A Challenge to South American Adventists

By Bruce L. Bauer

The South American Division (SAD) has taken seriously the command of our Lord to make disciples. The strategic plans to plant churches in each municipality and have an Adventist presence in all areas of the division is something that should be imitated in other divisions of the world field. The emphasis in ministerial training that students be required to actually plant a church is the type of training that should be duplicated.

When one looks at the areas of the world where there are few Christians and even fewer Seventh-day Adventists I believe it is time for the SAD to become a dominant player in sending its talented and committed workers to those parts of the world where there is so much remaining to be done. Jesus not only commanded his followers to witness for him in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, but also to the ends of the earth. Obedience and faithfulness compels God’s people to go where the name of Christ is not known.

When one compared the resources available with the needs, surely a reallocation is warranted. Notice the comparisons as described in the 154th Annual Statistical Report—2007:

Brazil has a population of 189,335,000, but has 1,419 ordained ministers and 1,331,282 members. There are 142 people for every Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) and 133,428 people for every ordained pastor.

China has a population of 1,317,955,000, but has only 97 ordained ministers and 360,822 members. There are 3,652 people for every SDA and 13,587,164 people for every ordained pastor.

Bangladesh has a population of 149,002,000, but has...
only 24 ordained ministers and 27,196 members. There are 5,478,820 people for every SDA and 6,208,416 people for every ordained pastor.

Egypt has a population of 73,418,000, but only has 4 ordained ministers and 740 members. There are 99,213 people for every member and 18,354,500 people for every ordained pastor.

These three countries are only representative of areas of the world where there is incredible need for the type of leaders and pastors that are found in the South American Division. What would happen if every year the South American Division would recruit, train, fund, and send 50 missionary families to the 10/40 window to work among Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists? What would happen if hundreds of young people in the SAD would become tentmaking missionaries in the 10/40 window?

I believe it is time for the South American Division to add its talent, vision, and commitment to the task of world evangelization.