

ACADEMY FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
Caribbean Region

Terry Ketchum reported for the Caribbean Region.

We would like to express our appreciation for the opportunity of intentional discussion regarding education within our region as well as the opportunity of dialoguing with other regions as we look to expand our vision of global education and all that entails.

The Caribbean region is composed of more than 7,000 islands, 30 districts for the Church of the Nazarene, with more than 125,000 Nazarenes speaking a variety of languages including English, Spanish, French, Dutch, Haitian, Creole, Patios, and a smattering of tribal languages.

We, too, face the challenge of preparing men and women to effectively minister within and across these distinctive environments.

Our regional leaders decided to approach the task at hand by reviewing our current educational vehicles for ministerial preparation, considering a composite of needs across the region as they relate to an expansion of our vision for ministerial preparation, and lastly by attempting to identify areas where an entity beyond the confines of our region (Academy for International Education) could enhance our pursuit for excellence.

1. A brief review of our current educational vehicles for ministerial preparation:

A. English Field

Caribbean Nazarene Theological College – residential program and extension centers throughout the English Caribbean. CNTC offers a diploma in theology and a Bachelor of Arts degree in theology. They are accredited by the regional accrediting association CETA. CNTC also offers a certificate, a diploma and a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Education as well as a certificate in Management of Human Resources.

B. Spanish Field

Cuba has a residential program and extension centers

Dominican Republic has an extension program

Puerto Rico has two de-centralized centers – one on each district – currently offering a diploma level program.

This field, in cooperation with SENDAS/Costa Rica, is developing a Masters level program in theological education.

C. French Field

Haiti – STNH has a residential program with an extension program currently undergoing extensive revision. STNH offers a ministerial diploma as well as the License in Theology (BTh)

French Antilles has a Bible Institute which is an extension center of CNTC.

2. A composite of needs across the region as they relate to an expansion of our vision for ministerial education.

Allow me to list some of these needs as expressed by our regional leaders without giving comment or explanation:

- Holy leaders to serve as mentors with God's people

- System of life long learning for pastors with an emphasis on biblical holiness and Spirit-filled living
- Continued curriculum assessment and evaluation to determine that the needs of the students are being met
- Provide bi-vocational training opportunities with attention being given to advancement of technology (e.g. computer science) as well as other cultural and environmentally appropriate considerations
- Enhanced learning possibilities for extension/decentralized education by providing trained teachers and quality materials in appropriate languages
- Training of trainers to train teachers for extension programs
- Continuing education for these trainers of teachers
- Reintegration and development of a music program – given the cultural importance of music throughout the region
- Development of minimal resource libraries for extension and de-centralized centers
- Coordination criteria for residential and extension programs
- Where necessary, continued pursuit of accreditation of our educational institutions through regional vehicles or by recognition through another accredited institution; e.g. Haiti with CETA or CNTC; Puerto Rico BA program in Theology with mainland US accredited schools (already attempted with assistance from Jerry Lambert to no avail)

3. Assistance from Academy

- The following represents seed-thoughts to be refined, massaged and enlarged upon as we continue the formative process of defining the role of an Academy for International Education. What I see transpiring here this week gives a

glimpse into the potential of global interaction and perhaps even a hint of what an on-going academy might pursue- i.e. intellectual stimulation; spiritual insight and renewal; formative dialogue that broadens understanding; and as Mike Vail suggested – creating an environment where learning may take place (that, in fact, has happened this week); use of formal, non-formal and even informal teaching techniques for the presentation of material that “scratches where we itch.”

- Although our region is blessed with talented, well-trained, practiced academicians, we relish the idea of dialoguing and working with an entity that transcends the borders of our region and the limitations of our combined expertise.
- Intellectual stimulation, spiritual insight and renewal, formative dialogue that broadens understanding and creating an environment where learning may take place, use of formal, non-formal and even informal teaching techniques

Some areas where we believe such an entity could benefit our region: (once again I will list without commentary or explanation)

- Development of cross-regional degree opportunities e.g. Masters program (such as what we see developing in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico) perhaps moving into doctoral studies as well.
- Development of cross-regional recognition of academic credits between Nazarene institutions, realizing the complexity of accreditation issues that would need to be addressed
- Assistance in curriculum assessment, evaluation, and modification (to confirm or correct what we have in order to provide the best means possible for ministerial preparation);

- Assistance in coordinating administrative and academic relationships between campus-based programs and extension or de-centralized centers;
- Creation and/or assessment of tools for literacy development within our region we have areas of 80-90% illiteracy and areas that surpass the United States of America in its literacy rate;
- Creation and/or assessment of resources in our primary language groups – Spanish, Dutch, French, and Haitian Creole;
- Guidance in development of financial matters – i.e. tuition-based budgeting, scholarship, grants, gifts, other resources that could be made available for ministerial education
- Assessment and development of bi-vocational training opportunities
- Development of tools for mentoring – why, what, how, who
- Assistance in development of a well-balanced system of life-long learning for our leaders. Something that isn't just a one shot effort but on-going continuing, well balanced system;
- Assistance in teacher training – both campus based (where necessary) and extension/de-centralized programs; this element would include training the trainers of teachers, (improving the quality of the whole learning process may indeed result in improving the quality of ministry being done in our churches)

Dialogue must continue among our regional leadership. We believe there is benefit in pursuing an Academy for International Education, as difficult and daunting a task that that may represent. We commit ourselves to this pursuit and to the expansion of our vision of global education.