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**ABSTRACT**

**SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT  
AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR BASARWA  
IN BOTSWANA, AFRICA**

**by**

**Boitirelo Kabo**

**Adviser: David Penno**

## ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE RESEARCH

Project Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR BASARWA IN BOTSWANA, AFRICA

Name of researcher: Boitirelo Kabo

Name and degree of adviser: David Penno, Ph.D.

Date completed: December 2010

### Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist church in Botswana, although being among the fastest growing churches in the country, has not been able to reach the Basarwa tribe since 1921. This is in spite of the church's best effort. Among the contributing factors is the apparent failure by the church to develop a culturally relevant approach that considers the Basarwa unique lifestyle and a lack of Basarwa church leaders.

### Methodology

Surveys were administered among the Basarwa in four districts to establish their awareness of the church and factors that hinder them from joining the church. Training on church leadership for the Basarwa was conducted. Literature was reviewed on the

lifestyle of the Basarwa, the work of other Christian organizations among the Basarwa, and lessons were drawn from the government's approaches on implementing change among the Basarwa. Finally a proposal for church leadership recruitment and training program will be submitted to the Union and the Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division as a contribution on how to reach unique peoples of the world.

### Results

The project revealed a concern for the spiritual condition of the Basarwa, and raised awareness about the need for Basarwa leaders in the Basarwa communities. It also indentified some possible future Basarwa leaders who could be recruited and trained for church leadership.

### Conclusions

On the basis of these findings and proposal, the Church should be deliberate in the recruitment and training for the Basarwa during the period 2010-2015.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT  
AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR BASARWA  
IN BOTSWANA, AFRICA

A Project Report

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

Boitirelo Kabo

December 2010

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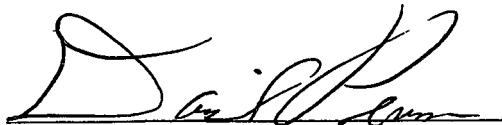
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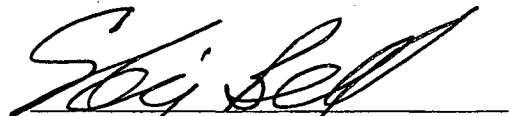
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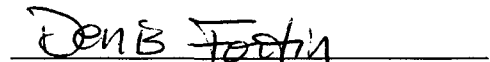
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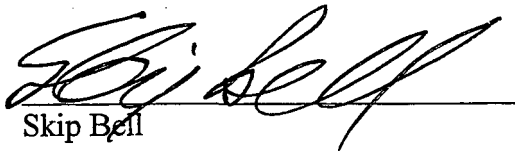
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March 21, 2011

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Finally, I thank the Lord Almighty for sustenance, for affording me the opportunity to minister and for good health.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

#### **Historical Context**

The Basarwa, who are the first inhabitants of Botswana, are known for their unique traditional lifestyle, including the clicks in their languages. They are found in most of the districts of the country. They are probably the most wide spread tribal groups in Botswana. However, it is an issue of concern that though the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been working in the country since 1921, the Basarwa continue to be an un-reached tribe as compared to other tribes in the country. This fact contributes in part to their lamentable status of being among the least privileged people group in the country. This apparent failure is a concern considering the efforts that the church has made to reach them with the Gospel.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the Basarwa people in the country of Botswana, together with the facilities that have been provided to them in their various settlements.

#### **Personal Background**

From 2005 to the present I have served as the executive secretary of the Botswana Union Mission. Previously I served as the president of the North Botswana Field, a departmental director at both the North Botswana conference and the South Botswana conference. I have also served in the two conferences as a local pastor in three of the districts. Throughout my twenty-two years of ministry I have had a conviction to grow

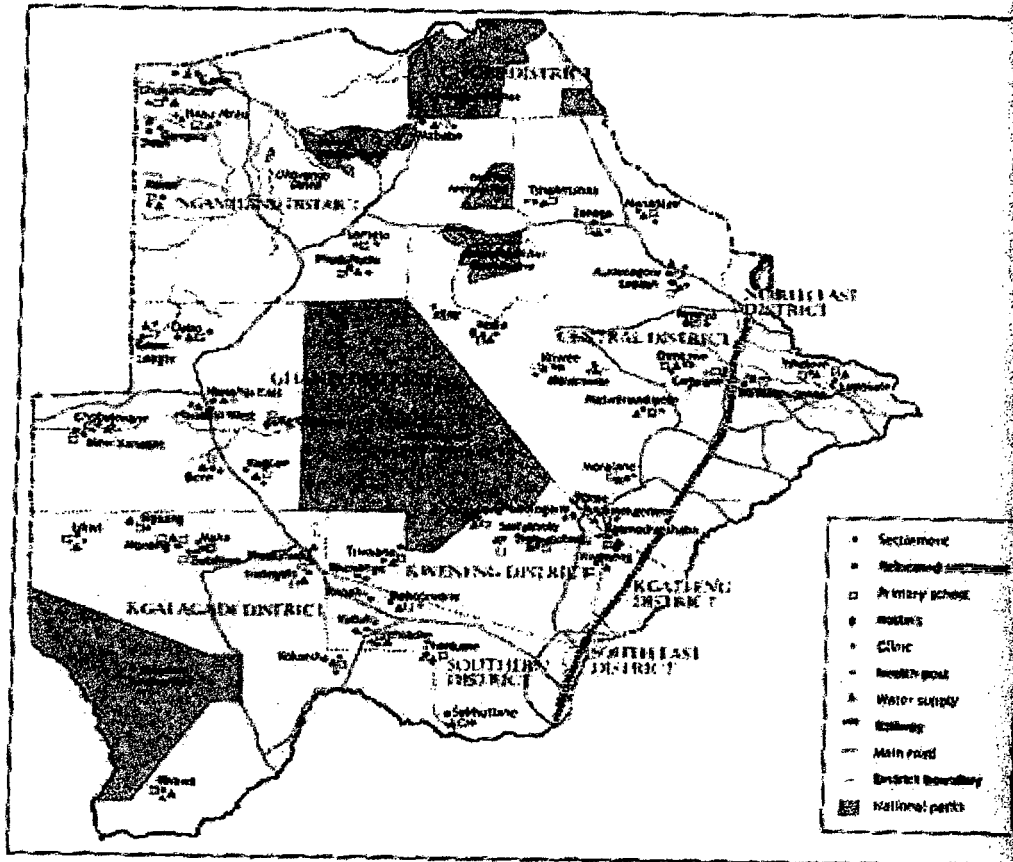


Figure 1. The Map showing the distribution of the Basarwa in Botswana. (Good, 2009, p. 104).

the church in all the different tribes of Botswana. I have been motivated by the command of Rev 14:6 to take the gospel “unto all nations, tribes and people.” With this conviction also came the thought that all believers have the potential to serve in a leadership role. Throughout my ministry I have encouraged young people in my churches to join the ministry. It was with pleasure and gratitude to God that I was able to see three of my

former young people join the ministry at different times.

I grew up in Maun in the northwest district of the country, where I observed the Basarwa, who were a poor tribal group of people. Their main responsibility was to serve as herdsmen to those families in the community who owned cattle. They were basically a community of people who heavily indulged in the drinking of alcohol and smoking. Their children did not go to the same schools as we did. Rather, they accompanied their parents in their daily work. Later on in life, when I joined the church, the Basarwa were uniquely absent both as church members and church leaders.

As I served in the pastoral and administrative work of the church, I watched helplessly as the church recycled its programs in its attempt to reach the Basarwa, with no success despite an enormous effort to be innovative. My initial response to this constant failure to reach the Basarwa with the Word of God was that the failure of the church's efforts was due to their "nomadic" life style.

A few years ago I developed a passion to study church growth patterns in the Botswana Union and the variables that may be influencing growth in the Union territory. I discovered that the church seems to grow fastest in areas where the missionaries first made an early impact. This explained why the church was growing fastest in Kanye and Maun where the missionaries established hospitals. This growth was later to spread to other parts of the country.

I also came to understand that this growth seemed to be along tribal lines and some tribes seemed to grow faster than others. In this regard, I noted that the church seemed to grow faster in those areas where at some point in history the church had a pastoral or leadership presence. This seemed to account for the growth of the church in

the Bokalaka area, the central district, the Bashubia in the Chobe district, the Bayei, and the Bakgaladi. It became very clear that tribes that have not had any Seventh-day Adventist church leadership were almost unreached tribes regardless of their proximity to the tribes that had been reached. Examples include the Baheherero, who co-exist with the Bayei and Batawana, yet the church has not made any meaningful impact on them; the Batswapong and the Babirwa; the Basarwa who are scattered throughout the country and co-exist with the Babukhushu, Bakgalagadi, and Bayei. The church has made inroads with these other tribes as at some point they have had indigenous church leaders. It became apparent that the issues of ownership and the relevance of the message cannot be ignored. Therefore the challenge is the recruitment and training of local leaders. It was from this platform that I intend to make recruitment and training of church leaders to be an alternative church growth strategy among unreached people groups.

In 1998, I did a short research paper for my Masters in Pastoral Ministry at Solusi University in Zimbabwe, to find out why the Baherero of the Ngamiland were not joining the Adventist church. Although on the surface it was suggested that the Baherero identified with the Lutheran church because of the clothing which they received from that church, other evidence suggested that the Baherero, who came from Namibia in the 1970s, had a sense of ownership of the church because their former colonizers had invested in them by training some of them to lead out in their local churches. At the same time they viewed the Adventist church as militant against their culture. The Lutheran church was seen to be culturally compatible with them. In 1998 I wrote a unpublished paper on this topic. From this short paper I developed an interest not only to study trends that tend to hinder church growth in the country, but also to attempt to mobilize local



leadership to overcome these obstacles so that the church in Botswana could continue to grow.

Initially, I had intended to continue this study and even recruit more Baherero to train as leaders, but due to the fact that many Baherero went back to Namibia in the following years, leaving just a few candidates, and the fact that the church is gradually making some inroads among them, I abandoned that project. From this study it was observed that ownership, which includes local leadership, can be more important than correct doctrine.

When I enrolled with Andrews University for the Doctor of Ministry in Leadership Cohort in 2007, I decided to revive the same passion for leadership development as an alternative church growth strategy. I decided to do it among the Basarwa who are more numerous and have been in the country for the longest period of any other tribe in the country, though there are no Mosarwa church leaders or any significant church membership among the Basarwa. I also realized that although the Basarwa are probably the most studied group of people in the country, there has been little or no research done on their response to the Christian faith.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The first inhabitants of Botswana, the Basarwa, with a population of over 60,000 (Williams, 1991) live in almost all districts of Botswana, with a heavy presence in the northwestern parts. Although the Seventh-day Adventist church has existed in Botswana since 1921, and its message has reached most of the tribal groups in the country, the Basarwa remain an un-reached people group. The church's attempts to reach them through public evangelism, personal witnessing, infrastructural developments, and

community services have yielded minimal results.

As of 2009, the Botswana Union membership was 28,318, compared to a national population of 1,842,000 (General Conference, 2009, p. 320). This translates into a national membership to population ratio of 1:65. It is sad to note that the total membership of all the Basarwa in the whole country is currently less than 100, making the ratio of their membership to their population to 1:18,420. Other tribes like the Batawana and the Bangweketsi have a ratio as low as 1:6. This is despite the efforts that the church has made to reach the Basarwa. It is thus important to establish the variables causing this situation. A possible contributing factor is a lack of deliberate recruitment and training programs for indigenous Basarwa for leadership in different levels of the church.

### **Statement of the Task**

The task of this project was to develop models and propose deliberate programs in the Botswana Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that seek to reach the Basarwa by recruiting and training them into church leadership at the local church and conference levels. The project then sought to discover if indigenous leaders in the church organization contribute to church growth among a given people group.

### **Justification for the Project**

For the past 90 years the Adventist church in Botswana has made minimal impact through its outreach program to the Basarwa. The few who are baptized are apparently unable to adhere to the Adventist lifestyle in doctrine and practice. In addition to being nominal members, recruitment and retention have proved to be very challenging. This is despite the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the second largest Protestant

church and the fastest growing denomination in the country. This apparent failure to minister to the Basarwa needed to be investigated to determine the cause for this, and to propose effective methods to reach Basarwa.

This failure of the Adventist Church to reach the Basarwa tribe suggests that the conventional evangelistic approach of the church is either incompatible with the Basarwa culture or does not fill a gap in the lives of the Basarwa. Conventional “missionary” type public evangelism, infrastructural developments, and community service programs of the church do not appear to appeal to the Basarwa. In order to reach the Basarwa, new methods must be explored.

Currently there is a lack of Basarwa leaders in the church organization. There is a need to develop Basarwa who could model the Adventist lifestyle, minister relevantly within the Basarwa culture, and assist in developing programs that would be effective in ministering to other Basarwa in the context of their unique lifestyle. This will in turn create a feeling of ownership concerning the church by the Basarwa as they minister in their own community.

### **Description of the Project Process**

Theological reflections focused on three themes: first, biblical examples of reaching unique people as shown in the missionary activities of Israel and her neighbors, and God’s dealings with the Israelites as they journeyed to Canaan, the ministry of Jesus to selected unique people groups, and the ministry of Paul to the Gentiles; second, the theological reflections of various denominations on the issue of reaching unique people groups; and third, theological reflections by Adventist missiologists on the topic of reaching unique people groups

Selected relevant literature was reviewed. This included books and articles on missions, in particular focusing on reaching unique people groups in Southern Africa, recent history, life style and culture of the Basarwa, the history of Christian missions among the Basarwa, and the growth patterns of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Botswana since 1921, when the church began in that country.

Statistical information on the growth pattern of the Adventist Church among tribes was examined to determine the variables that contribute to church growth and mission, and the implication for ministry among the Basarwa.

The work of the Adventist Church among the Basarwa was evaluated. A study of the Botswana government and other non-governmental organization strategies and policies for implementing lifestyle changes among Basarwa was conducted, looking into the implications for Adventist mission among Basarwa.

A survey among the unchurched Basarwa to determine the mission of the Adventist church was done with a view to determine factors that hinder them from attending church, and factors that would allow the church to minister more effectively to them. A proposal for implementing a training program for Basarwa potential leaders as a method for increasing church membership was also created. The summary of this project will be reported to the Botswana Union and the Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division for use to reach similar people groups in the country and the Division.

### **Expectations From This Project**

This project is expected to grow the membership of the church in Botswana by addressing the mission to over 40,000 Basarwa who have not been reached by the church. The strategies developed in this project could perhaps be helpful throughout the Southern

Africa Indian Ocean Division in reaching other unique people groups in the region. It is expected that the project will provide skills for pastors and administrators in the conference by providing effective methods of ministering and nurturing in the districts occupied by the Basarwa.

The project will also benefit the church in Botswana by providing multicultural leadership to the church. The project is expected to develop a leadership capacity among the Basarwa. Through the proposal, the church in Botswana is expected to move from its traditional approach of evangelism to a more comprehensive approach of meeting each tribal grouping according to its needs. The multicultural leadership approach as an alternative is expected to help the church to live in harmony with its profession of preaching the Gospel to all nations and tribes.

While appreciating the cultural lifestyle of the Basarwa, the project will compliment the Government's attempts to implement change in the lives of the Basarwa, so that they can enjoy all the benefits and the resources that are enjoyed by all other citizens of the country. It is also the aim of this study to chart a way for other religious and non-governmental organizations to minister and bring about change in the lives of the Basarwa. From this project the church should be able to cooperate with other churches and organizations in ministering not only to the Basarwa but to other groups in community development and projects that seek to improve the quality of life for the people.

It is hoped that this project will develop my leadership and evangelistic skills as I continue to serve and minister among different peoples within Botswana. I hope to be able to be deliberate in multiplying leaders from the widest possible base, which would

enhance unity and ownership of the church and its programs by all the tribes in the country.

### **Delimitations**

Although the media and current literature on the Basarwa (commonly known as the Bushman) are awash with the conflicts between the Basarwa and the Government of Botswana over their relocation from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR), the high court case involving the supply of water and other resources, and the rights of the Basarwa in general as citizens of the country or the First People of the Kalahari, with due respect to the facts that these issues are fundamental and does affect the lives of the Basarwa and their perspectives of other tribes and possibly their response to Christianity, this project purposed to be deliberately exclusive of such pertinent issues. It was solely focused on factors that directly affect the church and its ministry.

While recognizing the fact that there are other unique people groups in the region and in the world where the church may have similar challenges in reaching such groups, this project has deliberately limited itself to the Basarwa of Botswana. Such groups include the Native Americas, the Aborigines of Australia, the Masai of Kenya, the Namaqua of Namibia, and the Hottentontotes of South Africa.

While dealing with the Basarwa as a tribal group, I am aware that there are different clans or groups of the Basarwa scattered around the country such as the Naro, the river Bushman, the Kua, the Kaukau, and many other groups. However, for the purpose of this project I have deliberately chosen to deal with them as one group because of the one denominator of their unique life style, and other variables in their lives in general as compared to other tribes in the country. A specific emphasis will be made on

the response of the tribe to the Adventist message.

Following the foregoing recognition of the different groups within the Basarwa, the study did not attempt to sample or survey each group according to their clans or groups, but it surveyed four districts of the Ghanzi, Okavango, Khalagadi, and the Ngamiland as a representation of the lifestyles and the responses of the Basarwa in the country. Although Sekoba lives outside the four districts his experience is cited to show the potential of the Basarwa in church leadership.

While acknowledging the abundance of literature on the Basarwa as a people, there is a gross deficiency of writing about missionary activities among them or their response to Christianity in general. Therefore, while acknowledging the differences that exist in each people group, this project drew some principles from other peoples in similar situations for a proposed alternative solution to the item under study.

Whereas the initial intent of this project was to implement recruitment and training program for the Basarwa, due to time constraints, the process of recruitment in the church, the availability of budgets, academic qualifications, the process of qualification, and identification of seminaries or places for training, this objective was not feasible within the duration of the writing of this project. However, it has proposed an alternative which would be presented for implementation to the different stakeholders such as the local churches, conferences, and union executives for implementation within five to ten years.

### **Definitions of Terms**

*Basarwa*: A tribe in Botswana renowned for its simplistic culture, with minimal impact from modern civilization. They subside on hunting and gathering of wild fruits,

roots, and berries. They are commonly known as the Bushman because of their unique lifestyle of staying out of modern civilization. They have also been perceived as nomadic in their life.

*Government:* Refers to the government for the Republic of Botswana.

*Church:* Refers to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

*Country:* The Republic of Botswana.

*Botswana Union:* The national constituency of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Botswana.

*Global Pioneers:* Unskilled lay pastors who have gone through a short training course and provide leadership, who are recruited to start work in places that do not have an Adventist presence, and that provide spiritual leadership to the church in that area under some supervision.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

#### RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

##### **Introduction**

The need for leadership recruitment and training programs for the Basarwa tribe in Botswana is necessitated by the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has identified itself as entrusted with a message that should go to all the tribes and nations of the world. This is seen as a prerequisite to one of the pillars of the Adventist beliefs in the second coming of Christ. One of the church founders, Ellen White, referring to the task of preaching the Gospel to all nations and tribes declared:

By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God. Had the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory. (White, 1940, p. 633-634)

This universality of the mission is manifested throughout the whole Bible as reflected in the inclusive nature of the history of Israel, the experience of individuals in the Bible both in the Old and New Testament, the gospel commission as outlined by the Lord Jesus, and the policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The universality of the gospel forms the framework for recruiting and training for leadership among different tribes. The development of church leaders is critical for the Adventist church if it is to survive and continue to carry its mission to all nations and tribes of the world.

H. Blackaby and R. Blackaby (2004) show the tragedy of not developing leadership by noting that “Napoleon’s failure to develop leaders around him cost him his empire” (p. 134). The same authors painfully declare that “failure to develop leaders in an organization is tantamount to gross failure by the leader, whether by design or by neglect” (H. Blackaby & R. Blackaby, 2001, p. 134). The need for leadership development within the church structures cannot be overemphasized.

This chapter will attempt to show how the universality of the mission is revealed in the whole Bible. First, it will show how the mission in the Old Testament was meant to be all inclusive, not just directed to a specific group of people. Second, it will show how God revealed in different scriptures that Israel was to be a missionary nation to all nations and all peoples. Third, the New Testament emphasis on the missionary nature of the church to all peoples will be explored. Fourth, the chapter will show how the Seventh day Adventists has through the years endeavored to be a missionary organization taking the message to all peoples. And finally, the biblical mandate for leadership development through the Bible and its implication by the Adventist church. The purpose of this chapter is to show that lack of leadership development among Basarwa has been the gap that caused them to remain an unreached people group for over 80 years in a country where most tribes have an acceptable level of the Adventist presence, despite efforts made by the church to reach them with gospel.

### **Towards a Theology of Universality of Mission in the Old Testament**

The Old Testament provides a concrete foundation of the all inclusive framework of the mission of the church of reaching all nations, tribes, and peoples of the earth. The foundation for the universality of mission in the Old Testament is found in Gen 12:1-3

where God told Abraham that he would be a blessing to “all the families of the earth.” This universal motif becomes manifest throughout the Old Testament through the individual lives of non-Jewish people who were incorporated in the Judeo religion and through non-Jewish groups that were included in the Jewish religion. Of particular interest is how these individuals and groups took up leadership responsibilities.

Blauw (1976) argues that the Abrahamic blessing as found in Gen 12:1-3, pronouncing blessings upon all the nations of the earth, forms the foundation of the universality of the mission to all people (pp. 22-23). According to Bauer (as cited by Blauw, 1979), the term translated “people” by the KJV is *mispahot* which can be rendered differently by various Hebrew translators. The Septuagint translates it *phulai* which means tribes, nations, and peoples. Other translations have rendered it as follows: ‘families’ by the KJV, ‘tribes’ by the JB, ‘peoples’ by the TEV and the NIV. With this definition it follows that the word can be translated to mean communities.

Blauw (1976) suggests that the context of Gen 12:3 should be seen as a continuation of Gen 1-11 where God lost all nations during the flood and the construction of the tower of Babel. Thus the Abrahamic promise should be understood as a “continuation of God’s dealings with the nations, and therefore the history of Israel is only to be understood from an unsolved problem of the relation of God to the nations” (p. 19).

The word “universality” as used in this context best finds its meaning in the words of Blauw (1974) who defines it as having “the whole world view and that it has validity for the whole world” (p. 25). The word mission or missionary generally refers to the deliberate efforts to go out or take the message, life style, or religion to others.

## Ministry to the Other Tribes in the Old Testament

Contrary to the view expressed by some scholars that mission is exclusively an act of the New Testament, except as it is found as liturgy throughout the Psalms (Hoekendijk, as cited by Blauw, 1976, p. 27), and that God's express will towards all nations is only pronounced in the New Testament through the mandate to spread the Gospel to all tribes and all people (McGavran, 1980, pp. 26-28); God's plan for the whole world can be traced as far back as Genesis chapter 10 immediately after the tower of Babel (Blauw, p. 20). A comprehensive and poignant study of the Old Testament shows that it was always God's master plan to evangelize all nations. This is suggested by three facts: (1) the testimonies of individual gentiles who came to the faith in the Old Testament, (2) the relationship of Israel and other nations, and (3) the evidence of the scriptures relating to other nations.

### Individual Gentiles Who Came to the Faith

The Old Testament is replete with Gentiles who came to the Jewish faith but were not rejected. One of these individuals was Melchizedek a priest and king of Salem, according to Gen 14, who blessed Abraham and later received a tithe from him. Kaiser (as cited in Winter and Hawthorne, 1981) notes that through this ceremony Melchizedek confessed his faith in Jehovah (p. 18). It is important to note that by receiving the tithe Melchizedek exercised a leadership role which was acknowledged by Abram. That in itself shows how a non-Jew exercised leadership even over the father of the chosen tribe to be. In this experience therefore, God manifested that leadership within the community of believers was not be exclusive of other tribes.

Jethro, a Midianite priest, and Moses' father-in-law demonstrated his interest and

commitment to the faith of the Jews by offering them a much needed management principle to help them rule the Israelites and later sat down to have fellowship and a sacrificial meal with the leaders of Israel as in Gen 18. Although there is no evidence that he joined the Jewish faith, or exercised any leadership role hereafter, his association with the Jewish faith was one from a positive perspective suggesting one who had the welfare of the Jews at heart. On the other side, the fact that this advice was not rejected as coming from a gentile suggests that the Hebrew culture recognized the value of advice even from different faiths.

Perhaps the inclusiveness of the nature of the Jewish religion at an individual level is reflected best in the life of Ruth, a Moabite who covenanted to join the Jewish religion declaring “your people shall be my people and your God shall be my God” (Ruth 1:16). Ruth was not only accepted as a member of the Jewish religion, but she later become the great-grandmother of David (Ruth 4:17). Thus, she became part of Jesus’ family tree. Through the experience of Ruth it was revealed that God’s master plan for all the nations was to be included in the plan of salvation, and therefore individuals who came to the Jewish religion were accepted as a sign that all people were meant to be part of this grand plan.

#### The Inclusion of Egyptians During the Exodus

The inclusiveness of the Jewish religion was further shown by her relations with other nations with different religions. During the exodus from Egypt to the promised land of Canaan, the Bible records that some mixed multitudes also traveled with the Israelites (Exod 12:38). White (as cited in Nichol, 1981) defines these mixed multitudes as Egyptians who were either intermarried with the Israelites or who were impressed by the

manifestations of the God of the Hebrews (p. 243). It is important to note that though on the surface Canaan was a promised land to the descendants of Abraham, these non-Hebrew tribes or groups of people were not forbidden to go with the Israelites. Perhaps it is important to note that these were the enemies of God's people. This would suggest that God intended to include even those who were formally enemies to His people. This is in harmony with Anderson's (2000) assertion that the Abrahamic promise should be seen as a vehicle which transformed the "chosen Israel" into a reconciliatory nation between God and all the nations of the world (pp.18-19). This would inevitably mean that Israel was chosen to represent the nations of the world.

#### Jonah's Instruction to Preach to the Ninevites

The experience of Jonah whom God sent to go and preach to the Ninevites is a classic illustration of God's plans for Gentile nations in the Old Testament. Jonah a prophet of God who defined the parameters of his ministry within the borders of Israel was shocked when God told him to go and preach to the nation of Nineveh, who was at the time an enemy of God's people. He decided to go to a different destination, but the Lord brought him back to preach to the Ninivites (see Jonah 1-4). Through this story God shows his compassion to the thousands and perhaps millions who may not know their "left from the right."

Through these experiences and many others it is revealed that throughout the Old Testament the Lord has always advanced his mission to other individuals and nations through his inclusiveness. It appears therefore that God is not introducing something new in the New Testament. Evangelistic efforts to all peoples, tribes, and languages have been God's mission from the very beginning. Piper (2007) shows the importance of the

inclusiveness of this mission as he declares that the dichotomy between the Israelites and the Gentiles is irrelevant in the case of mission for the salvation of people (p. 131).

However, this does not negate the fact that God did elect Israel as a special unique people from among nations. It is therefore important to find the purpose of this election in the context of the Old Testament within the framework of the relationship of Israel and especially the mission of Israel in the Old Testament. A careful look at some Old Testament scriptures is helpful in addressing the purpose of the elections. For the purpose of this paper only four texts will be considered.

#### The Mission of Israel to Other Nations

Kaiser identifies Gen 12:1-3; Exod 19:5-6; and Ps 67 as the basic texts that can be used to show the mission of Israel in the Old Testament (as cited in Winter & Hawthorne, 1981, p. 25-28).

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Gen 12:1-3)

The use of the words in this text suggests a universal purpose for the call and the blessing of Abraham. Some scholars point to the fact that the blessings that were promised to Abraham were meant for other nations as well in that these blessings were addressed to the seventy nations that then existed in the world (Winter & Hawthorne, 1981); others suggest that the word "nations" (*goyyim*) does not have a political or national meaning, but that it has a religious meaning (Blauw, 1976). In harmony with this view, it seems appropriate to conclude that the purpose for the election of Israel is seen as a means not of rejection of the nations, but as a vehicle to use to reach all the nations of

the world. Thus it would be logical to conclude that all nations are to be reached with the Good News by those who have been elected at any specific period in time.

Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and [how] I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. (Exod 19:4-6)

Commentators are generally agreed in showing that through this text God intended the nation of Israel to be a nation of priests to all nations of the world. Nichol (1978) suggests that as a kingdom of priests they were to serve as “intermediary between God and the heathen.” They were also expected to serve as instructors, preachers, and prophets and “were to be examples of holy living” (p. 27). Winter and Hawthorne (1981) concurs as he notes that it is this mediatorial role in relation to the nations that Israel’s missionary role became explicit. He further observes that this text is the basis of the doctrine of the New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of believers as espoused in 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; and Rev 5:10 (p. 26). Therefore, through the priestly ministry of Israel the whole nation was invited to participate as His agents in sharing all the blessing with all the nations of the world.

### Psalm 67

Psalm 67 is noted as a key text in describing God’s purpose for the nations in the Old Testament.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; [and] cause his face to shine upon us; That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. [Then] shall the earth yield her increase; [and] God, [even] our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.



Through this psalm the nations are not only a witness to what God has done to Israel, they are also an object of God's purpose for salvation in that the saving power of God is to be known to all the nations and that all the ends of the earth are to fear Him. This same thought is found in Ps 117 and Ps 86. Additional relevant information can be derived from the fact that the nations have been created and shall be judged accordingly (see Ps 86:9; Deut 32:8).

The ministry of the relationship of Israel and other tribes, and the universality of the mission in the Old Testament can best be summed up in the words of Barth (as cited in Blauw, 1976):

The history of Israel in her totality and in her context is universal prophecy. For the Old Testament makes it unmistakably clear, again and again that is precisely the covenant of Yahweh with a unique Israel with a unique God . . . far from being an end in itself, far from getting one wrapped up in this particular relationship has meaning, revelation, real and dynamic import for the relation between God and all peoples, men of all peoples. (p. 28).

Barth seems to imply that the mission for the election of the Israel in the Old Testament was that she might be a witness to other nations in lifestyle and in drawing them to worship their God. The weight of evidence as shown above suggests that it was indeed God's intention to reveal Himself through the Israel to all nations. This therefore lays a foundation for the New Testament gospel commission, which should include the preaching of the Gospel message to the Basarwa tribes.

### **Jesus' Ministry to Foreign Tribes in the New Testament**

Hahn (1999) states that it is a limited view of Jesus ministry that leads to a conclusion that Jesus' ministry was exclusively for the Jews. He evidently shows that a comprehensive study of the ministry of Jesus reveals that it was an all inclusive ministry with the whole world as its agenda (p. 1). This is evident through his deliberate example

of ministering to non-Jewish communities and individuals, and through his commission to the disciples to go unto all people. The following texts reveal a clear purpose of Jesus' ministry to other tribes:

1. Trip to Gennesaret (Mark 6:45-7:23)
2. Trip to Tyre, Sidon, and Decapolis (Matt 15:30, Mark 7:24-8:9)
3. The healing of the Syro-Phoenician's daughter (Mark 7:24-30, Matt 15:21-28)
4. Visit to Magadan in Galilee (Mark 8:10-12, Matt 15:39-16:4)
5. Trip to Caesarea Phillipi (Mark 8:10-9:32)

By His deliberate move to go beyond the borders of the Israel and minister to individuals and communities of Gentiles, Jesus showed that he had an inclusive ministry to all the nations of the then existing world thus clearly showing that all tribes and people on the earth were the subject of his ministry.

Through the Gospel Commission as outlined in Matt 28:18-20, which has been considered to be the clearest intention of Jesus, shows beyond any shadow of doubt the purpose of his ministry in relation to other peoples of the world. For in it He gave instruction to his Jewish disciples to go to the entire Gentile world.

Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matt 28:18-20)

Winter and Hawthorne (1981) argue that the great commission as outlined in the above text is the most forthright, the clearest instruction towards an all inclusive ministry to every nation (p. 48).

Hybels (2002) draws our attention to the fact that the great commission was given

by Jesus himself to a group people that he had carefully selected and trained thoroughly for more than three years. He notes that the investment of time and effort preceded the commissioning (p. 127). Thus the gospel mission to all peoples, tribes, and nations finds its meaning and relevance in the recruiting and training of those who are bidden “to go.” It is only as leaders are recruited and trained that results from the Gospel mission can be expected.

A close look at the language shows the importance of the gospel commission to all the nations. Verkuyl (as cited in Winter & Hawthorne, 1981) notes that the word used for “go therefore” in the Greek *porēuthentes* was well chosen in that it means “to depart, to leave, to cross boundaries,” thus he deduced that this meant crossing “sociological boundaries, racial boundaries cultural boundaries, geographic boundaries” (p. 49). Thus it was clear from the very beginning that one who engages in this ministry would be expected not only to cross different boundaries as such a person takes the gospel, but it was expected that the gospel commission includes the development of skills of how to take the gospel to different races, tribes, and nations. It is also important to note that in the gospel commission Jesus specifically outlined the scope of the task by requiring his disciples to go to all nations, tribes, and nations. The Greek word *mathetes* suggests teaching and making disciples. Making people to surrender to “his liberating authority” thus suggesting that individuals and communities would be enslaved to some form of force, and can only be liberated by the teaching of the Gospel and as they surrender to Jesus. This gives hope for the Basarwa who appear to be enslaved to diverse belief systems.

## **Ministry to Other People Groups in the Apostolic Church**

The situation the Seventh-day Adventist Church faces in the objective of sharing the gospel to people of other religions and cultural backgrounds in many ways parallels to the situations that the apostles faced. How they went about mission is not only instructive to us as a church, but it is also relevant if the church is to continue to follow the mandate of the gospel mission. Examples of missions to other nations in the apostolic church are numerous; however, for the purpose of this paper a few examples will be cited.

Piper (2007) notes that the command for the disciples to be “witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the world” (Acts 1:8) forms the framework of ministry among other nations in the apostolic times (p. 51).

The story of the Ethiopian eunuch and how God sent Phillip to explain scripture to him and finally was baptized is indicative of God’s concern for the salvation of people of other nations (Acts 8:30-38).

Paul’s sermon in Athens reflects the efforts of the apostles in attempting to reach the unreached peoples during the Apostolic times (Acts 17:16-34). Piper suggests that during “the times of ignorance God overlooked, but he now commands all people everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30) as His “sovereign decision to postpone an all-out pursuit of their repentance through the mission of his people,” not His intention to exclude sinful nations from salvation (p. 130).

It is also important to note that Luke being a Greek wrote two books in the New Testament, namely, Luke and Acts. Thus it was shown that individuals from other nations were not only acceptable but were also allowed to exercise leadership roles in the apostolic church.

## **The Gospel Commission and the Seventh-day Adventist Church**

The Gospel Commission as understood by the Seventh-day Adventist Church probably is best captured in the words of White (1982): “All classes are to be reached. As we labor, we shall meet with nationalities. None are to be passed by unwarned. The Lord Jesus was the gift of God to the entire world—not to the higher classes alone, and not to any one nationality, to the exclusion of others” (p. 60); thus showing the scope of the work that was to be done.

It is, however, important to note that the Gospel Commission as understood by the Adventist church has undergone major changes with time. Oosterwal suggests that the earlier Adventist mission was informed by four factors:

1. They believed that the Gospel had already been preached “in all the world.” This was evidenced by an article in the *Review and Herald* declaring that “three-fourths of the earth’s surface is under Christian government and influence. . . . The missionaries that have been . . . have leavened almost every quarter of the globe” (April 16, 1872). Thus they saw this as a fulfillment of Matt 24:14. This perception caused a decline in the momentum of ground breaking evangelistic activities, which ultimately left groups such as the Basarwa unreached by the Adventist church.

2. Oosterwal (1972) observes that Adventists saw themselves as a movement within Christendom with a special purpose of preaching the Three Angels’ Message of Revelation which other churches had ignored to preach. Thus their task was to go to the Christian communities and declare the Three Angels’ Message, as opposed to going to unreached people groups to begin work. The Adventist mission had no room for other religions such as Islam, Hinduism, or others. Such an approach has caused Adventist to

be branded by other Christian faiths as “sheep stealers” (p. 26).

3. It has also been noted (Oosterwal 1972) that the Adventist mission work presupposes the ability to read. This is reflected by the denomination’s emphasis on the publishing department, which is declared as “the legs of the message.” As a result, although the church did establish schools, many of the illiterate people of the world remain unreached by the Adventist church (p. 26-27).

4. Adventist missionaries went to the mission field when they received a call from that field. Adventist missionaries went to assist believers in the mission field, not to establish a new field. Oosterwal (1972) asserts that “Adventist missionaries go overseas to assist the believers in their work making the overseas fields the determining factor of mission rather than the sending organization” (pp. 26-27).

The above rationale has had a negative impact on the mission of the church in general. Following are some of the results from this format of evangelism:

Communities which were not evangelized by other Christian communities such as the Basarwa were left out. It appears that Adventists have been waiting in the periphery for some other churches to preach to the Basarwa, before they would come with the Three Angels’ Messages and the Sabbath truth. But they never had the opportunity to fulfill this because none of the other Christians reached the Basarwa due to their lifestyle and other factors. The result of all this is that the Basarwa have remained unreached throughout the 80 years of the church’s existence in Botswana.

The Basarwa have the highest illiteracy rate in the country due to their nomadic lifestyle, and they remain unreached because the Adventist church has not been innovative enough or adopted a culturally conducive approach to minister to them.

With few or no Basarwa Adventists who could place a “Macedonian call” the Adventists continue to overlook the Basarwa. Most foreign missionaries came from either Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), or from South Africa. They were not sent to work in the areas populated by the Basarwa due to the fact that it is mostly a desert region and considered to be dangerous.

Oosterwal (1972) suggests that the shift to a more inclusive missions approach began in the mid-twentieth century:

It was only in the 1950s that most of the above approaches of missions began to be replaced with more inclusiveness of other churches. For instance the Adventists now recognize its need to cooperate with other Christian churches in doing missions among the non Christians without compromising the specific purpose of the three angels’ message. This has been done through cooperation with other churches in the work of Bible translation, the promotion of religious liberty, and Christian education. (p. 35)

The latest shift in Adventist mission is reflected in *Roadmaps for Mission* (2009), which recognizes that there are still groups and pockets of people that will require a different approach to reach. It also accepts the responsibility by the Adventist church to take the initiative to reach these unreached people groups. It also acknowledges challenges that these groups may have in joining the Adventist church.

According to the *Roadmaps for Mission* (2009) a document presented and adopted at the 2009 General Conference annual meeting, the Seventh-day Adventist rationale for mission is woven into the church’s identity, and defines the reason for the church’s existence. This is done in the framework of the Matt 28:18-20 and in a special sense in the context of the Rev 14:6-12, which serves as the church’s vision and mandate for reaching every nation, tribe, language, and people. This mandates the church to take its message to earth’s farthest bounds including different traditions and religions of the world.

The same document states that the scope of the Seventh day Adventist mission is comprehensive in nature. It involves proclaiming the gospel to the whole world (Matt 24:14), making disciples by going where people of different nations tribes, nations, religions, and cultures are to be found, baptizing them, and teaching them all the truth (Matt 28:18-20). This also includes inviting them into the fellowship of the believers of the world wide Seventh-day Adventist community of believers (Rev 12:17). The *2009 General Conference Working Policy* outlines a number of ways in which the Apostles fulfilled their mission amid peoples of other religions and cultures.

### Jesus Is the Only Hope

The proclamation of Jesus is the only the only hope for all humankind, through whom forgiveness and newness of life can be attained (Acts 2:38; 8:4; 1 Cor 2:2 ). Jesus was preached not as equal to their gods, but as the one who is superior. He was proclaimed as the one God, the Father . . . and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 8:5, 6). Although different cultures and different religions called for different approaches, the uniqueness of Jesus was always the constant feature.

### Integration of Elements From Other Religions

Paul made reference to non-biblical writings in his speech in Athens and his letters (Acts 17:38; 1 Cor 15:33; Titus 1:12). Paul used these to build bridges by pointing to elements of truth that existed in those religions.

### Contextualization

Perhaps the best contextualization is reflected as Paul described how he adapted his approaches to different groups, he declared:



Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself as a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I become like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law, so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law, so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. (1 Cor 9:19-22)

While the Apostles did not deliberately make it hard for people of other cultures and religion to accept the gospel, they nevertheless were focused on declaring the full purpose of God to them (Acts 15:19; 20:20-24).

### Openness and Identity

Seventh-day Adventists see the Apostles' approach of openness as instructive as a method for reaching people of other religions and cultures. This is manifested by such statements as "we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor 4:2). This suggests that "we are to carry out our mission, and identify ourselves as Seventh-day Adventists in a manner that avoids creating formidable barriers" (2009 *General Conference Working Policy*).

### Transitional Groups

This is the formation of non-Christian or specifically non-Adventist groups that would ultimately lead to the full acceptance of the Seventh-day Adventist message. These groups are established and nurtured with collaboration and endorsement of church administration. Although some groups may require a longer period to complete the transition, the objective should be leading this group into becoming members of the church (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2009, B 10 28 and B 10 30).

This is an improvement of the traditional method of a person either accepting the message or not. This approach recognizes the fact that it may require time for people from other religions and cultures to accept the theology and lifestyle of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### Opportunities and Need

Adventists should deliberately seek opportunities to bring the message to all people of the different religions and cultures. These should include intentional efforts in the development of expertise in the writings of other religions, along with literature and programs to train clergy and lay members in reaching adherents of these religions.” The church must make a deliberate effort to understand other religions and cultures in order to reach them. These efforts would of necessity call for the need to develop local workers. (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 2009, A 20 05–A 20 15).

### **Biblical View of Recruiting and Training Members for Evangelism**

A close look at some portions of the Old and New Testaments provides some useful information on leadership and different leadership styles. Howell (as cited in Toler & Brecheisen, 2003) acknowledges that the theology of leadership as revealed in the leaders call to do his work is instructive and useful in developing a framework for spiritual leadership (pp. 1-2). For the purpose of this chapter the example of Moses will be considered in the Old Testament in support of leadership development, as well as the example of Samuel who though being one the best leaders of Israel did not develop leaders. In the New Testament an emphasis will be placed on the experience and writings of Paul.

## The Old Testament

According to the book of Exodus, God choose Moses to be his mouthpiece to the children of Israel (Exod 3-16). He was to lead and teach the Israelites God's will. As a result of this noble duty all the people came to him for advice, guidance, and to be judged by him (Exod 18:13).

Thus Jethro proposed a new model of leadership:

Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that [is] with thee: for this thing [is] too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone: Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place [such] over them, [to be] rulers of thousands, [and] rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, [that] every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear [the burden] with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee [so], then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. (Exod 18:19-23)

H. Blackaby and R. Blackaby (2001) note that through this new model Moses was not only to recruit and train others who would help him do the job of ministering to others, but he was also enabled to unearth leadership skills which was hitherto unknown. Further, he sees the need to influence "God's people toward God's purposes" as "central to the task of Christian leadership" (p. 17). Sanders (1967) takes this concept further by stating the sole role of a leader is to develop other leaders as manifested in the life of Christ who took more time to train the twelve disciples (p. 51). He further suggests that the key for a successful training program in any given community lies in its adaptability to mission and the ability to give a clear purpose to natural and spiritual gifts (p. 51.) The advice of Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, is quite fitting in that the new recruits were given

a purpose that was in harmony with their ability.

Samuel was one of the most spiritual and able leaders that Israel had, and upon his retirement the whole community could not find any fault with him although he had led them his whole life. However, he failed in that he did not deliberately train leaders. The failure of his sons to lead precipitated Israel's demand for a king to lead them (1 Sam 8:1-6). This lack of leadership development is crucial, as noted by H. Blackaby and R. Blackaby (2001). They see it as a "core value of any leader" and calls for intentionality on the part of leaders or else it will not happen by default (p. 134).

It therefore follows that it is not only the duty of every leader to recruit and train others, but this should be the leader's primary objective in his/her leadership role. The example of Christ and other world leaders show that leaders who fail to train other leaders will inevitably fail in their endeavor.

The advice by Jethro to Moses to delegate and train others can be seen as a pillar in Moses' leadership. It is very likely that had it not been for this counsel Moses would have not led the Israelites effectively. The same principle was implemented by God when Moses was overwhelmed by the demands of the Israelites in Num 14 when the seventy elders were selected.

### The New Testament

In the New Testament, Jesus, who is the greatest leader, exemplified the principle of one leader training leaders by spending more than three years in training leaders who afterward were to go and make disciples of all nations. Sanders (1967) observes that Jesus "devoted the greater part of His three years of ministry to molding the characters and the spirits of His disciples" (p. 148). According to him leadership training is a

“delicate task” which should not be done in a “haphazard or ill-conceived” manner. It is a task that requires a “careful thought, wise planning, endless patience, and genuine Christian love” as reflected in the method Christ used to train his disciples (p. 148). Ball and Johnson (2002) find the choosing of the twelve disciplines as an object lesson in leadership recruitment. They assert that having recruited the twelve, Christ gave the disciples not only the mandate to preach but to develop leadership from among the heathen and the unbelieving peoples of the world (pp. 280-281). Morgan and Stevens (2005) take this principle further by arguing that instead of sending people to go and preach it is nobler to develop local leadership through the recruitment of volunteers (pp. 100–102).

The Apostle Paul’s life and writings are instructive in the importance of leadership training. His experience in recruiting and training Silas, Timothy, and Barnabas speaks to the importance of leadership development in the mission of the church. He further advised those that he had recruited in the ministry on the significance of leadership multiplication. To Timothy he said, “The things that you have heard from me in the presence of many witness entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim 2:2). The Apostle Paul sees leadership training as a core value for the Christian community to continue its mission to all nation and tribes.

#### Adventist Position on Recruitment of Local Leaders

As early as 1909 the Adventist church has been committed to the development of local church leadership. White (as cited by A. L. White, 1982) declared, “If we are to be carrying on the work most successfully the talents to be found among the English and Americans should be united with those of every other nationality” (p. 48). She further

advised that “in laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers as to train the church for acceptable cooperation. Let him labor for them individually endeavoring to arouse them . . . to work for others” (1915, p. 196). Although emphasis is on local leadership, it is logical to make the same application to different tribes within a given nation. This approach is probably best summed up by B. Beach and W. R. Beach (1985) in their observation that “the structural framework provides for a self-supporting, self-governing and self extending church in all lands” (p. 37). They further state that newly established units or churches are to develop their own trained work force. They attribute this leadership recruitment and training to the growth that the church has enjoyed since its inception (p. 37).

### **Conclusion**

The testimony of the Scripture and of the Seventh-day Adventist Church history suggests that it was God’s intention to include all the nations, tribes, and the people of the world in his grand plan of salvation. As part of this plan God intended to carry out this mission through those who believe, beginning with Israel in the Old Testament and the Apostles in the New Testament, to unbelieving nations. However, believing communities were to be intentional in the recruiting and training of local leadership in order to be able to minister more contextually to the communities within which they live.

The history and the experience of the Basarwa tribes in Botswana suggest that the failure to develop leadership at a local level and throughout the different stages of the organization of the church has significantly contributed to failure by the church to reach this group of people with the gospel. This calls for the church in Botswana to be intentional in the recruitment and training of Basarwa church leaders if the church is to be

successful in carrying out its mission to the Basarwa tribe. The growth of the church in Botswana will to a greater extent depend on the deliberate innovative methods that the church will use to address the current challenges which were not addressed in the past. Perhaps the words of Stout (2006) were correct as he declared that “the past experience should be a guide post not a hitching post” (p. 25). He further suggests that leadership “implies change and initiating change” (p. 38) in the way a given organization has been running its mission. This suggests that those in leadership should use past failures to drive the organizations that they lead. An implementation of this principle will see the church in Botswana being able to reach not only the Basarwa, but also other tribes in the country.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT ON BASARWA

#### **Historical Context of Church Mission in Botswana**

The use of conventional methods in evangelism, such as public evangelism, health ministry, Adventist education, and even construction of worship centers, have evidently advanced the course of establishing a presence of the Seventh-day Adventist church among many tribes in Botswana, resulting in some commendable growth of 30,000 (Botswana Union Statistical Report, fourth quarter, 2009) from a population of 1,700,000. Notwithstanding this growth, It is reasonable to expect that after more than 80 years of ministry and service in the country, the Seventh-day Adventist church, which is the third largest church, and the fastest growing single Protestant church in the country, should have graduated from establishing a presence in the major tribes, gathering a few followers in some sections of the nation, to a more comprehensive approach to reach all tribal groupings in Botswana regardless of their unique situations and challenges. This should include recruiting and training local people for leadership among all tribes.

This conventional approach for reaching people has without doubt been presented as the Adventist way of evangelising by the church's historians, Theologians, and Evangelists such as Mervyn Maxwell, R. Shwartz, George Knight, E. E Cleveland, and Gerard Damsteegt.

The area of concern of this review has to do with the method the Seventh-day



Adventist church should use to reach the unique peoples of the Basarwa tribe, for whom the church has labored for, but to no avail, for all the 80 years of the existence of the church in Botswana. This calls for a deliberate specific method that would take into consideration their unique lifestyle characterized by, among others nomadic movements, high levels of illiteracy and poverty, unique social structures, and detachment from other tribes within the country.

At the heart of the matter is the recruitment and training of Basarwa people into church leadership who would in turn serve their community better by teaching and modeling the Adventist lifestyle. Therefore the purpose for this review is to challenge the Adventist church to move beyond discipling in its simplistic form of spreading the word, towards training as an alternative approach in dealing with the Basarwa and possibly others unique people groups.

There has long been research into the lives of the Basarwa. In fact A. White (2004) suggests that they are the most studied species of humankind on the planet (p. 2). However, there has been little or no research done on how to reach the Basarwa with the Word of God, neither has there been research focusing on their responses to the Gospel as it comes to them, let alone their response to the Adventist message. Their response to the Gospel has been taken for granted without taking into consideration the variables that exist between them and other tribes. Thus they have been perceived to be heathenistic, anti-Christian, and hard to reach with the Gospel. The greatest challenge is how to bring Christianity, or specifically Adventism, closer to their culture without compromising the principles of Adventism.

This literature review attempts to address the following issues: (1) the challenges

of the unique lifestyle of the Basarwa, (2) effective methods in implementing change among the Basarwa, (3) past and current missionary work among the Basarwa by the Christian community among the Basarwa and their responses to such efforts, (4) current cultural changes and the available opportunities for the Christianity community to minister among the Basarwa, and (5) analysis of patterns of the Seventh-day Adventist Church growth in Botswana. All these will be addressed within the broader framework of the Gospel commission and the fact that the Basarwa has the potential not only to be regular members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but also to be leaders within the same community where they would provide quality leadership to Adventist members and indeed the whole nation.

### **Categories of Literature on the Basarwa**

The writings on the Basarwa can be divided into three categories: First, as part of the historic materials on the peoples of southern Africa, this category places a lot of emphasis on their origins, their interactions with other people, and their primitive life style. This includes writing by Tlou and Campbell (1997). This kind of literature is replete with misconceptions and myths about the social lives of the Basarwa people, but does not address the potential that the Basarwa have in any given sphere of life. This may be due to the fact that it is historic in nature and not meant to provide sociological information on any given tribal groupings.

Second, it is literature written by Western authors who have been “fascinated” by this unique special race. Thus such writings have the objective of informing the whole of the civilized world about this “primitive,” care-free group of people. This literature is normally overtone with a lot of derogatory remarks, which are not only unacceptable

currently, but are also void of whole truths about the life styles of the Basarwa because they are not based on any comprehensive research, but mostly based on perceptions about the life style or at best an encounter with some certain individual(s) belonging to the Basarwa tribe. This includes writings like *The Lost World of the Khalari* by Lauren Van Der Post (1986).

Thirdly, there are those who see the Basarwa as a tourist attraction. These make up the majority of the written works on the Basarwa. This category is characterized more by colorful pictures than text. These lament the fact that the social life of the Basarwa has changed over the years, blaming this change on the government or the other tribes. These would want the Basarwa lifestyle to remain unchanged amid changing society and environment. These incriminate any organization that seeks to bring about change among the Basarwa, as they would anybody who would interfere with their rock paintings. They also instill among the Basarwa a sense that they should resist change at all cost, in spite the fact that other tribes in the country are changing. The writers in this category include A. Mertens (1973), A. Bannister and D. Williams (1999).

Fourth, lately there has been literature on the Basarwa written by Human Rights organizations that are basically fighting for the rights of Basarwa, in particular their rights to land and right to continue living as they have always lived. Most of this literature advocates for Basarwa to be provided with facilities to meet their social needs wherever they may be. These groups include the many writings by Survival International, A. Mogwe, W. Le Roux, and A. White.

Other literature includes attempts to implement change in the lives of the Basarwa. These include the government of Botswana and non-government organizations

such as religious organizations and other social groups. These argue that the Basarwa deserve the right to be ministered to and to take advantage of all the resources that benefit all other tribes in the country. As would be expected, these have met resistance from other groups, leading to legal battles on the relocation of the Basarwa from the Central Game Reserve and the services provided to the Basarwa.

### **Challenges of the Unique Life Style of the Basarwa**

Among the books that give detailed information on the social life of the Basarwa is *The Bushman* by Wannenburg (1999). In this book the authors give a comprehensive structure of the life of the Basarwa. The book outlines the social life structure of the Basarwa which includes their known hunter-gather skills, simplistic life style, and their traditional belief system.

Wannenburg also shows how the Basarwa are related to the Khoisan of the Cape in South Africa and others in Namibia. However, the book does not address the Basarwa as a dynamic race that has the potential of improving or changing their life style. The author seems to be satisfied with the traditional life of the Basarwa, and thus does not even attempt to address the variables in the Basarwa culture and tradition. Thus the implication is made that 21st century Basarwa are supposed to pursue the 14th century lifestyle in spite of the dynamics of the current lifestyles and cultures. This approach unfortunately views the Christian faith as an unwanted element that seeks to transform the lifestyle and the culture of the Basarwa.

### **Definitions and Origins of Basarwa**

It is interesting that the Basarwa (although the identity of Basarwa is not questioned) have been assigned different names, some of which are meant to identify

them. They have been known as the San, the Bushman, Remote Dwellers of the Khalari, (ba tengnyana teng—literally meaning those who stay far away), First People of the Khalahari, and the Basarwa.

Their earliest identification was the San. A. White posits that this name for the Basarwa by the whites is a misrepresentation of their identity (p. 26). This name would be inappropriate because the Basarwa themselves have never identified themselves with such a name. It is a name that only identifies Basarwa in academic circles, which is unique with the Basarwa among the tribes in the country.

The name “bushman” carries both negative and positive connotations. On the negative side, Williams (1991) suggests that it means people detached from modern civilization and the stresses associated with such life. On the other hand, the notion suggesting that the bushman are a people who live harmoniously with nature (p. 6) may be perceived as acceptable.

While it is true that they live harmoniously with nature the name Bushman has recently been fought by both the Basarwa and human rights organizations, such as, Survival International, urging that it relegates the Basarwa to the position of wild animals, far below human beings (A. White & Le Roux, p. 12). This notion is taken to the extreme by George McCall Theal who is quoted as having summed up all these ideas by saying that “Bushman were of no benefit to any other section of the human family, they were incapable of improvement and as it was impossible for civilized men to live on the same soil with them. It was for the world’s good that they should make room for a higher race” (as cited by Williams, 1991, p. 6).

The other name used to identify the Basarwa is The First People of the Khalahari.

This is normally used by the human rights movements especially Survival International when fighting for the rights of the Basarwa, showing that they are the first inhabitants of the land and therefore they deserve all the rights due them, in particular the land issue. While this correctly articulates the fact that they are the first people, no other tribe or nation is named in a similar way. For instance the Bakgaladi are not called the Second People of Khalahari nor are the Bayeyi called the First People of the Ngamiland.

The most acceptable name currently is the Basarwa as shown by Mertens (1973) and others. The name suggests “*ba o ba ba sa ruing dikgomo*” (those who do not rear cattle). The Basarwa themselves have accepted the name and other tribes in the country have always known them as such (Wannenburgh, 1999, p. 9).

The Basarwa have generally been known as primitive nomadic people who survived on roots, wild fruits, and hunting (Mertens, 1973, p. 1). Many argue that this reality makes it difficult, if not impossible, to live with them or to bring any meaningful facilities to them, including the gospel message.

However, Williams and White correctly show that the Basarwa did not move about aimlessly through the bush in search of food, but that they had demarcated land in which a group would move to find food. They were so organized that if an individual was found hunting or gathering berries in a territory that belonged to another group, such a person would be punished (Williams, 1994, p. 7; A. White & Le Roux, p. 20).

In their book “Voices of the San” A. White and Le Roux (2004) give a comprehensive approach on the life of the Basarwa covering their origin, life style, movements, relations with other tribes, their perceptions by other tribes, and religion. This approach is complimented by the interviews which run parallel with the main text,

thus validating the truthfulness of what the authors are saying. The book also covers recent changes that have taken place in the lives of the Basarwa resulting from mistreatment from other tribes and forced relocation from their ancestral land by the government of Botswana. The authors give invaluable information on how the government attempted to implement change among the Basarwa. Although most of these methods have been shown to be faulty there are lessons that can be learned by Christian organizations attempting to make a meaningful change in the social life of the Basarwa.

It is also of interest to hear from the interviews how the Basarwa wish to be treated in relation to education, modern health practices, and religion. Contrary to the myths and misconceptions that the Basarwa are anti Christian, it is interesting to note how the interviews in the book reveal the Basarwa's appreciation of change and their desire to benefit from what Christianity has to offer, like all other tribes. The book is loaded with a wealth of information on how the few Basarwa that have been intertwined with other nations are serving as agents of change within their community (A. White & Le Roux, 2004, p. 46). The writers also present an impressive positive impact by other Christian denominations such as the Dutch Reformed Church in Dekar. Thus, this has shown that there are some groups that love Christianity and are prepared for such a change. However, it appears that the missing element in reaching the Basarwa is the approach. It is likely that using the Basarwa to effect change would be more acceptable than the use of other people from tribes.

### **Training of Leaders**

Burns (1979) presents what could be a comprehensive approach to leadership. However, his approach is limited to political leadership. His writing thus is not useful in

prescribing appropriate leadership styles for groups that have minimal political influence or affiliation. In his approach to leadership he does not show how such leaders were formed in terms of recruitment and training, which would be of benefit in relation to the development of the Basarwa church leaders

Leslie Pollard (2000) in his book *Embracing Diversity* recognizes the need for different approaches to reach different groups. This book, which is composed of a number of articles from various Adventist circles, addresses leadership diversity challenges with an intention to come up with solutions which would be of help for people who minister in other cultures and to both genders. This approach provides a glimmer of hope for the development of Basarwa leaders. His inference is particularly relevant to the Basarwa in Botswana, where after 80 years of ministry the church has not been able to produce a Mosarwa leader in the church, though the Basarwa are known to be the first inhabitants of the country.

The challenges that exist between the experiences of the Asian community together with those of other groups in different cultures and continents, the collision of cultures, the barriers that continue to hinder progress and impact toward the acceptance of the Gospel even today, are instructive to the Adventist church in Botswana which draws its membership from mainline tribes, causing the same effect upon the Basarwa who are viewed as unique people. Therefore, what he offers as solutions for breaking the barriers can be used to break the boundaries between the Basarwa and the Adventist church in Botswana.

The alternative of training the local people, who are familiar with the culture and the expectation of the people in issues of leadership, seems to be a better option for



leadership development. This concept is expressed by Posner and Kouzer, who emphasize the need to enable others as integral components of leadership (pp. 241-277). Currently there are countless groups of people who have not been reached who would be easily reached by such an intentional program. While it is important to embrace diversity, it is critical to first use the locals as such an endeavor is carried out. This was the method that Jesus used, in that all his disciples were Jews, who later went to the Gentiles.

Notwithstanding the fact that currently there are winds of change of globalization, ministry among any given African tribe should take into consideration the values and culture of such a tribe. Failure to do this would lead to unnecessary frustrations. This calls for a need for local leadership for effective, meaningful, and lasting growth in the church.

Posner and Kouzer also bring to the surface the need for different leadership styles to be applied for different people. For instance, Africans, because of their chiefs and kings cultural style, would accept what has been described by others as a hierarchal form of leadership. Europeans, who reject being led by others, may prefer what has been described by some as a primus form of leadership—one among equals. Therefore, to make a blanket statement about one method which would be more applicable is uncalled for due to different expectation on the issues of leadership by the various communities. Therefore for one to minister effectively among the Basarwa it would be important to recognize their leadership structure.

In her book *Leadership can be Taught* S. D. Parks (2005) presents a model of teaching leadership advocated by R. Heifetz. Though it appears new and thought provoking, it has the potential to revolutionize the area of leadership training and

recruiting in that it provides an alternative which could work in the area of teaching and development of leaders in an unconventional way, which hopefully would fill in for the missing link in the leadership in many organizations and the world at large. This model for training local leadership can be helpful in church recruitment and leadership development.

Heifetz (1994) and his colleagues are of the view that leadership can be taught. It is not limited to a particular group of people. This method seeks to tap out leadership skills from as many people as possible. This is important because traditionally communities, nations, and people at large have believed that leaders are born, or simply talented. These have left a gap in the area of leadership. The other challenge is that different communities and organizations have been led by individuals who do not qualify for leadership, but are placed in leadership positions simply because they are born in the line of the supposed leaders; thus, this has contributed to poor quality leadership. This therefore is an important step to attempt to change the status quo. This approach offers an opportunity for the Basarwa who traditionally have no hierarchical form of leadership in their social structure.

In his book *Spiritual Leadership* J. O. Sanders (1967) presents timeless principles of leadership drawn from the experiences of biblical characters such as Moses, Nehemiah, Paul, David, and even godly men such as Livingstone and Charles Spurgeon. He begins the book by showing that spiritual leadership is a priority in today's society as it was during the times when God lead the children of Israel. He posits that God is more in need of leaders than He is in need of followers. He places a lot of emphasis on quality spiritual leadership (p. 17). This certainly gives leadership a new dimension in that many

times the emphasis has been on the follower. Therefore the greatest need of the world today is for right spiritual leaders rather than for multitudes of followers. From this vantage ground then followers can be developed who would in turn lead others. Thus the process of leadership formation will be an ongoing process.

One of Oswald's seven qualities for good military leadership is training others to lead without any interference. Through the use of contemporary leadership in the political world he shows how such leaders have been successful and how others have failed because of failure to develop leadership (p. 31).

Zwandasara (1997) defines leadership as more of "people than theories." He sees an effective leader as one who seeks to "understand people not as static entities, but as human being possessing complex internal and external dynamics [sic]" (p. 11). In this approach he deals with different types of possible leaders. He concurs with Heifetz that in every people grouping there are potential leaders. This approach does not only differ with the traditional leadership theories which focus on the skills of the leader, but it concentrates on the people and their potential.

With this approach it would be more logical that the local leader would understand his/her people better than a non local who will have to study the culture and the behaviors of the people being ministered to.

### **Effecting Change**

Kotter (1998) in his book *Harvard Business Review on Change* discusses the need and the process of change management in a way that will help the organization to adapt to changing situations in the world and in the communities served by such organizations. Kotter defines insanity as "using the same methods but expecting more results" (p. 91).

Thus it would be unreasonable to continue to attempt to use the same methods to reach the Basarwa that have been used for the past 80 years.

In this book the writers observe that volunteers are generally the most dedicated people in any organization. This is the same concept that is developed further by Morgan and Stevens in their book *Simply Strategic Volunteers* (2005), where they deal extensively with the importance of volunteers in organization. The authors address the topics of arranging, managing in terms of training and using volunteers to bring about change in an organization. They state that for an organization to grow it must know how to manage its volunteers and use the potential they have (p. 110).

Concerning training Morgan and Stevens argue that for any organization to continue to have a positive impact on the community, it is important for such an organization to be deliberate in recruiting and training new local leaders rather than to use the established leaders (p. 102). This is in contrast to the conventional method as reflected by Winter and Hawthorne (1981) in their book *Perspectives on the World Christian Movements*, which shows a trend of missionaries as they came from the Western countries to spread the Word of God. The missionaries did not train the locals so that they could work among their own communities. Rather, the missionaries simply attempted to communicate the Word of God. Hybels (1992) says trust is important in the area of training. He argues that all who would be leaders should be given opportunity to make mistakes. He supports this position by the fact that all the past and present leaders were at some point given opportunity to lead even though they were not the best leaders (p. 126). It would therefore seem reasonable to conclude that contrary to the traditional method of sending people to go and preach among the Basarwa, the people of Basarwa

themselves should be given opportunity to lead.

This is slightly different from the conventional method addressed by most Adventist writers that places equal if not more emphasis on the regular members. This is reflected among others by the concept of the ministry of all believers and such books as *So You Want to be a Leader* by Pierson (1996). Although he poses questions that may suggest that leadership is a rare and difficult responsibility which could be handled by some special group of people with special skills like being able to promote, being able to manage one's time effectively, and being able to handle criticism. It is important that he advocates the concept of the priesthood of all believers. In this is enshrined the importance of leadership development for all members. This concept calls for church members to develop qualities not only for a leadership role, but to develop sound acceptable Christian characters.

While all these qualities are essential for a good leader, the contemporary approach to leadership is that leadership can be learned as much as a student learns his/her mathematics. While it is true that all believers are to minister Morgan and Stevens (2005) bring in an element that suggests that there is more potential that needs to be used in the volunteers and new members, even as they declare that all organizations grow better at the edges (p. 156). This has been a common denominator among church planters authors such as Schaller (1990) whose emphasis is that new church members should be treated as assets not liabilities, for they have a potential to make the difference between a growing church and a non growing church (pp. 122-123).

Stout (2006) in his book *Time for Change* discusses the importance of change in any organization. He brings the concept which he terms "Ideal Leadership Model"

(p. 11). Through this approach he introduces a scientific but complex prism which serves as the basis for the “Ideal leadership Model.” For him leadership is inseparable from change. This is shown by his arguments that leadership implies change and initiating change. Any change must of necessity benefit the followers, not just the leaders. And it is important that successful leaders can well be defined by their abilities to change, read the situation and be able to change on time (p. 38). This differs from some literature where change is simply made for the sake of change or at best change that benefits the leader which has nothing to do with followers.

Greenleaf’s (2002) approach of servant leadership is very useful because it sees leadership as service to the community. This will go along in reaching the Basarwa because there would be nothing much to gain from them as a people. It simply calls for a servanthood attitude to be able with unique situations they live in.

Toler and Brecheisen (2002) make an invaluable contribution to Christian leadership in five chapters covering topics that present among others: ten principles for successful leadership, characteristics essential for moving people forward, and how to integrate personal faith with public leadership. Of particular interest is the chapter where they address “adjusting to adversity.” In this chapter they posit that all the adversities should be dealt with by adjusting methods to achieve the mission (pp. 105-122). The principles presented are useful though it leaves out the use of cultural trends as a method which could be used in adjusting for adversity, which is what is needed in recruiting and training the Basarwa.

Although Kenaope (2008) outlines patterns of church growth and principles in how to jump start members for maximum participation especially in the context of the

Seventh-day Adventist Church, his approach is basically focused on the mainline tribes in Botswana. His approach is totally oblivious of the fact that there are Basarwa who live a different life style from all other tribes. He is not even conscious of the fact that they have not been reached.

Damazio (2008), in his book *The Making a Leader* urges that the greatest crisis in the church has to do with the issue of identifying and training leaders to take up the task of the gospel for their generation and clearly within a given context. In this book he outlines the different types of calls as they appear in Bible characters. He presents a unique approach because he does not only deal with characteristics for the church leaders, but also highlights the need for different methods to recruit and train people from all walks of life for church leadership. This approach is simple as compared to the current leadership principles and schools presented by scholars such as R. Heifetz and S. Parks.

### **Summary**

The literature reviewed revealed the unique lifestyle, challenges, and the perceptions of different writers and societies on the Basarwa. It has also shown challenges facing those who intend to implement change on the social lives of Basarwa. Notwithstanding the challenges faced by Basarwa and those who seek to minister to them, there is the possibility that Adventists can make inroads into the lives of the Basarwa through a leadership training approach. With this approach the church can be a torch bearer in implementing change not only in the religious domain, but also in areas such as education and other social spheres of these communities. This would be a valuable lesson in reaching other unique people groups in the region. This project attempts to make a contribution in this area.

This literature review has brought to view the following information: the identity of the Basarwa as a unique people in Botswana, the characteristics and the social life of the Basarwa, the church growth patterns of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Botswana, the work of other organizations that have effected change among the Basarwa, and leadership methods and modules which could be used to implement change among the Basarwa. Although the Seventh day Adventist church has been doing some work among the Basarwa, due to unavailability or limited literature, there has not been literature reviewed in this area. This project will attempt to address this area together with the development of Basarwa leadership in the church.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT

#### **Introduction**

This project grew out of the need to primarily grow the church among the Basarwa in the western part of Botswana. On a secondary level it came out of the desire to train church leaders among unique people groups who would be able to minister effectively among their own and also form part of the team of Adventist ministers in the whole country. It also aroused the need for the church to partner with government, non-governmental organization seeking to implement positive changes among Basarwa in areas that include but are not limited to increasing literacy rates, reducing the levels of poverty, character developments, capacity building in spheres of lives that will aid in reducing improve the social lives of Basarwa, and social acceptance of the Basarwa by other tribal groupings.

The responsibility of the church in Botswana to reach the Basarwa community, who are estimated officially to be over 40, 000 (Good, 2009), although Good argues that the real population could be well over 65,000, continues to be a challenge. As a result, the church does have some chapels in a few of the settlements, most of them are dilapidated or just white elephants for lack of use. Individuals and groups that have been sent to work among the Basarwa have either resigned or decided to work elsewhere due to frustrations resulting from an unfruitful ministry. Attempts to reach them through the medical

ministry have also failed due to the fact that they do have their own working medical system. Their perceived nomadic lifestyle has also compounded the already complex situation.

Faced with this complicated scenario, and yet compelled by the Great Commission and the Three Angels' Message of Rev 14, which the church professes to own as their unique purpose for existence, leadership training among the Basarwa becomes less optional today if the church is to forge ahead with its mission. Leadership training becomes the only way through which the church can effectively fulfill its objective through equipping them and investing in others who can continue to minister to others as it does happen with other tribes in the country.

Therefore, my desire is to present leadership training as a critical part of the many approaches that the church should use to reach the Basarwa tribe in Botswana Union. Due to limited time required to recruit and train individuals for ministry, this project will restrict itself to creating an awareness of the church among the Basarwa, stating the causes for the apparent indifference of the Basarwa to the church, a possible solution to the problem as revealed through the study of the interactions of the Basarwa with Christianity.

### **The Methodology**

The method used in this project includes primarily a certainty of the spiritual condition of the Basarwa which was done through random surveys that were carried out among the different communities of the Basarwa in the country. These included the Basarwa in the Okavango, Kgalagadi, Ghanzi, and in the Ngamiland districts. These surveys were intended to establish the religious affiliation in particular with the Christian

faith, the most appealing elements to the Basarwa, the perceived strengths of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by the Basarwa, and their view on how the church can best serve the Basarwa community.

The project proceeds through a brief investigation of the work that the Christian church has done among the Basarwa since the work started in the country. The project will also review past and present encounter of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Finally, variables that exist among the Basarwa in relation to other tribes in the country will be explored.

To achieve these objectives a total of 488 survey forms were distributed among the Basarwa. Of these only 246 were returned completed from the four selected districts namely Okavango, Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, Ngamiland, the Adventist pioneers, and pastors working among the Basarwa were also interviewed.

The survey in Okavango was done in 2008 mainly in Shakawe from mostly students in the Brigade (vocational school) from Basarwa who came from other villages. Other surveys were done in Gudigwa from adults, church attendees, and non-church goers. Other villages in this region that were covered include Beetsha and Eeretsha which were carried by church Global Pioneers on my behalf.

In the Ngamiland District the survey was done in Khwai through the help of the village chief, who compiled the information and sent it back to me for analysis. In the Ghanzi and Kgalagadi district the survey was carried by an assistant in different Basarwa settlements.

In addition to the surveys that I did in Okavango, I held training meetings with a group of six to eight people for about five hours distributed over a week. The purpose for

the meetings was to: (1) discuss the spiritual position of the Basarwa, (2) raise an awareness about the needs of Basarwa leaders to lead their communities, and (3) to investigate the willingness of some of the Basarwa to serve in some kind of leadership role.

Other interviews were held with different groups of people including (1) organizations and other Christian denominations that have worked and continue to work among the Basarwa, (2) Adventist workers, (3) Basarwa members, (4) members of the Basarwa community, and (6) political and local leaders who have dealt with the Basarwa.

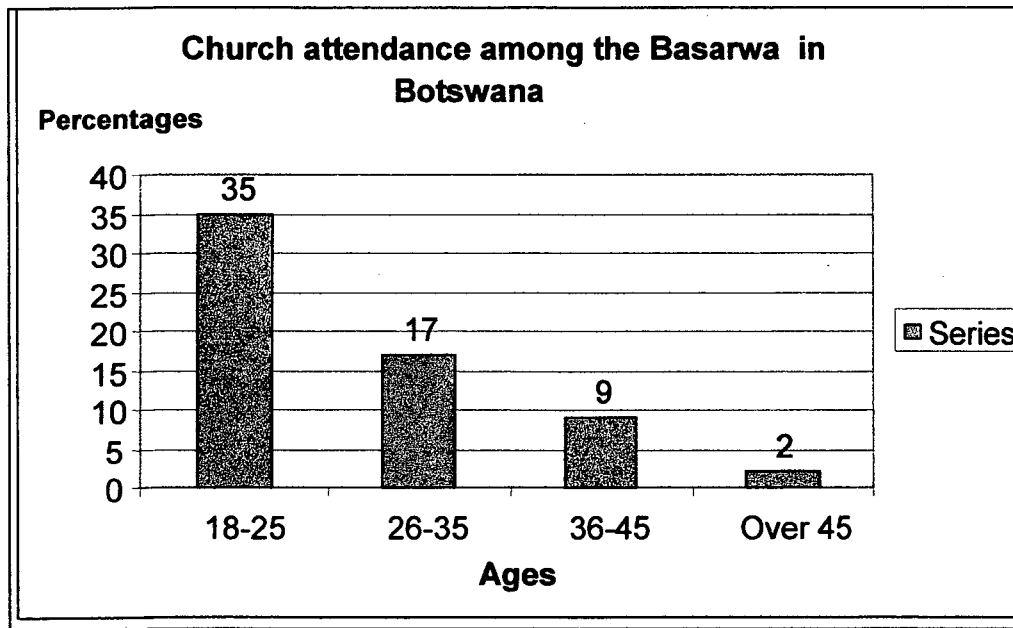
### **Findings**

For the purpose of the proposals for this project, selected questions were analyzed from the two surveys forms. This was done with an understanding that the other information will be more relevant and will be useful for the complete implementation of the project.

These meetings were helpful in that it raised awareness and of those that attended 30% showed interest in serving in some kind of leadership role if guarded and given the right academic training.

Although acknowledging the difference that exists among the different groups of the Basarwa resident in the four districts, the same instrument was used in all the districts.

Figure 2 shows a percentage of Basarwa who identified with some church. The chart shows that the elderly community among the Basarwa did not attend or identify with any church organization, while the younger generation showed some interest in the church.



*Figure 2.* Church attendance among the Basarwa in Botswana.

Additional to this, information that was acquired from those surveyed and by personal observation showed that primary school children, who could not be surveyed because of their ages, had a double percentage of church attendance to that of their elder siblings. It was also observed that primary school children had a higher church attendance than their age mates who did not attend school. This may be attributed to three factors.

#### Religious Syllabus

The Botswana religious syllabus at the primary level is more inclined to teaching Christianity as a subject and projecting it as the only religion to be followed. Kuela (2010) laments the neglect of their culture by the school curriculum. He expressed disdain at the school syllabus led to the loss of their cultural identity, because they were taught to follow a strange religion causing them to lose their spirituality. He posits that the educational system “paid no attention to our own traditional philosophies” (p. 40).

Although this was good or perhaps inevitable for the good of Christianity, this in many cases led to the elderly in the community resisting the influence of the school and thus the impact of the Christianity is very minimal with the elderly generation. This friction led to many Basarwa parents withdrawing their children from schools in order to preserve their culture.

### Non-Basarwa Teachers

The influence of their non-Basarwa teachers who, in addition to be highly esteemed individuals in the community, transmitted Christian ethos either by default or intentionally as a way of undermining the spirituality of the Basarwa. Kuela (2010) notes that the teachers who did not know the Basarwa culture were not only arrogant but also claimed to have been sent to transform them. He asserts that they claimed that “government wanted to make us human beings and that we should stop being Basarwa. They started teaching us ‘proper’ human behavior” (p. 39). This transformation included the Basarwa religion, which was resisted by the community as expressed in Kuela’s words, “we needed to be educated within our cultural environment without having to disown our traditions” (p. 40).

### Influence of Non-Basarwa School Mates

It is also probable that as the Basarwa co-exists with other tribes such as the Bayei, Babukhushu, Batawana, Bakgalagadi, and the Bayei who were receptive to Christianity that they had an influence in encouraging the Basarwa children to accept the faith as they interacted.

The regression of Christian adherents through the ages as reflected in Figure 2 and the additional information on the children not attending school seems resistance to

Christianity provides a variety of possible interpretations:

1. That Christianity is just beginning to arrive among the Basarwa and it is attempting to make its impact through schools. Although this possibility has some substance to it, it can be challenged by the fact that as will be shown in the later part of the chapter that some Basarwa had an encounter with Christianity as early as in the 1950s though with minimal impact currently. It is also of interest to note that there are some tribal communities within the country that co-exist with the Basarwa that have been impacted positively by the Christian faith. These include, as stated earlier, the Babukhushu and the Bayei.

2. The elderly Basarwa consider Christianity as part of children's educational curriculum provided by the government and some organizations that mitigate against the Basarwa culture. This is shown by the fact that though the church and the school are different institutions, when children who have shown adherents to the Christian faith are withdrawn from school for various reasons, they also stop attending church. So that the majority of the youth and middle-age people currently not attending any church mention that while at school they did nominally attend church. White (2004) also attributes this to a spiritual dilemma of the Basarwa whom he quotes as saying, "We young people are often confused about the many religions that are presented to us. Do we, the San have our own God and how should we understand these other people's beliefs?" (p. 42). Hence, many would follow the instructions of their parents against the teaching of the Bible.

3. The Basarwa maintain an indifferent attitude to churches resulting from the deposition of their land by government and the other tribes. White (2004) notes that beginning in the 1960s disposition of the Basarwa lands in the Ghanzi district resulted in

an indifferent attitude against the Reformed Church Mission and the Dutch Reformed Church Mission at Xanagas and Kuke, which were traditionally Basarwalands (p. 168). As a result the Basarwa became apprehensive about the honesty of the Christian religion.

Notwithstanding the arguments against education and Christianity it is important to note that there is a glimmer of hope for the church and education to begin to make inroads in the lives of the Basarwa. The young generation is gradually developing a hunger for education and for Christianity. A. White & LeRoux (2004) quote some of the young people declaring, “Only now we have learnt how important the church is. If you don’t have a church, then you don’t have a God, and you must know your God to reach everlasting life [sic]” (p. 43). Thus it shows that their hope of the church lies with the younger generation of the Basarwa community. Some have even gone as far preferring Christianity above their gods. A. White and LeRoux (2004) record an interview with N!ae G!xoma who stated that the “church is God’s thing, that’s where people speak to God. God should be respected . . . but not looking at the way people are living here in Anwa” (p. 45). As result of such attitudes among young Basarwa communities, some Christian denominations have been making some inroads into the Basarwa.

Figure 3 shows the religious affiliation of the Basarwa as per the survey. The study revealed that 69% of the Basarwa follow their traditional beliefs, followed by Independent African churches with 23%, while the remaining was shared by the mainline churches, evangelicals, and the spiritual healing churches.

While the results of the survey and interviews affirmed that the Basarwa are relatively closed to community not only to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but to the whole Christian community, it would be useful to investigate why the African



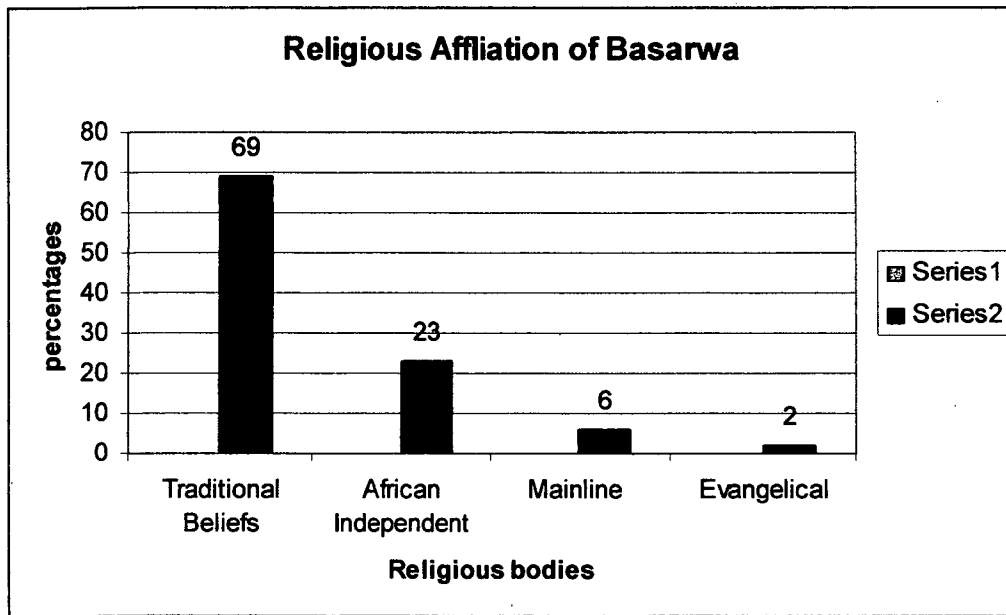


Figure 3. Religious affiliation of the Basarwa people.

Independent churches are making strides in the religious life of the Basarwa ahead of all other religious bodies. The survey revealed reasons that can be summarized into two factors that account for this success by the African Independent churches.

While other churches attempt to win the Basarwa by different community projects such as providing them with food and clothing, and then instructing them in the new faith, the African Independent churches that do not provide all these things are considered to be culturally relevant. White (2004) notes that the Basarwa are happy to combine their religion with the teachings of the Bible as reflected by one of the interviews stating, “We are also praying through our ancestral beliefs, using dance, . . . both the church’s prayers and our *kauherere* (traditional dance) are good” (p. 45).

As opposite to other churches that send “missionaries” to work among the Basarwa from other tribes, the Independent African churches use local Basarwa to lead

the churches even without any training. These people know the culture, languages, and traditions of the Basarwa. As part of the community they live with the people and travel with them when it is the season for moving for hunting and collection of fruits. This gives them an advantage over other church leaders who remain at their original place where they started the church. As such the church building or shelter that would be open will remain unused for some months. The Independent African church leaders not only travel with them the people but also participate in all the traditional activities.

This was further supported by the fact that of all those that were surveyed, many expressed their choice of which church they attend was influenced by its presence. More than 83% said they would prefer to attend a church which its local pastors or elders are Basarwa because they would understand their culture, language, and lifestyle. They were desirous to be taught in their own language as opposed to been taught in Setswana, which they feel neglected their culture as was the case with the government schools.

These observations post a challenge to make cultural relevance and development of local leadership less of an option for the Seventh-day Adventists if the church is to have a meaningful impact among the Basarwa.

### **An Encounter With the Christian Faith**

Whereas the perceived nomadic lifestyle of the Basarwa can be cause for their isolation from all other encounters with other tribes resulting in a limited interaction with the Christian faith, and due to the fact that they as objects were not available or that the missionaries themselves never had time or took the effort to follow them wherever they went, a careful study of the missionary activities suggest that there was interaction with the Basarwa as with other tribes. For the purpose of this project a study by M. Russell

will be considered not as an isolated case but as an example of the interaction of the missionaries with the Christian faith. While this study shows that there were deliberate efforts to reach the Basarwa with the Word of God, the same study will reveal that there could have been other factors that contributed to the current seemingly indifferent situation of the Basarwa to the Christian faith. This study will be further complimented by the experience of a certain Sekoba Kotama with the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In one of the rare studies done on the Basarwa's response to Christianity, Russell (1977) wrote an article "Religion as a Social Possession Afrikaner Reaction to the Conversion of Bushmen to their Church" (*La Religion comme possession sociale. Les reactions des Afrikaaders a la conversion des Boschimans a leur Eglise*). shows how the government in Botswana in 1973 ordered the dissolution of the Gereformeede congregation in D'kar 30 km from Ghanzi, which had been established by the settlers among the Basarwa of the area for themselves who had come from the Cape and later as per the Gospel Commission started work among the Basarwa who were more of the farm workers, though against the will of their mother church in South Africa (pp. 59-73).

The study reports that the reason for the dissolution by the government was that "the existence of the of the White Afrikaner Congregation alongside a mission to the Bushmen by the self same denomination was contrary to the government policy of the government policy of non-racialism, and that the white congregation should in the future amalgamate with the Bushman mission congregation" (p. 60). Russell posits that in this experience the "dilemmas, conflicts and tensions which characterize all confrontations between settlers and missionaries: the isolation of the Kalahari context merely serves to throw into peculiarly sharp relief the inherent problems for settlers of the Universalist

impulse Christianity” (p. 60). The experience leading to the dissolution of this church, which could have become a Gospel seed among the Basarwa of the Kalahari could be summarized in the following:

1. The establishment of the church in D’kar exclusively for themselves, but being motivated by the universal nature of the church they began to invite their workers to listen to the message although against the expressed will of the mother church.

2. The conflict of the settlers and the missionary’s worldview of the native population which were informed by their racial segregation impulses, resulted in failure to integrate the Basarwa in church activities. This finally led to the establishment of missions for the Bushmen alongside those of the settlers, a decision which resulted from an argument that the Basarwa do not and can not comprehend the concepts of Christianity. Thus they could not partake of the same communal service or be elected in to church leadership.

3. Failure to appreciate and understand the diversity in life style, culture, and the social structure of the Basarwa by the Afrikaner missionaries and settlers. This led to a discouragement of the Basarwa in adhering and practicing the Christian religion. Russell also notes that “the passive settler attitude to the religious fate of the Bushmen, exemplified in these social arrangements, whereby the Bushmen were exposed to Christianity, but not encouraged into it” contributed to the indifference which the Basarwa later showed to Christianity (p. 66). As a result the few that were committed dispersed and went to live in different areas because of the rejection and racial discrimination.

4. The dissolution of the church by the Government.

## **The Basarwa Encounter the Seventh-day Adventist Church**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church almost made a breakthrough to the Basarwa through divine intervention in the person of a certain Sekoba Kotama in the 1950s. The story of Sekoba comes through the interviews of his sister Mma Sekoba, some senior pastors who lived and worked with him, and later as recorded by Dwight A. Delafield.

According to the interviews Sekoba and his family lived around Nata, 200 km west of Francistown along the road to Maun. Tradition has it that Sekoba developed a desire to learn how to read and write. This desire made him walk some 100 kms to go to Gweta to attend some home classes for a period of a year, after which he went back to look after the cattle in Nata. All this happened around 1950.

Delafield and Wheeler (1969) records that one day when Sekoba was herding his cattle his began to see some visions in which he was told to go and look for the true church. Although he attempted to ignore these visions, they persisted and every time getting clearer as to the identity of the true church. He was told to travel to the northeast in Senyawwe where he would identify the true church by a black book and nine other brown books (though other interviews claim that the nine brown books were never mentioned). Around 1951, Sekoba walked about 150 km to Senyawwe in search of the true church, his only identity of such being a black book and nine other brown ones. The story claims that he found a certain Pastor Moyo reading the Bible outside, and later also viewed the brown books as per the vision, which happened to be *Testimonies for the Church* by E. G. White. He stayed with the pastor for some days where he was instructed in the teachings of the Bible including the keeping of the Sabbath which Sekoba confirmed were in harmony with the visions that he had seen (pp. 143-156).

Delafield and Wheeler (1969) further record the following insightful statement to authenticate this story:

After Sekoba and his family had settled down as farmers [in Natal, pastor Movo travelled to their new home by bicycle. . . . Besides Sekoba's family, he taught a number of Bushmen who had also taken up farming; and who lived near Sekoba (p. 155). Sekoba grasped the teachings of the Bible. A few months later—in 1954—Pastor Daniel Mogegeh baptized him. The next year, his wife, brother, and sister accepted the rite – of baptism. The Bushmen learned [sic] the Bible well. . . . Sekoba never lost his ability to speak, read, and write in the Tswana language. The Seventh-day Adventist church ordained him as an elder, evangelist, and pastor of the first Bushmen church. .. Died in 1957, only a few months after his visions. But before his death he saw ten more members of his tribe baptized into the Adventist Church. Today at least fifty Bushmen have joined the Church. (pp. 155-156)

After the death of Sekoba the little church which was established among the Basarwa gradually died due to lack of ownership and care by the Tswana speaking groups. Currently, the only surviving member from the Sekoba Adventist group is the sister, who has since moved to Francistown. The little church that continues to meet in Nata was re-established in the 1980s, and thus they are neither Basarwa nor have any ties with the Sekoba conversion.

It is pathetic to note that during this time when Sekoba was miraculously converted into the church, and even after his death, though there was a national recruitment and training program for Adventist pastors who were sent to Solusi for pastoral training from other tribes in the country, there was no deliberate attempt to recruit and train from among the Basarwa. The Sekoba conversion and its impact on other Basarwa in bringing them to the Adventist church has been up to now the only meaningful encounter of the church with this group of people in the country. This does not, however, rule out the few isolated cases that have been baptized in the Kgalagadi and the Ghanzi area, many of which have either left the church or have never adhered to

Adventist principles and doctrines. Many that continue to worship are basically nominal members. It would not be understated to say that the church lost an opportunity to make a meaningful impact following Sekoba's experience.

While this experience of Sekoba shows the opportunity of ministry and church growth among the Basarwa, it also shows what the role of education and acceptance could play in ministering among the Basarwa. The fact that the church leaders recognized Sekoba and even ordained him as an elder was instrumental in the fast growth of the church among the Basarwa at that time. It is regrettable that such an initiative was not followed up by other church leaders.

Other attempts by the church to reach the Basarwa included building churches and chapels in their settlements. The first was through the construction of the church in Ghanzi. Although this church was not established solely for them, it was expected that because they constituted the majority of the population in the area they would form part of the converts. But this was not to be because this church was led by Bakgalagadi and other Tswana speaking groups who looked down upon the Basarwa. Also at the time there were some Afrikaners who were their bosses. Thus, the Basarwa never joined the Ghanzi church. It simply became a church for other tribes most of whom were civil workers from around the country.

The next attempt to reach the Basarwa was a deliberate decision to build chapels in the Basarwa settlements. These included chapels that were built at Grootladte, Bere, East Hanahai, and New Xade. These were companies of the Ghanzi church. Although a few Basarwa did attend the church, they only did so when the pastor from Ghanzi came. The church also attempted to send some lay pastors to nurture the Basarwas in these

communities. However, as all other attempts, this was also not successful as all the lay pastors were not Basarwan.

Although the lay pastors worked hard and in many cases stayed with them, these were later discouraged as they did not understand the lifestyle of the Basarwa so they moved away from the church as the demands of their culture in search of fruits, berries, and when it was time for hunting. These lay pastors either left their fields of employment or were posted to some other places where they could have “some continuity.” Additionally, the Basarwa lacked ownership of these churches as the people did not understand their culture and the fact that they were led by people from other tribes.

Other initiatives by the church included bringing some Basarwa Adventist to some combined camp meetings so that they would fellowship, interact, and be instructed in the Adventist life style. One such was the 2000 camp meeting which was held in Kang, where some Basarwa were ferried from their settlements to come and attend. However, though there was no noted discrimination against them, the Basarwa and the other tribes were as clay and iron to one another. The Basarwa were different; their singing was uniquely different from all the others. Many times they would leave the lessons to go for their dances in the afternoon and evenings.

This experience revealed that the Basarwa community needed a ministry that is uniquely theirs which cannot be provided by members of the other tribes. This should have been an eye opener for the church to seek to provide culturally relevant leadership to this unique people.

The church failed to recruit from among the few Basarwa converts leaders who would lead. It appears the church was overly concerned with the correct presentation of



the doctrines to the Basarwa as opposed to the need of giving the Basarwa an opportunity to grow in their faith. So the church continued to send local missionaries to the Basarwa who failed due to conflict of culture and church doctrines. Although there is a handful of some Adventist Basarwa, it is pathetic that in the present, even in the days of Adventist pioneers, the church does not have any Adventist pioneers among them, but instead they are Adventist pioneers working among the Basarwa.

Currently the church, through the North Botswana Conference, is engaged in a program of developing the lives of the Basarwa along the Okavango through an agricultural program. The church decided to start up an orchard and a vocational school which is meant to improve the lives of the Basarwa in Beetsha and the surrounding areas. While this is a noble community development project which has the potential of positively impacting the lives of the Basarwa by providing them with the necessary skills with the hope that as they get these skills they will in turn join the church or at least work for the community project, it is saddening to note that the people that are currently being trained to run this project are not from the Basarwa, but they are from other tribes who will in turn train the Basarwa. Without pre-empting the result, with all this noble intention it is likely that this will also be one of those projects that will not impact the lives of the Basarwa or in any way help the church to reach the Basarwa.

This seemingly lack of confidence by the church on the leadership skills and the ability to drive programs and projects even for their own good should be a cause of concern, for it has not only led to a lack of ownership, but it has also reinforced the perception that the Basarwa have always had that the Bantu look down upon them. Keima (2010) posits that it is this attitude that has contributed to the current social

situation of the Basarwa, which includes poverty, high levels of illiteracy, their current challenges with the government over their land, and their welfare at large (pp. 29- 39). He further attributes the deplorable spiritual condition of the Basarwa to the same attitude, stating that “missionaries had worked hard to improve the lot of other African tribal groupings but the Kua [another name for Basarwa] were the preserve of the anthropologist” (p. 60).

### **Work by Other Christian Organizations**

While many Christian organizations have done some work among the Basarwa regrettably with very minimal impact on their social and spiritual lives, the efforts put by the Botswana Bible Society with its partners, and the Botswana Christian Council probably represents the best efforts done thus far for the Basarwa community in terms of ministering to them.

According to Rantshilo (as cited in *Botswana Review* 29th edition, 2010) the Bible Society of Botswana whose main mission is to “promote Christianity through acquisition, translation, production, dissemination and distribution of the holy scriptures in appropriate formats for the needs of the nation in partnership with individuals, private sector, churches, Christian organizations and government agencies” partnered with the Norwegian Council to translate portions of the New Testament in the Naro language (Naro is one most spoken language by the Basarwa). These were called the “Good News 1-3.” It included stories such as the Good Samaritan and other stories that were simplified to be read by primary school students. According to Rantshilo these portions appealed to the story telling nature of the Basarwa, so much that they were used as part of the school curriculum. The children would then tell the stories to their parents in the evening around

the fire as their part after the parents had told them their own traditional stories.

Another remarkable milestone is the translation of the whole New Testament into Naro by the Bible Society, which currently is ongoing and is scheduled to be completed before the end of 2011. It is hoped that through this process many Basarwa will be able to read the Word of God in their own mother tongue, and thus would break the language barrier to reach them. These projects are commendable as they do not only fulfill the mission of the Bible Society, but would probably provide the missing chain link between the church and the Basarwa. This was revealed in May 2010 during the “Follow the Bible Project” an initiative by the Seventh-day Adventist Church world head office, through which the church sought in part “to revive and encourage the Christianity community in every nation, tribe, and people to return to the Bible, to accept its authority and determine to follow the Bible in their daily life” ([www.Followthebible.org](http://www.Followthebible.org)). While the program was a success everywhere in the country as the church gave Bibles in Setswana (the national language) and in English, it was embarrassing that the church did not have any Bibles to give in any of the languages spoken by the Basarwa in Ghanzi, but instead gave them the Setswana and English Bibles.

Notwithstanding the value of these noble projects, it is lamentable to note that these did not have a deliberate effort towards capacity building in the area of leadership among the Basarwa. These were based on the presumption that the Basarwa should be able to read or those who read would be able to share the message with the whole community. It is also of concern to note that even the translators are not local Basarwa, but they are Basarwa from either Namibia or South Africa who have been employed for the job but not necessarily adherents to the Christian faith.

## **Implementing Change Through Leadership Development Among the Basarwa**

Although implementing change in the whole life of the Basarwa is not an easy task, the survey carried out, government, and other organizations have shown that this challenge will be easier when there is leadership developed among the Basarwa. A brief analysis follows of how the government of Botswana and Survival International is instructional in these areas.

When Survival International wanted to make an impact in the case for Basarwa relocation from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve it picked on R. Sesana together with other Basarwas to challenge the government on their relocation. The Basarwa won the case in High Court in December 2002. Kiema (2010) argues that though the Basarwa traditionally do not have a chief as other tribes in the country, when the government wanted to efficiently counteract the influence of the Survival International, it appointed Lobatse Beslag to be chief of the Basarwa, who was ultimately appointed into the House of Chiefs by the then president of the country, Festus Mogae (p. 77).

As an attempt to influence the Basarwa political life, there is a deliberate move to ensure that the local counselors in most of the Basarwa settlements are Basarwa. These include such settlements such as Xabo/Kuke, New Xade, New Xanagas, and Metsimancho. It is important to note that this calculated development meant to impact the Basarwa community as previously such a leadership role would have allowed the other tribes to continue to rule over the Basarwa. This development is beginning to bear some fruit in some understanding of government programs and projects among the Basarwa, as witnessed by, among others, increased literacy rates among the Basarwa.

It is also important to note that other non-governmental organizations which are

desirous of making a meaningful impact on the Basarwa and instill a sense of ownership also made a deliberate move to recruit Basarwa leaders. Such an example is Kiema Kuela, who by training i a teacher but is currently in leadership of the Kuru Trust to encourage the ownership and development of the Basarwa. Kuela is currently also making a meaningful contribution in sensitizing the Basarwa and the community at large on the injustices, abuse, and the needs of the Basarwa through his writings as an insider of the Basarwa community.

It is unfortunate that even in the face of past and present developments, the church has not made any deliberate move towards recruiting or training of Basarwa leadership to have a meaningful impact on their spiritual lives. On the contrary, the church is currently continuing to be involved in its conventional evangelistical methods by the converts from other tribes, and community projects which includes distributions of clothing through the women's ministry department. Although these are essential it is important to review them and come up with other initiatives in the ministry to the Basarwa.

### **Relationship Between Church Growth Patterns and the Pastoral Leadership in the Church**

An overview of the growth patterns of the Seventh- day Adventist Church in Botswana reveals that there is a relationship between the growth of the church within a given region and the presence of individuals from that region in church leadership. This is supported by the fact that currently Maun and Kanye which have the highest concentration of members also have the highest number of pastors in the church. Regions or tribes that do not have pastoral representation in church have the lowest membership. This evidently has very little to do with proximity and the population. A case in point is Molepolole which is "the largest urban village in Botswana as well as being the country's

third largest population centre, with a figure of 54,561 residents” (*Botswana Review*, 2010, p. 24). It is only 60 km from Kanye and 40 km from Gaborone, but has not produced a local pastor, yet the church is still struggling to establish its presence in this village as compared to much smaller villages with a pastoral representation in the church. The same trend exists in other similar communities.

The above observation presents the development of local or tribal leadership not only as a challenge but as an opportunity through which the church can continue to grow among the different tribes in the country. Thus the need to deliberately recruit and train leaders among the Basarwa is mandatory if the church is to make an impact among them and continue to grow.

### **Summary**

Although establishing an Adventist presence in the form of building churches and preaching among the Basarwa, involvement in community projects, and the continual conventional methods of evangelism are still very important components of the church, the weight of evidence in this study seems to suggest that due to the unique lifestyle of the Basarwa and to break the cultural bearers, the church should be deliberate in recruitment and training of the Basarwa leaders. This should be viewed as a challenge to be faced and an opportunity to embrace without delay.

As a challenge the church will have to change its pastoral recruitment strategy from being a volunteer calling of some mature spiritual people, to being a direct recruitment from possibly not very spiritual members in the hope that as they train they will grow spiritually. As much as it may appear as a risk, it is a worthy one to take courteously in order to make an impact among the Basarwa.

As an opportunity it would help to affirm the profession of the Adventist church of the Three Angels' Message "to all peoples, tribes, and nations." This therefore suggests that all peoples are called into the Adventist church not only into its membership, but also into the leadership of the church. Such confidence will also help to shed off the darkness that the church also looks down upon the Basarwa. As the church shows interest in the Basarwa not only as members, but being willing to develop its workers through leadership training, it will compliment other government programs which seek to improve the lives of the Basarwa. This could be an opportunity to accelerate the growth of the church among the Basarwa and indeed in the whole country.

## CHAPTER 5

### PROPOSAL FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF BASARWA CHURCH LEADERS

#### **Introduction**

While attending the Doctor of Ministry Leadership intensive modules at Helderberg from 2007-2010, the program purposed to equip participants with the four core competencies of the leadership concentration, the five essentials of leadership, and the administrative skills. As part of my study for leadership development in Botswana, I decided to build my proposed model using five of the six essentials of Christian leadership. To further expand on these essentials the proposal has drawn principles from E. G. White's counsels dealing with the Blacks in the southern States due to the some degree of similarities that exists between the Basarwa in relation to other tribal groupings in the country, and those of the Blacks and the rest of the white communities during her life in the United States of America then.

The data collected was used to formulate the model. Due to time constrains, resources, and the process of recruitment and training, this project has not been implemented fully, but presents a proposal that could be implemented within five years. The results of the study among the Basarwa and the literature reviewed on the topic suggests that this model could be an alternative solution to the challenge of reaching the Basarwa with the Adventist message. It is the intention of this chapter to build this model



by reflecting on the five essentials, drawing insights from the research findings, the Bible, and relevant literature.

### **Essential 1: A God-given Passion-stirring Shared Vision**

While the Seventh-day Adventist Church practices an exclusive position in its ministry in relation to other Christian organizations, which has been helpful in its attempt to maintain its unique doctrines and practice, such a position needs to be investigated to determine its efficiency in ministering to unique people groups. As a result of this position the church is not a member of such umbrella Christian organizations such as the World Christian Council; however, as has been shown in this study, there are other Christian organizations who are also attempting to spread the word among the Basarwa. This suggests that they are willing to cooperate with the church in this area, which could present a possibility to advance the work of the church in its attempt to reach and recruit and train Basarwa leaders.

#### **Proposal for a Shared Vision With the Bible Society**

One of the organizations which the church could cooperate in the area of reaching the Basarwa is the Bible Society, which is attempting to translate portions of the scriptures into the Naro (which is one of the Basarwa languages), and also working with audio tapes to take the Word to the Basarwa. Such a partnership would be of benefit to both the Bible Society which has a sole interest of spreading the Gospel, and the church which could use the advantage for development of leaders among the Basarwa. This partnership is possible since the Bible Society is desirous of such partnership from Christian organizations to archive its objectives. The church could and must share their God-given passion for the development of church leaders who serve both the church and

the Bible Society in translation while also assisting in the spreading of the Word in harmony with the church mission. It is therefore proposed that the church should share her passion with such organizations in its attempt to reach and train leaders among the Basarwa.

Although the Basarwa are generally an illiterate community, an observation was made from the study as why the Basarwa do not attend church. Unlike other tribes the Scriptures are not available in their mother tongue. As part of the reasons advanced for their continued practice of their traditional beliefs is the fact that the Bible is in their language and they have leadership in the form of the elderly. Therefore, the Bible Society's efforts to avail the Scripture in the native language could be complimented by the church's provision of leadership, which would be drawn from among the people. In this endeavor the church needs to share its vision with other organizations.

#### Shared Vision in Establishment of Basarwa Worship Centers

The church should show passion for a shared vision of establishing churches specifically for the Basarwa with other denominations for the purpose of capacity building among the Basarwa, without any connotation of discrimination. The study revealed that in 1973 the Dutch Reformed Church was closed by the government in D'kar when they attempted to create such a church and further instructed it to merge with the Basarwa in the future if they were to operate among the Basarwa. With due respect to the government policy of non-discrimination, the church could collaborate with other denominations and dialogue with the government to show that any initiatives are devoid of discrimination, but are solely attempts to provide worship centers for the Basarwa where it is expected that they would develop moral and some spiritual leadership skills.

In reference to the blacks, White (1909) advised:

Let the colored be provided with neat tasteful houses of worship. Let them be shown that this is done not to exclude them from worshipping with white people, because they are black, but in order that the truth may be advanced. Let them understand that this plan is to be followed until the Lord shows a better way. (p. 206)

Whereas there are differences between the blacks during her times and the Basarwa, the same principle is to be advanced to the government and the Basarwa themselves. As much as the separation between blacks who were then discriminated by society did help the church to grow among the Blacks, and ultimately developed some leadership among them, it is expected that a similar development would yield similar results among the Basarwa.

These churches would serve as the foundation for the development and recruitment of the Basarwa leadership within the church. This is necessitated by the fact as shown in the study that when places where the Basarwa co-exist with other tribes, Basarwa are indifferent to participate in such worship, as has been the case with the Ghanzi church. While the church embraces the cultural diversity they should be deliberate in developing leadership from different cultures.

Although this concept did not bring the desired results with chapels that were constructed in the Ghanzi and Kgalagadi districts, where such buildings have currently remained as white elephants in the Basarwa settlements, it is important to investigate the cause for this. An analysis of this scenario reveals that the cause was a lack of local Basarwa leaders. The church either sent some "local missionaries" to lead out in these chapels working as Adventist Mission Pioneers or they were led by someone from the mother church, as was the case with Ghanzi. On the contrary, this concept produced fruit in the Okavango district in Gudikwa, Beetsha, and Eeretsha, where currently over 60

Basarwa have been baptized in the church. The difference in the two districts seems to be that in the Okavango district there was a Mosarwa Global Pioneer and other local elders while in the Ghanzi district the church used to send some non-Mosarwa to lead the young church.

Therefore the shared vision to establish Basarwa churches should be accompanied by the provision of local leadership from the Basarwa.

It is also important to share this vision for developing Basarwa leaders with those church pastors and leaders within the districts that are occupied by the Basarwa. This would call for intentionality on the part of the church pastors and other church leaders. It is also hoped that this vision would be shared with conference presidents who are tasked with the responsibilities of recruiting and training those who provide leadership at the church level.

## **Essential 2: Challenge the Status Quo**

For the church to accomplish the Gospel Commission with particular relevance to the Basarwa, it is important for the church to deliberately change its modus operandi due to the unique life style of the Basarwa and the apparent failures with such conversional models of operation.

### **Change in the Recruitment Method**

This change would include the change in its recruitment methods to the ministry. Whereas the church in Botswana, or perhaps in the world, does not have a specific recruitment policy or method for the ministry, it has used the “free flow” method, whereby mature church members at the prompting of the Spirit apply to the conference for consideration to join the ministry. Traditionally, joining the ministry has been left to

those who feel the “call.” This normally is done through an internship program before being sent for training to one of the regional seminaries. Whereas this method has served the church reasonably well during its existence in Botswana, a closer look at this method reveals loopholes that have contributed to the lamentable spiritual condition of the Basarwa and other tribes.

As has been shown in the previous chapters this method has produced most pastors from the regions that have the greatest numbers of church members. For instance, while the church was experiencing rapid growth in the Northeast most pastors were from that region, and currently most pastors are either from the Maun or Kanye regions because of the large church membership. While this may appear logical, it has the potential of creating an appearance that church is exclusively for those regions that are represented in the leadership. As a result those in the leadership may also tend to be inclined to consider only those from their region for any given opportunity. Thus regionalism may gradually crop up in the leadership of the church, at the expense of regions with fewer members.

This approach has not served the Basarwa for the past 90 years due to their unique life style who require a culturally relevant ministry. While the traditional approach has been to send some local ministers to go and minister among the un-reached tribes, most of whom have been successful probably because of their general similarities in life style, these local “missionaries” have failed to minister effectively to the Basarwa because of the gap in their life style and culture. Many of them have been frustrated by the “uncivilized” life style, and the fact that in harmony with their culture they would move from place to place in search for food.

In addition to the variance in the life styles and culture among the Basarwa and other tribes, is the fact that other denominations have not been able to make meaningful inroads among this unique people group. As noted earlier the Adventist church's approach has been that of presenting the Adventist doctrines to the hitherto Christians and then winning them to their faith. This therefore presents a new challenge in the Adventists missionary work in the country.

As an attempt to address this challenge, it is proposed that the church should intentionally recruit church leaders from the Basarwa. Whereas it is to be acknowledged that this attempt has been made without success in the past, this proposal is cognizant of some factors that led to such failures, and the opportunities that are currently available which were not present then. Among the factors which led to the failure is the requirements for strict adherence to the Adventist message without due consideration of the challenges faced by the Basarwa.

In this respect, this proposal, while holding in high esteem the doctrines of the church, it advocates for a more flexible approach which would allow such recruits to continue to grow in faith while leading others. This is as opposed to the spiritually mature approach. The proposal also recognizes the fact that in the past the church required the Basarwa who were recruited to meet the required academic requirements for different seminaries, thus leading to many of them failing in this respect due to their high illiteracy levels, and the fact that education for the purpose of leading a foreign religious organization which mitatants against one's culture would not be a highly esteemed value among the deeply cultural Basarwa.

## The Basarwa in Community Leadership Roles

In spite of the fact that the Basarwa still continue to be the most illiterate community in the country, there are opportunities that have come in place. For instance, the government has chosen some of them to be leaders in the communities. These include Lobatse Beslag to be Kgosi or chief, although according to their culture they did not have chiefs. Others currently serve as political leaders in various councils. These Basarwa leaders continue to serve their communities effectively and are impacting satisfactory change which would hitherto not be impacted by anybody from other tribes.

It is important to note that although there may be some formal education in these Basarwa community leaders, it was never a laid out requirement for them to be community leaders. The government or political parties recognized the potential of these and appointed them, and in most cases their people rallied behind them. Such a renowned leader is Roy Sesana, who stood and won a High court case against the government on the relocation of the Basarwa from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (with the assistance of the Survival International and other human rights organizations).

In addition to the fact that some Basarwa have taken up community leadership responsibilities it is important to recognize that there are some quarters within the Basarwa community who are keen on some formal education if such education were to be tailor-made towards their culture or would not be perceived to be militant toward their culture.

This project proposes the following in order to serve as recruitment for the Basarwa leaders:

1. The church should identify a leader from each settlement that the church wants

to reach. Talent is to be scouted from among them not on the basis of education.

E. White's (1909) advice in reference to the black community can still be applicable, when she insisted "instead of wondering whether they are not fitted to labor . . . let the colored brethren and sisters devote themselves to missionary work among the colored people. There is an abundance of room for intelligent colored . . . to labor for their own people" (p. 199). Thus the initial step is for the church leadership to have confidence among the Basarwa that they are able to work and indeed lead among their own people.

2. The church should accommodate a shift in its approach of ministering when working for the Basarwa. This shift should be inclined to fit the unique cultural lifestyle of the Basarwa. This approach should take into consideration the belief system, values, and customs of the Basarwa. It is unfortunate that the church's attempt to reach Basarwa have been from the other tribe's culture, while theirs have been considered to be heathenistic.

The ministry of Jesus speaks of one who knew the culture of those that he ministered to. It therefore is the responsibility of the church to contextualize its method in order to be culturally relevant to the Basarwa. These would include among others the establishment of mobile churches which would be travelling with them according to their seasons when it is time for hunting (which can take up to three months). Such a shift of ministry can better be done by one among them who would be able to travel with them and be indeed part of the holistic cultural routine.

3. The Basarwa should be given a short training preferably in their settlements not outside. Ministers should move to the Basarwa settlements to give training among them for a short period of not more than three months per session, at least once a year as they



continue to lead out. The time in the interval would provide ample opportunity to develop the next syllabus and the opportunity to implement what has been learned. These sessions should run for a period between four to six years preferably by the same teachers.

### **Essential 3: Unswerving Commitment to Empower People**

This model addresses two methods of showing unswerving commitment to empower the Basarwa: small groups for multiplication of the Basarwa Leaders and community projects.

#### **Small Groups for Multiplication of the Basarwa Leaders**

According to the social structure of the Basarwa, as the group grows it divides to maintain about 30-40 individuals. These leaders should be empowered to continue to train spiritual or church leaders who would go with the new group. The Apostle Paul advised Timothy, “The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach other” (2 Tim 2:2, NKJ). This would be more than relevant in the case of these new recruits. This training model is in contrast to the traditional method whereby the new company or branch is taken care of by someone from the mother church.

The social structure of the Basarwa has the potential of enhancing the small group concept, serving as a fertile ground for church planting through small groups. This would not only multiply the church but will also multiply the numbers of leaders. The implementation of small group ministry within the Basarwa small social groups offers the hope of increasing an Adventist presence and multiplication of church leaders among the Basarwa.

## Empowering Through Community Projects

Empowering and multiplication of leaders seems to be at the core of Jesus' ministry for he spent time developing twelve leaders and teaching them how to be better leaders (Matt 10). A critical look at the ministry of Jesus suggests that he was more concerned with empowering leaders than driving some ecclesiastical program. Maxwell (1993) defines the role of leader as that of to identify, develop other leaders, and "cultivate in them the need for the organization" (p. 21).

The church should come up with community projects such the rehabilitation and agricultural project at Beetsha and train Basarwa to lead out in such. The experience of other community projects such as the Kuru trust and the community projects of the Khwai community presents an important lesson from which the church can learn from in empowering people and developing leadership among the Basarwa.

### **Essential 4: Exercising Solid Integrity**

It is important that ministry to the Basarwa should be done with particular integrity because of other tribes and the world's attitude towards them. Basarwa have been looked down because of their culture and life styles. Notwithstanding the social and spiritual condition of the Basarwa, all those ministering among them should forever be informed of the fact that they together with all the tribes of the earth "have not been bought with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (2 Cor 5:15).

E. White (1940) poignantly argues that "all men have been bought by this infinite price . . . God has purchased the will, the affections, the mind, the soul, of every human being. Whither believers or unbelievers, all men are the Lord's property" (p. 326). This is

critical as the social condition of the Basarwa has been stated earlier in the paper. The degradation and type of slavery subjected to being herdsmen and workers for the other tribes has resulted not only in some kind of inferiority complex, but also to some degree a negative attitude towards the Bantu tribes. Baker (2010) quotes E. White addressing a similar situation,

Are we not under even greater obligation to labor for the colored people than those than those more highly favored: who is it that held these people in servitude? Who kept them in ignorance, and pursued a course to debase and brutalize them...if the race is degraded, if they are repulsive in habits and manners, who made them so? . . . After so great wrong that been done them should not an earnest effort be made to lift them up? The truth must be carried to them. They have souls to save as well as we [sic]. ("Our Duty to the Colored People," March 21, 1891; *The Southern Work*, 1898. (p. 18)

Whereas there are differences in the life styles and the conditions between the blacks as described by the statement above and the Basarwa, the two tribes share a lot in common, thus making it imperative for the church in Botswana to take serious the admonishment above. Such advice calls for the church which is predominantly made up of the Bantu tribe who are, to a greater extent responsible for the social and the spiritual position of the Basarwa, to be intentional in its attempts to minister to the Basarwa. This must be done in integrity, respectfully, lest it should arouse an uncalled for indifference to the Word due to past relations. This integrity must take into account the culture, customs, and values of the Basarwa.

### **Essential 5: Demonstrating a Faith-Based Hope**

This concept suggests that there is hope for the salvation of any group of people. The Paul declares that "anyone who calls on the name of Christ shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). It is important for the church to practice this hope as most people have looked upon the Basarwa as hopeless because of their degraded conditions and their response to

Christianity over the years. When people had given up on faith-based hope of the black slaves E. White (1898) manifested this faith-based hope as she wrote that God has His own people even among the blacks, though they may be degraded and unpromising, she argued that there is talent that needs to be awakened. She noted that “God regards the capacity of every man, He marks the surroundings and sees how these have formed the character, and he pities these souls” (pp. 15-17).

It is therefore important for the church to show compassion to the Basarwa, instead of judging them. As this faith-based hope is manifested it should be manifested in the desire for capacity building among the Basarwa.

In line with this concept, I proposed that the church should consider ways of training leadership among the Basarwa. These may include running a mobile seminary for basic church leadership. It is further suggested that the church should specifically allocate sponsorship for young Basarwans who would be willing to go for training at places like Solusi or Zambia Adventist University for theological training. The church administration should be intentional in recruiting these young Basarwa while at school or at vocational schools. The surveys revealed that there are some Basarwa who would be willing to minister for their own people if given guidance. These would initially be taken through an internship program.

### **Community Programs**

As has been shown in the surveys that the Basarwa are involved in alcohol drinking and smoking, the church has be intentional in running programs for them that help them to overcome these habits. In this direction it is proposed the Botswana Union through its health institutions like Botswana Adventist Medical Services and Kanye

Seventh-day Adventist Hospital be encouraged to draw up a rehabilitation program within three to four years. It is hoped that as the church ministers in this way it will increase its visibility especially to those Basarwa communities, and that this ministry will be building blocks for leadership development as much as it would serve as trust and empowerment for the community.

### **Provision of Budgets**

This initiative would require that church a specific budget for leadership and training of the Basarwa on an annual basis. This budget may be used to sponsor the Basarwa children to the Adventist primary and secondary school, where the church will impact their lives in the educational systems. It is recommended that the North Botswana Conference and the South Botswana Conference together with the Union should annually budget, beginning 2011, specifically for the leadership development of the Basarwa.

### **Development of Institutions in the Settlements**

In the wake of the new dawn of the educational system in the church and the illiteracy levels among the Basarwa, the church should begin to plan to run some schools in the settlements or the places where the Basarwa are. Currently the church is running some orphanages in the country. It is here proposed that the orphanage in Ghanzi should be intentional in taking in young Basarwa children who are in the surrounding areas, and the whole church in the country should be responsible for the expenses. The proposal is to allow this orphanage to be operated in part or fully by the Basarwa. They should be given an opportunity to lead under the guidance of capable people, hoping that finally they would be empowered to some church leadership even at the preschool level. This is important in view of the revelation from the study, that there are more Basarwa kids who

are more responsive to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Use of Modern Technology**

The use of modern technology is proposed to be a useful instrument in both training and recruiting Basarwa leaders. The Bible Society of Botswana is using radios called “the proclaimer ”which it uses to broadcast the New Testament to the Basarwa. It is hereby proposed that the church should partner with the Bible Society in the production of these “proclaimers” for use by the Basarwa Christian leaders to use as a resource. In Namibia some kind of Ipods are being used to reach the Basarwa. The church is to instigate other uses of some kind of modern technology to minister and train Basarwa leaders, which would be able to reach Basarwa everywhere they are.

### **Summary**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s profession and adherence to the biblical mandate of the universality of salvation as revealed in the Old Testament, and the inclusiveness of the Gospel Commission as presented by the life of Jesus and the ministry of other New Testament writers has been challenged by the church’s apparent failure to reach the Basarwa even though the church has over 90 years of ministry in the country. Although the church is one of the fastest growing churches in the country, the church’s conventional approach to mission and other regular programs used to reach this unique people group has not yielded the desired fruit as it has with other with other tribes in the country. This has been a cause of concern to the church resulting in the need to investigate the variables that exist among the Basarwa.

The weight of evidence after a thorough study done among the Basarwa, the growth patterns of the church in the country, and other literature reviewed, seem to point

to a lack of the church's intentionality in the recruitment and training of the Basarwa leaders as among the causes for this lamentable scenario. The evidence for this hypothesis is the growth of the church among the Basarwa in the few incidents where they have been such leaders, as revealed in the experience of Sekoba, and the Global Mission Pioneers in the Okavango district.

This study thus proposes that the church should be deliberate in her efforts to recruit and train the Basarwa leaders if she is to impact their lives with the Gospel and fulfill her commission. This is to be done through the implementation of five of the six essentials of leadership development as presented for the Doctor of Ministry Leadership emphasis, namely: (1) a God given passion stirring a shared vision, (2) the need to challenge the status quo, (3) unswerving commitment to empower people, (4) exercising solid integrity, and (5) demonstrating a faith based hope.

### **Conclusion**

This proposal shall be shared with the Botswana Union at large through the action of the executive committee in adoption for implementation as a tool for reaching the Basarwa and other unique people groups in the country, region, and the world at large.

APPENDIX  
SURVEY FORMS

**AN AWARENESS SURVEY AMONG THE BASARWA**

Hello, my name is Boitirelo Kabo, I come from the Seventh-day Adventist church and we are conducting a public opinion survey. May I have a few minutes of your time?

1. Have you ever heard or read about the Seventh-day Adventist church? Yes      No

2. Is there is a Seventh-day Adventist Church in your village?                      Yes      No

3. Is there an Adventist church building in your village?                      Yes      No

4. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the name "Seventh-day Adventist"?

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5. Are any of your relatives members of the Seventh-day Adventist church?

Yes                      No

6. Do you know any member of the Seventh-day Adventist church in your community?

Yes                      No

7. What is your age?

- A. 18 -24
- B. 25 – 35
- C. 36 – 50
- D. 50 and above.

8. What is your occupation?

- A. Student
- B. Hunter – Gatherer
- C. Farm worker
- D. Worker in the tourism Industry.
- E. None worker
- F. Any other \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for filling the form. Thank for your time.



**The Basarwa church attendance survey form**

1. Do you attend any Christian church? No Yes  
 2. Do any of your family members attend any church? No Yes  
 3. Which of the following church groupings are most comfortable with?  
 A. Apostolic  
 B. Spiritual Healing churches  
 C. Mainline churches  
 D. African Independent Churches

4. Grade the following: Which elements of the church are most appealing to you? 1= strongest and 5 being the weakest

- |                           |     |     |     |     |     |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A. Doctrines              | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| B. Infrastructures        | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| C. Welfare Ministries.    | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| D. Fellowship.            | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| E. Multicultural Aspects. | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| F. Format of worship      | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| G. Presence               | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |

5. What do you see as the strongest points of the Seventh-day Adventist in your area?

- |                           |     |     |     |     |     |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A. Doctrines              | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| B. Infrastructures        | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| C. Welfare Ministries.    | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| D. Fellowship.            | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| E. Multicultural Aspects. | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| F. Format of worship      | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| G. Presence               | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |

6. How the Seventh day Adventist performed in the following areas? 1 for very good and 5 for very poor.

- |                                 |     |     |     |     |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A. Presence                     | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| B. Evangelism                   | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| C. Welfare Ministries           |     |     |     |     |     |
| D. Local empowerment            | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| E. Training of Basarwa leaders. | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| F. Community evolvment.         | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |

7. In your view what are the some of the hindrances which prevent the Basarwa from joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church

8. In your view how should the Seventh-day Adventist Church minister most effectively to the Basarwa?

9. Would you be willing to change your religion to join a church that meets your needs?
10. Do you see the Seventh-day Adventist Church being able to improve the quality life of Basarwa anywhere?
11. Explain your answer.
  
12. Would you be willing to offer advice on how the church would minister effectively among Basarwa?
  
13. Would you be willing to able the church accomplish its mission either as a volunteer or a trainer?
  
14. What is your suggestion on the nomadic lifestyle of the Basarwa with reference to church worship and ministry in general?
  
15. What element of the Basarwa religion do you consider to be the most incompatible with the teachings and practice of the Seventh day Adventist church?

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### **Education:**

1989-1993 Bachelor of Theology, Andrews University  
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2007- 2010 D.Min. in Leadership, Andrews University.

### **Church Relations and Ministry:**

Dec 15, 1984 Baptized at Maun, Botswana  
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### **Experience:**

Oct 2005-Present Executive Secretary, Botswana Union Mission Church  
Jan 2005-Oct 2005 President, North Botswana Field (Conference)  
Jan 2003-Dec 2004 Pastor, Kanye District  
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Jan 1996-Dec 1999 Pastor, Francistown District  
Jan 1995-Dec 1996 Departmental director, North Botswana Field  
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