

Stepping Up Reporting Event Notes 2008 of the Urban Mission Development Project



EVANGELICAL COALITION
FOR URBAN MISSION

A project jointly funded by the

and

The **Methodist Church**



and endorsed by: ECUM and its members: CURBS (Children in Urban Situations), Urban Saints, Frontier Youth Trust, Scripture Union Urban & Justice Ministries, Urban Vision, Unlock, Worth Foundation; and the following bodies: Church of England Board of Social Responsibility and Urban Bishops Panel, Baptist Urban Group, Churches Commission for Racial Justice, Churches Community Work Alliance, Methodist Urban Mission Strategy Group, National Estate Churches Network, Network of Urban Evangelicals, Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales Community Relations Committee, UK Urban Mission Congress Trust, Church and Society Committee of the United Reformed Church, Urban Bulletin, Urban Ministry Training Project (Newcastle), Urban Presence, Urban Theology Unit, World Vision.

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Stepping Up

Notes of 2008 Reporting Event for the Urban Mission Development Advisor Project

Present:

Francis Brien	URC
Andy Dorton	KEY Churches Together; Hull Outer Estates Group
Tony Ford	Gweini
Stuart Jordan	Methodist Urban Mission Strategy Group
Frank Kantor	URC
Fiona Smith	Unlock, Hull
Andy Weir	St Stephens Netherthorpe
Alison Gelder	Housing Justice
Roger Sainsbury	Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission, UMDA Management Committee
Michael Eastman	Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission, UMDA Management Committee
Erica Dunmow	UMDA
Katy Armstrong	UMDA
Jonathan Kerry	Methodist Church, UMDA Management Committee
Jim Robertson	Churches Community Work Alliance
Steve Millwood	Unlock, Sheffield
Liz Carnelly	Y+H Churches Regional Commission

Apologies:

Suzanne Adofo	United Reformed Church, Church Related Community Workers
Joe Aldred	Churches Together in England, Ethic Minority Church Affairs
Chris Baker	William Temple Foundation
Paul Ballard	Church in the Centre of the City Network
Alistair Beattie	Groundlevel Network
Stephen Belling	Nehemiah Foundation
Tim Bissett	Church Urban Fund
Andy Bruce	Churches Commission for Racial Justice
Nicola Chappell	Tearfund
Chris Chester	South Yorkshire Workplace Chaplaincy
Kathryn Copey	Children in URBan Situations
Steve Croft	Fresh Expressions
Andrew Davey	Church of England Community & Public Affairs Officer
Andrew Davies	Mattersey Hall, Assemblies of God
Stuart Dew	United Reformed Church, Church & Society Committee
Malcolm Duncan	Faithworks
Aled Edwards	CYTUN (Churches Together in Wales)
Tim Evans	Worth Foundation
Kathryn Fitzsimons	C o E Diocese of Ripon and Leeds
Laurie Green	National Estate Churches Network
David Greenfield	National Estate Churches Network
John Hayward	Scripture Union Justice and Peace Ministries, UMDA Management Committee
Phil Hulks	World Vision
Helen Jobling	Methodist Urban Mission Strategy Group, UMDA Management Committee
Terry Jones	Baptist Union of Great Britain Urban Officer
Martin Johnstone	Church of Scotland
Juliet Kilpin	Urban Expression
Jon Kurht	Livability (pka Grooms-Shaftesbury)
Dawn Lonsdale	Unlock
Stephen Lowe	Chair of C of E Urban Bishops' Council
Rachel McCallum	Sheffield Christian Education Council
Vernon Marsh	Methodist Church, UMDA Management Committee
Ian Mayer	Jubilee Trust

Stuart Murray-Williams	Urban Expression
Derek Purnell	Urban Presence
Ultan Russell	Social Responsibility Officers' Network
Sue Faulkner	Urban Mission Theology Project
Des Scott	Church Army
Rachel Shackleton	Spurgeons Network Development Manager
Elizabeth Simon	London Churches Regional Commission
Steve Summer	U R C, Church Related Community Workers
Phyllis Thompson	New Testament Church Of God
Richard Trotman	Church of God of Prophecy
Dave Wiles	Frontier Youth Trust
Keith Wood	Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission
Richard Zipfel	Caritas Urban Round Table Ne

1. Report on the Project 2004-7 - Executive summary

The original five outcomes set when the Consortium of 25 agencies and denominations was set up to develop the post in the early 2000s were:

1. linked databases of projects and denominational officers active in urban mission, for most of the major urban and/or metropolitan areas
2. self-sustaining networks of practitioners at the same level in those areas, supported by a coalition of such networks
3. the identification of the key issues for urban mission and theology
4. help for churches in interpreting relevant government policies
5. better access to information on funding for urban mission government policies and information on funding

Early in the Project, and a period of research testing the Five Outcomes, they were grouped into three main areas:

1. communications flows on funding and government policy
2. network development in several regions
3. training available to resource urban mission practitioners on the issues and practicalities that they face.

For full and detailed Reports on each of these Outcomes please see:

1. Summary of Urban Mission Information Work - http://www.urbanmission.org.uk/um_outcome_145_0408.pdf
2. Urban Mission Networks Evaluation Report - http://www.urbanmission.org.uk/um_outcome_2_0408.pdf
3. Evaluation of Urban Mission Issues Work http://www.urbanmission.org.uk/um_outcome_3_0408.pdf

All available to download from <http://www.urbanmission.org.uk/umhistory06-07.htm>

1.1. Government policies and information on funding

Changes on the Christian scene since late 1990s include –

- the growth of the Churches Regional Commissions
- the growth of Faithworks
- the changing role of the Church Urban Fund

So the strategy that was developed that it is better to spend time looking at improving the links between local practitioners and these agencies and their joint working, than setting up new systems of communication.

1.1.a *Urban Bulletin* – this has been a key channel of communication for over a decade. It currently suffers from the need to move into electronic availability and from irregular production schedule. The Project has worked with a number of stakeholders to address this.

1.1.b. Networks

Yorkshire and the Humber Region – the first structure set up was a network of networks, but in the last 18 months the shift has been towards a network geared more to resourcing local practitioners. The original pattern was that the network was administered by the Churches

Regional Commission for Yorkshire & The Humber, but as their staff resources have reduced, it is expected that the new UM networks Support Officer post will provide admin back-up.

Scotland – here strongest links are with the Scottish Churches Social Inclusion Network but the recent appointment of an Urban Mission Ministries Officer at Scripture Union Scotland and developments at Edinburgh Community Church means that it may be more viable to establish a network of people more interested in the whole of urban ministry.

Wales – here links with Gweini have proved fruitful, with the Project also linking to the CYTUN network and encouraging local churches to take advantage of both.

England and UK

The key events in the last three years have been:

- taking a leading role in creating space for national Christian urban mission, community development and social action practitioners to discuss the recommendations *Faithful Cities* of the Commission for Urban Life and Faith Report
- contributing to much closer working between a range of national Christian community development and social action agencies
- involving a UK-wide range of practitioners in the 2007 UK Urban Mission Congress, Jesus in the City, for Bristol in 2007

1.2 Issues

This became focussed on the need for better training for local urban mission practitioners. The Anglican Bishop for Urban Life & Faith was tasked with progressing this in terms of clergy training so the project concentrated on training for lay people.

Two symposia were held, calling together a mix of independent and college-based courses, denominational reps. with responsibility for commissioning training and urban mission practitioners.

2006 Symposium on Urban Mission Training

This was the first time a wide range of colleges, independent training courses, denominational officers and practitioners had been brought together to look at the general skills base needed for urban mission locally.

http://www.urbanmission.org.uk/um_training_symposium_bham_nov06_0208.pdf

2007 Symposium on Training for urban church planting and cross-cultural mission

This was more focussed in terms of topic and two of the six presentations were made by officers from Black-led churches.

http://www.urbanmission.org.uk/um_training_symposium_church_planting_2007_0208.pdf

2. Looking ahead

2.1 The Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise Project 2007-8

This research was commissioned by the Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber and Faithworks UK. It researched c20 projects in Yorkshire & Humberside Region

where Christians are engaging with the wider community, in ways varying from traditional church-based children's activities to a stand-up comedian.

A short presentation was made during the Stepping Up event about this piece of work by Liz Carnelley COE of Y&H CRC. The Executive Summary of the Report is circulated with this Report and can be downloaded from <http://www.crc-online.org.uk/reports.asp>

The most interesting finding in terms of vocational selection is that traditional pastoral skills are not the best indicator of successful community engagement and that strategic, team and pioneering leadership were all important and the *'existence or dominance of only one leadership style may actually hinder the effectiveness of the work.'*

The Recommendations of the Report concerning both leadership and the lack of traditional church resourcing for such ministry, very largely mirror those found in the 04-05 research undertaken by UMDA and those made in the Faithful Cities Report of 2006, even though some of the 'presences' investigated are rural and suburban.

The UMD Project will therefore be encouraging relevant bodies to pay attention to the Recommendations in this Report and will meet with Y&H CRC and Faithworks to discuss its promotion.

2.2 The Goals set for 2007-10

There was no Reporting event in 2007 partly because the funding for the future of the Project was not secured until the autumn and because the UK Urban Mission Congress took place in June when the meeting would otherwise have happened and this event was a major piece of work for the Project.

The UMDA method of working is to continue to act as a catalyst and the seven specific Goals for 2007-10 are:

1. share the learning from the Y&H network of urban mission practitioners with other regions/contexts

Report on Networking 2004-7 is to be disseminated to share the learning on how networking seems to operate best for urban mission practitioners.

2. to explore a UK-wide network of networks

The Project has been in conversation with six formal or informal networks of either denominational and/or agency reps at a UK level. Three of these have agreed to meet together in late Sept 08 to discuss whether it is time for a new national grouping.

3. to pay particular attention to the engagement of Black-led churches

Active involvement in training development underway and some engagement in Y&H and Scotland

4. to promote sharing of good practice etc on training for urban mission practitioners

A project is at the planning stage to set up a number of pilot hubs around the UK which will be both contact and delivery points for the specialist training that has been consistently requested over the last 25 years by urban mission practitioners.

5. to provide support to existing networks of urban mission practitioners where their own denominational resources are insufficient

Creation of Urban Mission Networks Support Officer post has resourced this process.

6. to further partnership in urban mission and ministry between the four nations of the UK and
7. to promote and develop the UK Urban Mission Congress in 2010 as a focus for practitioners from the four nations of the UK.

This is been planned in cooperation with the Edinburgh 2010 World Mission Conference. The JITC Exec will facilitate consultation around the E2010 themes at several places in 2009 where urban mission is already on the agenda – i.e. where there are ‘bubbles’ of enthusiasm. The findings will then be gathered together at a JITC Congress early in 2010 fed into the E2010 event. Groups in Wales have expressed an interest to hold their own event focussed on urban mission in 09.

3. Refining the priorities

Of the seven Goals for 2007-10, the two more complicated to achieve are:

- the formation of a broad-based UK body to promote and support urban mission
- training for urban mission.

At the *Stepping Up* event attendees were invited to answer the following question about these two areas.

In the light of the presentation from the Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise research project, consider:

What recommendations would you make on the key activities to further this Goal in the next 6 months ?

Sections 3.1 and 3.2 are their responses:

3.1 National Network

3.1.1 Why?

Options for the purpose are:

- resourcing and supporting projects
- influencing church structures
- accountable national voice to advocate for urban mission – possibly to Government
- sharing experience and expertise
- place for gathering accumulated knowledge
- place to discuss emerging issues
- sharing knowledge and ideas

3.1.2 What?

Alternatives are:

- a national umbrella over other smaller umbrellas
- one stop-shop or hub
- how to develop structure?

Self-perpetuating network?

Re-enforcing parts of network

3.1.3. Ways of working

- collaborative working, not re-inventing wheel

Does network need to be able to speak with a common voice?

3.1.4. Need

A driver to keep urban mission on the agenda.

3.1.5. Conclusion

National Network seen as a good idea.

Many practicalities will need careful consideration.

Meeting will need to decide on exact purpose.

3.2 Training

“We’re all urban now” therefore no need for urban specialists or specialist training – this is a cop out!

3.2.1 Who is being encouraged to be trained?

Options include: black church members (East London), white working class people, leaders (strategic gate keepers)

If different sorts of people are being offered training each region should have a strategy in parallel to mainstream for urban mission.

Multi-strand approach needed

What training will support that strategy?

What is the process and content of training and who delivers it? E.g. learning in sets with peers not packaged courses.

3.2.2 There is good urban mission training happening.

E.g. Nehemiah (Birmingham), Unlock

Need to identify them and put information about them together and identify the gaps too. Move beyond reliance on colleges

It’s different in different areas – part of training to research context of the area.

What exists is currently regionally based and groups will outgrow what is available in local areas.

Will need to expand to other areas anyway.

Conversation needs to happen between training groups

3.2.3 Denominational and college-based training

Denominations lack training structures for lay people.

If the church becomes primary focus of attention there will be problems. Training needs to be wider.

Need to influence colleges and training offered there.

3.2.4 Delivery in partnership with bodies outside the Christian community

Multi-faith areas

E.g. Street Angels, Halifax works in and for community, has partners (e.g. schools) but not necessarily other faith groups. How does one speak for the other if not with the other?

Generic skills

Do we have good examples of training with other professional agencies? E.g. for volunteer management, youth work or health?

Cross fertilisation

Avoid “dialogue of the deaf” between churches and secular agencies

Common Purpose (a cross-sectoral education programme) is a good model of learning outside culture

4. Future action

4.1 Goal 1 and 3 – regional networking

Learning from the different patterns of networking will be shared. More work will be undertaken to work with the Black-led churches, particularly in Y&H Region.

4.2 Goals 2, 3 & 6 - national networking

Three of the five groupings* that have been identified where people with a passion for urban mission and community action get together have agreed to meet together on 24 September 08 in London. This meeting will discuss in more detail what is needed to provide a national focus for the growing interest in urban mission.

UMD Project will keep links with the other two networks and encourage their engagement in whatever develops.

Especial effort will be made to include agencies based within black-led churches, as these are not currently engaged in most of the networks.

4.3 Goal 4 – support for small national networks

Conversations with the UMDA over the support required will be finalised and the UM Networks Support Officer will supply this where requested.

4.4 Goal 5 – training for urban mission

Key training agencies and other interested parties will be brought together in early autumn 08 as a steering group to identify the pilot hub regions and advise on their development.

4.4. Goal 7 – UK Urban Mission Congress

The UMDA will continue to sit on the Executive Committee and the UM NSO will act undertake administration as required by the UK UM Congress Trust.

The UMDA will work to promote the bubbles and co-ordinate their responses.

* The five networks identified are:

Caritas Urban Network

Eccleston Group

Ecumenical Urban Officers Network

The Evangelical Urban Mission Network and the Network of Urban Evangelicals that it convenes

Forgotten Five

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