



TAKING TIME TO THRIVE

Reporting on Tim’s First 100 Days

IFES celebrated the beginning of Tim Adams’s role as IFES General Secretary on January 1st, 2021. He has long been an important element of the fellowship’s leadership, and we know that God has brought him to this place to serve our fellowship well as we enter a new season for our ministry. This report is intended as a brief pause to join with Tim in his first 100 days and to reflect on what he’s accomplished and where we are going as a fellowship. We hope you find this to be helpful and a blessing.



A TIME OF LEARNING AND PLANNING

Tim Adams was appointed IFES General Secretary as our fellowship was preparing to lay out our new strategic plan, giving him the opportunity to coordinate that plan with his vision for IFES ministry. This comes after a period of learning about the great diversity of our members as they serve across the entire globe. Throughout 2019 and 2020, IFES did extensive research and evaluation into the trends affecting the global university to develop a snapshot of the priority concerns for our different regions. The infographic on the right is the summary of these findings. This will inform our current priorities and the direction our ministry will take in the coming years.

Tim has made it a priority to surround himself with leaders from around the world to provide counsel during his first months in the position of IFES General Secretary. He has taken on a truly unique role at the head of a uniquely diverse fellowship, and the guidance of different voices reflect the breadth of the fellowship – helping to nurture a global perspective for Tim’s decisions. This group consists of Regional Secretaries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America as well as representatives of our global team. Tim has

TOP 3 GLOBAL TRENDS AFFECTING STUDENT MINISTRY (BY REGION)



also reached out to former IFES General Secretaries for their advice and learnings from their experience. Each impressed on him that the role of General Secretary is a spiritual position first – don't lose sight of that as you focus on the details, the organization, and the activity. Keep Christ at the center.

With the input of the global trends and the counsel he received, Tim has laid out a statement of our shared calling.

OUR SHARED CALLING

As a truly global fellowship, it is crucial for IFES to celebrate the unity of our calling. We must continue to build a deep understanding of our shared mission across every region in our network while ensuring local ownership of ministries is the driving force behind our work. We are an expression of the global Church – one body made of all nations, tongues, and tribes.

An important element in that unity is a clear expression of our vision and purpose as a fellowship. To that end, Tim Adams has laid out key elements of our shared calling that form the core of our next strategic vision. We are called to be Christ's witness on campus and beyond, develop committed and godly disciples, expand to new cities and countries, and build ministries that last.

Be Christ's witness on campus and beyond

Our primary focus is students reaching students with the gospel. This is our expression of the call found in Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

To help Tim develop a keen understanding of the impact of our student ministries, he has begun a virtual tour to meet with students and staff of different national movements around the world. This provides the opportunity for him to hear how the lives of students across the world are being changed by the power of the gospel.

The first "stop" was with LIVF-Lebanon. Tim met with LIVF general secretary Farah, student planning coordinator Rita, and student Emil. After experiencing the Beirut Blast in August 2020, which left 300,000 people homeless and more than 7,500 injured, Emil's struggling belief in God was almost gone. One night he had said to God "this is the last chance. If you exist, show me." To Emil's great amazement, he received an invitation just seconds later to join an online Bible Study hosted by LIVF. Emil also worked through the gospel of John one-on-one with an LIVF staff worker. The process renewed



Tim Adams (top right) meeting with LIVF-Lebanon staff and students: student planning coordinator Rita (top left), LIVF general secretary Farah (bottom left), and student Emil (bottom right)

his faith, and he describes the experience as a spiritual rebirth. Testimonies such as these the heart of our ministry, and the other aspects of our shared calling is to build support to ensure this outreach is as effective and long-lasting as possible.

Develop committed and godly disciples

Students are at a critical time in their lives, and their experiences at university often lay a foundation that sets the trajectory for the rest of their lives. By building their discipleship, we are equipping students for a lifelong journey of faith and transformative impact wherever they are.

As the global trends study highlighted, many issues that impact our ministry vary across the world, while others affect multiple regions. It will be a priority to resource the ministries addressing the needs that are relevant – nationally, regionally, and globally – to ensure we meet the needs of students today.

Digital Transformation:

The experience of 2020 has accelerated our use of technology to nurture the faith and leadership of our staff and students. We must build on the opportunities that has provided – both creating access to our resources and fostering digital communities that develop lifelong disciples of Christ. Through the Living Stones Vision, IFES has invested building strong programs to grow organizational effectiveness across the fellowship, such as Governance Development, Indigenous Support Development, and Ministry Impact evaluation. We have seen a great impact from these programs, and we want to ensure that our work in building strong and self-sustaining ministries addresses the needs of our ministries today and in the future.

Online Fellowship and Connection:

On January 20, we invited our global and regional teams to an online event to focus on fellowship through sharing a devotional and prayer in small groups – with live translation in French and Spanish. The online event was very well received and will continue as a semi-annual opportunity for our global staff to grow as a community. As our staff take more opportunities to work remotely, the need to intentionally build spaces for fellowship continues to grow and is a part of Tim’s vision for our global and regional teams.

Expand to new cities and countries

Active in over 170 countries, we celebrate the blessings God has given us in reaching new campuses across the world, and we recognize that the work is far from complete. We are committed to seeing vibrant Christian ministry on every university in the world.

The success of our recent Breaking New Ground initiative has underscored the passion our staff and students have for reaching new populations of students. Our emphasis is to energize a new generation of leaders, resource their creative energy,

and facilitating international collaboration.

Building relationships with local churches ensures new student groups are indigenously led and serve their community. These partnerships both open doors that are otherwise closed to and encourage students to invest in those around them.

Build ministries that last

It is easy to start something; it is much harder to sustain. To ensure ministries last, we need to be intentional about investing in our staff, good organizational structure and governance, sustainable funding models, and strong partnerships throughout the fellowship.

Building a Senior Staff Team to Serve

A priority Tim had for his first quarter was to reinforce the structure for the IFES Senior Staff team to respond to its growth over the years. This new structure introduces three positions into the Executive team to ensure our regional secretaries, global ministry directors, and International Services officers receive the direct administrative and ministerial support needed to thrive in their positions. Tim hopes that these positions will be able to be filled throughout the summer.

Organizational Effectiveness:

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WHAT'S NEXT?

Tim is hopeful that international travel can begin again in the coming months, so that his tour of national movements can also be in person. He has a desire to visit movements working in sensitive and closed contexts, so that he can learn from how they serve and better understand how to serve them well.

Later this year, the new IFES Strategic Plan will be launched, built on the research done and the new global calling laid out by Tim. This plan will help shape our priorities and plans over the next decade. We are excited to see how God shines the light of the gospel in universities and beyond through the plans and initiatives that come out of this plan. And we look forward to sharing it with you when it launches.

Thank you for your partnership with us in this exciting time of transition and opportunity for IFES. You have joined us in the good work of bringing lifechanging hope to students across the globe. Thank you for your prayers and support!