Spring 2026

OTAN

Outreach To Asia Nationals

"I am the bread of life;
He that cometh to me
shall never hunger..."

John 6:35

Delivering freshly-baked bread, Egypt

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2026 MIDDLE EAST TRAININGS

Funding needed for leaders from 8 nations

"Some are full-time pastors. Some are tentmakers."

Dr. A, OTAN's Middle East ministry manager, describes the leaders who will be attending the summer conferences he is organizing in Egypt and in another Middle Eastern country.

"At one of our conferences in a restricted country, we will have 30 pastors coming from 8 different Arab countries. In that host country, we will also be partnering for the first time with another established Christian Arab outreach organization," he says.

OTAN's executive director will be joining Dr. A for these Middle East trainings, and conference topics will include biblical exegesis (examining Scripture to properly interpret it), discipleship, and leadership integrity.

Dr. A says, "Some of these leaders have education, but not biblical education. They need training to learn how to study the Bible verse by verse. In their cultures, salvation by good deeds can sometimes be taught. But salvation is not the gospel PLUS other things. That's why we clearly teach that it's not 'the gospel plus.'"

While most conferences in the Middle East can be accomplished with very frugal budgets, expenses for the restricted-country conference will be rather hefty. "Some of these pastors are living in poor Christian communities where there is desperate need in their churches," says Dr. A. These leaders cannot afford the cost of plane fare and lodging. That's where OTAN partners can help.

About $950 is needed to cover air fare, lodging, and materials for each one of the 30 Arab pastors from restricted countries. At the Egypt conference, about $90 per person is needed to assist the 70+ Egyptians who will be attending.

Would you consider asking your church, Sunday school class, Bible study, or other group to sponsor one pastor for the restricted country conference? Or could you give a gift of any amount to help defray costs for either conference? Your gifts and prayers make these unique trainings possible for our Middle Eastern pastors.

Give securely online at OTAN.org. Choose the "Give" tab, then choose "Middle East Pastor Training" from the giving menu. Or mail a check payable to OTAN (memo line: ME Pastor Training) to PO Box 2440, Winchester, VA, 22604. Thank you!

هَذَا السِّرُّ نُعْلِنُهُ نَحْنُ، وَاعِظِينَ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ،
وَمُعَلِّمِينَ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ، فِي كُلِّ حِكْمَةٍ، لِكَيْ نُحْضِرَ
كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ كَامِلاً فِي الْمَسِيحِ.

Colossians 1:28, Arabic

NEW COUNTRY, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Mali becomes OTAN's 13th mission nation

View of Bamako, Mali

Bakary (Bah-KAR-ee) Coulibaly was born and raised in Mali, a country in West Africa's interior. When he became a Christian in 2005, he was the first person in his family to follow Christ. "My college roommate was from Sierra Leone. He was a good Christian, and he told me about Jesus."

Bakary, who now serves as OTAN's Mali ministry manager, was part of a recent OTAN training in the capital city of Bamako in February. Though Mali remains high on the US "Do Not Travel" warning list, our staff and trainers did not encounter any serious problems during their visit.

"We had 23 pastors who came to the 4-day training. We were surprised how many of them had a good foundation of biblical knowledge. But they came to learn more, to learn more deeply," he says.

In OTAN's newest outreach nation, about 90% of the more than 25 million people identify as Muslim. Though it is difficult to gauge the number of Malian Christians, Bakary says, "It is somewhere between 2 and 5 percent."

Training sessions focused on biblical preaching that clearly presents the gospel and on ways for Malian pastors to know their congregations and understand their needs. Bakary adds, "We shared the importance of spending time on studying and preparing messages. Every pastor should take time to study and focus on what he wants to teach his church."

In a country of many ethnic communities and more than 70 languages, Bakary says, "Many communities in Mali have never heard the gospel." As we build connections and strengthen our outreach in Mali, Bakary asks prayer for his country and for its pastors and church leaders.

"I recently met a man who was the first preacher to preach in my own native village. Pray for the churches in Mali, for many people to hear the gospel. Many communities have never heard the name of Christ. Ask God to help the pastors and the churches to reach out to the many people who have never heard the gospel and have never been told about the love of Jesus. Everyone should hear the gospel story at least once in their lifetime."

FUTURE ASIA TRAINING CENTER

Join us in prayer and financial partnership

"In many parts of Asia, it's getting harder to do what we do," says Dan Lowen, OTAN's Operations Manager. "Some of our key countries are definitely seeing a rise in persecution, which makes in-country trainings harder to manage."

"We're praying about the possibility of an OTAN training center that would be located in Asia...in a country where it would not fall under the scrutiny of an aggressive or resistant government."

Dan says, "We want to make it clear that if we do establish an Asia training center it would NOT replace our in-country trainings." It would, however, address three critical issues:

- rising persecution and the need for a safe place to train our pastors,
- growing need for biblically-discipled, English speaking national translators,
- opportunities for Western students and young adults to spend time abroad, interacting with nationals and experiencing other cultures.

In addition to being a safe place for our pastors to gather for trainings, the center could provide an opportunity for year-round language education. TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) programs open many doors for graduates, increasing their self-sufficiency and influence in their villages and communities. Open to Asian believers, an OTAN TESOL program would teach English to and would disciple a new generation, providing Asian translators for future work and creating short-term mission experiences for American students.

OTAN Mobile Bible College training in Asia

OTAN Director Al Doomy says, "Our hope is that the TESOL students will get a vision for full-time ministry through these pastors and will build relationships that may develop into future work together. In many countries, connection is critical, and English is a precious commodity."

Currently, an OTAN training center in Asia is in the exploration stage. Would you consider being part of the "ground floor" group of givers that will help us launch this project? Choose the "Give" tab at our website (otan.org), then choose "OTAN Asia Training Center" from the giving menu. Your gift today will enable us to purchase a social organization license, provide a downpayment to either rent or purchase a property, and to begin any needed renovations.

RECONNECTING WITH RUSSIA

Our director describes his March visit

My trip to Russia was like going back in time. The government has reversed course with the freedoms that Russians enjoyed at the fall of communism. The surveillance state has reemerged. The government has an app that is embedded on all cell phones sold in Russia and has a ban on other apps. The app allows the government to monitor the Russian nationals' purchases, texts, or web calls.

Since the war in Ukraine broke out, the population of Far East Russia has shrunk noticeably. When I lived in the city of Vladivostok (located 60 miles from China/90 miles from North Korea) the population was about 1 million. Now there are only around 610,000. Many young men left Russia and have been living abroad since the war began. This was the first time I did not feel safe as an American walking the streets alone. The economy is also struggling, which leaves the Russian people feeling dejected.

The churches are still existing, but it seems as though society is stagnant, and so is the church. This was my first time in Russia since the war, so I was shocked by how oppressed the people were. I was able to encourage them, and the Lord opened many opportunities to teach and preach. I spoke at a Bible study in a flat of one of the believers, and 4 churches were represented. I met 2 young ladies from the church that God allowed Joy and me to start when we lived there. It was so encouraging for me to know that God was bringing more people into his kingdom even in hard times.

Another great moment was when I got to meet Igor again and found out that he and his wife are now helping his pastor lead the church that he is going to. I was able to introduce Igor to Jesus 4 years ago during our training in 2022. On this trip, I felt led to help one of our most needy churches rent a meeting place. This will cost $250 a month, but I believe they need this to grow. In Russia, it is very hard to be taken seriously as a church when you are meeting in the pastor's home. With God's help, this will enable them to enlarge their sphere of influence.

Please pray for our Russian pastors and their wives that, though times are hard, they will look to Jesus for the encouragement they need. That encouragement will spill over to their congregations. Also, pray that OTAN can supply $250 a month until the church can meet that need themselves. This will take a few years, given how badly the Russian economy is struggling. **Please pray that the gospel will continue to be shared in Russia. Also, pray for the Ukrainian people and for the end of the war.**

Outreach To Asia Nationals
OTAN

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Partner By Giving

Give online at **otan.org** or by check to **PO Box 2440, Winchester, VA, 22604**. Please designate your gift in the memo line.

Want to use the text-to-give option? Text "OTANtraining" and your gift amount to 540-274-5524.

Partner By Praying

If you feel challenged or inspired by this update, would you consider praying for this ministry? We're so grateful for the prayers of our fellow believers.

Want to learn to effectively pray for missionaries and their outreach? Visit otan.org/pray.

Partner By Going

Not everyone is able to go to foreign fields, but every believer can ask themselves the question, "Am I called to go?"

Is God calling you into the mission field? We'd love to talk to you about it! Connect with us at otan.org/serve.

HELP US CELEBRATE 40 YEARS! BECOME A WORLD IMPACT PARTNER!

This year, OTAN is celebrating 40 years of reaching Asia. OTAN co-founder Roxann Goodwin says, "Wow! Forty years of ministry! As Otis would say, 'Praise Jesus!' I am grateful for Otis' vision, to the Board of Directors who have served from day one, to all the Ministry Managers, to all the faithful prayer warriors, and to all the faithful and generous supporters from the beginning. Thank you, Lord, for the faithful, Godly, courageous national pastors. Without them we would not have a ministry!"

As we celebrate our **1986** founding and **40** years of *reaching nations by equipping nationals*, would you consider becoming an OTAN **World Impact Partner** with a **monthly gift of $19.86**, of **$40.00**, or of any monthly amount? Scan the QR code to give securely online, or mail a check to **OTAN, PO Box 2440, Winchester, VA 22604**. We're so grateful for your gifts and your prayers for OTAN.