



**The 2nd Global Summit on the 4/14 Window: New York
Sept 2-5, 2010.**

Reflections on Missions to Children in the South Asian Context

About 570 Christian leaders representing over 75 nations recently came together in New York to consider the global needs, challenges and opportunities poised by children between the ages of 4 to 14. This 2nd

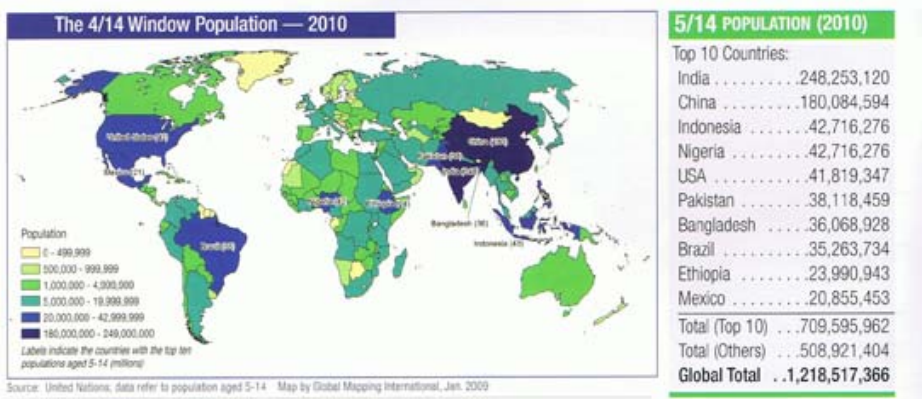
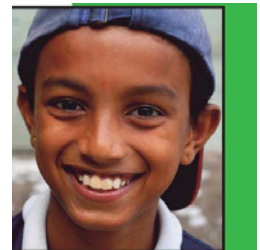
Global Summit on the 4/14 window was hosted by Promise Church in New York, from September 2-5, 2010 and facilitated by Dr. Luis Bush, *International Servant Catalyst*, Dr. Bambang Budijanto, *Chair – International Steering Committee*, and Rev. Nam Soo Kim, Senior Pastor Promise Church.

The focus of the 4/14 window initiative is to make an urgent appeal to consider the *strategic importance* and *potential* of the 1.2 billion children and youth in the 4/14 Window. It is a plea to the Church to open hearts and minds to the idea of reaching and raising up a new generation from within that vast group—a generation that *can* experience personal transformation and *can* be mobilized as agents for transformation throughout the world. The vision and hope is therefore to maximize their transformational impact while they are young, and to mobilize them for continuing impact for the rest of their lives.

Luis Bush says, “This requires that we become acutely aware of what is taking place in their lives. We must also endeavour to understand their nature and the essential means to nurture them. Only with this kind of informed awareness will we be able to reach them, shape them, and raise them up to transform the world.” The 4/14 Window Initiative is therefore a plea to engage in strategic global thinking and an answer to God’s call to catalytic action. The transformational mission of God involves bringing together all things under the headship of Christ (Ephesians 1:910) through the Church, which is His body. The body of Christ worldwide—including children and youth in the 4/14 Window—are God’s agents of transformation under the headship of Jesus Christ.

The Context for South Asia

In the list of the top 10 countries in the world with children in this age group, fall the three South Asian countries of India (248m children), Pakistan (38m children) and Bangladesh (36 m children). South Asia therefore assumes critical significance in this missional focus on children and her often desperate needs. The top 10 countries world-wide have a collective population of over 700m children vs. the 1.2billion of the world (58%) and together are larger by 16% of all other countries of the world put together. 1 out of every 4 of the world’s 4/14’ers are therefore from South Asia. The chart given below provides a deeper understanding of the areas of the world where the 4/14’ers reside.



322 million of the world’s 1.2 billion children reside in 3 South Asian countries alone

The 4/14 Challenge: Maximizing Transformational Impact

The table below provides some information of challenges facing children which need to be addressed in order to make an ongoing impact towards transforming children and assisting them to become agents of God's transformational mission

	South Asian Context	Indian Context
The Spiritual Challenge	4 of the eight countries have less than 1% Christian population viz. Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the Maldives.	Indian statistics for the church are between 4 to 5% officially. The Church is growing but less than population growth.
The Mental/Cognitive Challenge	Children's participation in primary education remains at an unacceptably low level. In 2001, South Asia accounted for more than a third of all the world's children out of school. India alone accounted for 26.8 million of the 115 million children not in primary school globally (23 per cent), while Pakistan had 7.8 million (7 per cent) and Bangladesh 3.8 million (3 per cent) according to UNICEF.	The right to education at elementary level has been made one of the fundamental rights under the Eighty-Sixth Amendment of 2002 and the Right To Education Bill of 2010. However, the literacy rate of 65% is still lower than the worldwide average and the country suffers from a high dropout rate.
The Physical/Health Challenge	70% of the South Asian population and about 75% of South Asia's poor live in rural areas and most rely on agriculture for their livelihood. According to the Global Hunger Index , South Asia has one of the highest child malnutrition rates in the world. In a latest report published by UNICEF in 2008 on global hunger shows that the actual number of child deaths was around 2.1 million.	As of 2008 India is ranked 66th on the global hunger index. The 2006 report stated that "the low status of women in South Asian countries and their lack of nutritional knowledge are important determinants of high prevalence of underweight children in the region". Infant mortality and Maternal mortality rates are matters of continuing concern.
The Economic Challenge	South Asia is the poorest region on the earth as well as Sub-Saharan Africa, and it has the lowest GDP per capita. Poverty is commonly spread within this region. According to the poverty data of world bank, there was more than 40% of the population in this region lived on less than \$1.25 per day in 2005, compared to 50% of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa. Bhutan has the highest GDP per capita in the region, while Nepal has the lowest. India is the largest economy in the region; it is the world's 11th largest or 4th largest by purchasing power adjusted exchange rates. According to a World report in 2007, South Asia is the least integrated region in the world; trade between South Asian states is only 2% of the region's combined GDP, compared to 20% in East Asia .	India's per capita income (nominal) is \$1,030, ranked 139th in the world, while it's per capita (PPP) of US\$2,940 is ranked 128th . Previously a closed economy, India's trade has grown fast. India currently accounts for 1.5% of World trade as of 2007 according to the WTO. 42% (456 million earn below \$1.25 per day) (2010 est.) GDP growth rate is at 8.8% for Q1 of 2010. However, 42% of India or 456 million earn below \$1.25 per day (2010 est.) As a result, children are victims of hunger and malnutrition, ill health, limited access or lack of access to education and other basic services, increased morbidity and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing, unsafe environments.
The Relational Challenge	Of course, it is not just poor children who are at risk. Actually, all children are at risk. Millions are at risk from poverty, but	At the deepest level, poverty is what happens to people whose relationships do not work for their well being. A

	millions are also at risk from prosperity! Many children and young people today have everything to live <i>with</i> , but nothing to live <i>for</i> .	person's wellbeing is rooted in wholesome relationships.
The Ministry Challenge	The ministry challenge is about encouraging and equipping the children and youth of the 4/14 Window to use their gifts and potential as agents in transforming the world. They represent an enormous untapped pool of influencers with sensitivity to the voice of God and willingness to do His bidding.	We need to understand again that God can and does use children and young people—their prayers, their insights, their hands and their feet—in changing the hearts of mankind. The 4/14ers have great capacity to understand the faith, and great courage and effectiveness as they share their faith. Adults will fail the 4/14ers if they fail to equip them with the vision and opportunity to do something beyond themselves

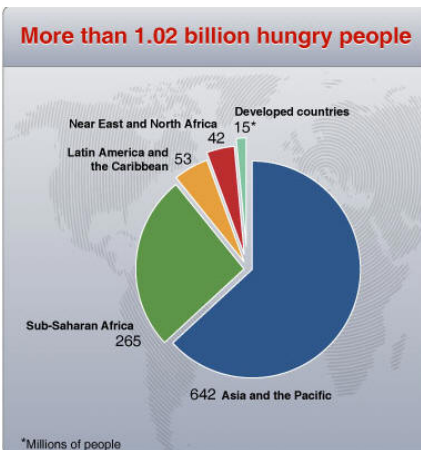
The Transformational Mission of the Church

A maze of challenges confront the 400 million plus children of the 4/14 window within South Asia. The contexts of the children vary from between poverty and hunger to growing economies and a tech savvy young generation. About 40% of South Asia's 1.4 Billion live in poverty. More than 596 million live on less than US\$1 per day. More than 70% of the malnourished children in the world live in Asia and these little ones as a result tend to contract illnesses for about 160 days of every year.



Transformation involves seeking positive change in the whole of human life, materially, socially and spiritually, by recovering our true identity as human beings created in the image of God and discovering our true vocation as productive stewards, faithfully caring for our world and people. Transformation is the progressive, ongoing and measurable, supernatural impact of the presence and power of God working in, through and apart from the Church on human society and structures. Recognizing this, renewed focus on *Transformation as the Missio-Dei* or *the Mission of God* must be embraced by every Great Commission Christian.

Transformation has become a unifying vision of the Church's mission. Diverse streams of transformation are converging into one great river of transformation in which the people of God are moving with the power, the presence and the peace of God, resulting in the healing of the nations. God is calling his servants to act as catalysts of personal, family, church and cultural transformation so that compelled by the love of Jesus in obedience to his command to love our neighbor by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Body of Christ can become his agent of transformation, a transforming Church on a transforming mission, united to bless the nations to the glory of God the Father.



In order to serve the 4/14 window, the Church is encouraged to meet their needs, recognize their challenges, and facilitate the raising up of a new generation of Christ followers to become agents of transformation themselves! "Raising up a New Generation from the 4-14 Window to Transform the World" (a.k.a. 4-14 Window Global Initiative) is a bold process of collaboration and mobilization that seeks to obey God's call to this new missional focus.

Facilitating an inter-generational conversation between Gen Y (ages 15-29) and Gen Z (ages 4-14) is the need of the hour as God's servants respond to this new challenge.

(Alex Philip, 4/14 Steering Committee)