



ActsIndia
M I S S I O N

Acts India Mission Overview

www.actsindiamission.org

Vision: To train leaders to plant healthy, reproducible, self-sustaining churches.

Mission: Acts India accomplishes its vision by identifying and training faithful men in an integrated method and holistic approach to plant healthy, reproducing churches in North India and providing them with the essential skills to maintain bi-vocational ministry.

Target Region

- 200 mile (300 km) radius around Delhi, India. (Expanding)
- This region of 100 geographical districts has over 200 million people
- 65% of the population is under that age of 35
- Approximately 80% of the population are Hindu, 14% Muslim, and only 2% call themselves Christian
- India is ranked as the 10th most persecuted country for Christians by Open Doors. Persecution ranges from political interference to unjust imprisonment, threats, and even murder. Hindu extremists justify violence against Christians through their nationalist mantra of “to be Indian is to be Hindu.”
- Many Bible colleges exist in India, but church planters need more than just Bible knowledge. They also need a clear plan that includes a source of income, a strategy for church planting, and mentors to walk beside them.

History of AIM

- Sanjay Charan graduated from Bible college with a Bachelor of Theological Studies in 1998. He worked in a mega church and then with various foreign missions organizations until 2012. During this time he gained a lot of experience, specifically with western church planting and evangelization methodologies. The emphasis was often on rapid growth and large scale projects rather than on discipleship. As the political climate changed and the government stopped allowing missionaries into the country, most of these organizations left India, and Sanjay found himself in need of income. He started up a business to pay for his living expenses and tried to manage church planting on the side, but then felt that he had become more of a business man than a church planter. After much prayer, he felt that God was calling him to full-time ministry and to establish a church planting network that would function in a less expensive, eastern style. His experiences to date would help to shape the new ministry.
- After much prayer and consultation, a network of 20 senior Indian pastors with Bible college (BTh - MDiv) training from different churches came together to officially form the Acts India Mission in 2020. They developed a unique approach that enables them to effectively spread the gospel and also provide for their families without needing a lot of outside financial support.

- Currently, the network is composed of 100 congregations (a combination of church plants, house churches and established churches with 30-400 people each) and a core team of 11 men.
 - Sanjay (Director of Training and Development) mobilizes, assess needs, encourages, facilitates the development of the organization and planting churches, provides oversight for everything, and shares with partners overseas
 - Ten master trainers train new pastors and oversee churches in their districts - each has responsibility for 10 districts. The goal is that each of these men will become fully salaried so that they can commit their entire time to developing new leaders.

Scale of the Challenges

Recently, India crossed the population of China and became the most populous country in the world with 1.4 billion people and 2% or less of those calling themselves Christians. Now North India is the epicenter of the lostness and it's been decades since the gospel was first introduced to India. Most of the churches in India are being run by leaders that are under-educated or not well versed in sound theology. These pastors also lack leadership skills to effectively plant healthy, reproducible churches. Without proper guidance and mentorship, these churches will send out church planters that will start new congregations that will be unorganized, weak theologically, and undisciplined.

Many in North India seek a better life due to their poverty and lack of economic stability. They are often drawn to the church and to leadership to enhance their own personal status but because they lack education and basic life skills such as health awareness, education, lack of moral understanding, etc. The church are then poor and weak, unable to sustain growth. Most of the churches are also struggling financially and can't meet their daily physical needs. Today's church in North India has fallen behind due to individuals and leaders being dependent on others to meet their needs. This tension often leads to church divisions, false teachings, social inferiority, and other tensions. As a byproduct, children don't follow their parents into vocational ministry, due to seeing the hardships they face.

Methodology of AIM

Having observed the struggles of newly trained pastors to support their families, AIM has sought to provide a means for pastors to care for their own families while at the same time starting new churches with fresh converts and making the best use of available resources. We believe church leaders can only be effective if they are training in leadership skills which is essential to be able to plant/lead a healthy church and if both physical and spiritual needs are being met. Their strategy is as follows:

- Men who show a natural gift and desire for evangelism are discipled and invited to a few days of training where they learn how to share the gospel and their own testimony. Those who demonstrate their faithfulness and have positive results in the field are further invited to enroll in a year-long training program. The ministry training happens during weekly two hour sessions. The cost of this year of training is \$350 USD.
- AIM is seeking to use a holistic approach in training their pastors. The training which is taught by both foreign and national experienced leaders, includes not only Biblical knowledge (sound doctrine, evangelism, discipleship, church formation and leadership development), but also administrative skills, strategic planning, and financial management.
- AIM follows a Model-Assist-Watch-Launch model, which means that while in the program participants can begin planting a church. As they transition out of the training program, they remain part of the AIM network, and receive mentorship, accountability, and partnership with other local ministry workers, and have further opportunities for courses and leadership development.
- Some of these students also receive further training in a vocation as they will function as bi-vocational pastors, providing for their own daily needs. Some of these men already have jobs which provide them with an income and only need the extra Bible training and support. Others need help or training to find appropriate work (for example if they were selling charms for idols before becoming a Christian that is no longer an appropriate occupation). In some situations, these men start up new businesses. Vocations range to meet the needs of an area and the abilities of individuals. Some examples of businesses started include the following: running a cyber cafe, an auto rickshaw business, and a clothing business.

- Pastors are sent out in teams of two to new target areas to start a church plant and a new business. This gives them both accountability and encouragement. The team continues to be mentored during the early years of ministry. The start up cost for establishing a team of two ranges from \$4,000 - \$7,000 USD. In some cases, the pastors pay a small portion (20%) of the needed funds and the remainder is given through supporters of AIM. The idea is that this money is a loan, but in some cases it will be a grant. Once the start up costs are covered, the new business provides the income needed to provide for their daily needs. It takes three to six months for a business to be self-sustaining.

How to Get Involved

Pray

- For close relationships among the master trainers.
- For the process of registering AIM with the government to go smoothly.
- For funds to support this year's projects, especially the training of new pastors.
- Join the mailing list [HERE](#) for monthly updates
- Join the Facebook group [HERE](#) to get bi-weekly updates.

Serve (Short Term Missions)

- Helps AIM build connections in the community
- Train new leaders/pastors
- Teach young people how to have devotions and to grow as believers
- Teach English
- Teach at Family Conferences
 - Christian marriage
 - Raising children according to God's Word
- Health lessons
- Business Training
- Contact Sanjay to discuss opportunities for short term ministry pastorscharan@gmail.com

Give

Major areas of need:

- \$50,000 for micro-business loans for start-up and leadership training.

On-going, year to year expenses:

- \$2,000 USD/month for the director and regional directors' salaries (currently only 3 people are in the position of getting a salary, but the goal is to have 11)
- \$400 USD/month rent for office and space to offer trainings to pastors
- Gifts through [Lightbearers](#) are tax receiptable in the US.
 - Lightbearers is a non-profit, para-church ministry located in Fayetteville, Arkansas centered around residential discipleship among college students. As students are discipled and developed in a biblical worldview, their rent money from Lightbearers owned property goes to support the work of church planting throughout North Africa and Asia. AIM is a strategic partner of Lightbearers, as they work in partnership to fulfill the Great Commission.

Accountability

- Acts India Mission Staff
 - Sanjay Charan - Executive Director
 - Pastor Akash - Board Member
 - Pastor Gowda - Board Member
 - Pastor Dinesh - Board Member
 - Pastor Sannu - Board Member
- Acts India Advisory Team
 - Ryan Martin - Partnership Development (USA); Director of Missions, Lightbearers
 - Rosemarie Harter - Communications (USA)
 - Lynn and Sherine Boville - Administration (Canada)
 - Russ Taylor - Partnership Development (USA)
- Statement of Faith
 - AIM is a Baptist organization and holds to the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 which can be found [HERE](#).

Newsletter



Giving

