

# The Changing Missionary Role

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## Study Report

*“In the long history of humankind those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed” Unknown author*

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CoN.....	Church of Norway
ELCHK.....	Evangelical Lutheran Church –Hong Kong
ELCT.....	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thailand
FGDs .....	Focus Group Discussions
FLM .....	Fiangonana Loterana Malagasy
HR.....	Human Resources
HQs.....	Head Quarters
JDs.....	Job Descriptions
KII.....	Key Informant Interviews
NMS.....	Norwegian Mission Society
NLM.....	Norwegian Lutheran Mission
NMS U.....	Norwegian Mission Student Union
NOKS.....	Norwegian Kronor
NORAD.....	Norwegian Agency for Development Aid
NYC.....	Network Youth Church
UK.....	United Kingdom
USA.....	United States of America
SIK.....	Centre for Inter-Cultural Studies
SMT.....	School of Mission and Theology
TAABCO.....	Transforming, Analysing, Accompanying, and Building Change Organizations
ToRs.....	Terms of Reference

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The authors take full responsibility for content, interpretation and any errors.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This study is a response by Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) to an issue that is part and parcel of their core mandate and that is the changing Missionary role. The study was commissioned in 2012 and a consultant from Transforming, Analysing, Accompanying, and Building Change Organizations (TAABCO) contracted to establish the current state of the Missionary role, factors contributing to its effectiveness, changes and challenges thereof. After the relevant agreements and definitions of the task were agreed upon, the study commenced in

March 2012 by sharing the Terms of Reference (ToRs) and their interpretation with Regional leaders, Country Representative abroad and NMS Management Team. Herein is a summary of the main findings of the study, conclusions and some suggestions for further reflection by NMS and its stakeholders.

**Background** – without delving too much into the history of Christianity, the report gives an overview of the changing world Christianity landscape. Global developments have directly impacted the Norwegian society and consequently the NMS. Demographically, the centre of gravity for Christianity is quickly shifting to the global South and statistics by World Christian Encyclopaedia attest to a decline in Europe and North America and growth in the global South. Likewise having pioneered Mission work, mission studies and been the drivers of Mission, the global trend in the Northern hemisphere points towards a general steady decline of Missionaries and an increasing number of those who go out for short term service. On the other hand, there are opposite developments in the global South where the Churches are now taking up Mission and sending Missionaries within their geographical boundaries and to other countries abroad. The example of South Korea is cited as an important pointer of the future changes in the global South if the figures and passion for Missions is sustained; because in a few years, Korea will surpass United States of America (USA) in the number of missionaries it will be sending out. Another phenomenon worth noting in the changing landscape is the growing migrant churches in Europe and partly North America which at the same time view the Northern hemisphere as a Mission field and are engaged in revival of both Catholic and Protestant churches. Whilst in some situations these churches remain isolated and with limited or no links to the host churches they nevertheless are a factor in the Christian community. These trends raise a number of conceptual and practical issues regarding the future of Mission including the types of relationships that may be forged between the Church/Mission agencies in the North and those of the global South. Again since it is outside the mandate of the study it suffices to state that a paradigm shift is imperative both in relationships, in the conduct of missions and in theological approaches.

Within the backyard of NMS namely the Norwegian society, a lot has changed over the recent years. Norway is one of the richest economies in the world with very high standards of living; from being very pietistic people secularism has become a reality. Moreover, from a rather homogeneous society, Norway is currently a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-racial and multi-lingual. Sociologically, the Church of Norway (CoN) has now officially separated from the State. In addition Norway has experienced a proliferation of organisations both local and international and a number have similar mandates as NMS. At the same time, secularism has partially resulted into a decline of interest in Mission, as statistics from NMS clearly show few Norwegians are available to serve as Missionaries for long term. Gone is the historical privileged and exotic position of Missionaries who were sources of information, knowledge on the other parts of the world as they were like windows to the outside thanks to technology that avails current affairs digitally and quickly.

As the interest in Mission fades, and as people seek answers to problems from new spiritualities, the Christian Church in Norway has been slow in addressing changes in society. It can be argued that the Church has to an extent been a captive of the general thinking in society and

therefore the Church of Norway within which NMS is anchored and draws its support, has for many years not paid attention to the issue of “calling” neither has it engaged young people in a meaningful and relevant manner on the same. On the other hand, the youth in search of spirituality that can fill the gap left by materialism have limited spaces of engagement within the Church and this has a direct impact on the work of NMS; because traditional supporters are aging and there are very few younger ones that can take over the mantle thereby overburdening the supporters as they dig deeper in to their pockets and stretch their efforts to sustain the work of Mission. It is the informed view of this study that NMS finds itself at the crossroads where critical decisions about the future direction are urgent requiring new, realistic and relevant strategies and approaches for Mission.

The Study report covers a number of subjects and issues as following; Methodology, Recruitment process and expectations, the understanding and application of the concept of “Calling”, growth and decline of Missionaries in Norway, the NMS model of partnership, the link between Mission and humanitarian work, the role and future of volunteers, sociological factors affecting the Missionary role including communication. Besides, the study report is structured content - wise to include inter alia; Acknowledgements, Executive summary, Background which is chapter one; Purpose, objectives and methodology is found in chapter two, while findings which encompasses several sub-themes is chapter three and analysis of findings is chapter four with chapter five focusing on the conclusion and some thoughts and suggestions on the way forward.

***Purpose and Methodology-*** The main purpose of the study was to: establish the extent to which the Missionary role has changed. ***Methodology-*** participatory methods were applied to gather data using questionnaires, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions FGDs), and field visits were made to a sample of countries namely Madagascar, Hong Kong, Thailand and United Kingdom (UK) and a general criteria was used to select them in consultation with NMS management. The choice of Madagascar was informed by its historical relationship with NMS as the first major country where Missionaries from NMS/Norway landed and started mission work more than a hundred and years ago including the fact that the host Church is one of the big Lutheran churches in the world; the choice of Hong Kong was informed by the partnership model which is apparently different and functional and also because NMS focuses on China from this vantage point; Thailand on the other hand, is a relatively new Mission field, a young Church and rather small with many Mission organizations and finally, UK and specifically New Castle Diocese due to the emphasis on building a Youth Network Church (YNC).

***Challenges in conducting the study:*** There were challenges that limited the scope of the study and one is the language as the consultant could not easily access materials in Norwegian language; two in the same vein some of the respondents found the questionnaire rather difficult, three the use of one consultant proved to be inadequate especially in data analysis and finally,

the study did not go in-depth in certain aspects that would have required further investigation for example, discussions with representatives from the Church of Norway on issues of “calling” and Mission and the youth organization known as NMSU to ascertain their vision for the future in so far as engagement of youth and Mission are concerned.

## **Findings**

**Literature** and research on the subject matter of the Missionary role is scanty and apart from the Centre for Inter-Cultural Studies (SIK) and School of Mission and Theology (SMT) who have undertaken evaluations and some studies the area of Mission concentrates more on the issues of Mission and culture; contemporary social ethical issues affecting the Church and more so the growing numbers of Missionaries from the global South. Traditionally, the Mission Hand-book is an important source of information on the history, growth, study and challenges in Mission work. Consequently NMS is on target and prompt by once again inquiring into the Missionary role and its attendant changes as this will help inform future strategies for partnership and recruitment.

**Preparation, Induction, JDs and Expectations** - Majority of the respondents affirmed that they had been through such as processes as interviews, induction and preparation. Regarding NMS work conditions; many respondents affirmed they were better than most Mission agencies although the study had no data for comparison to back this assertion. Nearly all respondents had Job Descriptions but the challenge for some was the mismatch between the written Job Description and the actual daily work performed. Few of them informed of work overload beyond prescribed hours by NMS Human Resource policies. Resettlement however, remains a challenge as it is left to the respective Missionary to sort him/herself. In spite of this, to facilitate normalisation Missionaries are offered 1 year at NMS Head Quarters (HQs) as they settle back in Norway, that is, if work and conditions permit. Those who attended the normalisation course found it worthwhile and do commend it to others. The findings show that few Missionaries know NMS before joining and some even finish their term of service without much knowledge of Mission and NMS. This state of affairs may warrant the Representative to have additional task to intentionally bridge the knowledge gap if any.

**Expectations** - At the level of expectations, the study findings indicate obvious levelling of expectations that transpires during the recruitment and even prior as NMS seeks clarity with the receiving Church/organisation. Findings noted that the process of levelling expectations to be insufficient resulting in a mismatch between the Missionary and local Church on the one hand and the NMS HQs on the other. There are also conflicting expectations between the Missionary and the Programme department of NMS. These contradictory expectations at different levels are partly due to lack of time for in-depth induction especially those who had elaborate visa requirements, short courses etc.; including unclear profiling of positions. Expectation regarding serving long term service by Missionaries is long over and in terms of interest there will be a few offering service but not many and this calls for a re-assessment of how expectations of short term Missionaries are levelled especially since some host churches are still in the mode of anticipating long term personnel. Since NMS is not so well known among youth and Church of Norway does not preach much about calling, many volunteers go to the field with vague expectations, which at times contribute to dissatisfaction, and frustration

with assigned roles. Missionaries require more accompaniment especially new people in the field; further with more short term Missionaries NMS and the local Church should redefine expected results within a given cultural, historical and linguistic context that is very different from Norway. It is incumbent upon Missionaries to be flexible and open-minded and ensure that expectations re-visited during the term of service. Although there is limited accompaniment in some countries the findings show that in others it has improved. It also emerged that the functions, profile and recruitment of a Country Representative should be made crystal clear and carefully managed if mentoring/accompaniment is to be effective.

***Understanding Calling*** - Calling as a concept and its application has evidently gone through changes both within NMS and among Missionaries. The evolving socio-economic and political context plays a lot into the definition, perception and even practice. Equally important is the historical spiritual reality of Norway, which used to be fairly pietistic that still resonates with Missionaries in spite of the changes in the context where most are not challenged to serve God. Missionaries and especially young people expressed the need to be present but not in traditional Mission. A respondent who observed that “Calling” has always been a basic word for Missionaries made a vivid articulation of calling. In addition to an “outer calling”, for example expressed through a “letter of calling” from the NMS, it has in most cases also been focused on an inner deep experience of being called by God.

The NMS is more than ever challenged to work with young people and find new language that resonates with their narratives but which will enhance the realization of Mission goals.

***The growth and decline of Missionaries*** - The decline in the number of Missionaries especially for long term service is a result of many factors. The hurried process of recruitment and the demand to perform and produce results seems to have jeopardized the learning, listening and effective interaction with the local context as the Missionary has to settle quickly into the task. The frustrations experienced by Missionaries accrue from limited consultation time between NMS, the local Church/organization and Country Representative because of the many reports that have to be compiled and filed. Definition of roles in the form of JDs are also impacted as the time is short to really clarify and formulate in detail accurate and relevant tasks moreover, a number of Missionaries have landed in the field to find no clear tasks or at most a mismatch creating even more frustrations on all involved. Narratives of missionaries who spent time without concrete work bear witness to this fact of time frame; further the inability to cope with culture and language is another contributory factor to dissatisfaction. Finally, the time frame driven by demand for results has caused Missionaries (the number is not clear but at least 30%) to work beyond the official hours and therefore negatively affecting their family life. The bureaucracy within NMS due to change of roles that some Missionaries find frustrating is partly also a cause of decline.

***NMS Partnership Model***- Partnership model in its understanding and practice vary greatly. In theory it is about two or more partners convening a round a common vision which in this case is the evangelism and concern but playing different roles and contributing according to their



strengths. Partnership model varies from country to country in terms of implementation. In essence the model by NMS is not problematic as it has worked and has registered a number of strengths such as making the local Church take more responsibility and building of local capacity for leadership. Additional strengths include equality between partners, mutual agreement, and participation in global Mission. Weakness are bureaucracy, need for a new image/profile of what Mission is. At the same time, the study findings illustrate some major weaknesses such as the hidden power of money that seems to indirectly inform decision making as well as some local partners still carrying the sense of being a second class partner and not an equal. Perhaps a major challenge of the model is how cooperation and communication within the framework of agreement is pursued, perceived and realized. NMS still has a position of influence.

Although Norway needs experience from the South and NMS can be a bridge and in as much as Norway needs spiritual renewal and south can make a contribution; the value addition by Norway is not clearly stipulated but it may be in sharing experiences in systems, work ethics governance etc. NMS through the Representative can walk side by side with the grown up child namely the local Church if there is trust and transparency. Therefore this being the case, need to re-engage on the understanding of Mission and Evangelism within the partnership context and especially in lieu of the realization of Mission on six continents and the changing world Christianity demography is inevitable. Moreover if NMS upholds the understanding that “presence” is more important because it keeps the link with Norway, then influence exerted by money in the relationship should be openly addressed and understanding developed on the role it plays. Given that agreements must of necessity be different by virtue of culture and structure of the local Church/partner, then NMS ought to have different agreements and not a carte blanche approach.

***The link between Mission and Humanitarian work*** - The findings show that Mission and Evangelism still receive high priority both in terms of personnel and resources. Additionally, while NMS is sourcing funds from the Norwegian government, despite financial constraints NMS is able to raise more money than they receive from the state. Many Missionaries have positive experiences concerning impact of humanitarian work; they see it as uplifting the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable groups in society and also as part of Mission. At the same time some respondents expressed discomfort regarding the potential divisive nature of development aid for example, delinking it from the Church, having two sets of salaries that can create competition and NMS seemingly having to play by the rules of NORAD which in countries with small growing churches may find it difficult to grasp unless well managed. It was also reported that it has become much easier to collect money for development activities than for Mission/Evangelism although NMS is about holistic Mission. It is incumbent upon NMS to factor in the agreements with local Church/organization the plausible contradictions that can emerge between development work and evangelism and seek joint solutions on do no harm approaches with a view to magnify the holistic understanding.

***Role and future of Volunteers in Mission*** - Findings of the study illustrate the vital role of volunteers some who partially pay for their stay abroad in the work of Mission. They work alongside Missionaries in the local Church/organisation and gain experience and knowledge of NMS. Many it was noted come without committed to Christian faith or even knowledge of NMS but after their stay they develop interest in Mission and have a changed attitude vis-à-vis Mission. According to the study, it is this group if well managed, nurtured and supported that holds the key to future NMS Mission work. The need for committed youth for long term cannot be overstated hence the imperative to explore further on the potential of connecting youth to NMS support groups, perhaps even have youth ministries in congregations; improve on follow up of those in and out of service and keenly look at their motivation for wanting to engage with NMS and Mission. Subsequently for effective monitoring and interaction, NMS should have a data base on who has served short and long term as volunteers fall into the two categories. Youth exchange could create more commitment but they need encouragement and inspiration to begin to think around possibilities of becoming Missionaries. Better use of volunteers demands that NMS avails information in advance on the type of work they are expected to undertake and requirements as well as ascertaining that they are actually occupied and not wasted and frustrated while in the field. This may mean use social media to engage youth, organizing a gathering in Norway to share the vision and mission of NMS. It was noted that TMF localized in Stavanger can provide an entry point and strong links between NMS and NMSU should be built and perhaps a mentor hired and located at the NMS Head Quarters in order to follow up young people.

***Sociological factors*** - Information gathered illustrates that sociological factors do indeed impact Missionary role. These factors include the working conditions, re-integration, culture, reputation and status back into the Norwegian society, the culture in the host local Church/organisation, NMS structures and communication strategies.

***Working Conditions*** - About 58% of the respondents were satisfied by the working conditions. They commended NMS for being a professional organisation with Hum Resource policies and staff in place. They enjoy the good working relationships and team work, learning and experiencing other work cultures and peoples and restoring human dignity to those they serve through development. The poor levelling of expectations was perceived to contribute to frustration and confusion in the work as respondents waited long to settle in the right jobs; the long working hours affected family life although NMS has a clear policy on this matter. NMS will need to work on technical support to and accompaniment of Missionaries, interpersonal relations and how to cope with the changing culture both in Norway and in the South.

***Normalisation*** - Responses from Missionaries clearly indicate that normalization is a major challenge not least for children. A number of issues were cited ranging from re-integration of children into school, finding basic things like accommodation and even needing to re-work one's Curriculum Vitae (CV) to overcoming prejudice because of the attitude towards the Missionary. Hence a number of respondents were of the view that job profiles should be defined in a manner that allows for better re-integration into the labour market in Norway.

It was the considered view of Missionaries that because of the challenge of re-integration they are unable in most cases to serve many years and have to consider the family situation as well as their own career development. Therefore normalization back into the Norwegian society can be frustrating depending on the skills, technical competence and the number of years spent away that either makes it easy or difficult to reintegrate. Moreover, a number also stated that they are pressurized by family especially grand-parents who think that they have lost on knowing their grandchildren and with this in mind many a Missionary may not want to be in the field very long.

*Culture in Norway –status and reputation* - Culturally Norway is a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-racial country which is a new phenomenon. Thus Norwegians are exposed to a variety of spiritualities and Christianity does not enjoy the previous privileged position in society. The Norwegian society is also conscious of human rights and upholds them very strongly. Because of the economic standard many Norwegians can afford to travel and per-take experiences of other cultures whereas before the Missionary was a key source of information- a window to the outside world. Cultural, religious and economic changes have an impact on the status and reputation of the Missionary partly because the society no longer holds Missionaries in high esteem and also because when they return they may not easily fit into the competitive society; thus making status and reputation closely linked to Normalization. The respondents are very clear that the Norwegian society pays no attention to the Missionary, if anything they are viewed rather negatively. This is not so much different in the Church as there are few spaces to recognize and appreciate the efforts of a Missionary. One Missionary stated that being a Missionary you sacrifice and offer a lot but no one takes note. Many a Missionary is concerned about their CV and career development and this results in signing up for short term so that they are not marginalized or left behind by changes in their society.

*NMS Structures* - The NMS has structures in place and for the purpose of fulfilling its mandate. Findings point out that the Missionaries do know even if superficially how this structure is meant to function. For example, each of the NMS programmes has a Program Manager and the NMS Representatives and NMS Missionaries also relate to them. It is expected that Missionaries report to the NMS Representative, the NMS Representative and Programme Managers report to the Program Director. Both the NMS Programme Department and the Human Resource is meant to be a resource centre for leaders and to some extent also for the Missionaries. Besides, the Missionaries have organized themselves in an employee association through which they negotiate salaries among other things and can be a safeguard for the Missionaries vis-à-vis the NMS leadership.

In their responses to the structures some Missionaries mentioned the lack of defined and provision of working structure by NMS for the Missionaries thus making it difficult to separate work and free time. A number of key responses on this subject show the challenge; what we were presented with from NMS didn't match what we got when we came out. This has nothing to do with what we are doing, because we already agreed to change the work before we left. But it has to do with office space, working hours, when to have our holidays, how much we should do for NMS (i.e. we wanted to do some work for them in the summers, but the local partner wanted to have us here as much as possible). It is hard for the Church to understand our

western thought about work/free time and also our need to rest, away from our work. I am much more tired here than I am home in Norway, probably because of the heat, language and culture.

It was also the view of respondents that decision making within NMS is slow. They felt that the organisation lacks clear and defined decision making procedures. Key responses on decision making worth noting include; first lack of continuity as an organization hence too much constant internal negotiation and renegotiations concerning the values and strategies of Mission work. At times the Missionaries are very independent and strong-minded, and prefer doing things their own way. Second, it is hard to understand the decision-making structures in the host Church. NMS has established structures for decision-making while in practice very much is decided based on who knows who, or more importantly who are related to whom. This culture undermines the established structures and is not a very sympathetic part of the NMS organizational culture. Finally, within the structure the NMS support systems to Missionaries remain a challenge. The challenges were summed up into three namely; lack of proper follow-up and communication from Norway, appropriate technical support, and selective decision making. To some respondents there is over emphasis on the development work compared to theological, missiological, and inter-faith work such as Islam, folk religion. There is no time to reflect theologically or missiologically on life experiences, because people are so busy with all the work that needs to be done.

*Communication* - Quite a number of Missionaries leave the field and NMS frustrated and one of the cited causes is the poor communication. It transpired from data gathered that communication channels vertically and horizontally experience hitches. The HQs lacks coherent internal communication between the different departments which translates in delayed or limited communication. Repeated communication to HQs by the Missionaries was raised as a cause for irritation because of untimely response. This is notwithstanding that some Missionaries have better and regular communication with home churches. Apparently there are no formal platforms for former Missionaries to engage or even visit a Mission country of interest. Respondents noted that NMS lacked coherence in communication and the HQs administration and bureaucracy is a source of misunderstanding and frustration for their work. It was also felt that HQs has limited follow up which translates into few Missionaries or limited interest in Missions. Communication in the host country depends very much on the knowledge of language and relationships with the local colleagues and Church. Perhaps a key factor in communication that was highlighted is the role of the Regional Representative and the bureaucracy of NMS that renders communication ineffective.

### ***Conclusion and Way forward***

Missionary role change is a fact of time and in spite of this change, the contribution of Norway and for that matter NMS to world Christianity remains crucial. The process of role change begun 20 years ago and now Missionaries assume roles as adviser, consultants, mentors etc; with no decision making power. A major shift in the thinking and practice of Mission is the Missionary role. Before they controlled the resources, determined the nature and scope of Church planting and were basically the ones in leadership. Currently or since 2007, NMS

Missionaries are expected to function as advisors, consultants and companions to the local Church. For the new role to take effect there has to be a change of attitude on both sides of the partnership Norwegian and local Church. In the case of Hong Kong the ELCHK no longer has Missionaries and therefore the scenario is slightly different. Whilst Missionaries accept the new role, they however, find it difficult to desist from the temptation of decision making because of the power of money. Slowly Missionaries are reckoning with the reality that they must learn to be guests, humble and in tune with the local Church without comprising the values of partnership. Equally important to highlight is the resistance by some Missionaries who argue that the new role denies them to fully utilize their skills and technical competencies.

NMS has no definite exit strategy and so some churches ask for Missionaries because it is the thing to do. Evidently expectations of roles of advisors and consultants remain hazy to some and hence after they complete their term some Missionaries feel frustrated because they have not achieved much. Missionaries who have been out before and go for short term service tend to understand culture and tendencies of frustrations are minimal. Indeed short term Missionaries in situations like China might be ideal to teach English courses. But all depends on the character and personality of the Missionary and an appreciation of the need to build local capacity and empower the local Church to play its meaningful role in evangelism.

A few *suggestions/recommendations* are highlighted at the end of this report for instance: NMS should continue the soul searching process of reflection already initiated on the changing role of the Missionary with a clear understanding of the trends in world Christianity both in the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Standing at the cross roads or even on a cliff demands a radical decision of the direction to be taken and this should engage all key stakeholders. As NMS searches for a workable strategy for the future time is of essence and transparent and realistic engagement with partners in the South should be prioritized because NMS together with its partners may unlock the potentials for future as each one has a specific key to bring to open the new and rusted doors in to Mission work.

Regarding *partnership* - it is essential to observe that this has been a desire and efforts in the right direction and many partners including NMS would want to continue on this path. However, to do that the mind set and attitude of both the Missionaries who still unconsciously perceive themselves in a higher position than the local Church personnel and that of the local Church in some instances that suffers from inferiority complex needs radical transformation. NMS should also seriously consider the context of the South which in many cases is multi-faith as the backdrop of Mission and engage with the local Church on how to achieve mutually accountable and responsible partnership that enhances the Mission and livelihoods of the people, and that resources availed are used for all and not to create new social divisions in the Church and society.

There is need for *better preparation and induction* of Missionaries and induction courses although short should be applicable to all with the aim of ensuring that the identity of NMS and its values are well understood and subscribed to by those intending to serve. Due to the reality of short term service, NMS and the local Church/organisation should in as much as possible agree on expected results which are communicated to the Missionary through the Job

Description. Working conditions and in particular *expectations* should be carefully assessed and motivations processed to avoid frustrations by any party. This requires a structured induction with an agreed content for Missionaries and volunteers who have served before and the new ones to the field. Likewise the expectation of the host Church/organisation should be expressed in the same way as the NMS and here the role of the Country Representative is very important in ensuring congruence and avoiding ambiguity. These expectations can be validated during the annual meetings of Missionaries to check if they are any variances and how the respective Missionary is coping. Finally, NMS is obliged to see to it that the team in Stavanger pulls together in one direction when it comes to information and communication flow to and from the field.

The concept of ***Calling***: At this juncture in the life of NMS a need for reflection to deepen and broaden the understanding, knowledge and interpretation of the concept among Missionaries is an imperative. Consequently, NMS is challenged to find new language and methods that are appropriate to young people but that convey the essence of the concept calling. On-going efforts by NMS to engage the Church of Norway and other actors in bringing to life the teaching and preaching on Mission should also provide adequate space for young people to participate and contribute their views on how they would want to shape the understanding of calling.

***Volunteers*** are important for the local Church as links for their youth with Norwegian young people and to share experiences. They can be bridge builders between NMS and Norwegian people. If NMS wants better use of volunteers it should designate a position, time and personnel at HQs to attend to them. A number of respondents pointed out that mechanisms of joining NMS are not so evident, many volunteers join because of knowledge of someone who has served before. Some volunteers are not Christian and this is their first encounter with NMS which can make them good ambassadors depending on the experience. NMS should sort out the in-built inequality of support to volunteers and make it clear who qualifies for support and why and who does not. A possibility of an overlap with outgoing and incoming volunteers to share experience and create connectivity should be part of the reflection.

Since NMS may opt for the strategy of strengthening volunteers in order to sustain presence in global South, there is need for designate position in Stavanger responsible for this undertaking. Moreover, short term approach and volunteers will weaken links between South and Norway unless complemented by other strategies of accompaniment.

### ***Sociological factors & Communication***

Communication needs urgent attention whether vertically between NMS HQs and the field or horizontal between the Country Representative and Missionaries. And at the centre of the communication is the host Church/organisation that should be kept in the loop on relevant matters. There are those whose work load is heavy, others with little and some don't know what to do and this affects their response to delayed or no communication. There is a possibility that there is too much information but not well channelled and to the relevant people. Likewise a few Missionaries seem to be outside the communication loop and the role of the Representative is contested as ineffective in certain situations. NMS with the new communication officer are encouraged to review the communication channels and make sure that all key actors understand the mechanism and policy.

The road already travelled by NMS and partners has enough to learn from and where NMS finds itself to-day is a position that past knowledge, experience and skills can be used to inform current practice and form building blocks as NMS envisions tomorrows transformation and engagement. NMS more than ever is to marshal its tools of reflection and praxis and look into the future from the vantage point of the current experience without nostalgia and being a hostage to the past in order to define a path befitting the vision, resources and the call of their partners.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we seek to provide the reader with background information and, a brief history of Norwegian Mission Society (NMS); objectives of the study; the methodology used; and limitations. For many insiders and outsiders, this study is considered as a timely undertaking by the NMS “a leap of faith in to the future given the changing landscape of Christianity”.

### 1.1 Background of Mission Work

In the 1960s and 1970s the discussions, practice and studies in the Schools of Mission and Theology including Mission agencies in North America and Europe focused on how to ensure “Mission on six continents” becomes a reality. Many of the studies conducted focused on the role of Missions and the emerging national Church while in the global South discussions centred on the self-hood, self-propagating and self-sustaining Church. At the heart of most northern and southern discussions was the issue of culture and Gospel steered by writings of Bishop L. Newbegin. It was a time when many churches in former colonies especially Africa and Asia were becoming autonomous and acquiring national identity but still with many populations that had not received the Gospel of Jesus Christ; hence Mission arrows were pointed from the North not least from Stavanger to world outside of Europe.

American and European Protestant and Catholic Missions contributed immensely to spreading of Christianity in the world and were the driving forces behind Mission work. Many changes have since taken place and churches in the global South have grown and it is argued by many theologians and Church Statisticians like David Barrett that the centre of the gravity of Christian faith is shifting to the global South as Christianity is witnessing a high growth in Asia, Latin America/Caribbean and Sub Saharan Africa (SSA). According to the World Christian Encyclopaedia, Africa had for example 360 million Christians in 1990 and it is estimated that this figure will rise to 633 million in 2025 while Europe had 560million and is expected to decline to 555 million as indicated in table 1 below. Demographic evidence shows that in less than twenty years the numerical strength of Christianity will be in the global South. This change is already affecting the profile of Mission work in the world. It is not within the purview of this study to discuss implications of the emerging strong Christian communities in global South suffice to state that there are factors which in the past centuries did not feature directly in Europe and North America that the Church in the South has to contend with and they include; the growing factor of multi-faith living; the need for historic confessional families such as Lutherans and Orthodox to find ways to cultivate relationships with Pentecostal and charismatic movements that are proliferating and influencing the forms of worship let alone attracting members from these churches; the capacity for the growing Church in the global South to shoulder responsibility as the centre of world Christianity.

**Table 1: The Global Growth of Christianity – 1990 (2 billion Christians)**

1.	Europe	560 million
2.	Latin America/Caribbean	480 million
3.	Africa	360 million



4.	Asia	313 million
5.	North America	260 million

#### 2025 Estimated Christians

1.	Latin America/Caribbean	640 million
2.	Africa	633 million
3.	Europe	555 million
4.	Asia	460million
5.	North America	Million

Source: *World Christian Encyclopaedia* – David Barrett

Demographic trends on their own do not explain details about Christianity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. On the other hand, they point to pivotal issues about Christianity in the future. One is the need for a paradigm shift in the understanding and doing Mission. Two is the inclusion of the migrant Churches both Protestant and Catholic in the ecumenical councils and dialogue in Europe and North America. Three is the important role of the South Korean Church since the 1990s in Mission when it begun dispatching Missionaries which today stand at 25,000 all over the world -165 countries and it is estimated to surpass American missionaries.

The growth of Christianity in the global South is reflected in the structures, leadership and worship including numbers. In brief, the Gospel is in the six continents although there are communities that have not heard or accepted the Christian faith. The changing world Christianity landscape has a direct effect on the role of the European and American Mission agencies in defining Mission and nurturing world Christianity. With movement of people from the South to the Northern hemisphere, presence of Missionaries from the South to the North has become a feature of Mission work; partly to serve migrant communities and partially to witness to the western society which is perceived to be very secular and post-Christian. In spite of the decline in the number of practicing Christians, the Church in the West has a wealth of history/knowledge/capacity that is useful for the counterpart in the South.

Indeed, recent decades have witnessed a rapidly changing context in Mission thinking and practice prompting a number of questions and issues that have resulted in studies and publications. In 2010 the global Church celebrated the centenary of Mission work in Edinburg, UK and a number of themes were discussed including the change of paradigm and reaching the “unreached people groups” with the Gospel. Perhaps an area where the greatest change has occurred is in “profile and role of Missionaries”. It is precisely this aspect that Norwegian Mission Society established in the 1842, would like to inquire more into. As a matter of fact, Mission work has changed in terms of strategy and implementation to being more professional, requiring specific skills/expertise. The change has been radical and in Norway and other countries codes of conduct to guide Mission work, organizations and Missionaries have been developed. The reorganization of Mission agencies like NMS to reflect any other organization where matters of human resources, finance and other organizational systems are more

structured with policies is become normal. Besides another major change in organisational culture is the cost of sending a Missionary from the global North to the South. In the case of NMS it is now more expensive than before estimated at (Ca NOKS 500,000) as compared to the costs of local personnel. Another critical shift is in the traditional idea of a potential individual Missionary informing their congregation that they have been “called” to a certain country and provision of financial, material and spiritual support by the home congregation being provided, this is does not work as before because a number of Missionaries tend not to be deeply anchored in a congregation.

## **1.2 History of NMS**

Norwegian Mission Society is a Mission agency established in 1842 to cater for the mandate of proclaiming the gospel to the whole world; is an independent organisation within the Norwegian Lutheran Church. In terms of structure NMS works through 4,500 local groups and 11 districts with more than 4,000 members. The first Missionary was sent out in 1844 to South Africa and in 1866, NMS arrived Madagascar establishing Mission work in 1867. To-date NMS remains the biggest Mission agency in the country with some presence of the American and Danish Lutheran Missions.

Although NMS was in Asia and more specifically in China, the 1949 communist revolution forced NMS to relocate to Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong. During the 1970s there was a desire on the part of NMS to expand Mission work in Asia and especially in Laos but it was a closed country hence in 1976 NMS begun work in Thailand. Europe and Middle East are recent Mission fields. Norway like many of the western countries was driver of Mission work before but now perceives themselves as collaborators. In Norway Church-State are separate, secularization and materialism, spirit of volunteerism while still alive is somewhat diminishing; there is a generational shift. The key supporters of Mission work are aging and shouldering a bigger financial burden than before clearly indicating the urgency to recruit new ones. There are observers who are of the view that it is easier to talk about diakonia –cultural diakonia than about Mission in Norway after a phase in their history where Mission work was perceived as undermining people’s cultures and in some instances supporting imperial interests. “There is a difference in telling about Jesus and offering assistance”. However, others contend that Norway although multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-racial still has a strong support base for solidarity and Mission work.

NMS finds itself at the cross roads as the former “Mission fields” abroad have Christians and churches in place and a number are engaged in Missions for example the Church in Hong Kong. At the same time, poverty prevails in global South with a growing middle class that has yet to sufficiently embrace social responsibility and solidarity with the poor. A few years ago, NMS underwent a soul searching period when there occurred an ideological crisis with former Missionary children who argued that their childhood rights were not fully accorded because of the work environment of their parents. NMS appreciates and is alive to the fact that something has changed within the Mission landscape. Culture in the North is changing and in Norway which used to be predominantly Christian, not everyone is a Christian and the country is now a multi-faith. Norway is one of the countries where economic prosperity is cushioned by social policies that ensure equity in resource allocation especially social services.

NMS has structured and organized its Mission operations in three programmes (a) aid and diaconal (b) leadership and management (c) evangelization and congregation building. In this case a partner Church may apply for funding for a project in which they need financial and/or labour. And a Missionary may choose to work within one or two of these programmes and in different local projects. The NMS structure chain of command is as follows: Each Missionary relates to a local Church management and co-workers and the local Church has a lot of influence on their work. In addition to this, the Missionaries have an NMS Representative as their supervisor as well representing NMS in relation to the partner churches. The Programme Director is the head of the NMS Representatives. Each of the NMS programme has a Program Manager and the NMS Representatives and NMS Missionaries also relate to them. The Missionaries report to the NMS Representative, the NMS Representative and Programme Managers report to the Programme Director. Both the NMS Programme Department and the Human Resource is a resource centre for leaders, but to some extent also for the Missionaries. Missionaries have organized themselves in an employee association through which they negotiate their salaries and it also functions as a safeguard for the Missionaries towards the NMS leadership. With this chain of command and structure NMS aims at optimal vertical and horizontal communication and clarity of roles and responsibilities.

## **2.0 Purpose, Specific Objectives and Methodology of the Study**

The main purpose of this chapter is to put in focus the goal of the study, the specific objectives, the methodology applied, data analysis and the limitations encountered.

### **2.1 Purpose and specific objectives**

Based on the Terms of Reference titled “The Missionary Role”, the overall goal of the study is to: Find out how and to what extent has the missionary role changed and may be find out which sociological, cultural, theological, ecclesiological and structural changes have affected the Missionary role in our time”.

The study will seek to address the following specific issues: Inquire into the thinking and changing Mission context in Norway and global South and determine the extent to which these changes have impacted the role of Missionaries and strategies applied to adapt.(b) Relevance and effectiveness of the roles of Missionaries; the preparation processes towards performance of these roles; perception and actual performance of different roles and responsibilities.(c) Understanding and changes in the concept of “calling” and its impact on the roles of Missionaries and the host church and communities.(d)To assess and determine the variance between expectations of Missionaries vis-à-vis their actual roles. The study shall consider the factors that contribute to the expectations and differences.(e) To assess the working conditions and time frames of missionaries with a view to establish any areas of improvement. (f) Review the institutional and structural arrangements in Norway and in the sample countries that cater for the Missionary.(g) To assess the sociological, cultural, ecclesiological and other factors which have great bearing on the Missionary role.(h) Review the model of partnership in terms of its understanding and practice as well as the challenges it faces.(i) To provide recommendations that would inform the future strategic direction for NMS in configuring Missionary role.(j) To compile a report capturing the findings and recommendations.

In seeking to understand the changing Missionary role, the study narrowed down to a number of thematic and sub-thematic areas including; Expectations of the missionary vis-à-vis other

actors such as the family, NMS, local Church; Understanding of the concept of “calling” as practiced; Another area of inquiry is the status of the missionary in Norway and in the local Church; Normalization/working conditions of the missionary; Duration/time for service as a missionary; Effectiveness of the “partnership model”; Mission and humanitarian work and Support structures and systems.

## **2.2 The Study Methodology and Approach**

The study applied a mix of approaches that were mainly participatory and non – extractive in nature to collect the necessary information from different stakeholders and especially Missionaries. The process included briefing with the NMS management, Missionaries, Regional leaders in host churches; review of literature relevant to Mission work. The study also adopted a cross sectional type design involving the use of both qualitative and quantitative techniques and tools to gather data. Ample time was devoted to literature review on relevant publications on the subject matter.

**Structured interviews Using FGDs and KII:** This was in a form of questionnaire and key guiding questions administered to Missionaries and other stakeholders (individuals and institutions). **Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions:** KIIs and FGDs targeted key stakeholders both in Norway and in the four sample countries i.e. Madagascar, Hong Kong, Thailand and United Kingdom especially representatives of relevant Church and development institutions. Besides briefings/ FGDs interviews were conducted with key actors in Stavanger, Norway and with Missionaries in Thailand and Madagascar including local host churches. Key Informant Interviews and self-administered questionnaires included participation from the following; NMS management and top leadership; former and current Missionaries, leaders and individuals in selected partner churches and institutions. Responses to the questionnaires that were sent from NMS Stavanger were received through email.

**Field Visits** were to sample Mission countries. During the field visits time was spent talking to current Missionaries in the field, those preparing to go and their related families and congregations. Site visits to the four key countries was to enable get an understanding of how the national/local Church perceives Mission and Missionaries (“call”), their view of the changing Missionary role and its impact among other issues. Field visits were conducted in Madagascar in April 2012 where Missionaries and Church leaders including development workers gathered at Antsirabe and provided time for the discussions. Countries that followed were Hong Kong where apart from discussions with Missionaries and Church leaders a meeting with the leadership of the Theological College was held. Travel to Thailand was undertaken in September 2012 after Hong Kong and meetings held with the head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thailand (ELCT), the Missionaries as well as making a project site visit in Bangkok. The consultant met both the previous and current Country Representatives in Thailand. The final field visit and consultation was in October 2012, to Carlisle in the Anglican Diocese of New Castle - United Kingdom. Volunteers were part of the discussions and interviews in the four host countries.

Back in Norway, members of the management team participated in responding to the questionnaire and key informant interviews (KII). In Norway the visits included attending a youth summer camp for one day in Opta where FGD and KII were conducted with representatives of the youth leaders. The consultant also attended annual conferences in

Stavanger of Regional leaders and NMS Country Representatives. A debriefing on the findings was organised in Stavanger and feedback given by the same leaders in March 2013.

Selection criteria for the four countries was informed by a number of factors; In the case of Madagascar this is the oldest and major Mission country in Africa for NMS and to-date the level of engagement remains very high. Further it is one of the countries with a large population of Lutheran Christians estimated at over three million. It also has more Missionaries than other countries. As for Hong Kong, the choice was premised on NMS' re-engagement with China and the Missionaries being based in Hong Kong. Hong Kong does embrace Mission, development and partnership besides hosting a Theological College that trains students from Asia. ELCHK is a mature and independent Church that now sends out Missionaries to other parts of Asia for example, Thailand. On the other hand the criteria used for Thailand encompassed the fact that it is a relatively new Mission field since 1976, the ELCT is a young and small Church with many diakonia activities. The ELCT has many Mission agencies working along aside with NMS. NMS Missionaries in Thailand also serve the neighbouring country of Laos. In the case of Carlisle the partnership is special in the sense that NMS and the Anglican Diocese of New Castle are developing a Youth Network Church, and the missionaries are mainly young volunteers from Norway and the global South. As a Northern hemisphere Mission country the UK was chosen to provide insights in to the potentials of volunteers as an approach to Mission in future particularly in light of short term Missionaries. Additionally, the UK is a European country whose experience of Christendom is similar to that of Norway.

**Desk Study/Literature review:** The NMS Missionary Role study entailed desk studies and literature review of relevant documents, reports and secondary data on Mission and Missionaries. References are made to previous studies on NMS Missionaries in general and specifically in the four sample countries.

**Fieldwork Management (Data Collection):** The study was conducted during a one year period starting from March 2012 and completed by March 2013. This process included study orientation, four site visits in four countries apart from Norway, attendance of at least two conferences/trainings in Stavanger in March and August 2012, and final report writing. An official debriefing of the findings of the study March 2013 and an earlier feedback on field visits was given by the NMS General Secretary and Chairperson of the board en route to Madagascar in November 2012, when they stopped in Nairobi and an informal sharing of the emerging issues from the findings held.

### 2.3 Data collection

The data collection process took approximately three to four months (factoring in the delays while awaiting the permission to conduct the study). Ethics were observed to obtain informed consent and reassure the participants of confidentiality through the use of the information collected only for the purposes of understanding the changing role of the Missionary with a view to define appropriate strategies. The consultant used participatory data collection techniques. The analysis of the respondents is provided in the tables 2 below in terms of gender, age bracket and duty station. The sample size was adequate to justify the subsequent analysis of findings.

**Table 2.1: Gender of the respondents**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
Male	20	52.63%

Female	18	47.37%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Table 2.3: The age bracket versus the gender of the respondents**

	Age Bracket					
Gender	25-35	35-45	45-55	55-65	65-99	Grand total
Male	5	9	2	2	2	20
Female	5	7	2	3	1	18
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>38</b>

**Table 2.4: Duty station of respondents**

Row Labels	County of Duty Station
Blank	1
Brazil	1
Cameroon	2
China	5
England	2
Estonia	2
Ethiopia	2
Japan	6
Laos	1
Madagascar	4
Mali	6
Thailand	8
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>40</b>

From the above tables it emerges that on gender response, 52 per cent were male and 47 per cent female. On the age bracket, most (16) Missionaries which represents 42.11 per cent were in the age bracket of 35-45, followed by the age bracket of 25-35 that represents 26.32 per cent or 10 Missionaries. The lowest were those in the age bracket of 65-99 which represents 7.89 per cent. The question is what has happened to the upper age limit, are they not interested in being in the field? A comparison between gender and age bracket indicates that most male and female responses were in the age bracket of 35-45 (which included 9 men and 7 women); followed by the 25-35 age bracket group that tied 5 men and 5 women. Responses received per country indicates that the highest were from Thailand (8) followed by Mali and Japan that tied (6) while China had 5. Worth noting is the low response by Missionaries from Madagascar which only accounts for 4.

## 2.4 Data analysis

The data was analyzed using the following methods; coding, data inference, sorting data into similar and contrasting patterns, incorporation of patterns into study themes, and developing themes into constructs for report writing. The study also analyzed the quantitative data from the questionnaires administered to respondents by using the excel spread sheet.

## 2.5 Study limitations

A number of limitations that impacted the study include; lack of working Norwegian language to enable proper reading of Norwegian materials; in the field some Missionaries had challenges of understanding the questionnaire and thus unable to provide relevant responses. Field visits were rather brief and compacted that they left no room for reflection and follow up of interviews during the visit. An analysis of respondents from the countries shows a low response from Madagascar and UK and this could be attributed to the fact that FGDs and KIIs were held in both places with volunteers and Missionaries. In the UK at the time of our visit, a number of volunteers were relatively new in their assignment.

## 2.6 Literature review on the Missionary role

Literature review on the Missionary Role seeks to establish a number of issues; one whether this subject matter has been researched and studied and the findings, the existing literature and thematic emphasis on Mission and the Missionary role.

The study of Mission is part of Theology as a discipline but it only gained prominence in the early 1950s. Mission conferences had become a historic feature of Mission since 1927 Jerusalem conference. However, with the formation of the World Mission and Evangelism body these conferences became structured and themes pertaining to Mission discussed. The last conference was held in 2010 in Edinburg, UK to celebrate the centenary since 1910 Mission conference that was held in the same country. In recent years there have been studies on Mission and in particular the changing profile of Missions from the global South started by migrants to Europe and North America - (migrant churches).

John Roxborough, in “Missiology after Mission?” writes that, “there are difficulties in the relationship of Missiology to theology and to the practice of Mission which remain intractable, yet require attention if Missiology is to be seen as a promise to the Church more than a threat or an irrelevance.” *Missiology* is the study of Christian Mission and the issues that arise through commitment to it while *Mission Studies* is the study of Christian Mission including its social and cultural effects. The validity of Missiology continues to lie in the validity of Mission and the importance of the questions it addresses and the intercultural perspectives it brings.

Missiometrics is an important field in Mission studies, which sprung up in the late 1990. According to David J. Cho, Missiometrics is an applied science of Mission studies to counting, measuring, and interpreting global Christian Mission. David J. Cho, writer of *Some Suggestive Concerns on Missiometrics*, explores three key concerns on Missiometrics. First, the high secularization of the western world that has become the serious Mission field. According to Bryant L. Myer’s report, among the total Christian population of the world, in 1960 only 30% of them were in the non-Western world and 70% of them were in the Western world. However, by the year 2000, 78% of the world Christian population was in the non-Western world and only 22% of Christian population was in the Western world. Secondly, there is a high decline

of old Christendom and ascent of new Christendom and therefore Missiometrics of Western Missiologists need to re-think the current situation and the reality of changing global trends regarding the shift of power in Mission. Finally, Cho and other Asian scholars provide an insight on the need for a creative approach of Missiometrics by Asian Missiologists. Lawrence Keys in the article on “The last age of Missions: A study of Third World Mission Societies” provides information on the growth of such societies especially in Asia and Africa.

According to David Barrett and Todd Johnson’s statistics, there were 1,227 million Christians in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania in 2004, 62% of the world’s Christians, while those of the two Northern continents (including Russia) constituted only 38%, dramatic evidence of how rapidly the western share of world Christianity has decreased in the twentieth century. If present trends continue, by 2025 69% of the world’s Christians will live in the South, with only 31% in the North. Allan Anderson, writer of *Asian Journal 30 of Pentecostal Studies 8:1 (2005): Towards a Pentecostal Missiology for the Majority World* observes that “Pentecostal Missiologists need to acknowledge and celebrate the tremendous diversity in Pentecostalism.” He gives an in-depth discussion into the features of the structures and patterns of Pentecostal Mission. The paper “Mission and Evangelism in Unity Today” adopted by the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism in 2000, articulates the churches commitment to mission and evangelism in unity within the context of the challenges facing the world today. The paper discusses three key aspects of Mission and Evangelism; Mission as an imperative and vocation, the context of Mission today and the contemporary trend, and the Mission paradigms for our times.

In an article entitled “Norway’s Share in the World” in the *Missions from the North* by C.F. Hallencreutz and John Aagaard, Nils E. Block –Hoell traces the special contribution of Norwegian Missions and highlights that their support to Mission to Africa (pp69) was substantive.

There is need for the Church to understand the roles as well as the changing roles for Missionaries. Andrew Walls has highlighted the importance of Mission studies for theology and Church history if the Church is to understand how it got to be where it is today (Walls 1991). Missiometrics highlights the decline of Mission in the North and the consequent increase in the South without a clear outline of the changing roles of Missionaries and Mission work. The studies come to the role is the recognition that long term service is no longer viable as illustrated by statistics that continue to plummet and that short term is gaining currency in the Northern hemisphere. This study seeks to highlight some of the changes in Missionary roles and the factors leading to the shift.

### **3.0 KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

This chapter discusses the findings of the study based on the terms of reference and the responses from questionnaires as well as information gathered from key informants. Findings of various topics covered in the study are presented.

#### **3.1 Recruitment, preparation, induction and accompaniment**



### Recruitment/Preparation/Induction

The study sought to establish whether Missionaries underwent induction both in Norway and in the field including reasons for wanting to take up the role of a Missionary. As regards motivation for missions a number of respondents explained that they wished to go abroad and gain experience; for others it was the love of Jesus Christ and inspiration by previous Missionaries.

NMS still recruits Missionaries from the same Church of Norway and through its advertisements in Christian News papers and congregations. In other words NMS recruits missionaries as if they still were insiders the way it was many years ago when the SMT provided a basis for training and preparation for Missionaries and yet to-day the SMT does not have a similar programme instead it focuses on training pastors for Church of Norway. As to whether preparation/induction was conducted prior to departure from Norway and upon arrival in the field, majority of the respondents affirmed that they had been through such a process.

**Table 3: Preparation and Induction**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
No	8	20.51%
Yes	31	79.49%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

From table 3 above data collected on the question did you have an induction/preparation; shows that induction both in Norway and in the field takes place. From the Missionaries who answered the questionnaire, it emerged that a majority, (79.49%) of the total respondents, had one form of induction and preparation in the field and in Norway. Only a small percentage of 20.51% mentioned that they did not go through an induction process. As for the length of the induction the responses were very varied and difficult to determine the exact mandatory time required by NMS.

**Table 4: Duration of the training/preparation**

Duration bracket (Months)	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 Month	1	2.50%
(1-5)	11	27.50%
(6-10)	5	12.50%
(11-15)	1	2.50%
(16-20)	4	10.00%
(21-25)	0	
25 Months and above	2	5.00%
Not answered	16	40.00%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The length of the induction/preparation was varied and some was categorized in terms of months. Many respondents as shown in table 4 above (40%) did not answer. In the 25 months and above there was an extreme case of seven years by someone in Madagascar. From this table, there seems to be lack of clarity on the required length of induction for new beginners in the field and for those who have already served before. There is disparity in response of the duration for instance 3 weeks and others 7 years indicating a kind of disconnect in time frames.

Clearly where language is mandatory the induction/training is bound to be longer especially in the field.

An inquiry in to the type of content of the induction shows from respondents, to have contained; introduction to NMS, Development course, Theology, and Mission preparation, Language study, Culture study, Mission and Development, Bible studies, Religious studies, and History. An inventory of the content provided by respondents, shows that subjects covered during induction are comprehensive but the depth is not evident. The study also attempted to establish the reasons for lack of training/induction as there were 20.51% of the total respondents, who mentioned not to have had any preparation period. Some of the reasons given were: Most of the preparation/induction was about Development and some respondents already had degrees in the same subject; it also happened that by the time they left Norway preparation/induction was yet to be conducted, some other respondents thought that the NMS and the SMT expected them to learn gradually, one respondent had prior experience as a Missionary in another African country. Finally for a few respondents most of the preparations/induction courses were already part of their Theological education at the SMT which they had attended for example, Culture and Religious studies and delayed departure was another reason.

### Job Descriptions

As part of the understanding of the role of the Missionary, the study assessed whether there were job descriptions (JDs) and the extent to which they tallied with what was done on a day to day basis.

**Table 5: Respondents with or without JDs**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	33	82.50%
No	4	10.00%
Not Clear	3	7.50%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

According to table 5 above majority (82.50) per cent had JDs. While about 10 per cent indicated they did not have JDs and 7.5 per cent remained unclear whether they have or did not. Efforts by NMS and host Church/organisation to articulate the task at hand is commendable.

**Table 6: Does the JD tally with what you do daily?**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
Blank	6	15.79%
No	13	34.21%
Yes	12	31.58%
Yes partly	7	18.42%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

A number of respondents were of the view that some tasks they do daily are partially part of the JD but not fully (18.42%). Table 7 below shows the number of respondents with JDs and which perfectly tally with their daily tasks is 31.58 percent. Those with JDs that perfectly and partially match daily duties account for 84.21%. Those without JDs were in two categories namely that JDs do not tally but left blank or stated it is not clear totalled to (7.89%).

**Table 7: Tallying of JDs and Daily Duties**

Do you have a job description	Does the JD tally with what you do daily?				
	Blank	No	Yes	Yes partly	Grand total
Yes	5.26%	28.95%	31.58%	18.42%	84.21%
No	5.26%	2.63%	0.00%	0.00%	7.89%
Not Clear	5.26%	2.63%	0.00%	0.00%	7.89%
<b>Grand total</b>	15.79%	34.21%	31.58%	18.42%	100.00%

It was noted that a number of respondents although not many ended up in jobs and roles that did not suit their written JDs. Another observation made was about insufficient preparation of volunteers and in one instance the cultural difference between Norway and the respective host country may have been underestimated in the preparation prompting a proposal that deliberate joint learning by the partner and NMS be promoted and enhanced in future. Further analysis of the findings from KIIs noted that some Missionaries are frustrated with the titles given such as Advisor and consultant as they do not according to them convey the exact role performed.

**Accompaniment of Missionaries:** The NMS has a system of accompaniment of Missionaries and Volunteers in place. In the host countries there are NMS Representatives and back in Norway there is a Programme Director with other staff responsible to oversee the work of Missionaries. Structurally incumbent officers are to provide support and accompaniment to the Missionaries. The findings show however, that that some Country Representatives have essentially not worked always as expected nor managed this role successfully while others have excelled. In one of the local Church the accompaniment function is shared by the local Church personnel with NMS Representative. This is partly because the staff person at the headquarters (HQs) in charge of the region has been rather busy and unable to pay adequate attention to Missionaries in this country. It also emerged that the functions, profile and recruitment of a Country Representative should be clarified and carefully managed if mentoring/accompaniment of Missionaries is to be effective.

### 3.2 Expectations

One of the factors that this study aims to establish is why many Missionaries after serving leave frustrated and do not wish to maintain communication with NMS. Hence this section on expectations attempts to assess whether the expectations by Missionaries at different levels of the organization for example, the Head Quarters, other Missionaries and the host local organisation/Church were met or not and what were the limiting or facilitative factors. The respondents were asked to give their expectations when they first accepted to undertake the assignment with NMS. In analysing the data, the responses were categorized into three broad expectations namely; expansion of God's ministry, development work and personal career development, and different cultural experiences.

In so far as the *expansion of the God's ministry* is concerned, respondents' expectations were; to work with the Church in the given country as well as the government in the development projects, to serve the Lord and work for the people, to have an opportunity to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to serve God as a Missionary according to his calling. One respondent stated: "I simply felt an old-fashioned calling to Africa and saw the concrete job offer from the Mission Society as a sign of God leading us. I was open to do whatever Missionary work NMS

wanted us to do, as long as the actual tasks corresponded reasonably well with my talents and education”. Yet another responded expected that the host “ would be able to use my theological education in the service of God, and that I would grow personally through learning a new language and getting to know a foreign culture”.

Pertaining to *development work and personal career development*, respondents’ expectations were; “to be able to use my education and abilities working in a broad range of assignments in the Mission field and contribute to the Church, work at the diocesan level as a project facilitator/consultant due to challenges in terms of getting volunteers to work for the Church; I hoped that I could be a good teacher to students, that is teach well and have good relationship with students, to work .... as a facilitator for the youth churches and develop the programme for interns; to take part in/work directly with the development of a youth Church, to be useful in NMS Mission work by using my knowledge and work experience from Norway in an African Mission context, be used with all my knowledge and education in sharing the word of God; be heard and involved in decisions concerning my work and my life, to be a good worker as possible for NMS and to do what I could to a 100% good work for the organisation; accepted as a co-worker in the local congregation, was prepared to work within all areas which the Church was engaged in especially the exciting job of working with rural development.

Those whose expectation was to undergo *different cultural experiences and encounters*, framed their expectations as; Meeting with sceptical people in terms of beliefs and religion, being in a good place to live/a good house and good working conditions, integration into the new culture, language and life, “we should move to country in order to learn the language and work as best as we can do”. Our children got a school/kindergarten so they could be happy, staying in the field for one period of five years, and thereby fulfil the two years language study.

The table 8 below illustrates percentages of respondents who clearly understood or did not the objectives of their assignment.

**Table 8: Clarity of the Objectives of the Assignment**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	25	64.10%
No	1	2.56%
Yes Partly	13	33.33%
<b>Grand total</b>	39	<b>100.00%</b>

The analysis from table 8 above shows that 64.10 per cent clearly understood the objective; 33.33% partly understood and 2.56 (one respondent) did not understand the task. A number of reasons for lack of clarity of assignment were espoused as; “In those days, you were sent only – and the work grew out of decisions made mainly in the field. Perhaps this is still a good idea and closer to what is happening to-day, as most of the strategic planning work has in reality been farmed out to the field and Representatives. There is no Mission Secretary looking over our shoulder anymore. To a certain extent Missionaries to this Asian country need a two year period for language studies, so I didn’t feel the need to know exactly what kind of work I would do. But I knew I would probably work as a congregation pastor, because all the other Missionaries did that”.

### **Expectations (explicit and implicit) of NMS Head Quarters**

The study asked respondents about their explicit and implicit expectations of NMS HQs. Respondents majorly expressed that the HQs expected Missionaries with skills, experiences and values in their different functions/roles. An analysis of responses culminated into four key expectations namely; undertake community and development work, perform advisory duties, do ministry work and administrative duties. Concrete expectations around ***Community and development*** which enlisted three responses noted that: It was to perform field duties as assigned and also be an important contact person between NMS and the other projects/volunteers that would also come from NMS. To work at diocesan level rather than locally in a congregation, so as to gain experience which they in turn could use in a Norwegian context at the end of their stay. Implement social activities although initially NMS didn't specify where or what it would entail except to follow NMS directions and rules and to learn the local language and culture. On ***Advisory duties*** some of the respondents stated that the HQs expected them to be advisors in different fields to the local Church/organisation. Meaning to be a good advisor for several projects and above all uphold the best behaviour in line with the Mission and the partner Church. A view worth highlighting is that according to the respondent the strength of the NMS structure is that the opinions of Stavanger/Norway do not matter as much as those of the NMS Representative and that this works very well when there is a good/well-functioning Representative and who knows more about the local circumstances than Stavanger.

Expectations around ***Ministry/evangelism work*** were expressed by majority of the respondents as inclined towards God's ministry and preaching the Gospel. A summary of the expectations include; to help people progress spiritually, socially and develop ways of engaging youth by working alongside the Diocese in building the internship programme and also starting a youth network church. Manage and support the development of the Church plans in the host country. In addition, respondents were to be evangelists and to support the growth of the Church in their areas of duty. In a particular case NMS HQs expected that the respondent would not be so caught up in administrative tasks that would limit his performance in evangelism. On the Youth the expectation to the respondent was explicit to work as a congregation pastor spreading the Word of God with a special and specific focus on the Youth Ministry. While another young respondent mentioned that being young he was to find new ways of doing Mission so as to reach out to many young people.

Concerning performing ***administrative duties***, expectations were not many. There were three responses; one was to work with administration matters and in this case the respondent was confident of fulfilling the requirement since they have management and strategic experience that would be useful for the partner. NMS expects timely delivery of reports, provision of logistical support when there are visits and communication with the supporting congregation and apparently this is a flexible role and each Missionary handles it in his/her way.

Findings indicate that a number of respondents did not provide any explicit or implicit expectation from NMS HQs. Their responses were; the position was detailed and clear, and that they had a good dialogue with the previous holder of the position before arrival, but NMS expected them to train a local successor before the 4-year period ended. It was difficult to state for a respondent to state NMS HQs explicit and implicit expectations because according to them they knew they would do her job during the five years of service; but another expressed that NMS had very little or no expectations from them because they have very little or no contact at all from NMS HQs and in the same vein a respondent noted that NMS HQs often has too little expectations. The result of the work is not measured, and often it does not correspond to the strategy of the NMS. This particular respondent indicated an existing

impression that one could decide to do what he/she wanted to do, and that the strategy of the NMS and actual need of the Church was secondary. The expectations for the other levels i.e. Sending Church in Norway and The Regional Office/local office, are mostly similar according to the respondents. If not answered it was referred.

In conclusion quite many expectations were realized but some have not been met for example, volunteers did not anticipate hard Mission field. NMS expectations at times do not necessarily corroborate with those of the host Church. ” One respondent noted “NMS expectations are not always clear. In some local churches it is not easy to have specific and detailed JDs. Generation Y puts emphasis on “being there” which to them is as important as doing but Missionaries focus on doing. Some Missionaries went through frustrating experiences because of lack of plan and use of skills. There is tendency for a mismatch between NMS, the Missionary and local Church expectations. As for JDs there seems to be more freedom in Asia than Africa. In an effort to address challenges NMS, has become a professional organisation, with good projects and well established systems for Missionaries, but the challenges of recruitment in the last 10 years have made NMS become very bureaucratic with so much paper work but not much focus on the local Church.

### 3.3 Understanding the “Calling”

This section seeks to establish the understandings and perceptions of respondents on the concept of calling.

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

The concept of calling has transformed from a personal lifetime commitment to a different country and people to service and solidarity in any given context of need. There seems to be an inter-change in the use of service and calling. Many want to serve and feel called to Mission abroad on short term basis. The changing use of the term calling is a global phenomenon especially in the Northern hemisphere. In Norway the concept of calling was vibrant in the 1970s but now it is seldom to hear about God’s call with few role models in Bible Schools who have been models for NMS not least the SMT. Currently NMS has few meeting points with groups where this concept of calling is deliberated upon and unlike the past centuries many organisations have emerged that address service to the needy and who are in direct competition with NMS. Besides, the life style in Norway like other Northern economies is crowded with many activities to the extent that people have little or no time for attending Church and teachings on subjects such as calling. Calling is a personal experience, an old paradigm which denotes action to go and spread the Gospel and is initiated by the Missionary, but now this is replaced more or less by strategy, structure and work in provision of service.

The table 9 below shows the number of respondents who answered the question on calling and the highest percentage 95% answered yes.

**Table 9: No. of respondents who answered**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
No	2	5.00%
Yes	38	95.00%

<b>Grand total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The respondents were asked to give their understanding of the concept “calling”. Being an open ended question, they gave various narrations of their understanding. Data analysis shows that the different respondents gave their understanding of the concept from different aspects as discussed below;

### 3.3.2 Definition and understanding of calling

Majority of the respondents gave their understanding of the concept calling in brief definition form as; ” what God has asked you to do and the main Ministry He has given you; This is God’s will with one’s life; God calls everyone, in different areas, not only the professional life; a need or Mission that makes one want to do something, More like a feeling or desire that you believe is from the Lord; God’s plan with someone’s life; calling encompasses your whole life; Calling from God is basically the dedication of one’s life to what He wants him/her to do for His Kingdom. When one gets a calling from God to become a Missionary that is like a life-long devotion; a situation when a person feels that God calls her/him to work in his plan/to work on something special/at a special place/land; when you feel what you are doing is actually what you are supposed to do; When you believe this is what God wants you to do; For me I think God called me to work with children and he also gave me this gift to see the value of all children and my wish is to fight for underprivileged children; to be convinced, to be in the right place, at the right time; to be in the place that God wants you to be; a wish to serve the Lord and that someone confirms the wish by engaging; a burden and joy to be a part of God’s work in the world, materialized through the sending from one Church and Mission to a certain place or nation for life, but with the possibility that God through certain circumstances might change place and content of the actual work and we need new language to explain calling”.

Findings regarding statements on calling are summarised in four categories as follows;

***Calling as a process*** - Some respondents gave their understanding of calling as a process in the life of a human being. The process of calling starts when God calls us to be His children and to follow Him. We are secondly called to follow the Bible as all believers of Christ (preach the good news to all and feed the hungry). God then goes further to call us to cross cultural ministry because of the ways He has given us both gifts and passions. Further, calling is simply two integrated steps in one’s life: First an inner calling from God and secondly a confirmation of this inner calling with an external calling from the sending Church, without which the first will not be fulfilled. Every Christian is called by God where to live and where to work, some Christians are called to be Missionaries. There is a call from “outside” and from “inside”. The outside call is from a Mission or a local Church and the inside call is from God as a result of praying, reading the Bible and perhaps talking to a spiritual advisor. Finally, calling can be understood on different levels such as believing in Jesus Christ the Son of God. The next is serving Him in different ways and among them is the service as Missionary. Finally, the Church’s and the Mission organisations’ needs and calls are also considered as “calling”.

***Calling as a great commission from God and by others*** - The respondents expounded their understanding of the concept calling as a Great Commissioning from the Lord God himself. First, we believe that all Christian’s are called to fulfil the Great Commission. God will ask some people to stay in their community, others He gives to serve Him somewhere else. The

calling is simply a question by Jesus: “Will you follow me” and our response to it. Jesus draws all people to Himself by saying “Follow me”. The calling is to become a child of God and a disciple of Jesus. From that moment, Jesus will send us out to the world to love and to serve, but our identity must be rooted in that first calling by Jesus: “Follow me”, then follows the sending, and his promise to be with us, as we are sent out -Matthew 28. Second, “calling” is the call from God to believe and follow Him, but after which he sends us out to different places. Christ calls his Church to follow him, preach the Gospel to the whole world. Every Christian is called to discipleship. Some are called to be “professional” Church workers. Each individual has his own path. Sometimes there is a question whether doors are open or closed. The call from God will come in different ways - interests, adventure, inner conviction, through the Bible, prayers, a need in a Missionary field, a need in a Mission organisation. Third, calling is an assignment from God that causes us to reach beyond our own borders (both physically and psychologically), but still allows us use our personality, education and experience. This calling is usually communicated through “official” channels (the Church or Mission organisations) that “send” us out into the world. In this respect my personal calling comes from God through NMS that challenged me to the task.

***Biblical understanding of calling*** - Some respondents used biblical reference to highlight their understanding of the concept calling; one respondent stated that his concept has for a long time been based on Philippians 2:5-11: the pattern of Mission has to be the pattern of Jesus, the pattern of incarnation. This involves, of necessity, the willingness to “step down”, to accept to become weak and vulnerable, and that this is the path to glory in the Kingdom of God. If we want to communicate the Gospel into the world, this “stepping down” is necessary.

### 3.3.3 Changes in Calling

*Changes in perception of calling are as follow;* The concept of calling has been seen more and more as a job like all other jobs, to have an income and a career. Many Christians look upon Missionary work more or less like an ordinary job. Most people do not focus on calling from God, but look at NMS as a “working place” with rules and policies, all rights and a good salary secured. NMS has over some years used advertisements as the main way of hiring people. This means that those present today have more desire of their position, rather than being encouraged to apply/ask the Mission for a position that they seem to have the ability to undertake. Calling was initially perceived to be much more like a strong personal feeling or conviction, and that many believed it was (or should be) communicated by God in a “supernatural” way – like a prophetic dream or vision. Nowadays many believe that each person has many “callings,” e.g. both as a Missionary and a father/mother, and that these should not be played against each other.

*Changes in focus and interpretation of calling;* There have been changes in NMS that placed less emphasis on calling and more on projects. It is appropriate to have development projects, but they should not dilute the concept of calling. Calling is much wider and in talking about God’s work it is not possible to streamline it too much rather, the voice of the Holy Spirit, the gifts given by Holy Spirit should be considered. There is the inner voice in someone’s heart that defines calling. The main reason for the short term service as a Missionary is partly due to the fact that people do not give their life over to God and follow this inside voice. Calling has now been influenced by other personal and social factors such as family and health. Earlier on calling was kept on one specific task or thing that needed to be done, for example if God had called you to be a Missionary to a particular country you couldn’t say no and it didn’t matter if



your wife wasn't "keen on" going to the specific country. The calling came before your family. It was also important to have a clear word from God confirming what one was going to do.

*Changes from the perspective of the dominant Norwegian cultural discourse* illustrate; First, that the word "calling" perhaps has been misused in the past and therefore in the next generation, one has tended to be careful to use this word out of fear of offending others. Second, most Norwegians have a great degree of personal freedom, power to shape their own lives and wealth. This means that most Vikings can control their lives to a great extent (in comparison with people in other countries). What they plan, assuming the plan is reasonably realistic often does materialize. In this context, they are not forced to ask God for direction, wisdom or help in the same way as people in poorer societies. God can still intervene, but it is easier to become "deaf". Third, my own personal understanding of calling has also changed over time. For instance, both my parents are Vikings, so I used to have a fairly "human" approach to planning etc. We had an awareness of being called by God but perhaps not a strong focus on this when we arrived in Asia in the beginning of the year 2000. As plans and the reality changes frequently, we were in many ways forced to cling to God and seek His will. This has made me more acutely aware of His calling to me and us by having to re-examine it again and again and really treasure it. It is crucial that a Missionary has an awareness of being called by Him. Without this, I think the very fast changing society would send any Missionary home very quickly and in a particular Asian society, short term service has limited value.

In conclusion, calling as a concept and its application has evidently gone through changes both within NMS and among Missionaries. The evolving socio-economic and political context plays a lot into the definition, perception and even practice. These changes have an effect on the Missionary role. Present day Missionaries want to be present but not in traditional Mission. "Calling" has always been a basic word for Missionaries. In addition to an "outer calling", for example expressed through a "letter of calling" from the NMS, it has in most cases also been focused on an inner deep experience of being called by God. Few Missionaries if any hardly subscribe to traditional understanding of calling as a life time vocation irrespective of the circumstances as long as it emanates from God. Indeed to-day many want to serve but have an understanding of calling as service that fulfills a need for a given time or more precisely being in solidarity with the needy and underprivileged. However, the important historic spiritual reality of Norway still resonates even if in a small soft voice, with Missionaries in spite of the changes in the context where most are not challenged to serve God.

### **3.4 Growth and decline of Missionaries**

This section provides a summary of the state of Missionaries within NMS as an illustration of the steady but fast decline of men and women ready to serve as long term Missionaries to-day.

#### **3.4.1 The global trends of Mission growth and decline**

The literature review has illustrated the global trends in so far world Christianity is concerned as well as the declining number of missionaries ready to serve for long term periods. A number of reasons are expounded such as modernization, secularization and high standard of living in the Northern hemisphere. The impact of secularism in post Christian Europe seems more compared to United States of America. In an article by David J. Cho he provides statistic of the

growing number of Missionaries from India (55,000) under the umbrella of the Indian Mission Association and 50,000 Nigerians serving sent by the Nigerian Evangelical Mission Association -NEMA in African countries. In the case of the USA short term Missionaries number about 150,000 and they serve only 1 year while long term ones account for 40,000. Further among the 150,000 short term Missionaries are many other nationalities apart from USA. As discussed in chapter one, the global South led by South Korea is beginning to edge out the traditional Mission sending countries.

### 3.4.2 Norwegian context

Developments in Norway are similar to other countries like North America and in particular NMS is witnessing a steady but gradual decline of Missionaries and constant numbers short term Missionaries. The table 10 below provides information on the number of Missionaries in service since the year 2005 to 2011; the regions where they have served and the gender.

<b>Table 10 : Status of Missionaries in the last 7 years</b>									
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total no. Missionaries</b>	<b>Africa</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Europe</b>	<b>Latin America</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Development</b>	<b>Evangelism and other activities</b>
2005	92	51	30	5	6	51	41	27	65
2006	80	47	27	2	4	44	36	25	55
2007	72					40	34	24	48
2008	67	30	28	6	3	37	30	27	40
2009	66	35	28	2	1	34	28	24	42
2010	63	32	28	2	1	35	28	23	40
2011	64	34	26	2	2	36	28	21	43

The data provided by table 10 shows a steady decline of the numbers of Missionaries since the period 2005 - 2010. In 2005 there were 92 Missionaries in total and by 2009 the number had dropped to 66 with a further decrease in 2011 when they were 64. The gender balance pattern has remained constant with NMS having more women than men. In 2005 there were 51 women and 41 men in 2008, men were 30 and women 37 reflecting the overall decrease in numbers. Regional distribution of Missionaries puts Africa on top during the years under consideration starting with 51 Missionaries in 2005 ending up with 34 in 2011 compared with Asia which had 30 and 26 respectively; Europe registering the highest number in 2008 with six Missionaries but with an overall constant of two people. On the other hand, Latin America has had a steep decline from six in 2005 to 1 in 2009 and 2010 ending up in 2011 with only 2.

According to NMS, the time frame that is the time Missionaries spend in the Mission field (formerly called “terms”) has been reduced a lot in recent years and Missionaries are in service for a shorter period of time. Time pressure is therefore greater on them to perform within a limited span of time and in new roles. This means less time for preparations, a desire to quickly get into “productive work” and a corresponding desire for “quick results”. Findings from respondents show that because of the short time frame, preparation and leveling of expectations receives less attention than before and in turn there are Missionaries who have gone out without induction and less or no information concerning their employer NMS. While in the field, the hurried process of recruitment and the demand to perform has jeopardized the learning, listening to the local context and settling quickly into the task. The frustrations experienced by Missionaries accrue from limited consultation time between NMS, the local

Church/organization and Country Representative because of the many reports that have to be compiled and filed to various authorities. Time frame has also impacted the definition of roles in the form of JDs as the time is short to really clarify and formulate in detail accurate and relevant tasks moreover, a number of Missionaries have landed in the field to find no clear tasks or a mismatch creating even more frustrations on all involved. Narratives of Missionaries who spent time without concrete work bear witness to this fact of time frame; further the inability to cope with culture and language is another contributory factor to dissatisfaction. It can therefore be argued that where the expected results are clearly defined and translated into JDs the time frame does not affect the relevance and effectiveness of the role. Finally, the time frame driven by demand for results has caused Missionaries the number is not clear but at least 30% to work beyond the official hours and therefore negatively affecting family life. The time frame needs to be discussed especially in light of relevance and effectiveness where language may be a requirement.

**Table 11: Duty Station**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
Africa	14	35.00%
Asia	20	50.00%
Europe	4	10.00%
Latin America	1	2.50%
Blank	1	2.50%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Accordingly the NMS strategy to address changing role and decline of Missionaries is partly to visit schools, follow up young people annually; be responsive to dynamic contextual changes; and it is reported that NMS is now more flexible with contracts for both short and long term.

### **3.5 Partnership Model**

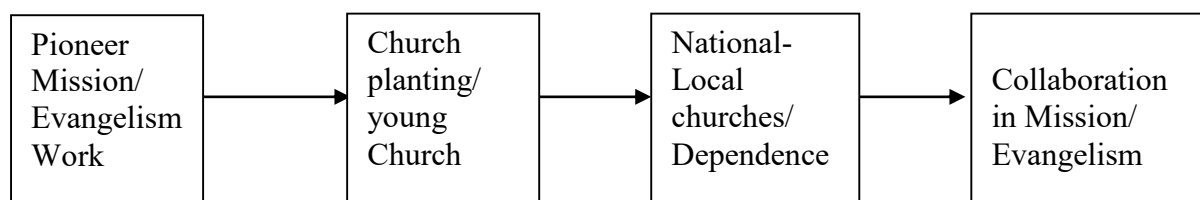
The nature and scope of partnership of NMS with churches in the global south forms the focus of this section. Additionally strengths and weaknesses of the model as experienced by various stakeholders not least Missionaries are interrogated.

Partnership is a concept that has been in the offing for quite some time and that has been understood and practiced differently depending on the context and actors. Within the Mission and Church-related development agencies the concept has evolved historically. Initially the Mission society in its act of spreading the Gospel was fully in charge of the structures, policy and governance. With the attainment of independence in many countries of the global South, the relationship evolved to reflect Church to Church and or Mission agency relating to a Church in the South.

#### **3.5.1 Historical evolution of partnership**

Evolution of partnership should be viewed within the backdrop of Mission history. The sketch below aims at capturing and explaining the evolution and the attendant challenges. This evolution has largely informed the thinking and practice of NMS. NMS partners with the host

Church, has project agreements that serve communities who may not be close ties with Church this is an expression of the holistic Mission perspective.



In the pioneer stage describes a historical epoch when the Missionary came into the community that had not heard about and been reached the Gospel. At this juncture of Mission work, the Missionary role is one of a driver and there was no thought about partnership. Second stage which some commentators refer to as parenting is when the “dotter” Church is growing and needs nurturing. Once again during this period of relationship the Missionary had the upper hand as a parent while the local Church as a “dotter” was learning and gradually taking up responsibility for evangelism and so partnership as a mechanism of relating was not appropriate as Mission agencies still financed and supported the Church and its institutions on their terms. A third historical phase in the relationship describes a Church that is autonomous and seeking to follow the footsteps of the local governance process as they develop structures and capacities. Finally is the stage of collaboration or “partnership” a moment when both the Mission agency and the local national Church acknowledge maturity, capacity and profile of each other as collaborators in the building of the Kingdom of God. In no way does this phase negate the inter-dependence or even dependence of the local Church to the Mission agency. To the contrary it is a phase that appreciates the identity of the local Church as an equal partner in Mission. NMS has opted to use the partnership model in its relationship with local Church and has partnership agreements especially where development projects are involved. But as findings illustrate this model is far from being perfect. There is “love–hate” relationship in one instance and in another a father/mother –child mentality and still in another case, it is a mutual cooperation.

**Missionary understanding** - a variety of opinions and views prevail among Missionaries regarding partnership. In one country NMS is perceived as investors expecting results. Local Church relationship is more important in the self-understanding of partnership and NMS is working with churches and organisations using partnership model. This means that through this approach, much influence on the Missionary work is assumed by the local Church and that the missionaries have to work under local management in addition to having an NMS Representative to relate to. According to Missionaries NMS still has a position of influence, financial status of NMS is not shared with partners; it therefore remains an unequal partnership. While on paper partnership seems alright in practice it is too optimistic not realistic. NMS has a variety of approaches to the partnership with the different partners; in the UK for instance, the partnership is not fully developed but it is evolving around developing a Youth Network Church. Aware of the decline of youth engagement and perhaps a worse or similar situation in England NMS and Carlisle are tapping into structures of the Diocese of New Castle using

volunteers to forge partnership. While in Madagascar partnership is all embracing including evangelism, multi-faith issues to development projects.

### **3.5.2 Achievements/strengths of the partnership**

According to respondents the partnership has attained the achievements and has certain strengths. A variety of achievements/strengths were identified and categorized in response to the question as follows;

*Enhance equality* - Respondents expressed that the partnership has enhanced equality in terms of performance of work. To them the partnership is true because each one has his/her own identity and responsibility. They further noted that the partnership works well due to good dialogue between the people from NMS and the local Church. Both parties listen to each other and share their thoughts, wishes and needs.

*Development of the youth ministry* - The partnership has also achieved the development and strengthening of the youth ministry. NMS has already been an important partner in the development of the children and youth work in the Estonian Lutheran Church, and in the Church planting project in Mustamäe. The Mission Centre in the Estonian Church and NMS has good contact, and this contact might increase and even improve the scope of partnership through the more volunteers in future.

*Enhanced accountability* - The partnership has enhanced accountability amongst the local partners. Focus by NMS on walking together with their partners has made partners more accountable and responsible. The partnership has also helped the partners to have a process of identifying, structuring and training the right human resource (personnel) even after the ending of NMS term in the area.

*Empowerment of the local partners* - The respondents expressed that the partnership has empowered the local partners in various ways. One NMS has played a great role by portraying respect for the local partners thereby strengthening these churches by enabling them to take responsibility for their own future. Two NMS sees itself as a facilitator, walking alongside the partner Church and ensures the partner Church is in the driving position. This is strength as it gives the partner Church responsibility and power of decision making. Three the partnership defines roles and delegates clearer responsibilities between NMS and partner Church/Organisations which has helped the Church realize that it is more responsible for its own activities, and cannot expect the NMS to bail them out every time they have a problem.

*Improved quality of work* - The partnership has improvement of the quality of work. Generally, NMS has achieved a lot by collaborating with partners than by doing it alone. The quality of the work has been strengthened because local partners have competencies that NMS lacks. The main strength of a partnership is when the partner Church has a good structure in the country where NMS is working. For instance the co-workers have a better understanding of the culture, the language and the people which ideally removes the former feeling of inferiority of the partner churches. The respondents also mentioned the partnership as an vital agent in transforming Mission work in the local churches. It has changed from Mission-oriented, to Church oriented and partly back to Mission oriented.

Finally, partnership has created ownership of both the work of evangelization and development. In turn this makes the Missionary role more acceptable as the mind shift of the

local Church begins to accept its full responsibility and ownership of the work and perceives the Missionary as a support function rather than the main force behind the work. On the other hand, the new role of the Missionary as advisor should be, mutually empowering as the Missionary acknowledges the position and role of the local Church in the partnership.

### **3.5.3 Challenges of the partnership**

The respondents also discussed the challenges of the partnership between NMS and the local Church and the discussions were analysed and categorized as follows;

*Cultural differences* - First, the respondents expressed cultural differences as a major challenge in terms of relating and communicating with one another. Though the relationship is open, there is a gap in communication due to cultural differences. The Missionaries find it hard to learn the language properly and behave in accordance with the accepted local culture. Second the cultural difference has greatly affected the interest of building friendship among the local partners. When you don't share the same culture and language it seems like the interest for building friendship is not assured. The Some African Missionaries looked at the white Missionaries as a problem for the Mission, not as a resource. Third, is the work culture - as there are different ways of work cultures that tend to conflict; the Church has retained some of the ways of doing the things that they learned from Norwegians 50-100 years ago and don't want to change because it is their tradition now and yet in Norway things have developed and found better ways of doing the same things.

*Communication flow* - communication between NMS and the local partners was highlighted as a major challenge in the partnership. Communication between the NMS and the Church needs to improve to hold the Church more and more responsible for all its activities. Another communication concern is when the NMS Representative and the leadership of the host Church are not in good communication terms. If they are not good partners how will that influence the whole partnership thinking? Definitely it has a bearing on the work of the Missionaries and relationships with NMS.

*Misplaced priorities* - Misplaced priorities in terms of projects as a challenge in the partnership was also raised. First, partner churches may give priority to values or plans that NMS does not support. Although this challenge can be handled because NMS can say yes or no to demands for support, but the partner Church has to decide and find its own way. Second, the support NMS gives is often according to what NMS prioritizes. If the NMS Representative is not aware of the signals his/she gives, the partner will easily start seeking all possible activities that are supported by NMS and not necessary what the partner has given as priority.

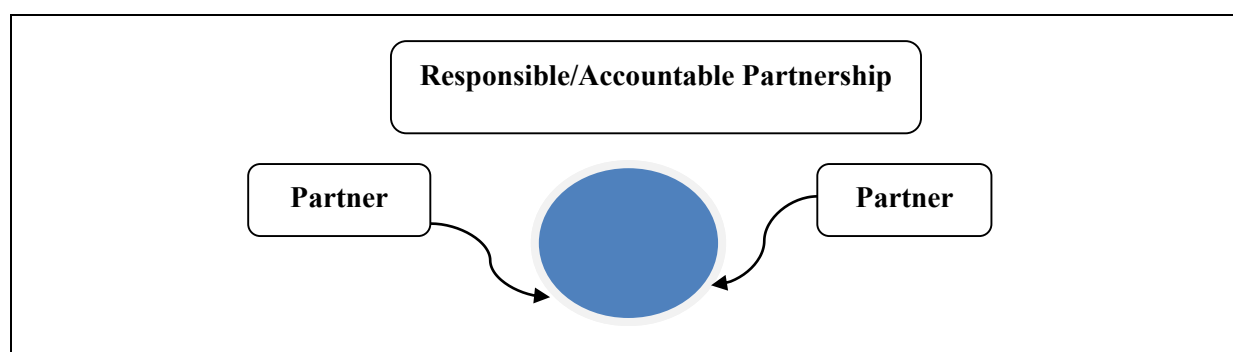
*Donor Dependency* - Those who have been given money will always be in need of having more. Previous practices have created dependencies abroad in sister churches and organisations so the transitions into the new roles are difficult. The host Church doesn't seem to understand what it means to be partners in the partnership; that they should and must have expectations to each other and need to speak more clearly of what they expect of NMS and what NMS should expect from them. The challenge here is that the Church expects money from NMS but does not give thought to what NMS should expect from them. The local partners do not necessarily consider NMS to be a reliable and responsible partner, but more a sponsor/investor who expects results and reports but is not willing to take part in any decision-making and therefore not willing to carry any responsibility if things go wrong.

*Relational differences* - There is concern over the relationship between NMS and the local partners. Respondents expressed that NMS needs to and has to show more humility towards their partners. NMS tends to appear arrogant at times. It appears that NMS likes to cooperate with partners only as long as the partners are in agreement with them. When disagreement occurs, NMS reacts negatively instead of addressing the differences constructively. NMS should always encourage their partners and be careful in the manner they criticize them.

*Unequal partnership* - The issue of equality in the partnership was discussed as a challenge. In most cases, NMS is still considered to be the “stronger” partner making the local Church to feel inferior. There is an assertion that the partners will never be equal since NMS will always have more money, and therefore power to make decisions directly or indirectly. It was also noted that NMS partnership model is defined by NMS and although NMS considers the partner as an equal one, the partner often feels differently. A respondent stated that the relationship has often been referred to as a mother-child-relationship more than an equal partner-relation or a junior and senior partner.

### ***The case of partnership and NMS Structures***

In a given country the structures of NMS provide for parallel leadership one through the Representative and another through the Missionaries. Both leaders are housed in one office but with distinct roles and responsibilities and reporting lines. The potential for confusion and conflict caused by such a structure could easily undermine the essence of partnership especially if communication and understanding between the two leaders is ascertained. In this case to avoid conflict and misunderstanding, the roles of the NMS-Representative and those of the head of Missionaries should be clear and where they interject clarified so that there is a mutual acceptance and knowledge of each others’ roles. Another way to ensure good working relationships between two leaders may be to provide office space in different places so that each one has room to exercise their responsibility and to safeguard against the fear of interference. In addition, such a scenario being unique to the usual NMS Representation in a country, attendance of meetings by leaders should be by invitation. As NMS develops new approaches to partnership and ventures in Mission with multiple partners under new organisational structures, thinking into roles and responsibilities and representation to such new local structures should be critically analysed and agreements reached by all.



**Conclusion-** Partnership model in its understanding and practice varies greatly from place to place. In theory it is about two or more partners convening a round a common vision and concern but playing different roles. The need to re-engage on the understanding of Mission and Evangelism within the partnership context and especially in lieu of the realization of Mission

on six continents cannot be overstated. Partnership model varies from country to country in terms of implementation. Strengths of this model are equality between partners, mutual agreement, and participation in global Mission. Weakness are bureaucracy, need for a new image/profile of what Mission is. Norway needs experience from the South and NMS can be a bridge. Norway needs spiritual renewal and the Church in the South can make a contribution. Value addition by Norway is not clearly stipulated but it may be systems, structures, work culture etc. NMS still has a position of influence. Presence is more important because it keeps the link with Norway but money still plays a role and a big one in the partnership. NMS through the Representative can walk side by side with the grown up child namely the local Church if there is trust and transparency. NMS sees Carlisle as a creative place/missionary market and therefore the need for partnership and work to develop long term partner is in progress. In future NMS and Carlisle may consider a Round table conference to enable partnership be translated in to strategies and plan with clear outcomes that can be reviewed annually. The NMS partnership model should seek to work towards mutual responsibility and accountability on the basis of needs and resources for Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 3.6 Mission and Humanitarian Work

Relationship between Mission and Development has been a matter of many articles and debates. There are development practitioners who argue for the separation of development in order to ascertain professionalism and impact for communities. On the other hand, many thinkers and practitioners still hold the view that development is an expression of Mission and therefore the other side of Mission. In this section the study presents the experience and thinking by Missionaries on the link and how if at all it has affected the Missionary role. The study seeks to establish the balance between development and Mission in terms of resource allocation and in particular whether government funding has tilted local financial support for NMS.

Policy documents and interviews with NMS leadership indicate that NMS in its strategy and values believes in holistic Mission which according to them ensures the health of the Church. In other words spiritual gifts should combine with technical skills/expertise. In spite of changes including the aging support group NMS has since 2006 retained its financial soundness without depending heavily on government support even at the time of the “missionary children crisis. A comparison table of NMS own and NORAD funding in the below shows that in 2006 NMS raised 59.6% while in 2010 it reached 66.0% and in no year has it been surpassed. This is an important and positive trend because many agencies that take on humanitarian work and receive government funding tend to have an imbalance in the resources which tilt towards government funding. In addition this trend helps one to understand that NMS local support groups do view Mission from a holistic perspective and continue to value the work of NMS. Obviously humanitarian work and development aid have gained currency within the Churches in some of the western countries and agencies as financial giving by Christians continues to decline.

<b>Table 11: Annual budget and contribution of the Norwegian government</b>				
<b>MMNOK</b>	<b>Govt.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>NMS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
2006	16,1	21,2%	59,6	75,6
2007	20,6	27,2%	55,1	75,7
2008	19,7	23,3%	64,9	84,6
2009	19,6	23,4%	64,0	83,6
2010	21,2	24,3%	66,0	87,2
2011	23,4	28,7%	58,2	81,6



It is however, important to observe that NMS has also undergone financial difficulties and initiated second hand shops and broadened its new supporters through such shops to 1,500 volunteers as a measure to enable financial stability. Although the study did not make a comparison between Mission and development of total financial income allocations, attempts are made to decipher the approximate number of Missionaries working in development and Mission activities. As shown in the table 122 below; 11 (28.21%) respondents were occupied with humanitarian assistance, 26 (66.67%) in Mission and 2 (5.13) did not answer. From the table an impression of what most Missionaries are actively engaged with is provided notwithstanding the notion of holistic Mission and neither oblivious of the possibility of some Missionaries performing both types of work which could be among those that did not answer.

**Table 12: Mission roles verse Developmental roles**

<b>Roles</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Developmental	11	28.21%
Mission	26	66.67%
Not Answered	2	5.13%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

In order to gauge the impact on Missionary role, job satisfaction, professional growth and well being, the respondents were asked about the *experiences* they have had as they work for NMS. Part of the responses considered relevant to humanitarian work section, are covered herein while the rest fall under sociological factors. Majority, 58.97%, indicate that they have had positive experiences while 2.56% and 15.38% of the respondents had negative and both (Positive and Negative) experiences respectively. However, a good number of 23.08% of the total respondents did not respond to the question. The summaries are shown in the frequency table 13 below;

**Table 13: Positive and Negative experiences in working with NMS**

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The mission has always done development work to help people in their everyday life like Jesus did.</li> <li>• There are many people in need. It is anyway good to help people. It is great to see that people come to the arrangements (humanitarian) at all – despite the fact that Church and religion are not so popular in the society.</li> <li>• Developing projects are often necessary in a poor surrounding and setting. It is needed and wished heartily welcome by the natives</li> <li>• I think our project is doing a good job in alleviating poverty in our area of work. Since they carry the name of MELM, this gives us a good name among the local population and the local authorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The humanitarian assistance is now divided from the Church and the evangelical foundation.</li> <li>• These projects are often funded by resources outside NMS (Norwegian state) and therefore more wealthy than projects in the evangelization field. This has often created a discrepancy and difference of salary that has caused problems inside the Church</li> <li>• The development project has to a large extent become an independent organization, detached from Evangelism and Church-planting. This is both due to NORAD-guidelines and the fact that it is very hard to find competent personnel who are Christians and who can function in a Fulani-context. Our new MELM-administration, where the work is organized according to departments, risks segmenting this separation between the humanitarian work and the Church-planting work further.</li> </ul>

In conclusion, the above findings illustrate that Mission and evangelism still receive high priority both in terms of personnel and resources. Additionally, while NMS is sourcing funds from the Norwegian government, they are despite financial constraints able to raise more than they receive from the state. Many Missionaries have positive experiences when it comes to the impact of humanitarian work; they see it as uplifting the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable groups and also as part of Mission. At the same time their concern is the potential divisive nature of development aid for example, delinking it from the Church, having two sets of salaries that can create competition and NMS seemingly having to play by the rules of NORAD which in countries with small growing churches may find it difficult to grasp unless well managed. It was also reported that it has become much easier to collect money for development than mission/evangelism work although NMS is about holistic Mission. In a country where the Church is still under persecution the entry point is projects that eventually result into churches. Apparently the challenge in one country is making humanitarian work a meaningful part of Church activities.

### **3.7 Role and future of Volunteers**

A programme for young men and women interested in short term service abroad is in place by NMS and the duration ranges from three months to one year. Although this programme is advertised perhaps not broadly nor in a language of to-day's young people, NMS still faces recruitment challenge. The reasons are many and some are similar to the general Mission situation. Apparently, youth are keen about other cultures, visiting other countries but not to tell about Jesus. Further students at the SMT are there not for Mission but primarily to become priests in the Church of Norway. During this study meetings were held with a number of volunteers/interns including a number of youth leaders who discussed and expressed their views. NMS has at least two categories of volunteers and they are both Norwegian and from countries in the global South. One group caters for their travel and local accommodation while another is fully supported by NMS. While in the field they are expected to work alongside the Missionaries.

Quite a number of respondents expressed that they did not know NMS or much about the organisation until they joined. While in the field they have come to appreciate the work of Missionaries and even begun to overcome their prejudices. In the UK the partnership between Carlisle and NMS is heavily hinged on young volunteers coming over to work with the Church of England in the development of a youth ministry. This group of volunteers were of the view that preparation was adequate although cultural differences may have been underestimated. The project Manager had been to one or two of the countries to facilitate induction of new volunteers.

It is clear that future Mission work will continue and thrive if the foundation stones are laid among young people who then will carry the torch on short or long term basis. But it is vital to note that Youth have short perspective and want to do Mission differently. Subsequently investing in the youth is securing the future of Mission work because it was reported that a number of volunteers do come back and we met some in the field who had served in other countries. The question and challenge for NMS is how to meaningfully interact with young people before they lose interest and become busy with life. A number of suggestions were made by respondents to the effect that; when Missionaries come back to Norway in the summer

on vacation and a times meet with congregations should be set aside but not as in the past when they travelled to different groups; NMS may consider engaging some Missionaries to meet with youth groups but then Missionaries would need to know in advance the type of role/work that they are expected to do. To step up recruitment one respondent stated that Country Representatives could organize a weekend to meet with congregations and young people when they visit Norway. It was also noted that NMS needs to be transparent and honest with volunteers or potential ones since they meet part of their costs and that at times expectations of the local Church do not always tally with reality e.g. wanting English taught but having no students to teach and therefore intentionally prepare youth to be flexible and open minded to such situations, because although youth are afraid of commitment they want to do meaningful work.

Volunteers are important for the local Church as links for their youth with Norwegian young people and to share experiences. They can be bridge builders between NMS and Norwegian people. If NMS wants better use of volunteers it should designate a position, time and personnel at HQs to attend to them. A number of respondents pointed out that mechanisms of joining NMS are not so evident, many volunteers join because of knowledge of someone who has served before. Some volunteers are not Christian and this is their first encounter with NMS which can make them good ambassadors depending on the experience. NMS should sort out the in- built inequality of support to volunteers and make it clear who qualifies for support and why and who does not. A possibility of an overlap with outgoing and incoming volunteers to share experience and create connectivity should be part of the reflection.

The strategy of volunteers is useful in bridging gaps created by declining long term Missionaries. It is also a time for youth to grow and nurture their faith and it is incumbent upon NMS to standardize application process and requirements. For Carlisle post - university are the best volunteers who have sensed God's gifting for their lives. Another strategy is for NMS to begin advertising the volunteer programme in high schools early enough as a means of creating interest early enough among young people as well as have need a vocational mentor. Relationships with NMSU are important and closer links would be beneficial to NMS.

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### **3.8 Sociological factors affecting Missionary Role**

In order to establish some of the sociological factors impacting the Missionary role positively and negatively, questions pertaining to the South and general NMS were given and the two tables below summarise the experiences. One major area of consideration was to establish views of the Missionaries regarding structures and whether they contribute to good working conditions. A number of the respondents went a step further to indicate some of the positive and negative experiences they had.

#### **3.8.1 Work Conditions and experiences**

When asked about the challenges in the working conditions, majority of the respondents felt that the working conditions were mostly good. However, some gave responses that were analysed and categorized as follows; limited time and resources, office and working space, field work and field visits, language and cultural differences, and lack of defined working structure by NMS. A considerable change in the "normalization" of the Missionary role has taken place in the last generation. This is reflected in some of the words and concepts used

today, which was impossible for Missionaries to use only a few years back: "Job", "working hours", "five days week", "time off", "wage agreements", "family politics" etc.

The experiences are summarized and categorized below; It is important to note that of the 39 respondents 23 (58.97%) had overall positive experience, 1 had negative (2.56%), 6 (15.38) had both negative and positive experiences while 9 (23.08%) did not answer.

**Table 14: What are your experiences?**

Row Labels	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	23	58.97%
Negative	1	2.56%
Both	6	15.38%
Not Answered	9	23.08%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The respondents were also asked about what they enjoyed as they work with NMS as Missionaries. Being an open ended question, they gave various responses which were analysed and narrowed down to four key points which include, Good working relationships and team work; Experiencing and learning different culture; Development programmes and restoration of human dignity; and the expansion and growth of Christ ministry.

*Good working relationships and team work* - key responses that indicted good working relationships and teamwork are captured by one respondent noted, "I enjoyed most our daily life in Douentza, the collaboration with our local missionary team there, that went very well most of the time, and my work among women and children in the Church." Second, "I have also very much enjoyed the very good relationship with the other missionaries that have lived in the same place. There was a team setting and we experienced a lot of happiness and some hard times together. The feeling of standing together and lifting each other up in a positive way has been excellent! Third, is "the good relations with the people and the mutual care for each other.

*Experiencing and learning of different culture* - Many respondents enjoyed learning and experiencing different culture through, getting to know the people in the local Church, learning the local language and meeting and meeting people from all over the world at the meetings of NMS as well as visits to different places.

*Development programmes and Restoration of human dignity* - Respondents indicated that they enjoyed seeing the benefits of the development programmes by NMS to the local people they serve. These efforts to them, have seen the restoration of human dignity and given hope to many needy people. The development programmes also gave some an opportunity to understand the nuts and bolts of development projects on the ground. Seeing how hard it is to do proper development work and get the results you need, a lot of it, is about changing people's behaviour it is really difficult and hard work.

*The growth of ministry* - Majority of the respondents indicated they enjoyed the growth of the Christian ministry in various ways; first when the local Christians take responsibility for the spiritual life in the congregations and the Church has grown and become stronger through the work. Secondly, they enjoyed the growth of the youth ministry in Church. A respondent mentioned that he/she enjoyed working with the youth, and the challenge of building Christian

youth work from scratch. Thirdly, they enjoyed the widespread knowledge about Jesus and the Bible. This they say has led people to find their place among the Christian believers. Some respondents mentioned that they appreciated visiting some villages and teaching the Bible, about Jesus, and developing new ways of working with youth inside the Church

As for working conditions the conclusion is that many Missionaries affirmed that NMS is better than most Mission agencies although the study had no data for comparison to back this assertion. Resettlement remains a challenge as it is left to the Missionary in spite of normalization period of 1 year at NMS as they settle back in Norway. It also transpired from responses that few missionaries know NMS and some finish their term of service without much knowledge of Mission; NMS and the Representative have the task to bridge the knowledge gap.

### **3.8.2 Normalization**

It is a fact that the Missionary is no longer the window to neither the outside world nor the main source of information. Indeed many Norwegians generally travel much more than before and their sources of information are diverse. Responses from Missionaries clearly indicate that normalization is a major challenge not least for children. A number of issues were cited ranging from re-integration of children into school, finding basic things like accommodation and even needing to re-work one's CV because of the attitude towards the Missionary. Hence a number were of the view that job profiles should be defined in a manner that allows for better re-integration into the labour market.

In addition it was the considered view of Missionaries that because of the challenge of re-integration they are unable in most cases to serve many years and have to consider the family situation as well as their own career development. Therefore normalization back into the Norwegian society can be frustrating depending on the skills and technical competence. Moreover, a number also stated that they are pressurized by family especially grand-parents who think that they have lost on knowing their grandchildren and with this in mind many a Missionary may not want to be in the field very long. Upon arrival back in Norway NMS do not ask for Missionary competence and as such feel no connection to the organization and no formal platforms exist for former missionaries to meet.

### **3.8.3 Status and reputation**

To a large extent, Missionary status and reputation is linked to the processes of normalization. Obviously the respondents are very clear that the Norwegian society pays no attention to the Missionary, if anything they are viewed rather negatively. This is not so much different in the Church as there are few spaces to recognize and appreciate the efforts of a Missionary. One Missionary put it that being a Missionary you sacrifice and offer a lot but no one takes note. The challenge in the South is the realization that the Missionary is no longer the driver in the driving sit and the reduced power by virtue of being seen to work under a national in some countries reduces their status. This becomes difficult for Missionaries who are still coming to terms with the changed role which now ascribes them a second position and unable to fully grasp the culture and language because of the short stint in the country.

Consequently many a Missionary emphasized that the Title of Missionary is not the most attractive for a CV unless one is going to work within Church circles. Moreover, to be a Christian in Norway is not an advantage for recruitment, few firms would be welcoming and hence resettling back in Norway can be a challenge.

### 3.8.4 Culture

Perhaps culture is one major source of well being or frustration. With short term, Missionaries without language find it difficult to connect and communicate effectively. In turn this affects their performance because their skills and competence is not well understood. The work culture in Norway and in the South are fairly different and adapting to the slow pace where relations are pitted against results can be frustrating for a Missionary who aims at achieving. Responses also clearly show that the evolving culture in Norway which was uniform but to-day is multi-cultural is reflected in a few Missionaries in the field as many have limited knowledge of faith especially volunteers. Until 1969 Norway conducted child baptism in schools and children learnt about religion.

Challenges related to organisational dynamics/culture were espoused by a number of respondents and they fall in to five areas; poor interpersonal relations, Missionary identity differences, slow follow up and communication from the NMS HQs, cultural and language differences, and challenges indecision making.

### 3.8.5 NMS Structures

In the description of NMS history, the structure (1.2) is also presented and for the purposes of this study we share Missionaries' views, considerations and experiences of these structures and their impact on the working conditions and well being. The NMS structure is as follows: Each Missionary relates to a local Church management and co-workers and the local Church has a lot of influence on their work. In addition to this, the Missionaries have an NMS Representative as their superior. The NMS Representative is their superior as well representing NMS in relation to the partner churches. The Programme Director is the superior of the NMS Representative.

Each of the NMS programmes has a Programme Manager and the NMS Representatives and NMS Missionaries also relate to them. The Missionaries report to the NMS Representative, the NMS Representative and Programme Managers report to the Programme Director. Both the NMS Programme Department and the Human Resource is a resource centre for leaders and to some extent also for the Missionaries. In addition to this, the Missionaries have organized themselves in an employee association in which they negotiate salaries etc and this can be a safeguard for the Missionaries towards the NMS leadership.

When responding to the question of NMS structures some Missionaries mentioned that there is lack of defined working structure by NMS while others expressed that NMS has not provided defined working structures for the Missionaries thus making it difficult to separate work and free time. Some of the key responses on this are; what we were presented with from NMS didn't match what we got when we came out. This has nothing to do with what we are doing, because we already agreed to change the work before we left. But it is has to do with office space, working hours, when to have our holidays, how much we should do for NMS. It is hard for the Church to understand our western thought about work/free time and also our need to rest, away from our work. I am much more tired here than I am home in Norway, probably because of the heat, language and culture.

**The challenge of decision making** - The respondents also felt that the organisation lacks clear and defined decision making procedures. Key responses on decision making were; One, there is lack of continuity as an organization hence too much constant internal negotiation and

renegotiations concerning the values and strategies of Mission work. At times the Missionaries are very independent and strong-minded, and prefer doing things their own way. Two, it's hard to understand the decision-making structures in the host Church. NMS has established structures for decision-making while in practice very much is decided based on who knows who, or more importantly who are related to whom. This culture undermines the established structures and is not a very sympathetic part of the NMS organizational culture.

**Challenges related to NMS support systems** – The responses on this issue were summed up into three challenges namely; lack of proper follow-up and communication from Norway, appropriate technical support, and selective decision-making. To some respondents there is over emphasis on the development work compared to theological and missiological issues including Islam and folk religion, etc. They further stated that there is no time to reflect theologically or missiologically on life experiences, because people are so busy with all the work that needs to be done.

### 3.8.6 Factors in the host country/Church affecting Missionary role

A number of questions pertaining to culture and perceptions of Mission considered important for the success of mission work were put to missionaries to rate from 1 being the lowest to 10 as the highest as illustrated by the table 15 below.

**Table 15: How would you rate from 1 (low) to 10 (high) the cultural ways of the people in the country you work in the following aspects considered important for the success of mission work?**

	Column Labels				
	1(Low)	2(Neutral)	3(High)	4(Not Answered)	Grand Total
Importance of mission and missionaries	5.00%	20.00%	50.00%	25.00%	100.00%
Appreciation of calling	15.38%	20.51%	38.46%	25.64%	100.00%
Appreciation of NMS partnership model	17.50%	32.50%	17.50%	32.50%	100.00%
Mission versus development which is highly acknowledged	15.00%	30.00%	15.00%	40.00%	100.00%
	<b>High Individualism</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>High Collectivisms</b>	<b>Not Answered</b>	
Individualism versus collectivisms	12.50%	7.50%	52.50%	27.50%	100.00%
	<b>High Masculinity</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>High Femininity</b>	<b>Not answered</b>	
High masculinity or high femininity	57.50%	12.50%	2.50%	27.50%	100.00%
	<b>Low power Distance</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>High power distance</b>	<b>Not answered</b>	
Power distance	7.50%	20.00%	37.50%	35.00%	100.00%
	<b>Short term orientation</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Long term orientation</b>	<b>Not answered</b>	
Time orientation	22.50%	15.00%	25.00%	37.50%	100.00%

The findings from the table above show first, that Mission work and Missionaries are highly regarded (50%), while 20% remained neutral and 25% did not answer. Second responses to calling attracted only 38.46% and when those who remained neutral 20.51% or did not answer 25.64% when combined it is a larger sample than the high one. It could be an interpretation of

lack clarity on the concept of calling as we have already explained in the previous section; alternatively it may be that Missionaries do not engage much in the debate on calling in the host Church. Third, the relationship between Mission and development indicates that 30% are neutral and 40% did not answer as to whether one is preferred to the other; while 15% was high. Once again as discussed on the section on Mission and humanitarianism it is most likely that there is no distinction as the two are an integral part of each other.

Fourth is the relationship between individualism and collectivism and 52.5% were of the view that it is high, 27.5% did not answer, 7.5% remained neutral and 12.5% thought it was low; while 12.5% remained neutral and 27.5% did not answer. Fifth on whether masculinity or femininity were high, 57% believe it is masculinity; 2.50 femininity. The sixth issue was power distance and 37.5% are of the view that there is high power distance, 35% did not answer, 20% are neutral and 7.5% think it is low. Finally, on time orientation only 25% thought the hosts had long time orientation, while 22.5% saw it as short term and 37.5% did not answer. These perceptions reflected in the responses have a bearing on the Missionary role.

***Cultural and language differences*** – A respondent observed that; ” It is really hard to get a 100% fit when working in such a different cultural environment. For instance, being a pastor in this Asian country is quite different from being that in Norway. One is challenged with different ways of thinking, mostly culturally-related”. The difference in language and cultural backgrounds is seen to affect the interaction between Missionaries and the local people.

***Diversity in culture and language*** - Respondents reported that this diversity has brought different cultures and languages into working together and the diverse staff now has become a challenge in building real team. Working with people from a different culture and on a second language is still a major challenge for most people. There are other challenges concerning inter personal relation discussed by the respondents such as relationships with the local population, Norwegian Missionaries need to be conscious about how their status as “white (perceived) millionaires” influences relationships. This is an argument of trying to “step down” in the standard of living and the standard as an organisation; and the relationship with the leaders has been difficult since they have been unreachable. There is very little direct contact between us Missionaries and the NMS leaders in Norway. This is frustrating and creates many problems.

***Limited time and resources*** - The respondents expressed that timely allocation of resources is key for a good working condition. There is a challenge of coping with all the work that should be done, but can’t be done within the time frames and resources given. In addition, the several salary cuts in 2000 – 2004 negatively affected the work conditions by the Missionaries.

***Office and working space*** - The respondents noted that they had some challenges with the home office. One of the respondents said, “Home office is a little challenge, but has also its good sides. And of course the fact that we had to “build up” this office ourselves, to buy all the hardware and software equipment etc. and to find a residence two-three times was also a challenge”. Sometimes we feel that we are running from place to place in the town as we have the work spread across town after the partner Church’s wish. This can be exhausting. We don’t have a very good office space either.

***Field work and field visits*** - Too much field work and field visits are also raised as a challenge for those Missionaries who have families and more so children. One respondent also mentioned that with a lot of travel, it was difficult to get enough exercise and his/her stomach struggles with too much rice. ***Peer Missionary Support*** - When asked about the challenges regarding the



Peer/Missionary support, majority of the respondents felt that the support was good, while a number mentioned that they didn't understand the question. However some of the following concerns over the peer/missionary support were raised; lack of enough social support at the duty station, poor working relationship and constant internal conflicts.

Pertaining to ***lack of enough social support at the duty station*** - respondents are of the view that there is little social support from the NMS HQs. The Missionaries are left out there in the duty stations without follow up calls to see on how they are coping up. A respondent said, "Even though there have been appointed youth ministers elsewhere in the diocese, there has been little contact between us except bi- monthly meetings. We have been the only NMS Missionaries until Feb 12, when another family came. We try to meet them socially every month, and that has provided more support for these last months than the three years prior added together.

***Poor working relationship*** – A number of the respondents have had challenges in relating to those they work with. One respondent expressed that he was challenged by several Missionaries that did not function together and or did not support the strategy. ***Constant internal conflicts*** – were cited causing constant situations of negotiations as to how to do our Mission work, to the extent that this leads to too much tension and not enough community life. A respondent suggested that there is need to have more continuity in the work. Linked to this is the issue that should be addressed during Missionary preparations, that is, new Missionaries should give themselves quite a bit of time to make sure they understand the reasons for why things are as they are, before starting to propose many changes.

***Lack of appropriate technical support*** - To begin with, the Representative seems to have too wide a responsibility making them hard to find. Another respondent also indicated that the Representative lives far away in Norway, and this makes it difficult to get quick advice or support in some cases. There is little financial support from NMS to facilitate doing some other extra things and finally, NMS HQs does not always give the professional support (consultancy) that one could need. ***Inter personal relations by Missionaries*** - Majority of the respondents did not respond to the question. Those who answered showed to have had no challenge in interpersonal relations others stated they didn't understand the question and few discussed some of the challenges they had which included poor management and leadership skills and styles and diversity in culture and language. ***Poor interpersonal relations***- This has created tensions among individuals leading to a situation where everybody is afraid of everybody. That means that the leaders do not have the courage to lead and take unpopular decisions, and therefore the same problems continue year after year despite everybody knowing and talking about it. ***Missionary identity differences*** - In this country, we are not an NMS group of Missionaries but a multi-cultural group. It is a challenge how to make a balance between being an NMS Missionary and a Missionary for organization. NMS missionaries should have an NMS identity inside and are entitled information from NMS after attending meetings in Norway.

On ***poor management and leadership skills and styles***, respondents expressed concerns over the way some leaders handled organisational matters. A respondent explained "before starting work as a department manager of diakonia, he found the co-operation with the former director a bit difficult. He made the others dependent on him, and he didn't share his competence to help us continue what he and others had done before. I felt very uncomfortable with the first and the last NMS Representative. The first one held back extremely much information. Once

they wanted to send my husband to Norway for a seminar, but forbid him to inform me about his travel”. **Selective decision-making** - Leaders in Norway do not engage in consultative decision-making. Sometimes the leaders don’t take time to understand the work that has been done by the Missionaries and end up making decisions which are sometimes difficult to understand.

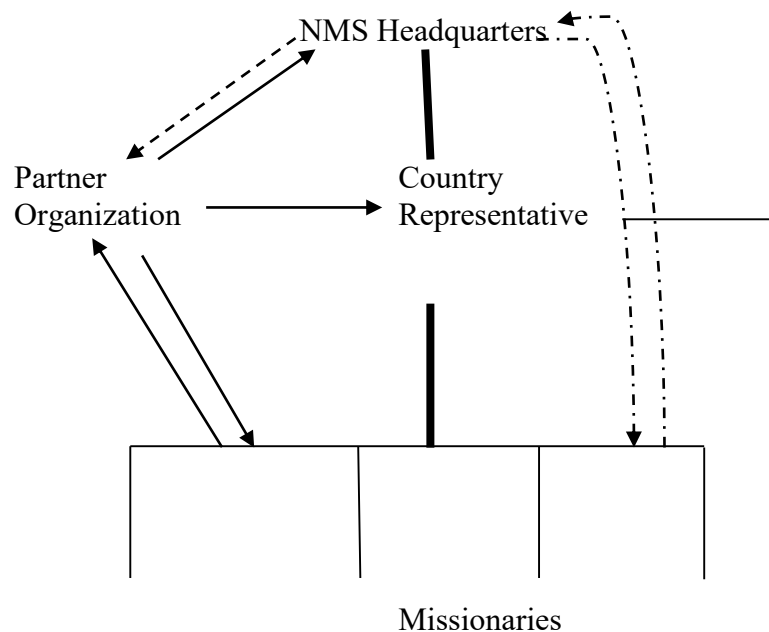
**Professional practice** - Majority of the respondents expressed having good professional practice and experience while a number observed they did not understand the question. The other set of respondents mentioned challenges they experience in their professional practice to include; adopting new ways of professional practice, follow-up and communication from the HQs, over emphasis on the development work, and cultural and language differences. **Adopting new ways of professional practice** - The respondents highlighted their effort to fit into a Missionary from their professionally careers was a major challenge. Incidentally, there is a wide gap between what one trained for and what he/she is practicing at the moment. Here are some of the responses by the respondents; “There have been instances when I feel more like a social worker than a Missionary/ Pastor. My strength lies elsewhere than first line evangelism, even though I feel I am getting better on that as well. I am working with things I do not have an education/training for, so therefore things may take longer than necessary. The area of development assistance work (development aid) is new to me. I was not comfortable with the professional language and the way of doing things within this work area, all the languages are also a big challenge. In written texts I have to use Norwegian, French and English, and orally I should also master the local language in addition to the other languages mentioned. I get tasks that I have not been trained in before. I usually take it as a positive challenge but sometimes it leads to frustrations and seldom sleepless nights”.

### 3.9 Communication

Communication as a sub theme was extracted separately because it was referred to by respondents many times. It is important to highlight that NMS has communication with NMS congregations about 550 of them with agreements and 2,000 Mission groups which receive some information. There are groups which do not know some missionaries and information on internet is not adequate and not out early enough according to some observers. Country Representatives also endeavour to communicate with missionaries and responses from key informants show movement towards improvement – with follow up, support and encouragement.

Nevertheless quite a number of Missionaries leave the field and NMS frustrated and one of the cited causes is poor communication. Notwithstanding that some missionaries have better and regular communication with home churches. Apparently there are no formal platforms for former Missionaries to engage or even visit a country of interest after end of service. Respondents noted that NMS lacked coherence in communication and the HQs administration and bureaucracy is a source of misunderstanding and frustration. Meanwhile it was felt that HQs has limited follow up which translates into few Missionaries or limited interest in Missions.

### Communication Flowchart



**Follow-up and communication from the HQs** - Communication between the HQ and the Missionaries is still a challenge in terms of understanding the content and responding to the issues. One respondent mentioned that HQs don't always understand his problems and challenges and some of them don't answer his questions, so he has to remind them once or twice or make a phone call creating frustrations. **Slow follow up and communication from the NMS Head Quarters** - respondents proposed that "NMS in Norway needs to have closer contact with their Missionaries in the South. They also have to take better care of their employees and be interested in their life as Missionaries and their work on a regular basis. There are so many resources in Missionaries in NMS waiting to be used but NMS needs to find a way to listen to their workers and value their opinions more regarding the work. The structure with a Representative as the superior of the Missionaries may require re-assessment to increase better flow of communication and information. Too much power is left to the Representatives.

The respondents expressed that the HQs in Norway have done very little to keep maintain constant contacts with Missionaries in the field resulting in lack of proper follow-up and

communication from Norway. They argue that NMS HQs almost always makes contact when they have something that needs to be done or answered for them. When it comes to work, communication with the HQs has been a challenge an example is official E-mail communication, more often the response time in Norway has been very long, and in some cases one is forced to make a follow up call and or resend the mail again.

As a conclusion, communication is a matter needing urgent attention whether vertically between NMS HQs and the field or horizontal between the Country Representative and Missionaries. And at the centre of the communication is the host Church/organisation that should be kept in the loop on relevant matters. There are those whose work load is heavy, others with little and some don't know what to do and this affects their response to delayed or no communication. There is a possibility that there is too much information but not well channelled and to the relevant people. Likewise a few Missionaries seem to be outside the communication loop and the role of the Representative is contested as ineffective in certain situations.

## 4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the above stated findings and their possible implications for the future of NMS and Mission work. A bird's eye view into the landscape and context of mission work illustrates major shifts that are also reflected in the change of name of NMS from Norwegian Missionary Society to Norwegian Mission Society.

***Changing landscape*** - In the introductory chapter we noted that the context for world Christianity and Mission have changed since the last twenty years. Researchers and statisticians highlight the epicentre of Christianity to be in the global South namely Africa, Asia and Latin America/Caribbean while in Europe and North America there is a decline. The demographic shifts have inherent possibilities and challenges which are beyond the discussion of this study except to note that it has a bearing on Mission. Historically Europe and America have been the drivers of mission in the last centuries but with a diminishing active Christian population, research shows that the global South may be taking over this pivotal responsibility. Already the South Korean churches are almost surpassing the United States of America in the number of Missionaries they sent out to 169 countries. What does this change mean and how does it affect mission strategies for future when there are still over 1.9 billion people who do not know Christ?

Global changes have not spared Norway. To-day Norway is a multi-faith, multi-cultural, multi-racial and multilingual society. With new spiritualities people are looking for new answers to problems from these spiritualities and not necessarily Christianity as was the case a few decades ago. Whilst NMS used to be the main window to the outside world, now due to economic prosperity of Norway the rich can travel, information is digitally accessible, and it is no longer exotic to be a Missionary. In fact the notion of being a Missionary is sneered upon

by society as being outmoded and contributing to change of people's cultures. Religion has in general not received positive attitude in Norway until a few years ago and this is due to the secularization and economic growth processes which in turn have impacted Mission work. As a country that upholds rights of the people, the competitive but comfortable life style has increasingly relegated Mission work to the background which is witnessed in the drop in figures of those in service.

**Literature review** -Recent research and publications on Mission indicate that it has been heavily influenced by Europe and America and that although it is a subject within Theology, it has been marginalised hence the subject matter areas for research have not seriously considered the experience of the Church in the global South. Therefore research in the South are urging for an approach to Mission that is cognisant to their context and challenges including the growth of the Church and the attendant dynamics. In other words African, Asian and Latin American/Caribbean scholars have to engage with their reality from their perspective and not the North and at the table to articulate their ideas freely. The scanty literature review shows that the Change role of the Missionary has not received as much attention given the speed and impact; rather it is other themes that are analysed such as Mission metrics, Gospel and Culture; reaching the Un-reached people groups etc.

**Recruitment, training, expectations and JDS** – Like many North American and European agencies NMS is experiencing challenges in the recruitment of missionaries. In the past NMS used the School of Mission and Theology in Stavanger as the recruitment base but it now recruits broadly. Respondents are of the view that recruitment of positions is advertised only in few Christian Newspapers which makes it limited in terms of coverage. To some respondents, NMS has no position in society, it is perceived as old fashioned where there are many new actors on scene. Moreover the society is too secular and the Church of Norway is not as Mission oriented as before. Besides NMS has found some positions seem difficult to define/describe for example a pastor to serve side by side with a local pastor in a congregation; description of positions should be made attractive. Findings also show that there are not enough spaces for NMS to meet young people who could be potential Missionaries; equally critical to recruitment are the sociological factors such as young people not wanting to reduce their standard of living, compromising the future of their children making it difficult for recruitment of long term personnel because it is unpopular to many Norwegians and they fear missing out on developments and changes in society. Another factor mitigating effective recruitment is inadequate aggressive advertisement and non- exciting and inviting descriptions of positions. This is an important matter for a Missionary because career prospects depend on how the role is defined. Hence the necessity of clarity of the purpose to which one is recruited because lack of it is reported to contribute to frustration in the field. As already initiated NMS should continue to open up towards other churches for collaboration and recruitment. The missionary of today is new to NMS because they are neither recruited through SMT nor Youth camps as was the tradition in the past.

**Preparation and induction** – Historically the role and relationship of the School of Mission and Theology and NMS in the recruitment and induction was vital but this has since changed. NMS now recruits and develops Job Descriptions on its own. However the School of Mission and Theology no longer enjoys this privileged position and its induction course has reduced to ten weeks from one year to match with the changing pace of life. In order to facilitate clear JDs and appropriate induction, the local host Church ought to be very specific on the role they expect a Missionary to play and the value addition. The School of Mission and Theology

according to some respondents should teach new and updated knowledge in tandem with NMS strategy. In addition for effective preparation the NMS Human Resources Department (HR) should seek to access accurate information from the field.

At the level of expectations, there is obviously a levelling of expectations but it is insufficient resulting sometimes in a mismatch between the Missionary and local Church on the one hand and the NMS HQs on the other. There are also conflicting expectations with the Programme department of NMS. Contradictory expectations at different levels, are partly due to lack of time for induction especially those who had elaborate visa requirements etc.; including unclear profiling of positions. Expectation for serving long term missionaries is almost over, there will be a few but not many and this calls for a re-assessment of how expectations of short term Missionaries are levelled especially since some host churches are still in the mode of anticipating long term personnel. Since NMS is not so well known among youth and Church of Norway does not preach much about calling many volunteers go to the field with vague expectations which at times contribute to dissatisfaction. Missionaries require more accompaniment especially new people in the field; further with more short term Missionaries NMS and the local Church should redefine expected results within a cultural, historical and linguistic context that is very different from Norway. It is incumbent upon Missionaries to be flexible and open minded and expectations re-visited during the term of service.

***Change of role*** – Role change is a fact of time and in spite of this change the contribution to world Christianity remains crucial. The process begun 20 years ago and now assume roles as adviser, mentors, and consultant with no decision making power. A major shift in the thinking and practice of Mission is the Missionary role. Before they controlled the resources, determined the nature and scope of Church planting and were basically the ones in leadership. Since 2007, Missionaries are expected to function as advisors, consultants and companions to the local Church. However, for the new role to take effect there has to be a change of attitude on both sides of the partnership Norwegian and local Church. In the case of Hong Kong the ELCHK no longer has Missionaries and therefore the scenario is slightly different. While Missionaries accept the new role they find it difficult to desist from decision making temptation because of the power of money. Nevertheless the reality is that Missionaries are slowly reckoning with the reality that they must learn to be guests, humble and in tune with the local Church without comprising the values of partnership. Worth highlight is the resistance by some Missionaries who argue that the new role denies them to fully utilize their skills and technical competencies.

NMS has no definite exit strategy and so some churches ask for missionaries because it is the thing to do. Perhaps a question to ask for future Mission thinking is: Can NMS depart from those countries where the churches are already strong and move to new fields or re-design joint strategies? Given that expectations of roles of advisors and consultants remain unclear to some after they complete their term Missionaries feel frustrated because they have not achieved much.

***Understanding calling*** – In all countries visited the respondents were unanimous that “calling” is not much talked and preached about in NMS, the Church of Norway and in society at all. Although NMS has many handbooks on different themes like HR and Organization Management and Development, there is hardly any reference document within the system on “calling”. Thus the content of most responses was rather superficial with no deep understanding and interpretation for instance, God calls to be witnesses in the field; it is a trend of radical conversion whereby one feels strong about injustices and therefore ready to go and be part of

transformation; and finally calling is a four legged stool where it starts with inner calling by God, external calling by the needs around, a need by someone/institution and an institution/someone ready to send.

Since calling is at individual and organizational level, it is not evident what the goals of the calling could be. The younger Missionaries seem to be more in development than evangelism as their place of calling. What does not transpire in the articulation of “calling” is the mere fact that role change of the Missionary does not impact the meaning and practice of calling let alone the global and national contextual changes, which demands more reflection. There should be no distinction between being “called” to Norway or abroad as it all amounts to the same thing namely service for God.

***Growth and decline of missionaries*** – The global trend points towards a decline of long term Missionaries in North America and Europe and the same applies to Norway as provided in the table under the findings chapter. Even though short term Missionaries is a growing phenomenon and which must be accommodated by Mission organisations and churches, not adequate thinking and development of a shared understanding has gone into the implication, hence there are some local churches who feel fatigued with building relationships with new people every so often. The discussion on short term Missionaries should then link to youth organisations to give impulses of how they desire the development of the same. It is encouraging to know that some organizations have started the debate but with a focus on Norway due to secularization.

Increasingly long term Missionaries are difficult to recruit as finding jobs in Norway when they return is near to impossible. Therefore wherever one is serving God using their talents should be embraced irrespective of time duration as the romantic calling of the last century does not exist and may never repeat itself. Furthermore, it is of essential that NMS bridges the knowledge gap in public concerning the profile and identity of NMS. Despite many activities and organizations competing for the same resources in Norway, NMS is anchored in the Church of Norway, still enjoys support of many groups around the country and can re-invigorate the debate and teaching on “calling” with a view to answer to the cry for missionaries in countries like in Thailand where the Church is young and small.

***Partnership model*** – Partnership model is an effort to recognize the changing landscape, the growing Church in the global South and role of the Missionary. NMS like any other Mission agency worked hierarchically for many decades in spreading the Gospel and planting churches. After being drivers of Mission, NMS went through a phase of integration but still controlled decision making and leadership. With partnership it is accepted even if theoretical that the Church in the global South has come of age and should assume its place at the table and provide leadership for the Christians. Likewise, due to long term relationships and because of belonging to the same body of Christ, the NMS and local Church carry a responsibility of ensuring that building the Kingdom of God continues and partnership affords both a possibility of equality in participation.

Although partners are equal the situations remain unequal and partnership seeks to secure equal contribution in God’s ministry. It is about relationship building; presence and action/ doing as opposed to doing only - Being and Doing. Given many years of being passengers some local churches need serious mental and attitudinal change to overcome fear that they may not be as good drivers of Mission work. In the same vein, NMS and Missionaries need to undergo transformation to fully give space to the local Church to learn and unlearn certain things as

they engage without undue judgement and prejudice. This is so vital in view of the unspoken power of money which undermines achievement of fruitful, meaningful and enriching relationships. Without tackling the silent but pervasive power of money the partnership model will perpetuate unequal relations, subdued views, unlocking of potentials and some local churches perceiving themselves as the “underdogs”. The study established that in one country namely Hong Kong partnership as envisioned has taken off and has potential to thrive this example could provide a basis for establishing lessons to be shared and replicated.

The discourse on “presence” which epitomizes partnership has changed to co-pilgrims. Genuine and lasting partnership premised on relationships will take time and call for patience by all involved. Since partnership is defined around a need, Norway ought to be seen as a Mission field more and more where churches of global South contribute their talents and resources accordingly. Consequently the debate on partnership and even its redefinition for better understanding may be prudent including sharing of the theological premise already prepared by NMS.

***Mission and humanitarian work*** - Development work is the other side of the same coin it is therefore an essential part of Evangelism. The findings established that NMS has received government funding (NORAD) since the 1970s but these resources have all been towards development while money collected by NMS goes to evangelism and building of churches. The two components are in principle well integrated although NORAD policy is to make a clear separation. The challenges of Mission and humanitarian work are at the local Church level where pastors feel unhappy because the counterparts in development receive higher salaries and have vehicles while their own remuneration is low. This disparity in resource allocation creates jealousy and competition in some countries and pushes pastors to want to serve on development committees for financial compensation hence the dichotomy and inherent tension. Another challenge raised by the local Church is that if they submit two proposals of development and evangelism, they are sure to get funding for development and not evangelism. Are there resource mobilization strategies that could improve local Church funding to pay decent salaries for pastors and continue with the professional approach to social services?

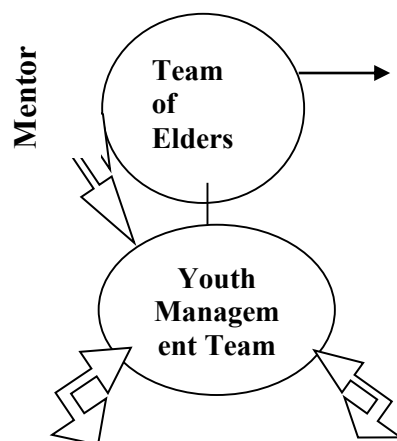
In some churches in Asia congregations collect money for social work. In Norway there is a separation because of source of funding. If the money comes from NMS then most of it goes to evangelism while if it is from NORAD then it is purely for development. An assessment of NMS receipt of money indicates that it raises more money than it gets from the government. Although development is more popular as a career and despite some local Churches feeling that NMS is more interested in diakonia than evangelism; the reality is that the development avenue involves more lay people in the Church and it is also a mechanism to reach the vulnerable and poor communities in a country thereby making the Gospel visible and real in the lives of people- Christian witness in a pluralistic society by engaging life threatening and denying realities. In one context the Church is encouraged to engage more in delivery of social services to bridge the gap between the poor and not so poor.

***Role and place of volunteers*** - Youth movements were drivers of Mission during the last century. NMS has a volunteer programme that involves young men and women from around

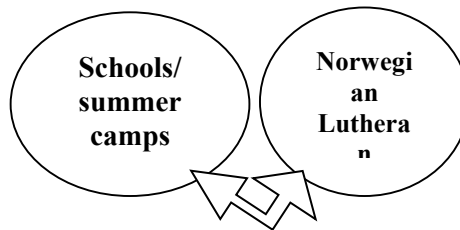


the globe at least Norway and the global South. Voluntary work in Norway remains the same and NMS has many volunteers although they are fewer people participating compared to some years ago. Many volunteers are excited to travel and experience new realities and so they seek to go for self - interest, gain an experience of another country, culture while some others go to offer service, and work closely with missionaries. The study found that some do not understand why Missionaries are in the field and others go an extra mile to ask questions about Mission which provokes reflection and within six months, a number change their perception of Missionary role and become more open for Mission. In fact some volunteers eventually become missionaries in spite of commitment to NMS not being fully secured as some have worked with other organisations and therefore the question remains whether they are loyal and identify with NMS or just a disciple of Jesus? What are the motivations for engagement and how can the energies be harnessed, developed and utilized?

The need for committed youth for long term cannot be overstated hence the imperative to explore further on the potential of connecting youth to NMS support groups, establish youth ministries in congregations; improve on follow up of those in and out of service and keenly look at their motivation for service. Subsequently for effective monitoring and interaction, NMS must have a data base on who has served short and long term as volunteers fall into the two categories. A youth exchange programme could create commitment but it needs encouragement and inspiration to begin to think around possibilities of becoming Missionaries. Better use of volunteers demands that NMS avail information in advance on the type of work volunteers are expected to undertake and requirements as well as ascertaining that they are actually occupied and not wasted. This may mean use social media to engage youth. The use of TMF even though localized in Stavanger and the plea to build strong and viable links between NMS and NMSU should be looked in to. As suggested in the drawing below to engage youth requires NMS to have a Mentor at the HQs and a team of elders who can advise on Mission and spirituality issues. These should be men and women with experience in mission work.



NMSU



Since NMS may opt for the strategy of strengthening volunteers in order to sustain presence in global South, there is need for designate position in Stavanger responsible for this undertaking. Moreover, short term approach and volunteers will weaken links between South and Norway unless complemented by other strategies of accompaniment.

**Sociological factors affecting the Missionary role** - A number of factors positively and negatively affecting the Missionary role were identified and under findings they are described in detail.

**Working conditions**—NMS ensures that Missionaries' rights such as limits on how many hours to work are captured in the HR policy manuals and practised. For couples they work for 150 per cent to allow time for one spouse to be home. All Missionaries are on Contract approach as opposed to life time calling and NMS affords them competitive salary. There is however, a distinction between volunteers and other Missionaries, for instance teachers for Norwegian Children who think themselves as missionaries and others. Respondents stated that there were instances when utilizations of skills and competence was lacking and low salary cited by some who complained that due to this they could not take their families on vacation. Because of the importance of relationship building which takes time, it tends to intrude in to actual work; the environment of work in some local Church contexts saw some Missionaries experience loneliness. A number reported that although the set hours are understood, they work many hours and do not count because of the higher goal they work for. Generally the view was that NMS is a good employer with exception of minor hitches of adjustment in the field and communication.

**Normalization**— Under normalization the study asked about reintegration back into the Norwegian society which is understood as a factor of being relevant to society. Many were appreciative of the one year guaranteed by NMS for reintegration but quick to caution that there is a mismatch in the application of NMS rules. Many are happy with the reintegration course. They also observed that it is difficult for children to fit into school system; grand-parents feel denied access to and knowledge of their grand- children and so children struggle to reintegrate. Missionary children are at times looked down upon—reintegration is problematic because Missionaries feel that their service and sacrifice is not recognized and therefore a waste of time. One put it as “sacrificing the family at the altar of Mission”. Perhaps the concerns around reintegration are part of key determinants for why Missionaries opt for short term assignments. Further they fear experiencing the culture shock of not being useful.

Reintegration also plays in to the **status and reputation of the Missionary**- It was the opinion of a number that the new nomenclature/titles for some Missionaries are less attractive (advisor,

consultant etc.), perhaps the options available is to re-engineer their CVs to suit Norwegian labour market. Apparently Norway unlike UK has limited space for appreciating a broad based experience and exposure and more focused on particular professions. *Culture in Norway* – is an additional force that contributes to role change because of secularism, very high standards of living it affects the spirituality of some Missionaries as the balance between technical competence and spiritual gifts tends to be tilted. Norway is an economic comfort zone and Missionaries have more money back home and since they have everything they fear to subject their children and families to suffering while out in the field.

**NMS structure**– From responses many a Missionary were frustrated by the bureaucratic administrative procedures as they impact adversely on the life of a Missionary. The role of Representative should be crafted and filled with people who have wisdom and ability to accompany missionaries including listening and working with the local Church on what they consider a priority. The position of Representative rather is squeezed; on the one hand it is meant to supervise and guide Missionaries in the field and on the other be their communication link with NMS HQs. An observation was made that NMS structure can be vulnerable with a Representative who is the voice back if they are not in communication and close contact with the local Church and all the Missionaries. In the table below five Missionaries answered that Country Representatives are unreachable but it was also stated that there are few now forging closer relationships.

With the Country Representative who is the sole communicator with NMS Stavanger and with poor support systems such a presence could encourage top heavy bureaucracy. Consequently NMS should develop a clear role delineation to avoid confusion and HQs and Country Representative should be required to communicate the same information to missionaries whether verbal or written. Should NMS desire to continue “presence” in the field then it behoves the weighting impact of presence and results.

**Communication- between and with different stakeholders** – Perhaps this was the most bemoaned function of NMS that Missionaries felt as major contributory factor in frustration and even disengagement with the organisation. It is expected that Missionaries communicate through the Representative to and from HQs and many a time this creates blockages, delays apart from a culture of slow and difficult to get response. In brief communication has been poor and not sufficiently involved Missionaries.

There lacks coherence of communication between various departments at the HQs especially between Programme and HR which is badly needed especially when communicating with the field. In certain cases there are no discussions/communication between the Representative and Missionaries. Since the distance from Stavanger and field is far and due to the complex bureaucracy, more formalized meeting points to cut on delays are imperative in future. NMS profile as a Mission and development organization is not well communicated to the public and to some NMS magazine needs face lift as well as an out-dated website especially for recruitment. To attract youth, NMS should be more digital and focus on youth messaging.

Communication factors in the host country include hierarchical thinking and culture that does not allow questioning, less organised Church and work spaces compared to structured Norway; limitation of language. The table 16 below provides a summary of the ratings of factors that contributed to achievement of the role. On the knowledge and skills 60%, facilities that enabled understanding of calling 42.8% agree and 2.8 disagree; induction seems not effective as 35.2%

agree and 35.2% are neutral; 51.4% clearly understood their JDs; an affirmation of the change of interest in Norway for Mission is 56% while the change of status of the Missionary in the South is 44.2%. It is also worth noting that NMS structures are rated low 37% in terms of being supportive and the general sociological factors show 40.6% not sure and 34.3% agree.

**Table 16: On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the achievement of your work within NMS as a Missionary?**

	Column Labels					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Grand Total
I had the knowledge and skills need to be a missionary	2.86%	14.29%	8.57%	60.00%	14.29%	100.00%
The facilities made it easy to understand the calling/work	2.86%	20.00%	20.00%	42.86%	14.29%	100.00%
The induction/preparation met all the stated expectations/objectives	8.82%	17.65%	35.29%	35.29%	2.94%	100.00%
I clearly understood the missionary mandate/ JD and expectations of NMS	5.71%	14.29%	14.29%	51.43%	14.29%	100.00%
The way the preparation in Norway and field was conducted was an effective way to my work	8.82%	11.76%	32.35%	47.06%	0.00%	100.00%
The materials I receive during the induction/preparation were useful in the field	6.06%	21.21%	33.33%	39.39%	0.00%	100.00%
the NMS structures have been supportive and functional	8.57%	25.71%	22.86%	37.14%	5.71%	100.00%
The social and development work has negatively affected mission work	50.00%	20.00%	16.67%	10.00%	3.33%	100.00%
The partnership model has worked effectively	5.71%	31.43%	28.57%	25.71%	8.57%	100.00%
There is a clear understanding about "calling" among missionaries	0.00%	27.27%	24.24%	39.39%	9.09%	100.00%
Interest for missions in Norway has declined due to ecclesiastical and sociological issues	0.00%	12.50%	40.63%	34.38%	12.50%	100.00%
The demand for missionaries in the South has declined	2.94%	32.35%	29.41%	32.35%	2.94%	100.00%
The role of the missionary has changed in the South- no longer as before	0.00%	8.82%	35.29%	44.12%	11.76%	100.00%
Normalization process has been satisfactory	7.41%	25.93%	33.33%	25.93%	7.41%	100.00%
Overall, the status of the missionary has reduced in Norway and in the NMS mission country	3.13%	9.38%	25.00%	56.25%	6.25%	100.00%
Overall, I was satisfied with the course	4.55%	18.18%	27.27%	45.45%	4.55%	100.00%

In conclusion a number of proposals were put forward to improve the Missionary role. ***Strategies for future direction of role of the missionary*** - The metaphor of body of Christ and the role of the Missionary as a bridge builder are important as NMS rethinks its future. For instance it could convene round table meetings with all partners and discuss how to renew the Church and Mission work, "It is not over with Norway the seeds of prayer and work done by the foremothers and forefathers are heard and answered by God". Besides renewal, NMS needs better and clearer goals which should include phasing out strategy where the local Church takes full responsibility and it could focus on short term and recycle experienced missionaries whose adaptation to the context may be faster than for the new ones.

Future of Mission seems bleak unless congregations within the Church system take it up seriously and promote it which would in turn call for enhanced congregation/diocese partnership between Norway and local Church in South. Faith has to be reengineered so that it is active in family and public life.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The preceding chapters and sections have discussed findings and analysed them accordingly. From the findings of the study, it has emerged that there is a major change in the world Christianity landscape. After many centuries of the dominance Christendom as faith in Europe and North America and which is where national values and culture emanate from, the epicentre of Christianity is quickly but surely shifting to the global South. This dynamic growth calls for a paradigm shift both in the Northern and Southern hemispheres in so far as theological thinking, articulation, practice and relationships are concerned. One narrative that permeates the new Mission work is multi-faith living and the second is secularism. The responsibility and role that the Church in the global South is expected to play remains unclear and undefined at the same time there is recognition that in spite of declining numbers of faithfuls in the Northern hemisphere, the rich history, knowledge, experiences and capacities are vital for Christendom. Moreover, the study notes that the changed landscape has a direct impact on Mission work both in Europe, North America and the global South.

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The question that the study attempts to answer is how far the Missionary role has changed? First and foremost there is congruence that the Missionary role has changed and this is informed by global changes in world Christianity as well as general socio-economic and political developments of the nations of the world. The demographics provided on the growth of Christianity illustrate that Europe and North America are taking a second position in Mission work while the global South is in the process of providing leadership on the same. Therefore the extent of change has been dramatic ranging from having been sole pioneer leaders, Church planters, managers, decision makers to assuming functions of advisor, consultant, etc. Basically the change in roles is caricatured as moving from the drivers' seat to the passenger one as regards Mission and evangelism in the local host Church.

As already alluded to there are many factors that have contributed to this tremendous change. Sociologically many Norwegians are more comfortable at home and prefer to pursue their careers within the system. The "comfort zone" of Norway means that there is a lot of interest to travel abroad but only on short stints. This has meant that few people are willing to take long term missionary assignment. Further whilst missionaries were the key source of information regarding other cultures and peoples this is no longer the case as there are several actors not least the media, thus rendering the role of a Missionary less privileged and attractive. Culturally, Norway has undergone a process of coming to terms with Mission work as something positive in terms of contributing to improved livelihoods rather than seeing it purely as having negative effect. Although this attitude is changing towards positive appreciation of Mission work, Norway has other competing actors in humanitarian work that are viewed as possible alternatives to mission agencies. The ecclesial landscape in Norway has also changed where about thirty years ago teaching and preaching on "calling" would have been common, findings illustrate that it is least preached. Equally important are structural changes that impact the role of the Missionary such as the inbuilt bureaucracy in NMS and at the local host Church level thereby hampering effective communication flow between the Missionary and other actors within the structure. The role of the Country Representative has to some extent helped but much depends on the personality of the individual rather than well laid out communication policy and channels known, respected and applied by all.

Just as the world Christian context has been changing so has that of the Mission. Findings illustrate a steady decline in recruitment over the years; definite change of roles that some missionaries do not feel comfortable with and or unsure that they can propel their career progression; the local Church is a key player in the role of the Missionary and at times what they deem important as work needing support is not always commensurate with what they offer the Missionary. In addition, the short period of stay means limited interaction and therefore insufficient engagement. The local Church is in the drivers' seat but not fully equipped and at times not always confident and sure of how to relate to the Mission agency and the seeming schizophrenia is a challenge in some cases to Missionary role and consequently the Missionary role is affected.

Concerning effectiveness and relevance, through the agreements signed between NMS and the local Church most missionaries are playing a relevant role because they are supporting build and enhance local capacity; provide technical competence and skills. There are a few instances that the study noted a mismatch of skills and actual work being performed. Expectations of the NMS, local Church and Missionary are to a large extent processed. However, there are variances especially at the HQs where Missionaries are of the view that clear communication of expectations remains a weakness leading to disconnect between the Job Description they receive in written and actual role performed. There is therefore inadequate consultation and time afforded to the levelling of expectations of the three parties. It is reported by quite a few volunteers that there is very little information out there on NMS and so its profile remains opaque.

On the concept and practice of "calling", the study established that there is a rather shallow notion of the same. Responses to questions were vague and missionaries use a different language to mean the same. The relationship between mission and humanitarian work was found to be well understood as two manifestations aimed at achieving the same goal. Regarding work conditions many a missionary did not have complaints, in fact it was noted that NMS is one of the best Mission Agency employer. It is sensitive to human resource policies and rights as it also has a code of conduct and respects times when Missionaries should take vacation. With exception of a few families where accommodation and other logistics were noted not to be in place, children and spouses are well taken care of by NMS.

Institutional and structural arrangements are clearly stipulated on paper and policies and do support the Missionary role. The economic prosperity of Norway dictates that a Missionary cannot be away for so long especially certain age brackets if they want to remain relevant and competitive which in turn forces those who desire to stay long to return especially education of the children. However, it is the sociological factors that do at times inhibit especially new missionaries without knowledge of local languages and culture. The local cultures tend to be quite different from the Norwegian especially on issues of power and gender relations including work culture.

On the subject of partnership which NMS presents as a model of working relationships, all parties understand that they are in the service of God and need to partner. Moreover, NMS has specific agreements with missionaries and local Churches that are structured and holds round

tables and partners meetings in addition to mutual exchange visits. The challenge with implementation of partnership is at three levels; one is the power of money that is silent but real in determining nature and scope of relationships; two is the historical experiences where the Mission agency is still perceived to be the better off partner; and third is a cultural mental state where some local Churches would rather continue dependency although theoretically they approve inter-dependence.

## 5.2 Way Forward/Recommendations

To begin with an organization on a cliff or at the crossroads requires to stop, take a deep breath and rethink its vision, identity, mission and strategy for the future. Already NMS has begun the process of revisiting its identity, strategy and the possibility of repositining itself for Mission work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by commissioning this study. These this report and suggestions is to contribute to the already strated reflection and debate and enable NMS proceed with the search for solutions by proposing possible options and ideas.

**Paradigm shift:** The changes within world Christianity and the global socio-economic and political context are contributing to evolving Mission landscape which NMS should take seriously and revisit the concept, practice and experience of of Mission with the aim of developing appropriate and viable definitions and strategies as well as methods. Findings and analysis of the same indicate how critical it is that NMS engages in a self understanding of future mission work with both the School of Mission and Theology and the Lutheran Church of Norway. With the SMT a number of issues should be analysed, discussed and agreed upon; what type of training does the 21<sup>st</sup> mission worker need, the likely mission strategies that NMS may apply globally, regionally especially in Europe and in Norway which is also a mission field should be redefined.

**Recruitment, Preparation and Induction:** It is encouraging to observe that NMS has people out there who still want to serve with NMS as Missionaries and one possible way to sustain the inspiration is to ensure that those Missionaries already in service are identified with NMS and can be ambassadors to others. For this to happen, there are a number of areas needing more attention for example culture and language as most respondents felt it was rather basic what they received. For the future career of missionaries the titles for some may need harmonizing and regulating to suit those in the market. A number of Missionaries were not clear whether their JDs and daily work matched and therefore whilst acknowledging flexibility in the work place it is necessary that JDS match with daily reality to avoid frustrations and wastage of resources. Since the time for preparation and training has reduced from one year to about ten weeks and even then not all new Missionaries attend the full time, it may be prudent for NMS to investigate ways and means of how this process can be continued while in the field without interfering with the schedule of work. Preparation and induction should be structured and made mandatory and content although coherent it would function better if the data base of missionaries would be categorized so as to provide relevant courses to respective individual Missionaries.

The NMS should recruit for specified tasks especially for short term missionaries to avoid disappointment. To facilitate targeted recruitment and careful screening of potential missionaries to ensure that they are Christian NMS could consider the possibility of hiring a recruitment officer. The role of Hald Connect as a collaborator with NMS in the process of recruitment

should be further inquired into in order to ascertain relevance and appropriateness to the changing times.

Given the prominent role that is emerging for volunteers bridging the gap for long term missionaries and since a number are also from the global South, with limited understanding of NMS, how can SMT incorporate them in the training and what type of content would be suitable for such short term workers especially those going out for the first time. Perhaps an introductory course on NMS would be helpful since many new missionaries do not have the knowledge of NMS's history, identity and systems.

**Expectations:** Analysis of data from respondents shows that expectations of various stakeholders are at times at variance and this depends on the origin of the request that is, the local Church and the NMS HQs which really are in dire need of counterchecking and validating requests that can then help minimize frustrations emanating from expectations. Personal and career development of the Missionary including an encounter with different cultures of the host country demands that NMS synchronize and articulate their expectations.

**Calling:** At this juncture in the life of NMS a need for reflection to deepen and broaden the understanding, knowledge and interpretation of the concept among Missionaries is an imperative. Consequently, NMS is challenged to find new language and methods that are appropriate to young people but that convey the essence of the concept calling. On-going efforts by NMS to engage the Church of Norway and other actors in bringing to life the teaching and preaching on Mission should also provide adequate space for young people to participate and contribute their views on how they would want to shape the understanding of calling. The relationship between NMS and the Lutheran Church of Norway is important as it is the base for its recruitment and sustenance of Mission work. In view of the limited discussion and preaching on calling and given a declining support base for NMS, there is an urgent call for a re-engagement on these issues with a view to providing solid ground.

Such reflection and joint efforts with the Church of Norway and young people would hopefully propel NMS to re-profile the concept of calling in the context where Mission is perceived negatively to illustrate how it offers an alternative as well acknowledging that Mission is indeed on six continents including Norway and Europe. The urgency for spaces where sermons and discussions on calling can be conducted cannot be overstated. Of great importance is the need to assure that both demands for high technical and professional competence is respected as well as the fact that people are genuinely responding to God's calling

**Partnership:** Taking cognisance that partnership between NMS and partners in global South is largely informed and influenced by the historical experiences of the people, socio-economic, political and religious developments, the nature and scope including areas of cooperation cannot be replicated given the differences in various countries. Rather whilst NMS is in principle in the right direction, this is the time to seriously interrogate the strategies applied and establish their relevance, effectiveness and viability as it may be time to disaggregate partnership strategies for different contexts and local partners. In cross cultural contexts there is need for certain key competencies especially for Country Representative to facilitate partnership processes. Whilst the current partnership model is anchored on theological basis, little if any of that background is known to many stakeholders and hence the tendency to perceive and value partnership almost exclusively from a financial view leaving out other



resources and talents available. NMS should evaluate the partnership model to establish mechanisms of how to enhance mutual trust and change of mind set on the culture of money and meaning of equality including the link between “presence and results”. There is need for recognition of each partner and especially their contribution and work towards a partnership that affirms the diverse contributions equally. Having been the drivers of Mission for a very long time, NMS and Missionaries should interrogate decision making processes to ensure that one party does not influence unduly.

***Declining numbers of long term Missionaries:*** It is a reality that fewer and fewer people are ready to serve for long term and a measure that NMS may consider is short term Mission whereby some of the Missionaries in the field come for two weeks in Norway for Mission. Likewise short term teams from Norway would undergo brief training in Mission approaches and methods and travel abroad on “*vacation with meaning*” where they spend some time with the local Church/organization and take days for vacation. The anticipation is to create more awareness about NMS and Mission as well as prepare the ground for future recruitment.

***Mission and Humanitarian:*** In view of the affirmation of development activities being part and parcel of Mission, NMS would be helped to ensure that on-going discussions with partners on the understanding of the link between the two and especially on resource allocation especially the seeming high salaries of development workers as compared to pastors and other Church workers. Also crucial in the dialogue is to encourage more vertical exchange between churches of Asia and Africa to learn different local models of resourcing humanitarian work.

### ***Sociological factors***

***Normalization/Reintegration*** - Due to the negative image that still reigns in Norway about Missionaries, NMS will need to continue to work on better strategies for re-integration such as a titles of roles, CVs and provide space for reflection on the same where management, missionaries and other key stakeholders can make a contribution. Many respondents appreciate the reintegration course offered by NMS but observe that there are no formal platforms for engagement with NMS after returning from the field; this is a matter that NMS could process further and establish the viability of such and how they could link to already planned activities in Norway.

***Structure and communication:*** In as much as the structure is in place, it was perceived to have certain dysfunctional aspects especially at the HQs level where communication between programme and HR departments is wanting and on the other hand, the delayed communication with field came out as a major concern. To enhance clarity of knowledge of roles and expectations, and communication vertically and horizontally NMS should clarify its structures and the relevant linkages. Further, the functions, profile and recruitment of a Country Representative should be crystal clear and carefully managed if mentoring/accompaniment are to be effective. Finally, the management of communication with Missionaries in field, with the Country Representative and the HQs should be harmonized.

***Volunteers:*** Unlocking the potential of young people for mission is a primary challenge and concern that NMS will have to address in the coming years. Although the financial support base for NMS is aging at least above 60 years and in the Norwegian context that is young, the Mission

such Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) runs schools and holds summer camps that gather thousands of youth annually. These young people in their 20s are eager to do something meaningful with their lives and are fed up with the materialistic society. When they get to University (25) years, they lose the drive and as they settle down to work and establish families in their 30s, the trend is to disappear from Church. Therefore missions have youth but they need an effective, viable and sustainable strategy to engage with them. For this to be meaningful young professionals should assume leadership positions at NMS so that they can interact with, challenge, mobilize the youth for Mission in schools and summer camps which provide great opportunity. Further, in order to harness resource and maximize impact, Mission organizations in Norway should engage with each other and create channels of communication among young people as they break down and or reduce the historical boundaries between them.

For the Mission to be effective and meaningful and for new missionaries to be attracted and maintained NMS could think of creating a team of elders with experience both in Norway who can mentor the young people in management/leadership. The team of elders could also be an exit for those who retire from NMS management to continue to serve. While opting for short term missionaries it is essential to note the challenge which is the effect on quality of service especially in those situations where language is a necessity. Initially NMS missionaries had a common culture through School of Mission and Theology but current recruitment does not bring Mission culture as before – the culture is in the host country/local Church.

To begin with NMS ought to identify other arenas such as Norwegian congregations where to meet and engage with youth besides the NMSU. The collaboration with NMSU which focuses on family life, work with congregations in CoN and schools requires strengthening and creation of platforms for young people to converge and share the work of Mission. The many volunteers who return back to Norway every year are an important resource that should be harnessed, nurtured, supported, encouraged and challenged to critically think about Mission in Norway. Young people with experience from the field should be intentionally connected to other youth and space found by NMS and NMSU for them to use their knowledge and experiences. Another area of cooperation between NMS and Hald Connect would be in the exchange programme where a reasonable number (10) students from the global South travel to Norway and vice versa for Norwegians. Still an idea in the offing is to create some few jobs with some pay for young people in NMS with a view to enabling them get to know NMS better thus creating bridges between NMS and youth. With a focal young person at NMS other youth could be encouraged to offer to serve as Missionaries.

*“The Maker of the drum knows the inside” –Tanzanian proverb*

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## Annexes

### Annex 1: Questionnaire

Dear NMS missionary or former missionary!

The NMS has contracted the services of Dr. Agnes Abuom of TAABCO Research and Consultancy Company, a regional firm based in Nairobi, Kenya; to conduct a survey/study in the role of the missionary within The Norwegian Mission Society. There is a recognition that mission work and missionaries are placed in a dynamic context and hence the need to establish the impact of some of the major changes on the role of the missionary. We humbly request you to fill the questionnaire below.

INFORMATION	
1. Name of respondent	
2. Gender of respondent	Male Female
3. Age bracket	25-35 35-45 45-55 55-65 65-99
4. Duty Station/country	
5. Role/Position as missionary	
6. Number of years as missionary	

ROLE	
7.	a) How will you describe your job as a missionary? What is your understanding of your role as a missionary?  b) What are your main tasks?
8.	Do/did you have a job description?
9.	Does/dies the Job description tally with what you do on a daily basis?  If yes, explain:  If no, indicate areas of difference:

PREPARATION IN NORWAY	
10.	Did you have an induction/preparation session and for how long?  If yes, describe the content:  If no, why not?
PREPARATION IN THE FIELD	

11.	<p>What introduction, if any, did you receive at the mission/field level?</p> <p>Explain the type of preparation made at field level to receive you.</p>
EXPECTATIONS	
12.	What were some of your expectations when you first accepted to undertake the assignment with the NMS?
13.	<p>Were the Objectives of your assignment clearly understood by you?</p> <p>a)</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes, partly</p> <p>To a certain extent</p> <p>No.</p> <p>b) If no, give the reasons for you answer:</p>
14.	<p>a) What in your view were the expectations (explicit and implicit) of NMS Head quarters?</p> <p>What in your view were the expectations (explicit and implicit) of Sending Church in Norway?</p> <p>What in your view were the expectations (explicit and implicit) of The Regional Office/local office?</p>
15.	Describe the expectations of the host church/organization
16.	Describe how the expectations from various levels match or did not match with your own expectations?
17.	What challenges did these differences in expectations pose for you and your work?
CONCEPT OF "CALLING"	
18.	How do you understand "calling"?
19.	What has changed about the concept of calling?
JOB NORMALIZATION – to what extend has the missionary role been modernized/normalized like other professions and how has it impacted your well-being and satisfaction as a missionary?	

20.	<p>Work conditions</p> <p>Wage agreements</p> <p>Politics regarding family</p> <p>Work hours</p> <p>Missionary status</p> <p>Short term versus long term service</p>
IMPACT OF MISSION ASSIGNMENT ON YOUR CAREER PROGRESSION AND ASSURANCE OF WORK IN FUTURE	
21.	Describe how your current role as a missionary will facilitate your career. What challenges do you think you will face in the labor market as you return home?
NMS PARTNERSHIP MODEL BETWEEN NMS AND PARTNER CHURCH	
22.	Describe the achievements/strengths
23.	Describe the challenges
MISSION AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE	
24.	<p>What are the your experiences:</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Negative</p>
25.	What have you enjoyed most in your work with NMS as a missionary?
26.	<p>What challenges have you encountered in your work as a missionary, with NMS and with the host institution?</p> <p>Work conditions</p> <p>Peer/Missionary Support</p> <p>NMS Support</p> <p>Interpersonal relations</p> <p>Professional practice</p> <p>Organizational dynamics/culture</p>

27.	<p>How would you rate from 1 (low) to 10 (high) the cultural ways of the people in the country you work in the following aspects considered important for the success of mission work:</p> <p>Importance of mission and missionaries:  Low ____  Neutral ____  High ____</p> <p>Appreciation of “calling”:  Low ____  Neutral ____  High ____</p> <p>Appreciation of NMS Partnership model:  Low ____  Neutral ____  High ____</p> <p>Mission versus development which is highly acknowledged:  Low ____  Neutral ____  High ____</p> <p>Individualism versus collectivism:  High individualism  Neutral  High collectivism</p> <p>High masculinity or high femininity:  High Masculinity  Neutral  High Femininity</p> <p>Power distance:  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Low power distance  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> High power distance</p> <p>Time orientation:  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Short term orientation  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Long term orientation</p>
28.	<p>What positive and challenging experiences have you had with NMS structures</p> <p>NMS Program Director</p> <p>Human Resources Department</p> <p>Program Manager</p> <p>Country Representative</p>



29.	What changes would you propose concerning structure?
30.	What in your view are the changes that have occurred in mission thinking and practice and what are the contributing factors?
31.	What suggestions for improvement would you recommend for the future project phases?

32. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the achievement of your work within NMS as a missionary?		Scale				
		Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neither 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
1	I had the knowledge and skills needed to be a missionary					
2	The facilities and environment made it easy to understand “the calling”/work					
3	The induction/preparation met all the stated expectations/objectives					
4	I clearly understood the missionary mandate/JD and expectations of NMS					
5	The way the preparation in Norway and field was conducted was an effective way to my work					
6	The materials I received during the induction/preparation were useful in the field					
7	The NMS structures have been supportive and functional					
8	The social and development work has negatively affected mission work					
9	The partnership model has worked effectively					
10	There is a clear understanding about “calling” among missionaries					
11	Interest for missions in Norway has is declining due to ecclesiastical and sociological issues					
12	The demand for missionaries in the south has declined					
13	The role of the missionary has changed in south – no longer as before					
14	Normalization process has been satisfactory					

15	Overall, the status of the missionary has reduced in Norway and in the NMS mission country					
16	Overall, I was satisfied with the course					
Give reasons for your rating!						

End. Thank You!

#### NMS HEAD QUARTERS' GUIDING QUESTIONS

The following are a few questions that we would appreciate if the General Secretary and his management team could give some response to:

What has been the number of missionaries in the field since 2005 to 2012?

What has been the geographical distribution in Africa, Asia and Latin America in the last five years 2006-2012?

How many women and how many men missionaries in total from 2005 to 2012?

How many missionaries have been working in church activities and how many in pure development work?

What are the five main professional areas of most missionaries in the field?

What has been the annual budget of NMS since 2006 to 2012?

How much of the annual budget is from NORAD/Digni and NMS own funds?

How does NMS define/understand "partnership model"?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the "partnership" model?

What in your view are the factors that make missionaries comfortable/enjoy their work and want to continue to work with NMS?

Give any suggestions for improving the role of the missionary.

Thank You!