

Overcoming Frontier Peoples Barriers

Toward practical overcoming of the barriers keeping us from succeeding
among Frontier People Groups in South Asia – R.W. Lewis

1) Religious and Christian barriers (Jesus is seen as only available to Christian tribes/people groups), baptism, rituals, foods that peg people as being "Christians" how to escape the "war of religions" construct and focus on Jesus. This problem affects both the Indian Christians and their involvement in outreach to FPGs, and the FPGs themselves who have pegged Indian Christian groups as new castes. Syncretism of Indian Christians with pre-Christian worldview (for example, view of clean/unclean) makes believers unwilling to associate with non-believers, and vice versa. It is a huge problem that the tiny percentage of existing Indian Christians want to do the job themselves but may be among those least able to introduce an unfettered Gospel into the Muslim, Hindu, Sikh etc. people groups.

2) People Group Access barriers: how do we actually come into meaningful contact with FPG people groups, find them, help them, join them in causes etc. Need help on identifying communities or networks, trades they are involved in, problems they are encountering, especially when they are spread through multiple towns and language groups. Are there key points of access for like-minded Indian believers that can bring the Gospel into FPG networks?

3) Political/visa/residency barriers for expat workers (or community belonging barriers for national workers): How can witnesses become belongers in a community, both from the community perspective and from their own? How can they line up residency or identity with things that will give longevity or multi-entry and access (see above point #2). How can churches/agencies meaningfully mobilize and deploy in such a way that they gain the respect/gratitude of community networks and government approval? Example: A former student of mine created an organization that helps Indian community networks and families equip their quadriplegic family members for effective living and jobs. This same pattern could be used to help families with their autistic children (now 1 out of 160 children in India are autistic).

4) Identifying, encouraging, and assisting emerging apostles, Indian or expat, that God is calling to the FPG task in India. Honestly loving the people deeply from the heart is key. Fitting their jobs to the people group they are trying to reach and training them to think in kingdom ministry ways instead of "Christianizing," work in and through family networks. Be able to explain immediately and honestly our desire to help in Jesus name. Language learning can be a problem, as there are over 20 some "trade" languages of instruction, many alphabets, and thousands of heart languages. Winning people to Christ, not to us, leaving the authority patterns intact, encouraging new believers to listen to God directly and empowering them to spread the Gospel as the Holy Spirit leads them in their own family network and people group.

5) Scripture, literacy, media access barriers: The vast majority of Indians are not fluent readers in any language, though they speak more than one. Oral access to the Gospel is crucial. How are we doing pre-evangelism and impacting worldview through modern media? Are the scriptures that are available understandable and making their way into the daily lives of people? If not, why not? What needs to be done differently? Ex: putting parables of Jesus in short cartoon form in street level languages (staying away from offensive or idolatrous depictions). Building bridges to reading scripture more fully.

6) Awareness of needs and prayer barriers: How do we continue to put the needs of the SAsian and Indian FPGs before the prayer warriors and the agencies and candidates? Resources? Skill in programs used for modern effective Mass communication. (e.g. the Khan Academy videos!!)