**“Wanderers”**

*Sept 2017*

**Where are you on the CPM continuum?**

4.       Emerging CPM: stable 3rd gen churches and some 4th gen churches.

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**Name of Focus Group (UPG, city, region, language group, etc.)**

“Wanderers” [*pseudonym*] – A Muslim UPG

**Background info on the group**  
*(history, culture, family, traditions, religious, geographic, government, education, etc.)*

* Sunni.
* Living throughout the region

**The CPM Team**

*Describe your team.*

Several waves of CP team over the last 15 years. Just my wife and I now, but had from 2-4 couples at different times over the years and a few single teammates.

*How long has your team been together?*

Average team couple relationship with team was 5-7 years.

*Strengths and weaknesses of your team?*

Strengths: Eclectic, focused on outreach and discipleship, really wanting to see house churches birthed, committed to insider type ministry and results.

Weakness: two main teams working with network got blacklisted and left.

*Give team members’ primary responsibility.*  
Mine: continuing to coach, encourage, and resource the emerging movement.

Others: encouraging the leaders from afar.

**Primary barriers to evangelizing this group**

*(cultural, governmental, religious, geographic, historical, etc.)*

Tight communal living space, everything is watched very carefully, fishbowl, extremist groups present, strong regional sectarianism.

**Historical narrative of work among the group:**   
*(Please cover key issues as appropriate such as vision for the group and vision casting, prayer and prayer mobilization, training, evangelistic bridges, tools, commitment, baptism, church formation, leadership development, failures and lessons learned, etc.)*

Team in country since 1996, praying and reaching out to locals for many years before things started to happen.

It all started with one suicidal Wanderer refugee, “Mahmoud”. Having seen his father killed in local sectarian strife when he was young, he was depressed on and off, and really wanted to find a new life outside his country. He left the country once and moved to Europe but felt compelled to return, unable to explain why.

For 5 years, Mahmoud came around often but never had deep interest in discussions about Jesus. In late 2005 he called and asked to meet. He admitted he had seen nothing but hypocritical religion all around him, but he had seen something in us as Jesus followers that he was drawn to, and asked, “Help me learn to be a Jesus follower like you are…”

Soon after, he met Scott, who had just joined our team. Over the following months in 2006, Scott and Mahmoud and many of Mahmoud’s friends met almost every night at a local corner café. They read and discussed the Word, prayed for each other, and then celebrated when answers came. During this time Mahmoud fully became a follower of Jesus, was baptized soon afterwards, and quickly led his best friend Ibrahim to Jesus. Scott encouraged them to start their own Bible study with several interested friends in Mahmoud’s home. Scott continued to meet with Mahmoud and Ibrahim to encourage and equip them through “shadow pastoring”, but never took part in the home study.

Around this time, Mahmoud and Scott visited the pastor of the only Protestant church in town. The pastor told Mahmoud that to fully be a follower of Jesus he needed to attend his church. This confused and hurt Mahmoud a little. On the way home, a close friend stopped him and said, “I saw you go into the church building this afternoon. Have you become a Christian?” Mahmoud realized at that moment that he didn’t want to “become Christian”, he wanted to be a Jesus follower who had access to his family and people group. He wanted to create “church” among his own people so that they could have the best chance of knowing Jesus. Mahmoud even took up some practices like fasting Ramadan to share more closely with his family and community.

Encouraged by these first fruits we increased team prayer: 2 hours of “strategic prayer” each week, planning special days of prayer and worship, and producing a resource that helped a wide group of intercessors through 10 points of prayer for our city.

From 2006-08, Mahmoud and Ibrahim continued to meet with Scott & other expatriate believers. Bible studies and discipleship took place. After a break due to turmoil in the area, Mahmoud and Ibrahim resumed leading the study in Mahmoud’s home with one major change. Since Scott didn’t know or read Arabic well, over the last couple years they had always read and studied in English and then discussed among themselves in Arabic. We suggested they try reading right from the Injil Al Sharif (Muslim-audience translation of the NT). The next week they reported back, “The brothers love reading out of the Arabic, and it makes it so much easier for us all to understand!”

In 2009, the first catalytic God-opportunity occurred: Mahmoud spoke in his hometown. Key Imams (“Imam Abdallah & Imam Nasim”) had their hearts gripped by Mahmoud’s message, and the Holy Spirit started to draw them in. After studying through half of Luke together, they announced that they believed everything it said about Jesus. Imam Abdallah began teaching about Jesus in his mosque and various public settings.

Within weeks, Mahmoud & Ibrahim’s Friday Bible study & prayer group began to grow again: from 2 to 9 (as Imam Abdallah, Imam Nasim and 5 other believers joined). 8 years later, this group is still meeting every Friday as a core leaders group. These 1st gen leaders gather weekly for strategic prayer, study, and planning for leader development. They pray for radical things like the salvation of terrorist group leaders and the reconciliation of factions in the region.

In 2010, our team was exposed to Discovery Bible Groups and the principles of Discipleship Making Movements. As we shared these with Mahmoud and Ibrahim, they used them in their Bible study group. The Imams found it so simple to pass on, they started study groups on Fridays after prayer in their mosque and another DBS with a group of 6 other Imams. Things began to really happen and develop after this exposure.

In 2011, after studying the word and witnessing the baptism of Mahmoud’s friend Ibrahim, Imam Abdallah had a dream about a waterfall and being cleansed. He was certain God had told him to be baptized. He, Imam Nasim, and another believer, Yusof, obeyed. Shortly afterward, Imam Abdallah and Imam Nasim launched new DBS seeker groups.

In March 2012, a second catalytic God-opportunity opened up through NGO relief work starting among Wanderer refugees and pioneered in another region by the 1st generation MBBs from Region 1.

A key kingdom partnership with a local PoP there (a medical doctor, “Dr. Majid”) who Mahmoud & Ibrahim led to the Lord (after the Holy Spirit prompted, they felt led to sow into Dr. Majid’s life over a 4-month period).

Holistic medical care, counseling and spiritual sowing with families of refugees and local populations were elements of Dr Majid’s decision to follow Jesus and contributing factors to the growth of study groups in his area. Quite quickly, Dr. Majid began offering to pray for his patients. Good things later came of that.

In 2012, two more Imams were saved via Imam Abdallah’s public speaking.

In May, a third catalytic opportunity occurred with a commemoration speech at an event in Region 1. Imam Abdallah spoke, and 600 people heard a new message of hope and reconciliation. This caused a big stir among the local religious/political leaders in attendance from the local community, but kingdom fruit was clear: 19 responded on that day and spoke to Imam Abdallah. This grew to 24 interested men, and 4 new study groups began. Group leaders got saved and discipled others.

In May 2013, a fourth opportunity occurred: again, more commemoration speeches: by Imam Abdallah in Region 2 and Imam Nasim in Region 1. In region 2,600 in a mosque (via loudspeaker to 10,000 across the camp) heard Imam Abdallah’s speech. In Region 1, 1,100 heard a message by Imam Nasim. More imams in both regions were being reached, hearing a new message proclaimed by their fellow religious leaders (now MBB Imams).

But persecution began: these speeches in 2013 started drawing the anger of the top religious leaders from Imam Abdallah/Imam Nasim’s group. Intimidation and threats began. Imam Abdallah, Imam Nasim, and Mahmoud were the most affected. Fear sought to silence the brothers, but it failed.

At the end of 2014, in Region 1, there were a minimum of 2 Imams directly engaged and active, both baptized and born again. 13 groups of men and 4 groups of women were meeting weekly for DBS studies. May 2014 brought a fresh inroad into a new community after another speech was delivered there: a dozen men responded, and several DBS groups started. Dr. Majid’s wife as well as Imam Abdallah’s wife and daughter have started several DBS groups.

At the end of 2014, in region 2, a minimum of 2 Imams were directly engaged (being discipled by Imam Abdallah 1-2 times per month + Dr. Majid regularly). 9 groups of men, 4 groups of women.

In November/December 2014, one radical fighter was engaged by Dr. Majid after treating his daughter and sharing his story about meeting Jesus. In February 2015 the group of radicals meeting together being discipled by Dr. Majid had grown to 5 members. As of June 2015 several of these radicals who are following Jesus are helping lead 7 groups of radicals in DBS. The first radical has publicly renounced fighting and violence due to His following Jesus.

These catalytic events were partly responsible for network growth. Another factor is the consistent witness of disciples in the believing groups. They are sharing outside the groups and when a new group is formed, it quickly becomes a believing group because the new members are already moving toward Jesus.

**Cycles – describe any key cycles of training / training events / leadership meetings, evaluation, strategy planning, etc.**

Many early cycles of basic DBS principles and practice. This last year we have worked through Basic DBS, Discipleship, Forming into Fellowship, Strategic Prayer, Identifying and Releasing leaders. The brothers have begun to implement reproductive leadership principles in the movement. Growing leaders are identifying other leaders and investing in them. Using the “group circles” tool has been helpful for the brothers to describe and track what is happening in the movement as well as identify fruitful leaders and leader clusters.

**Roles of the outside catalysts**

In early years: sharing, befriending. Later years: sharing DMM principles, coaching, encouraging.

**Roles of near-culture leaders**

There are not many, just our former CBB teammates who continue to occasionally call and encourage and pray.

**Roles of key inside leaders**

Training, proclamation, starting new groups, follow-up with groups and leaders, problem solving, bearing each other’s burdens.

**Key partners**

Three former teammates and being linked in with Ephesus group for my coaching.

**Vision: is there uniformity of vision across multiple partnerships – does it exist, and if so, how did it emerge?**

Emerged because we shared a developed team approach

**Key factors in progress**   
*(What were key factors in progressing on the CPM continuum above?)*

* MUCH prayer (Strategic prayer – listening to God, standing on his promises) by the “alongsiders” (us) needed from the beginning and *especially* at key times since 2008. Since 2012, MBBs themselves trained and mentored in strategic prayer and they are passionate for it now!
* In seeking out PoPs: above all be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading! How easy it could've been to miss out on the great potential in Mahmoud (ex-suicidal man, etc.).
* Obedience-based study groups: intro DBS *ASAP* in the *heart language*. Set the “*Read – Obey – Share*” DNA early on.
* Instil vision for *multiplication* immediately: not just *addition* of 1st gen MBBs. They’ll pass it on to 2nd, 3rd generation leaders who will do likewise (2 Tim. 2:2model).
* Seize the special role for MBB teachers as catalytic opportunities from God.
* Some value in working with NGOs: access and bona fide help. But also some negatives: danger of creating dependency and potential for exhaustion/burn-out.
* Use local celebrations and events as key “fishing” opportunities for PoPs.
* Holy Spirit releasesapostolic, pastoral and evangelistic gifts early. These need sharpening and mentoring, which are key roles for the “alongsiders” to play. (Shadow-shepherding/2 Tim. 2:2/Titus model)
* Insider model was very effective in our context but has challenges for effective oversight of 2nd and 3rd generation and beyond.
* Key to think through DMM oversight and multiplication structures and rely on the Holy Spirit for the blueprint. Jethro principle (delegation of leadership) is needed. (We could've done better here from the start. We’re still learning; improved in 2014-2015.)
* Encourage birth of new groups early on. Mahmoud and the brothers call this “*nuclei of salvation.*”
* MBBs' willingness to suffer and carry their cross. This comes back to strategic prayer and the inner lives/depth of MBBs. Testing *will* come.
* Don't underestimate what short-termers can add to long-termers' strategies! Whole DMMs can be sparked by one conversation, a smile and a cup of coffee shared *at the right time and in the right place*. This goes back to God and His sovereign plan and purposes.

**Key barriers to progress**   
*(especially at transition points on the continuum above)*

* Identity (initially using English Bible, later a feeling that they were associated with Zionist Western Evangelicals)
* Pushback from Wanderer political leadership
* Backlash from CBB literature distribution

**Disappointments/Challenges**

* Getting uniform cycles going in new groups
* Suspicion on a communal and religious level
* Pushback from local Christian individuals and groups
* Overwhelming humanitarian needs and not finding ways to help

**Remaining Gaps**

* Making sure there is clear transmission of vision into new groups and new generations
* Developing uniform study cycles to ensure reproduction
* Workable solution for connecting with alongsiders working with other clusters of leadership

**Statistical Information**   
*(# of baptized, # of groups, # of churches – year by year if possible; any other information that would be helpful)*

* Total of at least 350 MBBs currently engaged in Region 1 & 2 put together. (The men’s groups are 7-10 men in size and the women’s groups 3-5 on average.)
* Reached 3rd generation of faith amongst these MBBs, rising number of 4th gen groups
* 100% indigenous movement DNA spreading. NO direct expat involvement apart from the shadow-shepherding (very active from 2005-2013, less so since Y & B had to leave the country.)
* As of Aug ‘17 68 groups of MBB *believers* (not just seekers), including:
* 7 *groups* of Radicals who’ve entered/are entering the Kingdom thru DBS studies…
* 11-15 groups of women now (women’s groups experience the most attrition, many choose to combine when they get too small
* ~42 2nd gen. baptisms took place during the summer of 2015!
* Some of the Imams’ 2nd gen groups have finally produced some 3rd gen groups and a new 4th gen.
* One healthy connection made with a similar-background MMB Imam from another part of the region who is connected to an emerging movement in his part of the region

**Future Plans**

* Working on further leadership growth cycle studies and relational connecting
* Ensuring clear study and communication happens concerning identity
* Developing a clear, simple plan for new groups and generations to connect with and pass on.
* More strategic connections with other like-background believers across the region

*(Edition History)*

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