

Why is there relatively little progress in Frontier People Groups?

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Some reasons are mostly out of our control:

1. **Places.** FPGs tend to be isolated from gospel witness, in places difficult to access politically or geographically. Almost 3/4ths of the population of people in FPGs is in South Asia.
2. **Religions.** Most FPGs are members of large religious blocs— like Islam, Hinduism, or Buddhism—that provide a global identity and view Christianity as an opposing religion allied with Western political powers. Around 90% of the FPGs are either Muslim or Hindu.
3. **Fears.** Many FPGs may be aware of and respect Jesus, but see Jesus as the savior of just the Christians, not of the whole world. they fear that putting their trust in Jesus will bring shame and ostracism on their family and community
4. **Diaspora.** FPGs tend to stay in their homelands. Less than 3% of the total population of FPGs are in diaspora groups. And those who come to faith elsewhere may be shunned as traitors to their people group or become secret believers with respect to their families.

Other reasons for lack of progress among Frontier People Groups are under our control:

5. **Lack of clarity regarding Frontier People Groups.** Efforts to mobilize for UPGs do not make clear which people groups are still waiting to hear about Jesus for the first time and which have strong movements underway or churches simply needing renewal.
6. **Lack of clarity about the Frontier Mission Task.** Clarity has also been lost about how to prepare pioneer workers to start Jesus movements in groups untouched by the gospel. Especially in multi- cultural mega cities, “church planting” strategies have shifted from establishing the first community of believing families in a specific people group to starting Western-style (meeting- and program- based) churches that aggregate strangers from many people groups. these rarely result in movements.
7. **The shift from pioneering to partnership.** Wherever the Church is established, even if it is in just a small, westernized portion of the population, local believers seek partnership with global churches to help reach their own people group. As a result, churches often bypass agencies and partner with believers in UPGs as a popular church-to-church “mission” strategy. However, such partnership strategies automatically direct mission workers to people groups with believers and churches, and away from FPGs.
8. **The shift from long- to short-term workers.** Mission dollars and interest have shifted from long-term workers to short-term teams, which rarely learn the local language well or go to people groups or areas where there are no Christians. Short-term trips have risen exponentially since 2000, but very few participants return to work long- term among FPGs. Even “career” missionaries today rarely stay more than 5–10 years. This is hardly long enough to effectively establish work among FPGs.
9. **The shift from implanting the gospel to extracting believers.** In most of mission history, missionaries have sought to learn the language of a people group and clearly communicate the gospel to them so that families among them come to faith. New believers in tribal areas have not been removed to other Christian tribal groups—no matter how evil the tribe, even if some were martyred. But when faced with people living in people groups that are modern or aligned with global religions, believers are often encouraged to flee their families and persecution and join another people group that is already Christian. The result is that no progress of the gospel is made among the original people group. The gospel is not implanted; instead, the believers are extracted.