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EMIT NEWS

THE IMPORTANCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL FLUIDITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS

How COVID changed
the way EMIT does training

REGIONAL REPORTS

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by developing leaders

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ORGANIZATIONAL FLUIDITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Worldwide, more than 40% of small businesses had to close down permanently. Millions lost their income. Advances that were made in the eradication of poverty over the last 50 years, were wiped out in less than 12 months. From the biggest corporations to the smallest non-profit had to adjust or close down.

The rapid pace of change together with organizations' inability to adapt to this constantly evolving world has led to the demise of many established organizations.

The importance of organizational fluidity became apparent over the last couple of months. Those that mastered the increasingly complex and turbulent environment and were able to react at a moment's notice, managed to not only survive, but even thrive.

Most businesses are designed for efficiency, not adaptability. Such businesses, by design, are not built to suddenly change course. A business that has embraced organizational fluidity can achieve

innovation, speed, and agility to suddenly change course to navigate around an obstacle without the cumbersome sluggishness of centralized control.

Organizations and leadership must position and prepare themselves to be highly flexible and fluid in this new world. Quick improvisation and ad-hoc responses are imperative in increasingly complex and volatile environments. A clear understanding of organizational flexibility will ensure that creativity flows in productive ways, not in destructive fight, flight, or freeze responses.

There are many variables to take into consideration in this new era of fluidity. Organizations must achieve a more organic fluidity, moving from hierarchies to networks, from formal rules and high levels of coordination into far more spontaneous interactions, improvised processes, and teams that have more freedom to make decisions.

EMIT reacted early in the crisis and addressed the mindsets, practices, and skills of our staff that

enabled us to change our structures and models. We realized the value of our more than 300 volunteers in Africa and decentralized our decision-making. Trusting our volunteers with the vision and implementation of our new model of training, proved to be one of the biggest reasons for our success in 2020.

Communicating the vision and the "Big Picture" became an important focus for the executive team. Staff and volunteers were trained in new technology and soon adapted to the new realities of virtual meetings.

Creating unity in purpose was at the foundation of our efforts. Goals and objectives were made clear and our teams were trusted with the implementation. The results were amazing.

We are privileged to have you with us on this journey of hope. It is our prayer that you will be encouraged by our stories and lessons learned.



Kobus Grobler
CEO

2020! In just a few weeks, the world changed forever. We were all forced into lockdowns, social distancing, facemasks, and elbow bumps. Our vocabulary now included words and phrases like "old normal", "new normal", "pre-and post-COVID", and "virtual meeting". All of us are now informed on the latest medical research and the procedures and protocols for developing vaccines. We now know the difference between antiviral and antibiotics. Working from home has become the norm for millions of people.

ANGLOPHONE COUNTRIES

Anglophone countries faced huge challenges with nationwide COVID-19 lockdowns. The impact of the disease has resulted in millions of Africans suffering from significant social, political, spiritual, and economic hardships. The cost of living skyrocketed over the last 12 months. Increasing poverty levels and the lack of social interaction resulted in huge social problems.

EMIT responded to these challenges by acting early and developing a training model that could continue even in these harsh circumstances. Our committees were trained to act as facilitators and our programs changed to small group training events early in the second half of 2020.

It was not always as easy as it sounds. Some of our volunteer leaders even resisted these changes initially. EMIT decided to push through non-the-less. The results of these early actions became very apparent as the first positive feedback started to come in from our small group meetings. Not only did the students engage better in small groups but they also became co-responsible for the vision. In many of our countries, we even saw an increase in student numbers.

Another major benefit from the small groups was that the students now held each other responsible and became more accountable for finding solutions for communities in need. This led to bigger social interaction and new programs started by our students to transform their communities.



Food hampers were donated. Hot meals were served to frontline workers in hospitals. Personal care packages and hygiene packs were distributed in informal settlements. Thousands of vulnerable and neglected children received food daily.

Residents and community leaders responded with gratitude to programs that were led by EMIT volunteers. We closed 2020 on a much higher note than what we started. Instead of focusing on the problems, the Lord helped us to focus on the opportunities. This led to much higher creativity and involvement.

To God be the Glory!

LUSOPHONE COUNTRIES

2020 was a year of great difficulty for all when the COVID-19 Pandemic and Lockdowns increased the burden of the

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financial crisis as a result of corruption in many countries. Our Lusophone countries did not suffer less. Amidst all that, there was another cyclone in Mozambique and human rights abuse in Angola which has gone unpunished. These continue to be the descriptions of the situation in the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. Surely we cannot put aside that extreme poverty is an inevitable result for most citizens. Those in rural areas suffer the most, as well as those that venture into big cities with a dream of better conditions, finding themselves at the mercy of streetwise youngsters as well as police looking for a "gasosa" (some sort of quick cash so they can let you go).



Situations like these normally make people try to flee to other countries and regions, but different this time, with all borders closed to and from any other country, bringing a heightened feeling of desperation and hopelessness. This caused some to practice "quick kidnappings" or hijacking amidst more affluent people and foreigners who did not return home when the borders closed.

EMIT was able to address the challenges of Lockdown and closed borders with a new adult training concept. The Committees in Angola were eager to accept the new way of training in small groups.

Facilitators were trained via MS Teams and Zoom platforms. By November 2020 we were able to have the first meeting with 19 small groups all over the country. Response from our teams has been largely positive and grateful for the innovative new model of training.

Unfortunately, since Mozambique also suffered the cyclone we were still not able to have training sessions there, since they are still under stringent lockdown. Please pray for the people of this very poor and politically unstable country.

The Lusophone countries can say "Obrigado" for all EMIT has done.

FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES

The prosperity and wellbeing of Francophone Countries in Africa are continuously under threat by political unrest, disease, corruption, and severe poverty. These countries are some of the richest in natural resources, yet they are also some of

the poorest on the continent. Despite all these challenges, there are many encouraging signs of progress.

After the genocide in Rwanda, trust became one of the major obstacles in getting church leaders together for training. Gradually it became clear to the leaders that EMIT was there to serve them and their communities. EMIT responsibly addressed their concerns and fears and challenged the leaders to forgive each other.



These leaders became instrumental in bringing about reconciliation, healing, and peace in their nation. The mistrust eventually subsided and over the last 20 years we trained more than 2120 church leaders face to face in Rwanda and more than 21000 church leaders were trained in our On-10 program.

The thousands of Rwandan and Congolese leaders we have since trained, continue to uplift, transform, and invest in their communities - a testimony that radiates throughout Francophone Africa. EMIT reconciles leaders and communities!

Our training in the eastern part of DR Congo was threatened in 2019 by another Ebola outbreak. Amid the turmoil of the outbreak, our local committees served church leaders in hotspot cities such as Beni, Bunia, and Butembo. Rebel groups also constantly threatens to kill civilians. It has been inspiring to see the levels of commitment that our volunteers exhibited during this difficult time.

COVID-19 added to an already desperate situation. Our committed team members in the French-speaking countries responded positively to the situation.

Our teams implemented the new model of training in small groups of 10 to 15 people with great success. 54 Facilitators were trained in small group learning principles. We were able to train 369 face to face students with 3380 On-10 trainees.

Our leaders effectively started new supporting programs to communities in need. These programs are improving the lives of thousands of impoverished and suffering communities.

With high spirit and resilience, we will move forward and achieve our goals to the glory of God.

HOW COVID CHANGED THE WAY WE DO TRAINING

To say that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world would be an understatement. It has upended day-to-day lives across the globe. The pandemic has changed how we work, learn and interact as social distancing guidelines have led to a more virtual existence, both personally and professionally.

After the initial shock and uncertainty subsided, we realised that if we want to fulfil our mandate to transform communities by training leaders, we will have to address our training model. We decided to be pro-active, rather than wait to see how long the pandemic will last. We believe it was the right decision as the pandemic is still with us – something no one could have predicted.

We could no longer come together in large venues with big groups, or travel across borders to deliver training as expert teachers. Even our material was designed to be taught in large groups by experts. Our entire model had to be changed.

The new model was determined after collaborating with our leaders across the continent and taking COVID guidelines into consideration. We moved from centralised, large group training events to decentralised, small group facilitation. This meant that students did not need to travel large distances to receive training but could stay in their communities and be trained. The training came to them. No expert teachers were allowed to



travel, therefore, we had to train facilitators for each group to facilitate the training process.

We had no material to train these facilitators and had to develop our own. As our training material was designed to be used by teachers in a classroom setting, all our material had to be reworked for the new facilitation process. We train in 8 languages – this was quite a task! As soon as the material was developed, the training of facilitators started in earnest. We had no idea if this would be successful.

We knew that we had to give the vision to the people and trust them with it. It exceeded all our expectations. We are happy to report that students are accepting this new model with open arms. They love this process. This model is more interactive. Students are encouraged to discuss the material and ask questions and therefore retain and internalise the material better. With the old model it was simply not possible.

Another unexpected benefit is that community involvement has improved. Because these leaders are now learning together within their communities, they come up with solutions to their unique problems. They take hands and serve their communities together. We are excited for the future and believe that transformation is possible, now more than ever.

2019 PRE-COVID TRAINING →



TEACHER CENTERED

Require an expert teacher



CENTRALISED VENUE

Students have to travel to the venue and find accommodation for the duration of the training event



PRESENTATION STYLE

The training material and delivery is designed for a teacher-centered model



LARGE GROUP SETTING

Limited time for students to interact
Learning and retention of information is limited

2020 SMALL GROUP TRAINING



LEARNER CENTERED

Require trained facilitators



MULTIPLE LOCAL VENUES

Students in each country are close to a venue and return to their homes each day



FACILITATION STYLE

Student participation is encouraged through effective facilitation



SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Ample time for interaction, discussion and questions
Learning and retention of knowledge is amplified



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