people around the world speak multiple languages. For example, a person might speak both Spanish and English fluently. But though they speak English, Spanish might be their “heart language” — the language that speaks most clearly to them.

***Why is it so important for someone to have the Bible in their own language?*** Quite simply, the Bible is God’s love letter — written to us and for us. And when the Bible is available to people in the language that speaks directly to their hearts, lives — and even entire communities! — change as people are drawn into a personal relationship with God. People are freed from addictions. Families are healed. And lives are transformed.

## **B. Literacy Issues**

“According to data from the 2014 U.S. Census Bureau, 21 percent — or nearly 60,000 — of working age adults in [Washington DC] lack a high school diploma. At the same time, 19 percent of adults cannot read a newspaper, much less complete a job application, according to [the National Center for Education Statistics](#).

The situation is just as worrisome at a national level. ***Approximately 32 million adults in the United States can’t read***, according to the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute of Literacy. ***The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found that 50 percent of U.S. adults can’t read a book written at an eighth-grade level.***”

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2016/11/01/hiding-in-plain-sight-the-adult-literacy-crisis/?utm\\_term=.2e5c0ba66eb8](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2016/11/01/hiding-in-plain-sight-the-adult-literacy-crisis/?utm_term=.2e5c0ba66eb8)

### C. Deaf and Hearing Impaired Population

“Across all age groups, in the United States, approximately 1,000,000 people (0.38% of the population, or 3.8 per 1,000) over 5 years of age are "functionally deaf;" more than half are over 65 years of age. About 8,000,000 people (3.7%) over 5 years of age are hard of hearing (that is, have some difficulty hearing normal conversation even with the use of a hearing aid). Again, more than half of those who are hard of hearing are over 65 years of age. We emphasize that these estimates are based upon self-reported (or informant-reported) hearing difficulty and not on independent audiometric measurements”. <https://research.gallaudet.edu/Demographics/deaf-US.php>

**Languages Are Not Always Spoken: Sign Languages and Worship.** “There are 978,000 Deaf in the Americas alone, but not a single, complete Bible translation exists for any of the 30 sign languages used across the continent. In El Salvador, most people speak Spanish, but the Deaf have never had the opportunity to attend school and don’t understand Spanish. But even if they did, that wouldn’t be the language that speaks to their hearts because it’s not in the one they understand best – sign language is. That’s why, for so many Deaf, not having the Bible in sign language makes understanding God’s Word extremely difficult, if not impossible.” <https://www.wycliffe.org/blog/featured/in-your-head-and-your-heart>

### III. INITIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR DIOCESE (Ten Minutes)

1. In what languages, if any, besides English (or Spanish if outside the United States) are primary Sunday services conducted in your diocese?
2. Are the clergy leading these services native speakers of this other language?
3. If the language is not English, Spanish or French, is there an authorized Episcopal or Anglican prayer book they use? Does this congregation have the complete Scriptures in their language?
4. In the public schools in the biggest city in your diocese, how many languages do the children speak?
5. Are there deaf congregations in your diocese?
6. Are any churches using sign language interpreters to assist in Sunday services, even if the most members of these congregations are not hearing impaired?
7. Look at p. 11 in the Census Bureau Document, *Language Use in the United States: 2011*. Almost twenty-one percent of people in the United States speak a language other than English at home.

What is the percentage of people in your state that the census says speak a language other than English at home?

#### **IV. WRITING AN EVANGELISM GRANT APPLICATION FOR YOUR BISHOP (Thirty Minutes – Collective Discussion and Response)**

***Pick a diocese from those represented at your table and respond collectively.***

For the sake of the following exercise, please assume that you have been asked by a Bishop in your state to make recommendations about how to evangelize people whose native language is not English, or who are hearing impaired, as well as those who are functionally illiterate.

The Bishop is highly motivated, because a major Foundation has asked the Bishop has been asked to apply for a substantial grant to reach these people, provided the diocese can formulate a credible plan to the foundation in order to do so, recognizing obstacles as well as opportunities to reach people who have no church and very much want and need to be part of a Christian community.

Please describe the evangelism opportunities and obstacles to achieving these opportunities, making recommendations ranked in priority order, aimed at making maximum use of existing resources.

##### ***A. Data Sources?***

What data do you need in order to respond to this question? What resources would you consult?

##### ***B. How Do You Engage Key Parties?***

1. If you are in the U.S., how do you engage Anglo lay people in this effort? If you are outside the United States, how do you engage Spanish speakers in the effort to reach people who don't speak Spanish as their native language?
2. How do you engage lay leaders in the immigrant or refugee communities in this effort and identify potential candidates for ordination from non-traditional backgrounds to help serve these communities?
3. How do you engage ELCA and other Christian church partners in this effort?
4. How do you positively engage the geographic communities where these people live in this effort?
5. How do you engage language teaching programs (e.g. ELL) in this effort?
6. How do you engage the deaf community in this effort?
7. How do you engage adult literacy programs in this effort?

***C. Strategy – Language or Country of Origin?***

1. Do you try to plant new churches?
2. Understanding that that we try to bring all people to Jesus, if you are going to plant a new church for this mission, do you focus on people you are trying to reach with church plants in these communities by language they speak? Country of origin? Predominant occupation (e.g. mariners, miners, farmers)?
3. What are some of the drawbacks of each approach? What are the strengths?

***D. Changes Needed in Diocesan Approach?***

What changes in your current diocesan operations and rules are needed in order to make this effort work well?

***E. What Changes Are Needed at Denominational Level?***

What changes in the current TEC approach to such evangelism are needed at the denominational level to make such efforts work better?

1. Within Executive Council?
2. At General Convention?
3. Other TEC Bodies?

**V. Pick A Reporter for Your Table to Respond**