

Faith. Work. Impact.



MISSION
EURASIA

Train to lead. Equip to serve.

2019-2020

NGPLI

Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative
(Миссия в Профессии)

Contents

1. Introduction
 2. Unprecedented Ministry Opportunities
 3. An Overview of NGPLI
 4. Time for Professionals Forums
 5. Strategic Focus: The Professional World
 6. School Without Walls (SWW) and NGPLI:
Vision, Target Audiences, and Interconnected Ministry
 7. NGPLI and the Challenges of COVID-19
 8. NGPLI and Global Professional Outreach Initiatives
 9. NGPLI and the Church
 10. 2020 Focus: Entrepreneurs and Establishing a Culture
of Giving in the Church and Business Community
 11. Closing Thoughts on NGPLI from Mission Eurasia Field
Ministries Leaders
 12. Maps of NGPLI Impact in 2020
-

1. Introduction



Introduction

As a young Christian growing up in the Soviet Union, I was not allowed pursue higher education or occupy an influential profession because the atheistic Soviet government did not want Christians to hold places of influence in society. However, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, a new window of opportunity opened for young Christians who dreamed of someday becoming doctors, teachers, and lawyers. This first generation of post-Soviet youth has now come of age and thousands occupy the influential fields of medicine, education, law, business, media, science and technology throughout the former Soviet Union/ Eurasia. However, most lack the Christian training, support, and resources needed to advance the gospel through their professions and help transform post-Soviet society for Christ.

That's why Mission Eurasia launched the Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI), also known as Mission in Profession (Миссия в Профессии) in Russian, in 2012. Since then, Mission Eurasia has trained thousands of young Christian professionals in Eurasia, who are connecting the church with society and helping the church to grow. Therefore, it is a joy to share this report on NGPLI in 2020, which gives an overview of the transformational impact this strategic initiative has had on the post-Soviet nations of Eurasia this past year.

I am grateful to our field ministry team leaders who have dedicated much of their time and talents toward developing and carrying out the vision of NGPLI. I am especially grateful to my ministry colleagues, including Dr. Michael Cherenkov, Mission Eurasia Executive Field Director, Denis Gorenkov, NGPLI International Director, and Dmitry Polyukhovich, School Without Walls national coordinator in Belarus who works with young Christian businessmen. Without their efforts and dedication, this innovative and effective ministry would not be possible.

I hope that, as you read this report, you will be encouraged to continue praying for and supporting the work of young Christian professionals in Eurasia through NGPLI as they reach their professions, communities, and nations for Christ, despite any obstacles they may face.

*Sergey Rakhuba
President
Mission Eurasia*

2. Unprecedented Ministry Opportunities

Thirty years have passed since the Soviet Union collapsed and the Iron Curtain fell. The transitional era that followed these events was filled with unprecedented civil and religious freedom, and this newfound freedom allowed the people of the former Soviet Union to pursue higher education and choose their own professions for the very first time.

During the last 20 years, thousands of young Christians who were born in the years following the Soviet Union's collapse have studied at universities that were once temples of atheistic communism. Furthermore, after graduating, these young leaders are pursuing professions in key fields that were previously closed to Christians. Today, young Christian businessmen and women, doctors, journalists, lawyers, teachers, and more are boldly proclaiming the name of Jesus in the most influential professional spheres in Eurasia.

In response to the invaluable opportunity for young Christian professionals to impact their workplaces, vocational spheres, and entire communities with the gospel, Mission Eurasia created the Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI) to train, equip, and mobilize the Next Generation of Christian professionals in Eurasia for effective ministry.

Dr. Paul Silkovsky's Story

For Dr. Paul Silkovsky from Ukraine, work is so much more than just surviving in a low-paying environment. "I am so poorly paid for my work that if I didn't see it as a way to serve Christ, I wouldn't last long," he shared with a smile. A few years ago, Paul was working in a pediatric intensive care unit, when he asked himself, "Why don't we allow parents to be with their suffering children? Does this really help us provide better treatment? How must God see us when we prevent parents from being with their suffering children?" According to the medical practice of the time, children receiving medical treatment in Ukraine were isolated from their parents.

After realizing the detrimental effects of this practice, Paul performed a study that compared Ukraine's medical practice with that of other countries. He concluded that, when parents are in the ICU with their children, they do not inhibit treatment, but rather help speed up their children's recovery time, which in turn, results in more effective treatment. This study helped to transform Ukraine's medical practice. Today, the rules that were in place during the Soviet era have been abolished, and children receiving medical treatment are able to have their parents with them.

Furthermore, all of Paul's colleagues and patients know he is a Christian, because his faith so clearly touches their lives. In fact, several of Paul's patients have started going to church, and some have even put their faith in Christ! Paul has also been interviewed on several TV shows, and during every interview, he takes the opportunity to share his faith, thus influencing the lives of thousands of people. Paul's career was nothing but a pipe dream for his parents, who worked as a handyman and cleaning lady during the Soviet era, but God has answered their prayers beyond their wildest imagination.



3. An Overview of NGPLI

As Next Generation Christians continue working in Eurasia's most influential professional spheres, they must combine their professional skills with effective evangelism in order to impact their workplaces and vocations for Christ and His Kingdom.

All across Eurasia, a critical mass of young Christian leaders is being recognized as having a promising future in the region's most influential professions. In these key professions, young Christian professionals have the wonderful opportunity to impact both their vocational spheres and society as a whole. In order to do this effectively, these young leaders need spiritual support from the church, and they need to learn from other Christian professionals who have successfully used their careers to impact others with the gospel. That is why Mission Eurasia is using NGPLI to provide the training, support, and resources that young Christian professionals need to transform their workplaces, vocations, and society for Christ.



In 2019-20, we hosted NGPLI training events in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. A total of 14,700 young professionals participated in these events, and they represented seven key professional spheres in Eurasia:

- **Business: 3,000**
- **Creative Professions (i.e. art, music, etc.): 900**
- **Education: 2,500**
- **Law: 1,300**
- **Media: 800**
- **Medicine: 4,000**
- **Science and Technology: 1,000**

More specifically, we held 20 NGPLI training conferences in the following countries: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. We also hosted six NGPLI roundtable discussions for evangelical leaders and young professionals in Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Additionally, we conducted more than 75 training seminars on sharing faith in the workplace in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Finally, we hosted NGPLI summer training events for businessmen and women, doctors, lawyers, and teachers in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine.

Along with hosting NGPLI training events, we also developed and printed several new training resources:

- **1,000 copies of *A Package of Ideas for Church Leaders***
(a book developed for young professionals)
- **12,500 copies of *The Gospel on the Desktop***
(a book of evangelism strategies for young professionals)
- **500 copies of *My Song is My Ukraine***
(a training manual approved by the Ministry of Education)
- **1,000 copies of *Holistic Mission***
(a book developed for young professionals)
- **1,000 copies of *Reach the Maximum: Overcoming Challenges***
(a book developed for young professionals)
- **500 copies of *Six Opportunities for Evangelism in the Workplace***
(translation and adaptation into Georgian)

Additionally, we created numerous videos and other media resources to promote the NGPLI vision throughout Eurasia in 2020:

- **15 videos**
- **5 PowerPoint presentations**
- **3 radio appearances**
- **Apple coach app for young professionals: QC cards.**
- **Mobile version of the Prayer Guide (Molitvoslov) in the Georgian, Ukrainian, and Russian languages.**

An Overview of NGPLI (Continued)

In 2020, we estimate that the 14,700 young Christian professionals who received training through NGPLI impacted 135,000 others directly and indirectly with the gospel. In order to reach even more people with the Good News, these young leaders must continue to share their testimonies, pursue spiritual mentorship, and encourage one another to stand firm in faith. Together they are creating communities in which they can grow their own ministry efforts by sharing their ideas and working together to transform Eurasia for Christ and His Kingdom.



Using the training they received through NGPLI in 2020, young Christian professionals in Eurasia distributed the following Scripture pieces in their workplaces:

- **8,500 copies of *The Gospel on the Desktop***
- **15,000 copies of *Light magazine***
- **30,000 copies of the *Gospel of John* (Pocket Testament League edition)**
- **10,000 gospel booklets**
- **1 million copies of the special *Scripture-based Prayer Guide* (Molitvoslov) to meet the needs of those affected by COVID-19.**

Mayor Roman Polikrovsky's Story

Roman was born in 1979. His parents were evangelical Christians, and because they lived in the midst of Soviet oppression, they never dreamed that their son would obtain an influential job. Under the Soviet regime, Roman's parents, along with other evangelical Christians, were prevented from securing jobs that would allow them to influence society, and in his youth, it seemed that Roman was doomed to suffer this same fate. However, the Lord had other plans.

In 2003, Roman started his first year of college at Ternopil National Economic University, and he graduated with honors in 2008. His degree allowed him to impact his city by sharing the gospel with the many businessmen and government officials that he met through his work.

In 2007, Roman founded House of Mercy, an outreach organization that cares for those in need in Ukraine's Ternopil region. This organization is a powerful testimony to God's love for those in need, and it also helped Roman realize that God was calling him to serve the people of his city. In 2010, he was elected to be a deputy of the District Council of Zbarazh, and in 2014, he was elected mayor. Today, Zbarazh is developing successfully, the city's people have a positive view of Christians, and the young Christian leaders that Roman has trained are influencing their community for Christ.

During his speech at a recent youth outreach event, Roman urged young people to use their professions as ministry opportunities. He also encouraged them to work hard so they could obtain influential positions in society. And most importantly, he reminded them that everything they do should be for God's glory. Roman's story is a perfect example of how Next Generation Christian leaders can use their professions to bring strategic change and hope to their society, which was crippled by the Soviet regime.

4. Time for Professionals Forums

NGPLI provides leadership training and spiritual mentorship for young Christian professionals in order to prepare and motivate them to transform their society, starting with the professional sphere. Investing in the ministry potential of young professionals through NGPLI is a key part of growing God's Kingdom and strengthening the church in post-Soviet Eurasia.

That is why we have developed many different NGPLI training events, which allow for effective communication and collaboration among young Christian professionals. As these young leaders talk and work together, they encourage one another to grow in faith, share progressive ministry ideas, and develop long-term plans for evangelism.

In addition to these large-scale strategic training events, we also created Time for Professionals forums, during which specialists from key vocational fields learn how to share the NGPLI vision with other young professionals in their spheres of influence.

Our 2-3-day Time for Professionals forums:

- **Are designed for the key professional fields of business, education, law, medicine, and science and technology;**
- **Present the most current and effective strategies for workplace evangelism;**
- **Include Christian speakers who are experts in the fields of business, education, law, medicine, and science and technology;**
- **Catalyze new ministry communities, initiatives, and partnerships among young Christian professionals;**
- **Promote NGPLI on a global scale in order to create international partnerships;**

More specifically, each Time for Professionals forum includes sessions on the fundamentals, prospects, and next steps related to a particular topic. Each of these sessions includes panel discussions, and this format allows young Christian professionals to learn from experts in their fields, ask questions, and receive comprehensive answers to these questions. Additionally, each forum includes a variety of seminars and master classes, during which church leaders and representatives from Christian organizations share knowledge and resources related to the forum's topic. Finally, each forum concludes with a message from a local pastor.





Movement

- Models of existing movements of Christian professionals and the beginning of strategic relations.
- How forum participants can develop new ministry initiatives among businessmen, healthcare workers, teachers, and other professionals.

Prospects

- Understanding the kind of strategic changes that impact society through Christians who carry out their mission in their workplace.
- Ideas and models of transformation through the gospel of the Kingdom in all spheres of life, including motivation to witness about Christ and deep transformation.

Basics

- Theology of work, missionary focus for one's professional calling.
- The biblical foundation of profession as mission, and the workplace as the Kingdom of God.

The target audience for our Time for Professionals forums is young Christian professionals who are just starting their careers and want to integrate their faith into their work in order to impact their professions and society for Christ. We held our first Time for Professionals forum in Moldova in 2014, and over the past few years, thousands of young professionals from Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan have participated in these forums. Using what they learned during the forums, we estimate that these young leaders have reached tens of thousands of colleagues, clients, and partners with the gospel.

Natalia and Sergey's Story

A special NGPLI forum was held for 500 young Christian professionals in Krasnoyarsk, a city in Siberia, Russia which once served as a center for Stalin's gulag system. Despite the escalating persecution against evangelical Christians in Russia, our NGPLI team is boldly shining the light of Christ to prepare young people for effective ministry in their own nation.

In fact, not long after the forum, Natalia and Sergey, two of the participants, decided to hold special meetings for businessmen and teachers at the Krasnoyarsk city center. Natalia is a teacher, and she is very influential in her field, as in 2017 she was recognized as the best teacher of the year in her region. The forum helped her see how she can share her faith with her colleagues. Similarly, Sergey is a successful businessman, and the forum motivated him to reach out to his colleagues who have never gone to church but were still open to meeting with him at the city center.

"When I went to the forum, I already knew that the Lord was calling me to use my professional status to reach out to my colleagues, but during the event, I learned that I could be a missionary in my profession," Natalia shared. "So, after that, I led a discussion for several of my fellow teachers, during which we talked about the challenges we face at work. I also shared the Good News of Jesus, who was also a teacher, but more importantly, the Savior of the world. Now, I'm continuing to share my faith with these teachers, and two of them have started going to church! I've also seen the attitudes of their students improve, which only encourages me even more."

Similarly, Sergey shared, "Working in Russia's business world is very challenging due to corruption. That's why I invited my fellow businessmen to a meeting after the forum to talk about how to overcome the challenges we face at work. I shared my testimony, which deeply impacted my colleagues. And now I regularly meet with some of these businessmen so we can keep talking about Jesus. I'm also hoping to hold a larger meeting this winter. This would be a good continuation of the forum, which encouraged me to make my workplace into a mission field."

Time for Professionals Forums (*Continued*)

It is essential that we present the NGPLI vision in a way that is biblically sound and ministry-centered. Therefore, after each Time for Professionals forum, we host a variety of follow-up conferences, prayer breakfasts, and training sessions that are designed to allow young Christian professionals to network in small groups with other young leaders from their particular professions. During these events, young professionals learn how to be faithful witnesses for Christ in their workplaces and vocations.

Using their NGPLI training, many young Christian professionals in Eurasia have formed special communities, through which they enjoy fellowship and develop their own ministry strategies to reach their professional spheres of influence with the gospel. To ensure that these communities of young professionals are being led by competent, mature leaders, we use our NGPLI events to identify the young professionals with the greatest leadership potential and equip them with the tools they need to effectively lead communities of young professionals.

Process for Developing Next Generation Christian Professional Leaders



Forum

Follow-up
Training
Conference
Networking

Fellowship

Individual transformation
Community transformation
Church growth

In summary, our Time for Professionals forums equip young Christian professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively share the gospel in their workplaces and vocational spheres. Furthermore, at present, we are focusing on using these forums to provide young professionals with the tools they need to form communities of young professionals in the key fields of business, education, law, medicine, and science and technology. Through these communities of young professionals, hundreds of young Christians are bringing the Good News of Jesus into their workplaces, professions, and society.



In 2019-2020, young Christian professionals who participated in NGPLI training events started seven new communities of Christian professionals:

- **Community of Christian Creative Professionals – Ukraine**
- **Community of Christian Businessmen and Entrepreneurs – Uzbekistan**
- **Community of Christian Businessmen and Entrepreneurs – Tajikistan**
- **Community of Christian Businessmen and Entrepreneurs – Russia**
- **Community of Christian Medical Professionals – Kazakhstan**
- **Community of Christian Teachers – Russia**
- **Community of Christian IT Professionals – Belarus**

Furthermore, 640 young Christian professionals learned about the NGPLI vision through these communities, and using their training, these new leaders confidently shared the gospel with their colleagues, clients, patients, and students.



Transfer of the vision, building of strategic relationships

Time for Professionals forum:

- a place for young leaders to meet;
- passing on the NGPLI vision and models;
- exchange of resources;
- committing to new strategic initiatives.

Training seminars, starting of new communities

Growing the influence of the forum: Forum+.

- meetings for different groups of professionals;
- training seminars;
- starting new communities and providing resources for the ministry.

Preparing and developing new leaders

Practical ministry of communities and preparing new leaders to minister in their communities.

- Practical initiatives of communities of professionals in different fields;
- coaching and mentorship;
- training seminars for potential leaders;
- participation of new leaders in NGPLI ministries: various projects, development of resources, ministry plans, etc.

Vitaliy's Story

Vitaliy, a young Christian lawyer from Ukraine, recently wrote on his Facebook timeline, "Thank you all for your congratulations! I especially want to thank Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky, who believed in my abilities as a lawyer during the electoral process. Also, thank you to the 361 deputies who voted for my appointment as a member of the Central Election Commission."

Vitaliy is a wonderful example of a Christian who is using his professional skills and successful career to influence key processes in Ukraine for the glory of God. Vitaliy learned about the importance of sharing his faith through his profession thanks to the Association of Christian Lawyers, a group launched by a team of Mission Eurasia's School Without Walls (SWW) graduates who are now working as lawyers. These young leaders started the Association of Christian Lawyers after being inspired to use their careers to combat corruption and to impact Ukraine's legal field for Christ during an NGPLI forum in Kiev in 2015. As they continued to participate in NGPLI training events, these Christian lawyers, including Vitaliy, became more and more determined to use their professional skills to transform Ukraine's legal field with the Good News of Jesus.

Even though Vitaliy received a wonderful career opportunity thanks to Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky, many years ago, through NGPLI, he learned that the most important thing he can do with his career is to proclaim the gospel that changes everything.

5. Strategic Focus: The Professional World

In order to prepare young Christian professionals in Eurasia to most effectively impact the marketplace, NGPLI focuses on five key professional fields: business, education, law, medicine, and science and technology. This focus allows us to develop specific ministry strategies for each of these key fields while also expanding the overall NGPLI vision.



Business

Eurasia's business market has great potential for growth, but it is also riddled with corruption, disrespect, and distrust. Also, the remnants of Soviet-era regulations, combined with uncivilized business practices, have hindered economic growth. Today's young Christian businessmen and women know that, without moral and spiritual growth, Eurasia's business sector will only continue to suffer.

That is why these young leaders are so committed to putting into practice what they've learned through NGPLI as they share the gospel in their workplaces and in all of their business activities. In fact, in the midst of staff shortages and poor leadership, which are becoming more common in Eurasia, young businessmen and women are having an even stronger impact in their offices, partnerships, and customer relationships.

Irina's Story

Irina graduated from the Oil and Gas University in Omsk, Russia, where she realized that God was calling her to serve him through her vocation. She began her career at an oil company in Moscow, but soon after, she moved to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where she worked for three years. She then moved to St. Petersburg, where she currently works as an oil derrick design specialist for Gazprom, Russia's largest natural gas company.

In 2018, Irina traveled to Belarus for an NGPLI forum in Minsk. She was particularly excited to hear special guest Philip Yancy speak, because he is her favorite Christian author. During the forum, Irina took part in a master class on launching communities of young professionals, and when she returned to St. Petersburg, she used what she learned at the forum to launch one of these professional communities.

This community provides a safe space where Irina's non-Christian colleagues feel comfortable discussing work-related challenges, spiritual topics, and the connection between faith and work. As the leader of the community, Irina has created an atmosphere of acceptance and trust, and her testimony is having a tremendous impact on her coworkers.

Today, in the heart of St. Petersburg, where Russia's harsh Yarovaya law has made it very dangerous for Christians to practice their faith, several dozen young professionals are regularly meeting to talk with Irina about Jesus. "Because my colleagues live in the Russian information space, they think that evangelical churches are sects sponsored by America," Irina shares. "But, at the same time, they are interested in spirituality, prayer, and learning about God. I am very thankful that I can help them in their search, and I am so grateful to NGPLI for helping me start this community. I believe that my colleagues will become disciples of Christ and testify about Him in their workplaces. As this happens, our workplaces and nation will be transformed."

Education

The impact that teachers have on the lives of their students cannot be overstated, and young Christian teachers in Eurasia recognize the wonderful opportunity they have to reach young people with the gospel. Soviet-era schools only taught ideas related to communism and Darwinism, but today, Christian teachers can impact their students with biblical ideas, such as creation, through their lessons. Using their NGPLI training, these young teachers are faithfully serving as witnesses for Christ by caring for their students and introducing them to Christian ideas.

Ruslana's Story

Ruslana is a professor at one of the largest medical universities in Ukraine. Every day, she interacts with students from many different countries outside of Ukraine, including China, India, Iran, Pakistan and countries in Central Asia. Ruslana's mission is to share her Christian faith with these future doctors so they are prepared to provide the best treatment possible, while recognizing that their patients are created in God's image.

Every week, Ruslana hosts a club called Salt, during which she and her students discuss ethics, spiritual values, and questions about life and death that frequently come up in the medical field. For many of Ruslana's students, especially those from Muslim-dominated countries, the Salt club allows them to hear the gospel and learn about the relationship between work and ministry for the very first time.

Law

For 70 years, the Soviet Union violated basic human rights, and as a result, nihilism is still prevalent in Eurasia's legal field. During the Soviet era, Christians were not allowed to work in any position related to law, but today hundreds of young Christians work in the legal field. Additionally, Soviet-era Christians were always on the defensive in legal matters, but today young Christian lawyers are using their NGPLI training to take advantage of every opportunity they have to help restore freedom, justice, and truth to Eurasia's legislation.

Madina's Story

"I live in Tajikistan, and I graduated from law school two years ago. In my country, women are primarily engaged with family, and few of us pursue higher education, especially in the legal sphere. My stepfather, who is a pastor and School Without Walls (SWW) graduate, helped me a lot in both my career and my faith. He shared with me that SWW taught him that Christians need to hold influential positions in society so we can positively impact our country. That is why I decided to become a lawyer.

"During my final year at university, I also joined the SWW program, and my favorite part was getting to participate in NGPLI events. During one of these events, I heard the story of William Wilberforce, a British lawyer and politician who helped lead the abolition movement against slavery. I was particularly moved by these words that John Newton spoke to William: 'Use your position for the glory of God.' I was so inspired that, after graduating from university, I started working with local churches to train Christian lawyers how to effectively share their faith.

"Today, persecution against the church in Tajikistan is becoming stricter. For example, recently my friend's son greeted his dad during a worship service, and the local authorities reported the incident to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In our country, children are not allowed to participate in worship services, so now the church is facing a lawsuit. We are struggling against a powerful government system, but God is on our side.

"I am grateful to SWW for shaping me into a leader and fighter. I am also grateful to NGPLI for connecting me with international Christian lawyers who support me in the midst of religious persecution. I believe that we can help make religious freedom the norm in our country, and that children will be able to worship Jesus with their parents. With God's help, we will continue to fight for this future."

Medicine

During the Soviet era there were no Christian doctors in the medical field, but today many young Christian doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals are sharing Christ's love with their patients and coworkers. These young professionals are combining their NGPLI training with compassionate care, which is introducing many sick and suffering people to the healing hope of Jesus.

Dr. Timur's Story

Dr. Timur (name changed for his safety) runs a private clinic in Central Asia. As a business owner who was educated in America, Dr. Timur has the opportunity to influence his country in ways that many other believers cannot. "We take risks, but we are still very careful about sharing our faith with our patients," Dr. Timur shares. "The majority of our employees are Christians, and people choose to come to our clinic, because they appreciate the way we treat them, and they enjoy praying with the doctors.

"During the past several years, we have also started several new Christian communities, which many of our patients have joined. We also recruit young interns, whom we help to gain professional experience, and more importantly, expose to Christian ideas. Even though these interns don't work with us long term, we hope that they will carry what they learned at our clinic into their future careers. We are ready to sacrifice to help our country grow toward Christ."

Science and Technology

Young people are the quickest at understanding new scientific ideas and technologies, so companies that produce computer systems and other technological instruments can strongly influence society. Using their NGPLI training, young Christians working in the field of science and technology are growing God's Kingdom by helping churches and Christian leaders learn how to incorporate new technology into their worship services and ministry programs and to reach their communities in a more effective way.

Paul's Story

Paul grew up in a Christian family. His father was imprisoned for his faith and the church where his father serves endured many years of persecution during the Soviet era, when believers were prevented from obtaining influential professional positions. Therefore, when Paul decided that he wanted to be a computer software engineer, some of his fellow congregants weren't entirely supportive of his decision. However, Paul's father was very supportive of his son, and he was proud when Paul started to enjoy success. "My work produced a lot of positive results, so I was promoted to be the head of a group of programmers," Paul shared. "That's when I started thinking about how I could share my faith with my coworkers."

In order to learn more about God's call for Christian professionals, Paul attended an NGPLI conference organized by Mission Eurasia in Kharkiv, Ukraine. During this conference, he learned that Christian professionals are called to exercise patience in the workplace, along with working hard. Now, Paul is putting what he learned into practice by being more attentive to his subordinates, who have expressed their appreciation for his kindness. He has also started talking with them about deeper topics, and often their conversations center around God and the gospel. Two of Paul's coworkers have even started going to church!

"As a Christian, my mission in the professional world is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with my colleagues, and there are three components that make this mission effective: high-quality work, honesty, and care for others. The quality of my work allows me to share my faith with even more people as I am given more responsibilities. Also, being honest in my work shows people that they can trust me, which makes them more likely to trust what I tell them about God. Finally, caring for those who depend on me opens their hearts to receiving the gospel. This is what my ministry looks like now, and my mission is to continue serving God in the IT field."

6. School Without Walls (SWW) and Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI): Vision, Target Audiences, and Interconnected Ministry

Mission Eurasia created SWW and NGPLI to train and equip the Next Generation of Christian leaders in Eurasia for effective, transformational ministry in their communities, workplaces, and entire nations. While these two programs are intrinsically related, their visions and target audiences are unique.

School Without Walls (SWW): Vision

SWW is a flexible leadership training program that equips Next Generation leaders all across Eurasia and Israel with biblical wisdom, leadership skills, and practical, hands-on ministry experience. Also, SWW promotes church growth and spiritual revival by mobilizing young leaders to serve in local churches and develop their own ministry initiatives, connecting the church and the community. Using their holistic training, SWW leaders are sharing the Good News of Jesus with orphans, refugees, and many others in need in their communities. Additionally, they are planting churches, distributing Scripture, passing out humanitarian aid, and leading many other strategic outreach projects.

School Without Walls (SWW): Target Audience

SWW is primarily intended to prepare young people who are 18 years or older for ministry in their churches, communities, and nations. Furthermore, while SWW is useful for training and equipping all believers for ministry, it is specifically designed for young people who are seeking to grow in faith and leadership.

Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI): Vision

Through conferences, forums, roundtable discussions, and other training events, NGPLI equips, encourages, and empowers young Christian professionals in Eurasia for bold evangelism in their workplaces and spheres of influence. The central goals of NGPLI are to help young professionals form a holistic view of ministry, learn leadership skills, and actively share their faith in their workplaces, vocations, and society. Young Christian professionals are using their NGPLI training to impact key professional fields in Eurasia with the gospel message.

Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI): Target Audience

NGPLI primarily equips young Christian professionals from the key fields of business, education, law, medicine, and science and technology to share their faith in their workplaces and professions. Additionally, NGPLI connects older professionals with younger professionals in their fields for mentorship opportunities.

Interactive Connection

NGPLI was created out of Mission Eurasia's network of SWW church partners and young Christian leaders, and the success of SWW made it possible for us to launch another Next Generation ministry initiative. Thus, there is some overlap in the Next Generation leaders who participate in SWW and NGPLI, because some of the young leaders who are being trained through SWW also attend NGPLI events so they can expand their ministry efforts to their workplaces.

Despite this overlap in Next Generation leaders who participate in both SWW and NGPLI events, it should be noted that the key purpose of NGPLI is to reach young Christian professionals who have not yet received ministry training. Thanks to Mission Eurasia's large network of partner churches from various denominations, ministry organizations, and other NGOs, SWW has become a unifying force in Eurasia's churches and among its young people. The strong partnerships and sweeping influence of SWW laid the foundation for NGPLI, which has ignited a movement and is now preparing thousands of young Christian professionals all across Eurasia for transformational ministry in their workplaces and professional spheres.

Our long-term goal is for the young professionals who receive training through NGPLI to form and lead autonomous communities that provide training for even more young people in their professional fields. In order to make this goal a reality, every NGPLI training conference, forum, and roundtable discussion equips young Christian professionals to effectively share the gospel in their workplaces, and prepares them to share the NGPLI vision with other young professionals in their fields. Furthermore, each NGPLI training event provides an opportunity for young professionals to work interactively to develop new ministry strategies for their respective fields. In addition to general NGPLI events, we also host special large-scale Time for Professionals forums for young professionals from specific professional fields, during which these young leaders learn about the NGPLI vision and how to share it with their peers.

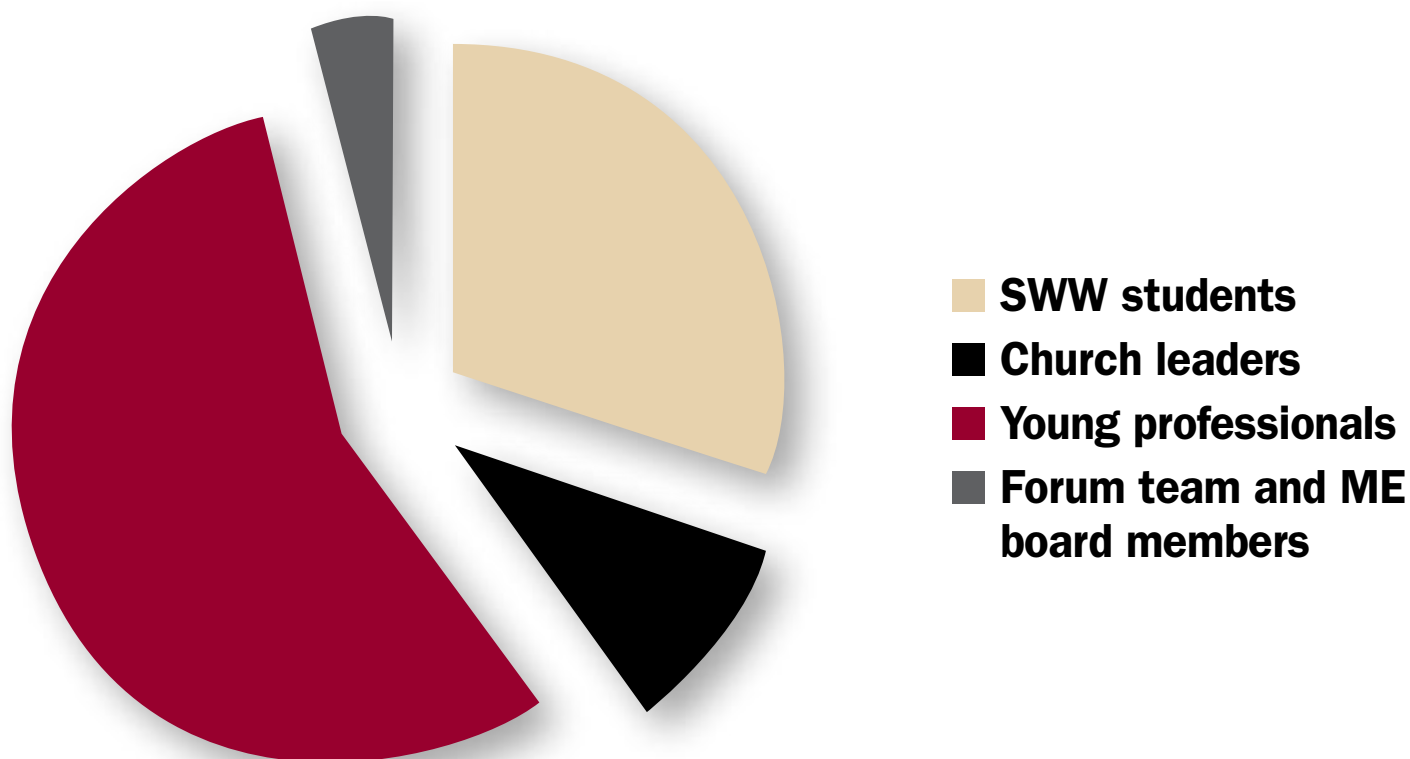
Thus far, we have hosted five large-scale Time for Professionals forums in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. About 3,000 young professionals participated in these forums, including several SWW leaders, who are now helping to attract more young people to NGPLI events. Using the Time for Professionals forum that took place in Kyrgyzstan and a training event for Christian medical professionals in Belarus, we will illustrate the intrinsic relationship between SWW and NGPLI, as well as the differences between these two Next Generation leadership training initiatives.

Our Time for Professionals forum in Kyrgyzstan was the first event of its kind ever held in Central Asia. About 500 young professionals from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan participated in this event, which a team of 150 SWW leaders helped to organize. Thanks to the committed efforts

of these SWW leaders, about 200 new young professionals were connected with NGPLI. Also, it should be noted that, among the 150 SWW leaders who helped organize the Time for Professionals forum, there were a significant number of university students (70) and Christian teachers (40), as well as many church leaders.

The 200 new young professionals who attended the Time for Professionals forum in Kyrgyzstan included many doctors, businessmen, and managers. It was extremely important for these young leaders from all throughout Central Asia to learn about the NGPLI vision. Additionally, the forum allowed the Mission Eurasia team to connect with many church leaders, and these growing partnerships will allow us to continue expanding NGPLI in Central Asia.

Breakdown of participants in Time for Professionals Forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan



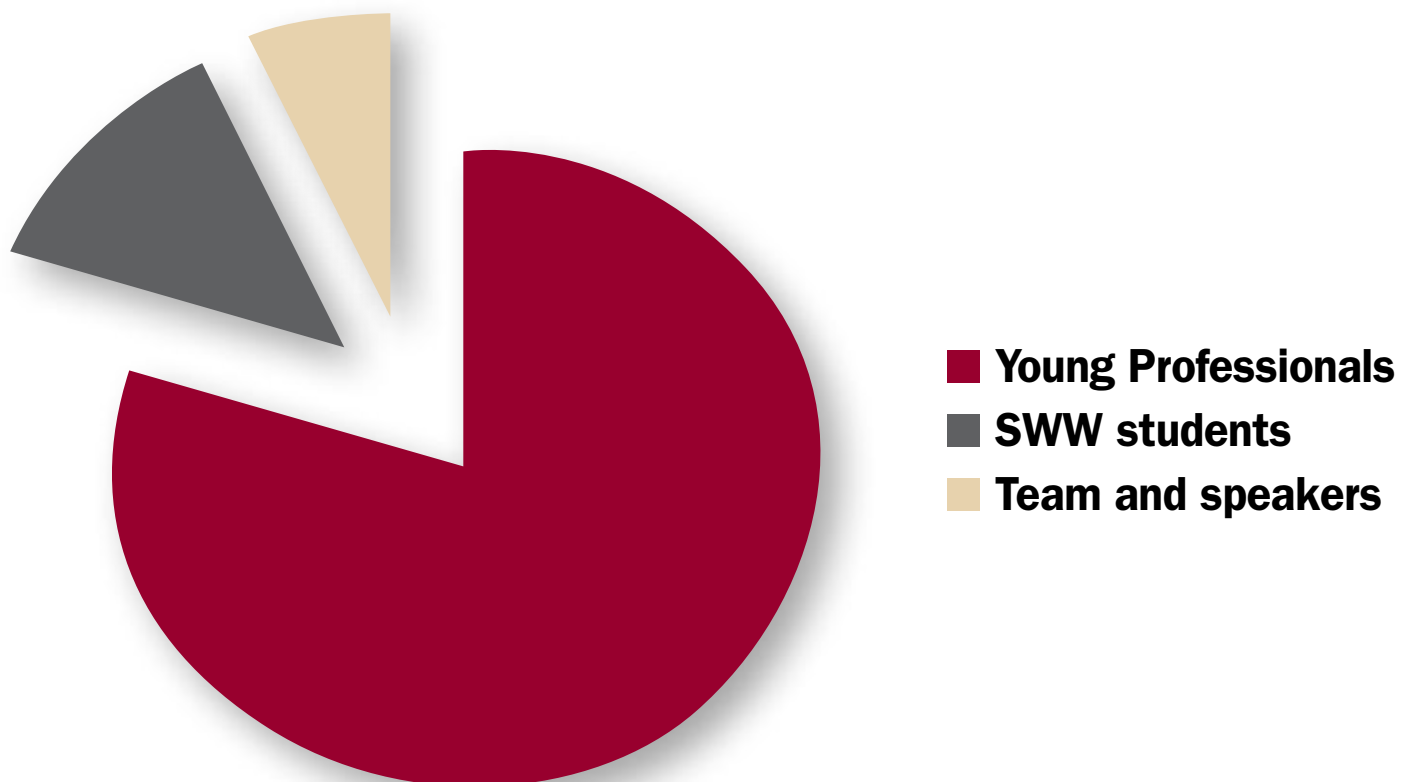
Unlike the Time for Professionals forum that took place in Kyrgyzstan, almost all of the young people who participated in the training event for Christian medical professionals in Belarus were professionals, rather than SWW leaders. The main reason for this is that the training event was organized and led by an autonomous community of young medical workers who wanted to share the NGPLI vision with their peers. The 20 SWW leaders who participated in the event were also medical professionals, thus unlike our Time for Professionals forums, very few SWW leaders participate in NGPLI trainings that are designed for young professionals from specific fields.

Based on this study, it is clear that, while SWW helped make it possible for NGPLI to reach young professionals in Eurasia, the two programs' visions and target audiences are unique. More specifically, SWW trains and equips Next Generation

leaders in Eurasia for ministry in their churches, communities, and nations, but NGPLI focuses on training established young professionals to share the gospel in their workplaces and vocational fields. Furthermore, the NGPLI communities of Christian professionals that SWW leaders help to start quickly form their own leadership teams, organize training events, and develop their own ministry initiatives.

In conclusion, both SWW and NGPLI are key components of Mission Eurasia's ministry, and their interconnected nature allows us to train and equip thousands of Next Generation leaders in Eurasia for effective ministry. Additionally, thanks to their unique visions and target audiences, we are able to prepare young leaders in all spheres of Eurasian society to serve Christ and His Kingdom.

Breakdown of Participants in Christian Medical Conference in Minsk, Belarus



Alisher's Story

After an NGPLI training event in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, Alisher, a young businessman, shared his story while holding his son in his arms: "I often don't spend enough time with my family, and I believe that God is calling me to better balance my time. That is why I am so thankful that I was able to participate in this training. It was important for me to learn that my work is also my ministry, and that God wants me to serve, not only in my business, but also in my own family."

"I was born into a devout Muslim family. My uncle was an Ulama, an Islamic teacher, in a mosque. My parents were so proud that, at the age of four, I could already recite two entire pages of the Koran from memory. Even though I was really just repeating the sounds, and I had no idea what the words actually meant, my parents were still proud. I grew up in Bukhara, which has a long, rich history, but is also a challenging place for young people to find work."

"When I graduated from high school, a lot of people were leaving our city to work in Russia, and local Muslim leaders were encouraging young people to go to Turkey and other Muslim countries to get a good education so they could have more career opportunities. Many of my friends took advantage of these opportunities, and when they came back, I didn't recognize them. They were arrogant and considered the rest of us to be 'second-class.' They were also even more devoted to Islam than they were before they left. Some of my former classmates were even martyred for their faith during terrorist attacks in Chechnya and Syria."

"I could have been one of these martyrs, but the Lord saved me from that life. One day, a friend from school invited me to his house for tea and dinner. As we talked, I learned that he was a follower of Jesus. I asked him to read me something from the Bible, which I had never even held before. As he read from one of the gospels, it felt like Jesus was speaking each word directly to my heart. I understood everything, and I realized that it was the truth I had been looking for my entire life. I prayed to God for the first time that evening, and I put my faith in Christ!"

"After that, the same friend introduced me to the Christian in his home group. The pastor of this small group of about 25 people told me about SWW, and he helped me sign up for the program. One of the first sessions I attended was about NGPLI. For me, this was a very important topic, because of the economic challenges in my city. I wanted to share the gospel with my neighbors, but I also needed to work in order to support my family."

"During the NGPLI course, I learned a very important truth: God wants me to work, and He will bless me with opportunities to serve both Christians and non-Christians



through my profession. After finishing this course, I prayed that God would provide me with a job through which I could share the Good News with Muslims and other people in need. I also asked my fellow SWW leaders to pray for me, and one of them, a businessman from Tashkent, said he could help me start my own business."

"The Lord perfectly answered my prayers, and now I own a travel business, through which I book tours, provide medical insurance, make car rentals, and book flights for people traveling in Kazakhstan, Russia, and Uzbekistan. Four people from my church work with me, and we have many opportunities to talk with people, including tourists and migrant workers, as we help them with their travel needs. Many of them share their struggles with us, and we always offer to pray with them."

"Two months ago, we helped a woman who was planning to go to Russia to find work, but she was devastated, because she would have to leave her six children behind in Uzbekistan. To make matters worse, her husband went to work in Turkey several years ago, but she hasn't heard from him in a long time. This woman shared her story with tears in her eyes, and our hearts went out to her. We spent a long time praying with her, and we encouraged her to wait awhile before booking her tickets."

"After I shared the woman's story with my friends, one of them, who is a SWW graduate from Tashkent, offered her a job at his law firm. It turns out that this woman is an excellent editor, and she has extensive knowledge of legal jargon. Today, she works at home, preparing contracts and various other legal documents. Her children are all in school, and they are no longer in financial distress. The woman was so struck by God's provision for her family that she started going to church, and not long after, she put her faith in Christ. Now, all of her children go to church with her every week, and she is preparing to be baptized! This faithful woman boldly shares the Good News of Jesus with her relatives, friends, and clients, and I am so thankful that SWW and NGPLI taught me how to use my profession to serve my neighbors."

7. NGPLI and the Challenges of COVID-19



As soon as the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, young Christian professionals in Eurasia who have received ministry training through our Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI) began looking for opportunities to serve their colleagues, clients, and customers, and the entire Christian community, particularly churches and Christian organizations.

At the beginning of the pandemic, we focused on providing NGPLI training primarily for healthcare workers, but we have since expanded our efforts in 2020 to include the following:

- **Provide legal and medical advice** as well as training materials for 4,500 Christians who want to serve those in need amid social distancing, yet who lack the experience and skills they need to act. Leaders of the Association of Christian Medical Professionals and Christian Lawyers began consulting churches and missions in Belarus, Russia. The leaders of these professional associations provided consultations to churches, advising them on how to conduct ministries and mission work amid the changing legal and epidemiological landscape.
- **Provide consultations to businessmen and women who have lost their jobs** as a result of COVID-19 and need to consider switching career tracks. Through webinars and live broadcasts on social media, which were conducted with the help of our expert partners, we were able to help 600 business leaders and 2,000 entrepreneurs. In Russia, where anti-missionary laws are in force, young professional leaders organized regular meetings for their colleagues in large corporations. These meetings took place in St. Petersburg throughout the fall and winter of 2019-2020, and in April 2020, young professionals held a conference for hundreds of their clients, colleagues, and church leaders. We were impressed by the way the team worked to organize and publicize this conference online, which was broadcast on the NGPLI YouTube Channel. There were 300 registered participants who all actively participated in the conference. Conference materials remained in the public domain and have been viewed by thousands of young professionals.
- **Foster a culture of generosity, as well as provide training on financial literacy and the creation of personal and family budgets.** In April 2020, we started hosting Time to Be Generous conferences, which are aimed at reaching churches and the Christian community throughout Eurasia. The goals of these conferences are to foster a culture of generosity and giving in the Body of Christ in Eurasia, respond to the economic challenges caused by COVID-19, and stimulate the creation of new business initiatives among Christians. Mission Eurasia's "Time to Be Generous" programs have impacted at least 3,000 people. After one of these programs, Vadim from Siberia (Russia) shared this feedback: "Your message has greatly impacted me. After your program, the Lord encouraged me to start supporting a local missionary, who was working in our region. I shared this desire with my family. We prayed about it and made the final decision to provide financial support for this missionary."



NGPLI and the Challenges of COVID-19 (Cont'd)



- **Encourage local financial investment of COVID-19 ministry efforts.** According to our estimates, as a result of the efforts of the SWW leaders and our initiatives to mobilize resources from national churches, local Christians in Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, and other Eurasian countries have increased their financial investment and assistance by at least 40 percent toward helping the victims of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Provide much-needed spiritual and relief assistance to those affected by the pandemic.** SWW leaders and young professionals worked in partnership with churches, government officials, and volunteers from NGOs to help sew and deliver 20,000 masks, 13,000 hygiene kits, 10,000 food parcels, and one million copies of a specially designed Prayer Guide (“Molitvoslov”) to those in need.
- **Establish Hotlines of Hope for those in need.** While many churches in Eurasia were closed during the pandemic, some 3,000 SWW and young professional leaders trained by Mission Eurasia were available to address the needs of those in their communities 24/7. Through telephone hotlines and social media networks, these young leaders served as beacons of hope and “channels of trust” for those who called or contacted them with questions or concerns. As a result, these young leaders were able to provide spiritual and emotional support for thousands of unbelievers with whom they shared their hope in Christ and began the process of discipleship.
- **Cultivate partnerships with Christian professional communities to help those affected by COVID-19.**
 1. In Central Asia, we are partnering with Jimilya, a young Christian doctor, and The Doctors in Prayer for Colleagues and Patients movement. During the pandemic, these medical professionals have been meeting in person and via Zoom to pray for each other and their patients. As a result, at least 7,000 healthcare workers and patients received spiritual support in 2020.
 2. In Belarus, we are partnering with Artyom Adamenko, the leader of the Association of Christians in Belarus, along with other active Christian groups, to provide ministry training for churches and believers in Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. Artyom and other Association leaders are answering questions related to COVID-19 to assuage common fears among churches and Christians. They conduct personal consultations, participate in church leadership meetings of churches, develop resources and post them on their website: <http://belcms.org/>

We believe that by uniting our efforts and the efforts of our strategic partners and mobilizing the leadership potential of SWW students and NGPLI professionals, we have supported, evangelized, and impacted the lives of at least 3 million people across Eurasia during the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI) and Global Professional Outreach Initiatives

It is very important that young Christian professionals in Eurasia build relationships with like-minded people, not only in their region, but all around the world. Therefore, along with our Time for Professionals forums, we also partner with other global ministries, such as the Lausanne Movement for World Evangelization, to expand our ministry to Next Generation leaders in Eurasia.

In fact, one of the documents that we give to our NGPLI participants is *The Cape Town Commitment*, which was created during the Lausanne Movement's "Preaching the Gospel to the World" event in Cape Town, South Africa on October 16–25, 2010. This event brought together 4,200 Christian leaders from 198 different countries, including a leadership team from Mission Eurasia, and engaged several hundred thousand more Christians through meetings held all around the world.

The Cape Town Commitment consists of two parts. Part I presents several important truths found in the Bible, and Part II calls young people to actively serve God's Kingdom. Additionally, this document includes many important statements about the great impact that young Christian professionals can make on their workplaces and spheres of influence.

Below are several notable excerpts from *The Cape Town Commitment*:

- **The Bible reveals God's truth to us that the work of man is part of His good purpose. The Bible refers our work to the sphere of service, for we serve God in various forms. Nevertheless, the false doctrine of the "separation of the sacred and the secular" penetrated the way of thinking and action of the church. This doctrine teaches us that religious activity is divine, and all other activities are not. Many Christians devote most of their time to their work, in which they do not see the spiritual meaning (so-called secular work). But God is the Lord of all life. "And do everything that you do from the heart, as for the Lord, and not for men," Paul said to the slaves in the service of the Gentiles. Despite the fact that the place of work, where adult Christians mainly enter into relationships with unbelievers, provides great opportunities for evangelization and transformation, very few churches see their task as teaching parishioners how to use these opportunities. We were not able to regard our work as an important biblical phenomenon, just as we were not able to subordinate our whole lives to the rule of Christ.**
- **We regard the division into worldly and sacred as one of the main obstacles to mobilizing God's people for the fulfillment of God's purpose. We urge Christians around the world to abandon this unbiblical approach and discourage its destructive consequences. We want to break the tendency to consider ministry and missionary work (within the country and abroad) as the work of predominantly church-paid ministers and missionaries, the amount of which is only a small percentage of the whole Body of Christ.**
- **We urge all believers to accept their daily ministry and mission to be where God called them to work. We ask pastors and church leaders to support people in this ministry—in the community and in the workplace— "to arm the saints for ministry" in every aspect of their lives.**
- **Great efforts must be made to teach all of God's people through daily life-long service, which requires living, thinking, acting, and speaking from a biblical point of view and with a missionary intention in any place and under any circumstances of everyday life and work.**
- **Due to their skills, commerce, business, or profession, many Christians can go to places where traditional church founders and evangelists do not reach. What these "tent workers" and business people do in their workplace should be regarded as one aspect of the ministry of the local churches.**
- **We urge the leadership of local churches to evaluate the strategic importance of ministry at their workplace, to mobilize, equip, and send parishioners as missionaries to their workplaces, both in their own country and in countries where other forms of evangelism are impossible.**



Along with the Lausanne Movement for Global Evangelization, we have also formed NGPLI-centered partnerships with eight other like-minded ministry organizations in Eurasia:

- **Association of Christian Businessmen, Russia**
- **Christian Lawyers Association, Russia**
- **“Novomedia” Association, Ukraine**
- **Christian Medical Association, Belarus**
- **Christian Medical Association, Ukraine**
- **Christian Medical Association, Russia**
- **MARKHO (International Alliance for the Development of Christian Education), Ukraine**
- **Christian Lawyers Association, Ukraine**

Natalia's Story

On June 25-29, 2019, the Lausanne Global Workplace Forum took place in Manila, Philippines, and about 850 Christian professionals from 109 different countries participated in this unique event. Mission Eurasia was honored to have Natalia, a Christian teacher from Siberia, represent our ministry at this special event. Natalia was recognized as the best teacher in her region, she serves as a leader for the community of Christian educators in Siberia, and she spoke at our April 2018 NGPLI forum in Krasnoyarsk, Russia.

The forum in Manila strove to help Christian professionals recognize that work is a gift from God, rather than a punishment. It also called them to expand their understanding of ministry by teaching that they don't have to travel somewhere far away to serve the Lord, but rather they can serve Him right where they are through their professions. One presenter expressed that non-Christians can be introduced to God through the caring witness of their colleagues, therefore, work should be used for active ministry.

Natalia left the forum with a renewed desire to encourage and support other teachers in Russia who are serving the Lord in the midst of the escalating persecution spreading across the country. “Each day of the forum began with a time of Bible study, namely the book of Daniel, which was interpreted within the context of ministry in the workplace,” she shared. “This biblical hero shows how important it is for us to be God's witnesses in places where Christians aren't usually found. Therefore, our workplaces, where we spend 8-12 hours a day, should also be places where we express our faith in God.

“Daniel was the king's servant, and he was entrusted with managing the satraps. He endured many trials while fulfilling his professional obligations, particularly when he was thrown into the lion's den. Daniel's example teaches Christian professionals that martyrdom is a real facet of ministry in the workplace, and it encourages us to trust God more deeply so that fear doesn't drown our willingness to follow His calling.”



International Alliance for the Development of Christian Education (IADCE)

The International Alliance for the Development of Christian Education (IADCE) partners with the Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI) to provide “faith and teaching” professional development training programs and resources for Christian educators in private and public schools in the countries of the former Soviet Union (FSU). Through its IADCE representatives, Raymond and Cindy Le Clair, Mission Eurasia helps to equip an extremely influential group of Christian professionals—teachers.

As a result of the pandemic in 2020, several important in-person training events had to be canceled, including a large conference that was designed to launch a new website and teaching approach called “Faith and Science in the Classroom” (<http://vnk.mapxo.org/>).

However, the ministry of IADCE made significant progress during 2020 in a number of key areas, which are highlighted below:

- **Adapting the live four-week professional development course, “Teaching Christianly 4+,” (“4+”) into one that is fully hybrid, using a mixture of video and live participation.**
- **Translating video lectures and materials from Russian into Ukrainian.**
- **Updating websites including for “4+.” (<https://4plus.mapxo.org/>) and the IADCE main website (www.mapxo.org)**
- **Developing new promo videos in Russian and Ukrainian languages for “4+” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D209Kye2noY&feature=emb_logo) and Time for Christian Education www.mapxo.org.**
- **Translating resources on Christian education for teachers and parents into Russian and Ukrainian.**

The IADCE network now includes approximately 2,000 Christian educators of early education, elementary, and secondary schools in Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and Lithuania who now have access to quality Christian training materials and web-based resources in Russian and Ukrainian.

9. NGPLI and the Church

In 2020, a total of 680 churches throughout Eurasia were involved in NGPLI, and now we plan to engage even more church leaders in this ministry. Also, it is critical that we use NGPLI as an opportunity for young Christian professionals from a variety of denominations to catch the vision, connect, and form partnerships. That is why we have invited representatives from several Catholic and Orthodox churches to participate in many of our forums.

The majority of our church partnerships include churches from the following denominations: Evangelical Christian Baptist, Mennonite Brethren, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian. We are also excited about several new partnerships we recently formed with Presbyterian churches in Uzbekistan, Catholic churches in Belarus and Ukraine, and Orthodox churches throughout Eurasia. As churches in Eurasia become more interested in serving their communities, many of them are offering to host NGPLI training events to help prepare young people in their congregations and communities for ministry.

NGPLI, along with our many other initiatives, is actively supported by both local churches and large-scale ministry organizations, and as we present the NGPLI vision during ministry conferences and church events, our team of partners only continues to grow. Furthermore, through a wide range of activities, including roundtable discussions, presentations at local churches, training events, and interviews with our church leaders, we are spreading the NGPLI vision to the furthest corners of Eurasia.

One of the senior pastors from the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in Belarus, one of our ministry partners, recently shared his thoughts about NGPLI: “It is just what the church needs today in order to motivate talented young Christians to see their professions as opportunities to bring the gospel to their workplaces and society.”

Ruslan's Story

In February 2018, SWW leaders from Kazakhstan invited their friends to an NGPLI roundtable discussion in Almaty. More than 40 young professionals participated in this event, including Ruslan. “I had heard about the roundtable, and I was very interested in the topic, but at first, I didn’t know if I’d be able to go,” he shares. “My daughter was sick with a fever, so my wife and I asked our pastor to pray for her, and the day before the roundtable, her temperature dropped! Our pastor said it was a sign that God was blessing my trip, so I decided to attend the roundtable. At that time, I had very little experience with sharing my faith at work (I’m in business), because most of my coworkers are Muslim, so I took many notes during the roundtable.

“When I returned home, my pastor invited me to share what I learned at the roundtable with the leaders of our church, so using my notes, I explained the importance of NGPLI. My pastor listened very attentively, and two weeks later, he shared a story with me. There is a woman named Saule who attends our church and is the manager of a large, successful company. She faithfully donates a lot of money to our church, so my pastor decided to do something he had never done before. He called Saule and asked if he could visit her office and pray for her company. He also shared that he was inspired to do this after hearing about what I learned at the roundtable.

“After my pastor arrived at Saule’s office, she offered him tea, and he asked her how he could support her in prayer. Saule immediately burst into tears. ‘I have a very hard job, pastor,’ she shared. ‘For three years, I have given money to the church, but today, through you, the church has offered to help me. Thank you!’ After their first meeting, my pastor decided to continue visiting and praying with Saule every week.

“Two months ago, Saule started inviting her seven female colleagues to eat lunch with her, and during their time together, she shares Bible stories and offers to pray for them. All of the women love going to these meetings, and one of them shared that she had wanted to know more about Christ for a long time, but she was too afraid to go to church. Praise God for NGPLI, which encouraged my pastor to proclaim his faith beyond the church walls!”





Ministering to Victims of Protests in Belarus

In May 2020, protests began in Belarus in advance of the presidential election on August 9 that many believed would be fraudulent. Mass protests then unfolded throughout Belarus on election day because protestors believed that authorities were falsifying elections results in favor of the incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko. During the clashes, law enforcement officials often used illegal and unjustified cruelty. Hundreds of protestors were injured and thousands were prosecuted. Many lost their jobs, were forced to pay heavy fines, and ended up in prison.

The Christian community in Belarus reacted differently to this crisis. Most churches were simply not ready to articulate their position; some Christian leaders supported those who demanded justice. NGPLI leaders in Belarus also faced a difficult choice: how to response to acts of civil disobedience. We are grateful to God that most of our leaders found the right solution and took the position of serving those who are suffering and seeking justice in their country.

Young professionals from the Christian business community, together with SWW students, prepared 150 food parcels for needy family members who lost their jobs due to their civil and political position. They also purchased medical kits for those who were violently attacked by security forces and needed medication as well as psychological help. The food parcels and medical kits were delivered to about 700 people in eight cities throughout Belarus.

In October 2020, amid ongoing protests, NGPLI leaders, SWW leaders, and local church leaders organized and hosted a conference called “Church and Society.” The purpose of the conference was to help churches in Belarus serve as a prophetic voice for the country and support all those who need comfort and hope. A total of 75 leaders representing 22 Christian communities from seven cities in Belarus, including SWW leaders and young professionals, met to analyze the situation, pray, and develop an updated strategy for the ministry.

Groups of Christian medical workers and Christian psychologists have played a significant role in the ministry of young professionals in Belarus. In November 2020, these communities organized a conference called “Defeating the Crisis” as well as a series of retreats to provide training for Christians offering medical and counseling assistance to those affected by the protests in the country. The total number of Christians who received support and training during these retreats and the conference exceeded 400 people. In turn, they provided comfort and assistance to at least 3,000 Belarusian citizens who suffered during the protests.

Natalia, the leader of the Christian Psychology movement, Natalia, shares: “Many people suffer from injustice, violence, and hopelessness. Realizing this, Christian professionals, including therapists, doctors, and coaches connect and combine their professional expertise and evangelical values to serve their society in crisis. In this ministry, the best question to ask is “why?” By answering this question, we learn to believe, help, and win others to Christ.”



Ministering to Refugees from the War Between Armenia and Azerbaijan

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region has a long and complex history. It has become a defining factor in post-Soviet history and an integral part of the modern identity of Armenia and Azerbaijan. On September 27, 2020, the military conflict erupted into full-scale war. As a result, thousands of people perished and more than a million residents of both countries became refugees.

In response to this humanitarian crisis, NGPLI leaders and SWW leaders took an active role in serving these victims of war and sharing the gospel with them.

Their ministry focused on two major needs: providing humanitarian aid in the form of food, clothing, warm blankets, and copies of Scripture to the traumatized refugees; and providing training for church leaders and church volunteers on how to help victims of war during this crisis.

By the end of 2020, young professionals and SWW students, together with Mission Eurasia's international partners, packed and delivered about 6,000 emergency food packs, containing food, clothing, copies of Scripture, and other essential items to Armenian and Azerbaijani refugees who fled from the war. Through this ministry, Mission Eurasia's young leaders trained through NGPLI and SWW demonstrated the compassionate heart of God and Christian care to thousands in distress.

Before the military conflict began, a young Christian businessman named Tigran (whose name has been changed for security reasons) ran his own agricultural business and was an active leader in a local NGPLI community of Christian businessmen. But during the war, Tigran was drafted into the army and was stationed in the war zone, although he never fired a single shot. Instead, he testified to other soldiers about Christ and prayed for them. When military operations ceased, Tigran began buying food and other essential items and would deliver these goods to families who lost their husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons during the war. These trips represent the ministry of just one NGPLI leader who joyfully shares his faith and resources with others in great need.

During the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, NGPLI leaders were also involved in training and supporting church leaders and volunteers so that they could provide psychological, medical, and legal assistance to the victims of war. As a result, NGPLI leaders, including medical doctors, psychologists/therapists, and counselors organized one forum, two conferences, and six training seminars for 400 church leaders and volunteers. NGPLI leaders from Belarus and Ukraine also participated in these training events and shared their experience of ministering to people in crisis situations. In this way, NGPLI leaders served as bridges, connecting Christian communities in various countries to the needs of suffering people in Eurasia.

10. 2020 Focus: Entrepreneurs and Establishing a Culture of Giving in the Church and Business Community

We are actively developing special NGPLI training initiatives for Christian entrepreneurs and businessmen and women, who have the opportunity to financially support long-term ministry projects, while also encouraging their churches and fellow businessmen to do the same. This is a critically important endeavor, because very few Christian professionals in Eurasia are actively giving in support of ministry initiatives.

More specifically, most Christian businessmen and women in Eurasia are happy to invest in short-term, emotionally-charged ministry projects, such as one-time gifts for sick children, orphans, refugees, etc., but very few of them are interested in supporting long-term projects aimed at church growth and societal transformation.

Therefore, through NGPLI, we are providing training for Christian entrepreneurs and businessmen and women who already understand Kingdom values, give generously, and want to help ministry projects in Eurasia become more self-sufficient and independent from foreign aid. By equipping and mobilizing these young leaders to invest in long-term ministry projects, these projects will be more effective and more significantly impact Eurasian society.

In order to prepare young Christian entrepreneurs and businessmen and women to create a culture of giving within their churches and professions, we adapted, translated, and developed six new resources on the topic of generous giving. These include the “Seven-Day Generosity Challenge” handbook and video lessons, “Seven Characteristics of a Generous Church” handbook, and the “Time to be Generous” eight-part broadcast series. NGPLI leaders used these resources to conduct 60 training seminars in which more than 1,300 Christian entrepreneurs took place from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Georgia. As a result of these training events, we estimate that these Christian entrepreneurs were able to reach more than 3,000 colleagues and clients with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In addition to in-person training events, NGPLI conducted 10 online training events on the themes of generosity, budgeting, and raising local support for ministries. At least 9,000 entrepreneurs involved in construction, IT, private education, healthcare centers, team building, agriculture, and church leadership attended these online events. We believe that these efforts have contributed significantly to creating a culture of generosity among Christian entrepreneurs and church leaders in Eurasia. For example, Denis Gorenkov, Mission Eurasia’s international director for NGPLI, led a training session on the importance of generosity and sacrificial giving for 70 Christian businessmen at a large evangelical church in the city of Vinnitsa, Ukraine. Immediately following this training event, the participants raised enough funds to purchase a vehicle for missionaries from the church who are ministering in remote villages in this region of Ukraine.

It is imperative that young Christian professionals in Eurasia learn to overcome their society’s focus on consumerism, and recognize the importance of giving sacrificially to ministry projects. In so doing, these young leaders can help strengthen their churches, along with ministry projects all across their homeland, so we will continue using NGPLI to establish a culture of giving among Christian entrepreneurs, businessmen and women, and other young professionals in Eurasia so they can serve as examples for their churches and peers.

Thanks to our strategic NGPLI training events, communities of young Christian professionals are growing throughout Eurasia. In particular, we have developed seven communities of Christian entrepreneurs and businessmen in Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Armenia. Together, these 800 young leaders host prayer breakfasts, TED-style lectures, meetings with experts, mentoring sessions, and much more. Overall, we are training young Christian professionals who are willing and able to equip other Christian entrepreneurs and businessmen and women with a biblical vision for their churches, ministry efforts, and society.

Farukh's Story

Pastor Farukh lives in southern Uzbekistan near the border with Afghanistan. "I have not been able to leave Uzbekistan for a long time, because the authorities forbid me from doing so," he shares. "Things have gotten better, but for a while, my family endured persecution every day." Pastor Farukh and his family have long been the only Christians in their town, and as a result, their neighbors reject them. For example, when Umida, Pastor Farukh's wife, was seriously ill due to the poor quality of their drinking water, their neighbors said that Allah was punishing her for betraying him. On another occasion, after Umida gave birth to their son, Pastor Farukh arranged a party for the community at their home, as is customary for Uzbek families, but no one came. "We cooked a lot of food and waited for hours, but nobody came," Umida recalls with sadness.

Thankfully, God has blessed Pastor Farukh and Umida with many children, along with a church in Tashkent that faithfully supports them. Also, because this church hosts SWW sessions, many SWW teachers and students help Pastor Farukh and his family with their ministry efforts. They recently came up with the idea to help Pastor Farukh plant pomegranate trees and dig a community well, because the area where his family lives is very hot, which is perfect for pomegranate trees, but makes getting water difficult. Pastor's Farukh's neighbors often struggle to find clean drinking water, and the local Christians are regularly fined by the local authorities, which drains their finances. In order to help their struggling brothers and sisters, the church in Tashkent, along with Western supporters, helped Pastor Farukh and several other believers in his area acquire land, plant pomegranate trees, and dig a deep well and water storage unit.

"This was such a great blessing to us," Pastor Farukh shares. "Thanks to the pomegranate gardens, all of the Christians in our area have jobs, so now we can pay the fines that the state imposes on us. Also, thanks to our SWW training, we realized how a community well and water storage unit could help us share the gospel with our neighbors." After everything was ready, Pastor Farukh and the other Christians told their neighbors about the well and invited them to take as much water as they needed. Thanks to the well's depth and filtration system, its water is the best in the entire district. "Now, people come to the well, take water, and sit with us in the shade of the pomegranate trees and talk about Jesus," Pastor Farukh adds. "Several families have joined our church, and the local mullah now treats us with respect. We are giving people drinking water, but more importantly, we are telling them about the living water of God's Word."

Today, Pastor Farukh leads secret SWW sessions for about 30 young people in his home. These young leaders dream of becoming missionaries in Afghanistan, and they are very actively preparing for ministry work. In the afternoons, they work in the pomegranate gardens, and in the evenings, they study. Furthermore, on the weekends, they, along with Pastor Farukh, go to the well and share the gospel with everyone who comes to get water.

11. Closing Thoughts on NGPLI from Mission Eurasia Field Ministries Leaders



Denis Gorenkov, NGPLI International Director

Denis Gorenkov is a Ukrainian national leader who has been actively involved in missions since accepting Christ at the age of 18.

In 2007, Denis became co-director of International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) in Ukraine. He joined Mission Eurasia in 2015 and, as the current director of Mission Eurasia's Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI), Denis uses his experience and expertise to train young Christian professionals to reach their professions and communities for Christ. Denis and his wife Elena have two children: Olga and Ilya.

NGPLI is strategically important for every country in Eurasia, but especially for the countries in which religious persecution is escalating, such as Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. As one young Christian businessman shared, "If you are a good worker, then people will trust you. And if you are trusted as a professional, then people may also trust your beliefs. This is the basis for sharing Christ in the workplace."

In 2020, NGPLI grew significantly, and now this strategic ministry continues to bear fruit for God's Kingdom. **We are currently reaching 30,000 young professionals through NGPLI**, and the dynamic growth of the community of Christian medical professionals in Kazakhstan is particularly exciting. At first, we thought this community would be relatively small due to escalating religious persecution in the country, however, over the last two years, young Christian medical professionals in Kazakhstan have been actively sharing their faith and inviting other medical workers to join their community. In fact, so many new medical professionals joined the community that they had to start a new one. Today, young Christian medical professionals in Kazakhstan are continuing to proclaim the gospel in the midst of persecution.

Along with the growing ministry of young Christian medical professionals in Kazakhstan, after our October 2018 NGPLI forum in Minsk, Belarus, young medical professionals, psychologists, and IT specialists also started new communities in Belarus and Russia. Today, the community of psychologists meets in Minsk, the community of IT specialists meets in Brest, and two communities of medical professionals meet in Minsk and St. Petersburg. These communities are igniting a movement among young professionals throughout Eurasia.

As we consider the future of NGPLI, it is crucial that we take into account the large-scale, perhaps irreversible changes caused by COVID-19 as we motivate and train Christian entrepreneurs and businessmen and women to invest in long-term projects that will impact their churches, communities, and nations. That is why we are focusing on the following changes for the next stages of development of NGPLI:

- Place maximum emphasis on the development and support of small (up to 10-15 people), strategic groups of young professionals. Since there may be restrictions on largescale, in-person projects in the nearest future, we will aim to develop small groups by carefully selecting members who can strategically impact others.

Closing Thoughts on NGPLI from Mission Eurasia Field Ministries Leaders (Cont'd)

- Make the most of web-based training opportunities to deliver strategic messages with speeches, interviews, discussions with professionals from specific areas, discussions with church leaders, etc. We believe that such formats will become our main method to achieve many of our goals.
- Look for every opportunity to support one of our key groups of professionals: businessmen-entrepreneurs. As a result of COVID-19, there has been a significant reduction in business and a drop in investments and income. In the future, along with training Christian entrepreneurs, we understand that it will be necessary to help them find resources and strategies for the survival of their businesses in order to continue developing our “Business as Mission” model. At the same time, we plan to continue fostering a culture of generosity and giving in the Christian community, because we believe that the values of this culture will enable believers not only to thrive, but also impact other people for the Kingdom, including their colleagues, friends, family, and brothers and sisters in Christ.
- We will continue to develop communities of young professionals who will regularly meet and plan their own ministry initiatives. While we will be hosting fewer NGPLI training events, we will be doing more to stimulate growth within existing communities of young professionals all across Eurasia.

As we reflect on 2020, we are happy to share that we met all of our goals for NGPLI, and we can confidently say that this initiative will continue to be one of the most influential ministry programs in Eurasia. In the midst of escalating religious persecution, the COVID-19 pandemic and growing separation between churches, training and equipping Next Generation professional leaders for ministry in their workplaces and spheres of influence is one of the most effective ways to transform Eurasian society for Christ.

NGPLI: Turning Challenges into Ministry Opportunities



Dr. Michael Cherenkov
Executive Field Director
Mission Eurasia

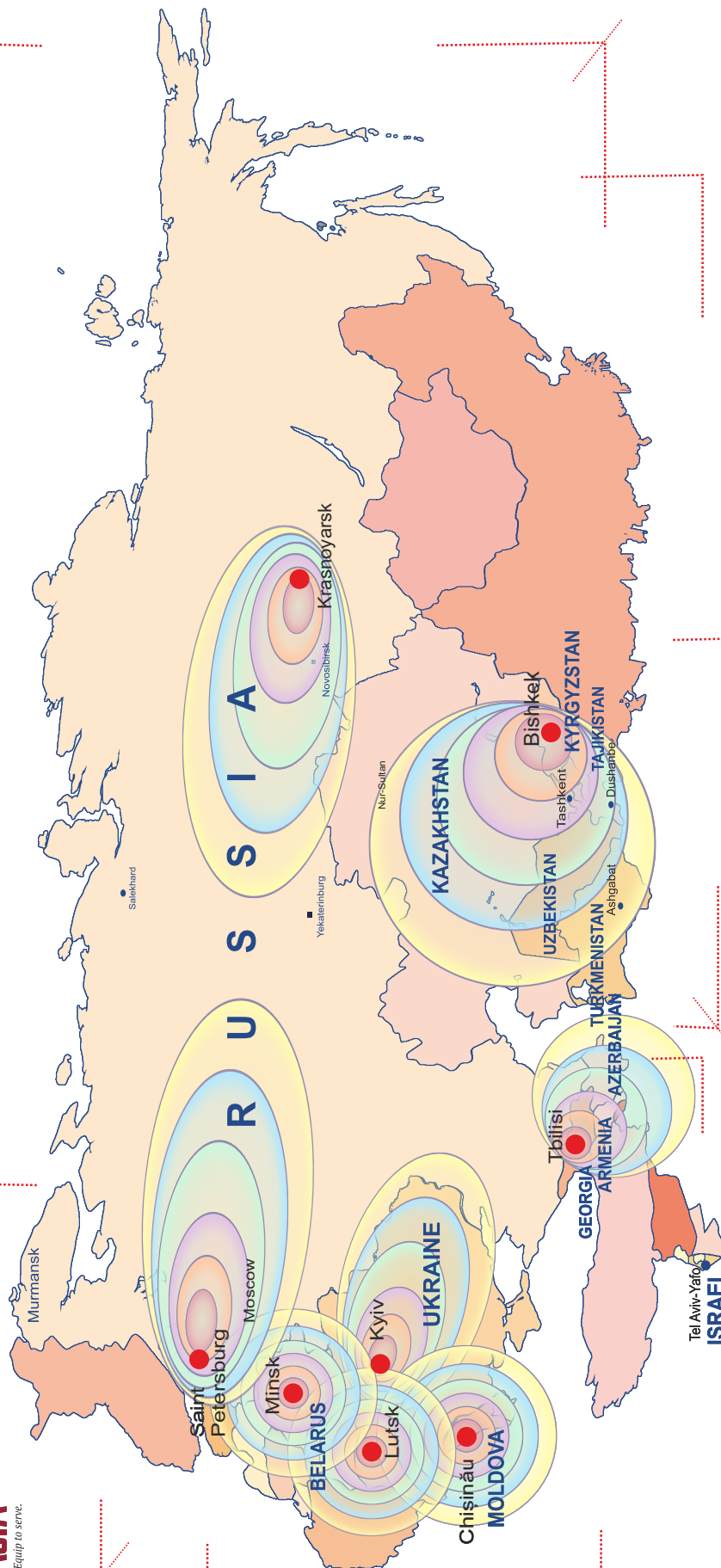
Dr. Michael (Mykhailo) Cherenkov serves as the executive director of Mission Eurasia Field Ministries. He has taught at several Christian universities in Ukraine and is the author of numerous publications, including five essay collections on the church's prospects in the modern world as well as two books on evangelical Protestantism. Dr. Cherenkov and his wife, Nina, have four daughters: Karolina, Vasilisa, Michelle, and Sara Stefani.

Our Next Generation Professional Leaders Initiative (NGPLI), which is designed to mobilize young professionals for evangelistic ministry in their communities, has already become a real movement. This movement is spreading rapidly, reaching new churches and regions, however, it needs strategic leadership, new ideas, and resources. We can celebrate success, but we also must be responsible for the future—to lay foundations for sustainable growth and to attract new leaders and programs. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to make adjustments to our plans, restricting us from holding large events and training seminars. At the same time, this crisis has directed us to focus more on the professionals serving on the front lines. Today, everyone is praying for doctors and teachers. Today, when churches are closed, everyone understands that professional Christians are still on the front lines. They are visible to everyone. And this experience should transform us forever. We do not need to wait for a new crisis. Instead, we need to mobilize the entire church to serve young professionals, or rather, to mobilize the entire church through the ministry of young professionals, through their training, care, and support. If they are at the forefront of the church, then they deserve better treatment and better resources. In the coming years, we will focus on helping those professional communities that are critical to the life of society as a whole; those groups that can move to the front lines at any moment. By helping us to equip them, you are helping the entire church serve the entire community. And then the motto of the Lausanne movement will be fully implemented: “Whole Church – Whole Gospel – Whole World.”

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

Ephesians 3:20-21

NGPLI Impact in 2020-Eurasia and Israel



Forum
«Calling. Faith. Impact.»

80 conferences
and seminars
for young
professionals

Impact of professionals
on their colleagues
and clients:
80,000 non-Christian
colleagues and clients
heard the gospel

Christian professionals,
who went through
NGPLI training:

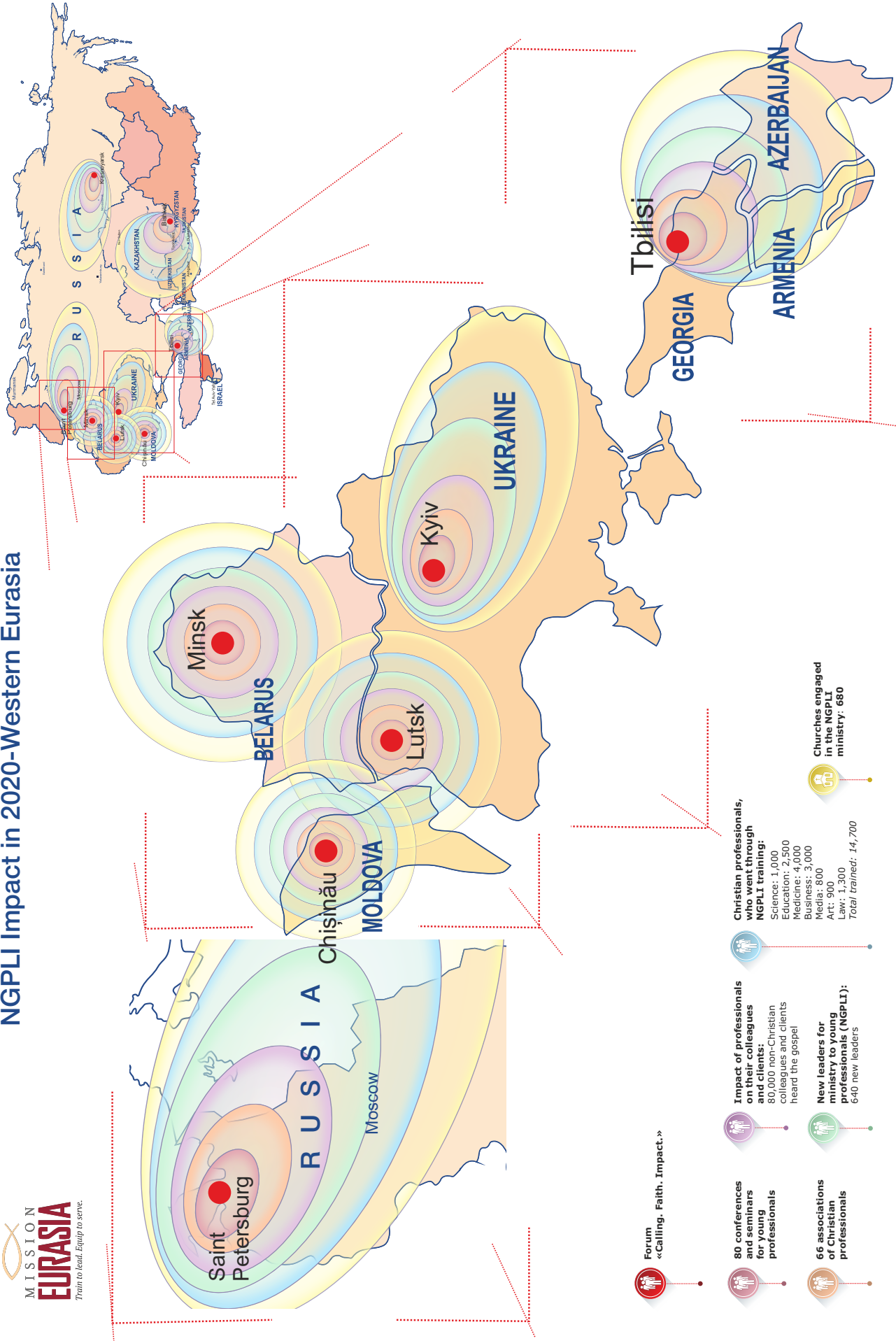
Science: 1,000
Education: 2,500
Medicine: 4,000
Business: 3,000
Media: 800
Art: 900
Law: 1,300
Total trained: 14,700

66 associations
of Christian
professionals

New leaders for
ministry to young
professionals (NGPLI):
640 new leaders

Churches engaged
in the NGPLI
ministry: 680

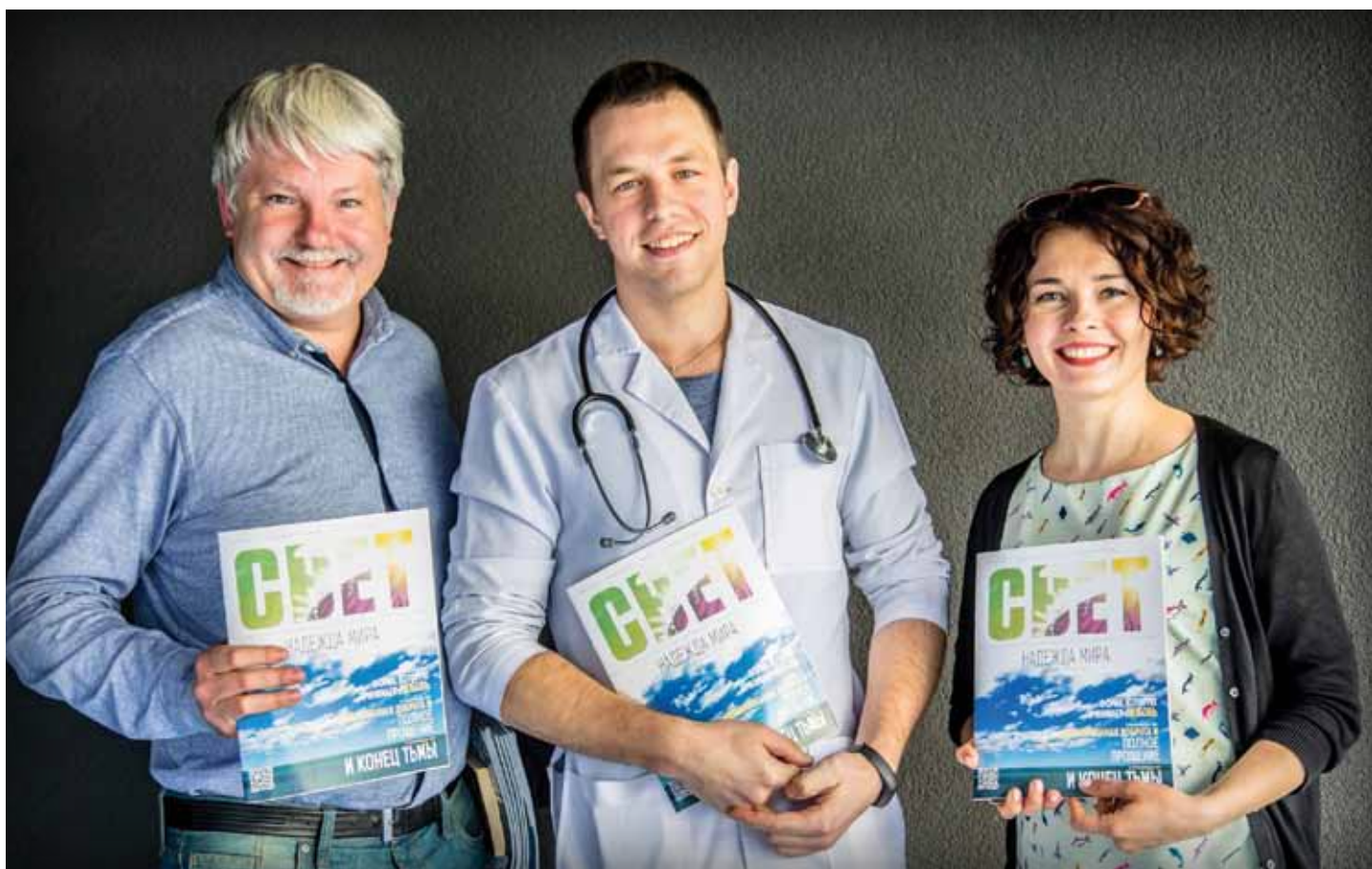
NGPLI Impact in 2020-Western Eurasia





Our Mission

To train, equip, and mobilize Christian leadership throughout Eurasia who will engage in indigenous evangelism, church planting, holistic ministries, and church growth by developing creative and strategic ministries and by facilitating partnerships between nationals and Western Christians.



EMAIL:

info@missioneurasia.org

WEB:

www.missioneurasia.org

FACEBOOK:

facebook.com/missioneurasia

TWITTER & INSTAGRAM:

@MissionEurasia

MISSION EURASIA-US:

P.O. Box 100
Franklin, TN 37064

PHONE:

(630) 462-1739
(888) 462-7639 (toll free)

FAX: (630) 690-2976

MISSION EURASIA-CANADA:

8-975 Elgin St.
P.O. Box 22003
Cobourg, ON K9A 5J0

PHONE: (833) 387-2727

