

Alpha Asia Pacific

# annual review 2020



# Message from the Executive Director

As the pandemic hit, our dedicated Alpha teams across the region helped many churches get to grips with the various online platforms and showed them how to pivot to church online.

As a result of the trust built, many churches then began to run Alpha online as the year progressed (about 4,600 churches and organisations in Asia Pacific ran Alpha in 2020). The number of Alpha courses run across the year was the same as in 2019, which was an amazing result given the lockdown restrictions, and the number of Alpha courses for adults even grew by +12%.

Our mission has remained unchanged throughout the pandemic, it is to serve and equip the church in its mission to help people discover and develop a relationship with Jesus.

As the church embraces digital evangelism, including Alpha online, I believe this moment represents the greatest opportunity for the spread of the gospel since the invention of the printing press.

None of this opportunity can be realised without your amazing support and partnership.

Thank you for your love and the difference you are making as Alpha continues to equip and empower the church in Asia for such a time as this.



**Miles Toulmin**  
Vicar of Holy Trinity Bukit Bintang  
Executive Director of Alpha Asia Pacific

# 2020 in a glance

There has been significant progress in our bid to help the local church in the region pivot to run Alpha online. Out of the 4,599 churches and organisations that ran Alpha, 1,429 of them went fully online while 535 adopted a hybrid model. Despite the decline in the number of actively engaged churches as well as overall courses and participants across all Alpha contexts, there has been encouraging growth in numbers for the standard version of Alpha.

Furthermore, the Asian church has the highest average uptake of Alpha online courses per church around the globe. Our hope also remains kindled by growth in the number of actively engaged churches and organisations in the Catholic context, greater support of resources for marriages and families, and a strong immediate impact for evangelism in the digital space.

**47%**  
of the Alpha courses  
were run online.

**36%**  
of all Alpha Youth  
courses were run  
online.

**173,392**  
people experienced  
Alpha, with almost  
**50%** of them being  
participants in Alpha  
online.

Asia had the highest  
number of Alpha online  
courses per church  
worldwide at  
**3.04**  
courses per church.

The number of  
participants for the  
standard Alpha course  
increased  
**+7%**  
thanks to Alpha online.

**50%**  
of actively engaged  
churches ran an  
Alpha online.

There was a  
**+4%**  
growth in actively  
engaged churches  
and organisations  
running Alpha in the  
Catholic context.

# What is Alpha

Alpha is an opportunity for anyone from around the world to freely explore their unique questions about life, faith and God in an open, friendly and informal environment.

It is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith. Each session looks at different questions around faith and is designed to create conversations. It can be run in-person wherever physical gatherings are possible—churches, offices, cafés, universities, homes—as well as online. Regardless of background, everyone is welcome to try Alpha.

No two Alphas look the same, but they have three key things in common: hospitality, a talk (video sessions) and good conversations.

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I started to love Alpha and the people there... I have such peace! I can just say that it is beyond my understanding. And joy! Sometimes I can't understand how I can be this joyful. I also have more love for people. My heart is more open...If you are still hesitating, I encourage you to spend some time coming to Alpha.

**Nguyễn Quý Ly,**  
Alpha guest, Vietnam



We believe everyone should have the opportunity to explore a personal relationship with Jesus, regardless of their background or where they are in the world, for free.

# We Believe

*Our Vision*

The evangelisation of the nations  
The revitalisation of the Church  
The transformation of society

*Our Mission*

To equip and serve the Church in its mission to help people discover and develop a relationship with Jesus.

# Alpha through the years



## 1977

Alpha begins at Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) in London as a course for new Christians.

## 1981

Alpha expands to a 10-week course with a weekend away.

## 1990

Nicky Gumbel takes over the running of Alpha and repositions it for non-churchgoers.

## 1991

Four churches are running Alpha.



## 1993

Questions of Life: Alpha course in book form is published.

HTB holds the first national Alpha conference attended by 1,000 church leaders.

## 1994

Tricia Neill, now President of Alpha, joins the team and rolls out an international strategy.

## 1995

First Alpha conference for Catholics is held at Westminster Cathedral Hall.

## 1998

More than 10,000 churches are running Alpha.

First Alpha conference in Hong Kong.

## 1999

1 million people have experienced Alpha.

## 2004

Egypt holds Alpha's first Middle East conference.

## 2007

First Alpha conference in South America.

## 2008

10 million people have experienced Alpha.

Alpha releases the first Christian commercial ever to be shown on mainstream TV in Britain.

## 2009

11,000 church leaders attended the world's biggest Alpha conference in Seoul.

## 2012

Alpha is represented at the Vatican's Synod on New Evangelisation in Rome.



## 2013

Alpha Innovation redesigns Alpha, repositioning it for the next generation. Alpha Youth Film Series is launched.

## 2014

The Alpha Asia Pacific Hub opens in Kuala Lumpur.

HTB's first Asian church plant Holy Trinity Bukit Bintang is planted at the heart of the Hub.



## 2016

The Alpha Film Series and the Global Campaign featuring Bear Grylls are launched.

## 2017

The new Alpha Youth Series with improved content is launched. The Alpha Film Series is available in 18 Asian languages, the Alpha Youth Film Series is available in 12 Asian languages.

## 2018

The Alpha Hub hosted the first Alpha Regional Gathering that comprises the first Asian Leadership Conference, and the 4th Experiencing Alpha conference.

The Church Engagement Framework, a core tool to articulate and execute Alpha's Global Strategy is introduced. It is a framework that helps increase the number of churches around the world running effective Alphas.

## 2019

The Marriage Course Remake is launched and the course videos are now free for the churches thanks to the generosity of a donor.

27,500 churches and organisations ran Alpha with over 1.2 million participants.

## 2020

COVID-19 global pandemic began and Alpha online is launched.

The first online Alpha takes place in Asia with a pivoted strategy to meet the need and demand to help churches run their Alpha courses online. Hundreds and thousands more experienced Alpha because it has been made available to them digitally.



## 2021

An estimated 25 million people have experienced Alpha, run in 140 countries and in over 100 languages.

### First Global Online Leadership Conference

Due to ongoing travel restrictions, this year's Leadership Conference was hosted entirely online and free of charge for the first time. 30,000 delegates are expected from all around the world.

The Alpha online platform with mobile app is launching in September, a platform integrated with MyAlpha that allows churches and guests to run and join the course all on one platform.

The Alpha Asian Film Series is being developed to feature fully contextualised content, produced entirely in Mandarin, Hindi and Bahasa Indonesia.

# The Mission in Asia Pacific

**The Asia Pacific Hub started in 2014 to better serve churches across the region. In 2020, the work of Alpha supported 4,599 churches and organisations to run Alpha in 19 countries.**

## 4 Key Roles:

In order to remain effective, the regional Hub continues to serve four key functions in Asia Pacific:

1. Provide strategic direction for regional ministry
2. Provide leadership as a centre of excellence
3. Create regional resources for local churches
4. Host, support and empower regional initiatives

## Churches across the region now have access to exciting new possibilities for the gospel.

The opportunities for the gospel in Asia Pacific are vast. Of the 4.1 billion people<sup>1</sup>, in the region, less than 10% are Christians. Nonetheless, language, social, cultural and political considerations mean

that the local churches need to be thoroughly equipped with contextualised content for evangelism.

Across the region, churches were forced to respond to the challenges brought about by the pandemic. It was crucial to swiftly pivot online, but our immediate priority was to love our neighbours. Churches prioritised organising resources to give practical help to the local communities whilst many leaders personally took

on additional jobs to sustain livelihoods. In time they rallied and with the supportive help of Alpha staff managed the shift online with success—to first host church services online, and then they ran Alpha courses online.

Our year in summary was one of learning, sharing the knowledge gained as best practices of virtual tools and training to assist church leaders both within Asia and across the rest of the world. The series of

"how to" guides and videos produced by Alpha proved to be tremendous assets for them, and the number of contextualised and translated resources increased by 400% over the previous year. Our ability to scale was driven by sharing best practices developed by countries from across the region. Thanks to countries that were faster to respond such as Australia, Alpha was better equipped to handle challenges that were unprecedented for local churches.

Considerable progress was made on the translations of The Alpha Film Series (AFS), Alpha Youth Series (AYS) and Bible In One Year (BIOY). We are optimistic about making more progress on that front this year. Meanwhile, the long-awaited Alpha online

platform is on course to be launched by September 2021.

## How Your Giving Helps Us

**Your giving has allowed Alpha to advance and witness God work in surprising ways.**

Alpha online has worked to connect people from various backgrounds worldwide. It has led to increased guest reach as well as higher retention at an average of 85 percent. More importantly, it has had a great impact for evangelism simply because it works. Since last year, we have been hearing stories of people and communities coming to faith through Alpha online. We are also seeing new leaders released and people getting involved by serving online.

## More resources, bigger impact

Your partnership, time volunteered and prayers makes it possible for us to equip churches to run Alpha online in response to COVID-19. We have witnessed how God is using it as a tool to transcend borders and advance the work of His kingdom. Furthermore, it enables Alpha to become more effective in countries that operate without a National

Alpha Office (NAO). Working online helped scale our reach especially in countries where an NAO has yet to be set up. NAOs are established to support large numbers of churches running Alpha. Countries without one are supported by the Alpha Asia Pacific regional team.

We have also been able to address language barriers through translated dubbings and subtitles of our resources into major Asian languages, particularly for the AFS and AYS. The upcoming Alpha Asian Film Series (AAFS) goes a step further to offer more relevant contextualisation for strategic countries in the region. Beyond that, our funds go into increasing the availability and accessibility of our family life courses known as The Marriage and Parenting Courses, which are practical tools for good communication and resolving conflict to build stronger marriages and families.



<sup>1</sup>Asia Pacific population statistics source: Analysis of UN Population Dynamics Data, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

**The Future of the Asian Church**

**Raising the next generation of leaders in Asia.**

Asia's youth population is growing. When we reach the youth, we reach a large majority of the present and future populations. As Alpha adopts new tools that are emerging for sharing the gospel in the digital space,

we are better positioned to engage the younger generations who prefer digital interactions. COVID-19 has accelerated the digitisation of the world, and Alpha online enables the church to reach people where they are. In countries across Asia Pacific where Alpha is active, there were about 900 million youths between the ages of 10 and 24 years old in 2020; nearly 536 million of them in countries with NAOs and more than 364 million in

countries without NAOs. There is tremendous value for developing the Alpha Youth Series (AYS) in parallel with the Alpha Film Series (AFS), giving them equal priority when it comes to translations. Leadership development remains a priority, such as The Global Leaders Network (GLeN) to nurture emerging leaders and multiple GLOW conferences done across many countries for youth leaders.

**The Asia Pacific Mission Field**

**Countries with NAOs**



**Australia**  
Pop. 25.5 mil  
Youth: 4.72 mil



**India**  
Pop. 1,380.00 mil  
Youth: 375.36 mil



**Singapore**  
Pop. 5.85 mil  
Youth: 0.90 mil



**Malaysia**  
Pop. 32.37 mil  
Youth: 8.0 mil



**Indonesia**  
Pop. 273.52 mil  
Youth: 68.93 mil



**South Korea**  
Pop. 51.83 mil  
Youth: 11.04 mil



**New Zealand**  
Pop. 5.11 mil  
Youth: 1.01 mil



**Japan**  
Pop. 126.48 mil  
Youth: 17.33 mil



**Thailand**  
Pop. 69.8 mil  
Youth: 13.33 mil



**Hong Kong**  
Pop. 7.47 mil  
Youth: 0.94 mil



**Philippines**  
Pop. 109.58 mil  
Youth: 31.45 mil



**Taiwan**  
Pop. 23.56 mil  
Youth: 2.96 mil

**Countries without NAOs**



**Cambodia**  
Pop. 16.89 mil  
Youth: 4.68 mil



**Myanmar**  
Pop. 55 mil  
Youth: 14.85 mil



**Pakistan**  
Pop. 220.89 mil  
Youth: 66.27 mil



**Laos**  
Pop. 7.37 mil  
Youth: 2.19 mil



**Nepal**  
Pop. 29.5 mil  
Youth: 9.47 mil



**Vietnam**  
Pop. 97.34 mil  
Youth: 20.44 mil



**Mongolia**  
Pop. 3.3 mil  
Youth: 0.73 mil



**Sri Lanka**  
Pop. 21.41 mil  
Youth: 4.88 mil

Main population source:  
<https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population-dashboard>:  
Analysis of UN Population Dynamics Data, Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Youth: ages between 10 - 24

*Our Values*

**We are for the church, by the church and through the church**

Our hope is for people to discover a relationship with Jesus through connection with their local church community.

**We are passionate about unity**

Alpha is a tool that is used by all major Christian traditions and helps to build relationship and unity at a local level.

**We believe in giving it all away for free**

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to explore a relationship with Jesus, wherever they are in the world, for free.

**We believe the church deserves our best**

We're focused on innovation to continually improve our offering and to respond to the evolving needs of the global church.



# Country Highlights

Alpha continued to impact lives in spite of the start of the pandemic last year and the running of Alpha online is gaining traction in countries across Asia Pacific. Every country is different and have addressed their challenges uniquely. We have experienced varying results in many areas, from growth in the number of churches that run Alpha, to the preparation and implementation of online trainings, conferences and forums, to the contextualisation and translations of new resources to support Alpha going online.

## The Resilient Church in Asia Pacific

At that same time, there have been countries which were confronted with unprecedented difficulties from the pandemic. It was an especially steep challenge for Alpha to grow within their local churches. Your giving allowed us to help and serve church leaders with practical means by meeting them at their point of need. Thanks to you, churches were supported to transition and evangelise online making it possible for many people to explore and encounter Jesus in the digital space. None of this would have been possible without you and we hope you are as encouraged.

### Pakistan

- Number of actively engaged churches grew by 100%, from 6 to 12 churches.
- Completed Alpha trainings through influential local leaders highly experienced in running Alpha as the Asia Pacific team could not travel.

### Sri Lanka

- Number of actively engaged churches grew by 44%, from 16 to 23 churches.

### Cambodia

- Number of actively engaged churches grew by 240%, from 5 to 17 churches.
- Completed 16 Alpha training sessions with 5 of them being Alpha online via Zoom, hosting over 200 pastors and leaders from 93 churches across 6 different provinces.

### Thailand

- Trained 700 pastors and leaders from over 100 churches, with 10 of the trainings hosted online and 13 hosted physically.
- Achieved its biggest Alpha course so far with its first ever Alpha online, which involved about 120 guests along with 40 team members and volunteers.
- Hosted 19 pastors and their spouses from 10 provinces to experience TMC in a retreat setting.
- Completed translation of AYS into Thai, which was launched in the 2020 Youth Conference with 130 delegates from 20 churches, and since used in 13 runs of AYS.

### India

- Number of actively engaged churches grew by 38%, from 215 to 297 churches.
- Number of actively engaged Catholic churches grew by 175%, from 8 to 22 churches.
- Ran the largest Alpha worldwide called 'Mega Alpha' in Tamil and Nepali using Alpha online with delegates from churches across Chennai, Tamil Nadu, and for the first time ever in Bhutan.
- Ran GLOW for the first time across all of the country completely online, with over 500 registrations and 150 devices logged in.

### Malaysia

- Number of Alpha courses grew by 7%, from 602 to 644 courses.
- Number of actively engaged Catholic churches grew by 38%, from 21 to 29 churches.
- Organised the first online youth conference in 2020 in the country's 4 major languages (Mandarin, Tamil, Bahasa Malaysia and English) which garnered a combined total of nearly 3,000 delegates from over 930 churches.
- Started the Run Alpha Online Together (RAOT) initiative to help churches new to Alpha run Alpha online, which garnered nearly 230 delegates from 58 churches, while RAOT Catholic attracted more than 70 delegates from 4 parishes.
- Hosted 'Faith for the Future' leadership forum with World Vision Malaysia and Barna Group to equip church leaders in engaging with Gen Z'ers and Millennials, which garnered about 600 delegates from 160 churches.

### Singapore

- Number of Alpha participants increased by 744%, from 3,683 to 31,096 participants.
- Number of Alpha courses grew by 24%, from 466 to 578 courses.

### Japan

- Number of Alpha Youth and Student Courses grew by 6%, from 51 to 54 courses
- Ran training that drew interest from 84 delegates from 40 churches to run Alpha online, which is a key milestone for Alpha in the country given the history of past support from universities, Catholic churches and overseas Japanese communities worldwide.

### Taiwan

- Number of actively engaged churches grew by 31%, from 81 to 106 churches.
- Ran 37 online training and 'vision' sessions for Alpha online, hosted 1,500 delegates from various nationalities across the contexts of Workplace, Youth, as well as Marriage and Parenting courses.

### Myanmar

- Attracted an immense response of 1,641 participants joining an Alpha Facebook live test initiative, despite its unreliable internet connectivity.
- Completed Alpha online training that equipped 25 leaders representing 15 churches from 3 cities and 5 denominations.

### Philippines

- Average number of participants per Alpha course grew by 16%, from 19 to 22 participants per course.
- Alpha courses online exceeded in-person courses, at 17 to 3 courses.
- Alpha Youth courses online exceeded in-person courses, at 22 to 10 courses.

### Indonesia

- Ran 14 offline and 20 online Promos, Webinars & Experiencing Alpha sessions for nearly 5,200 delegates from over 1,000 churches.
- Ran 55 offline and 26 online Alpha Training sessions for over 2,800 delegates from nearly 460 churches.
- Contextualised AFS for locals by filming testimonies from local leaders to replace the English-version testimonies in several episodes.

### Hong Kong

- Number of Alpha courses grew by 15%, from 573 to 659 courses.
- Ran vision and training sessions for Alpha online for about 700 leaders from 200 churches.
- Ran online training sessions for The Marriage Course and The Parenting Course during lockdown, which garnered participation from about 200 pastors and leaders.

### South Korea

- Ran 12 Alpha training webinars involving 242 people from 152 churches.
- Created local video resources to encourage sign-ups for and participations in Alpha online.

### Vietnam

- Launched the first Digital Evangelism conference with 250 delegates from over 150 churches, which led to 54 new Alpha courses.
- Ran Alpha trainings for 360 leaders from over 140 churches, two-thirds of these leaders were focused on how to run Alpha online.
- Over 35% of actively engaged churches have successfully pivoted to Alpha online or adopted a hybrid model.

### other countries

- Number of Alpha courses grew by 1.6%, from 853 to 867 courses, despite a 21% decrease in the number of participants from 20,693 to 16,321 participants.

### Australia

- Number of Alpha participants increased by 34%, from 49,470 to 66,408 participants.
- Number of Alpha courses grew by 41%, from 2,425 to 3,412 courses.

### New Zealand

- Number of Alpha participants increased by 21%, from 6,314 to 7,659 participants.
- Number of Alpha courses grew by 60%, from 557 to 893 courses.

# Regional Highlights

Building up leaders and resources  
in a climate of uncertainty

## Leadership Development

Alpha continued to support leaders around the region despite the cancellation of planned physical conferences and gatherings as the COVID-19 pandemic pushed these events online in 2020.



## The Global Leaders Network (GLeN)

Hosted in October, GLeN was an event that served to connect, gather, and inspire the world's emerging, young, influential church leaders from across all denominations with a wide range of experiences. A total of 50 delegates from about 30 churches across 5 countries in Asia Pacific attended the event.

## Alpha Collective (AC20)

The first event was held in a physical location in early February, when 47 delegates from 9 countries represented by 27 churches were hosted at the regional hub in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The aim of AC20 for delegates and their churches was three-fold:

- (i) to experience the cultures of HTB London and HTBB Kuala Lumpur which have had a global impact through Alpha
- (ii) to extend Alpha by sharing best practices for impact maximisation in one's own church and reaching out to the other churches around the world as a Hub Church
- (iii) to encounter God by providing a time and space to be refreshed and ministered to by the Holy Spirit through prayer.

The online version of AC20 was run in October, providing an opportunity for global strategic churches to connect with each other in a gathering of 54 churches from 16 countries in Asia Pacific.

## Alpha Online (AO) Digital Strategy Webinar & Experiencing Alpha (EA) Online Conference

The AO Digital Strategy Webinar and EA Online Conference were held in mid July with 570 and 430 delegates respectively from 19 Asia Pacific countries. While the AO webinar explored what the church of the future looks like, beginning with how the church can reach and engage the digital space beyond COVID-19, the EA conference gave delegates a look behind the scenes by letting guests take part in an actual Alpha online course run by HTBB.

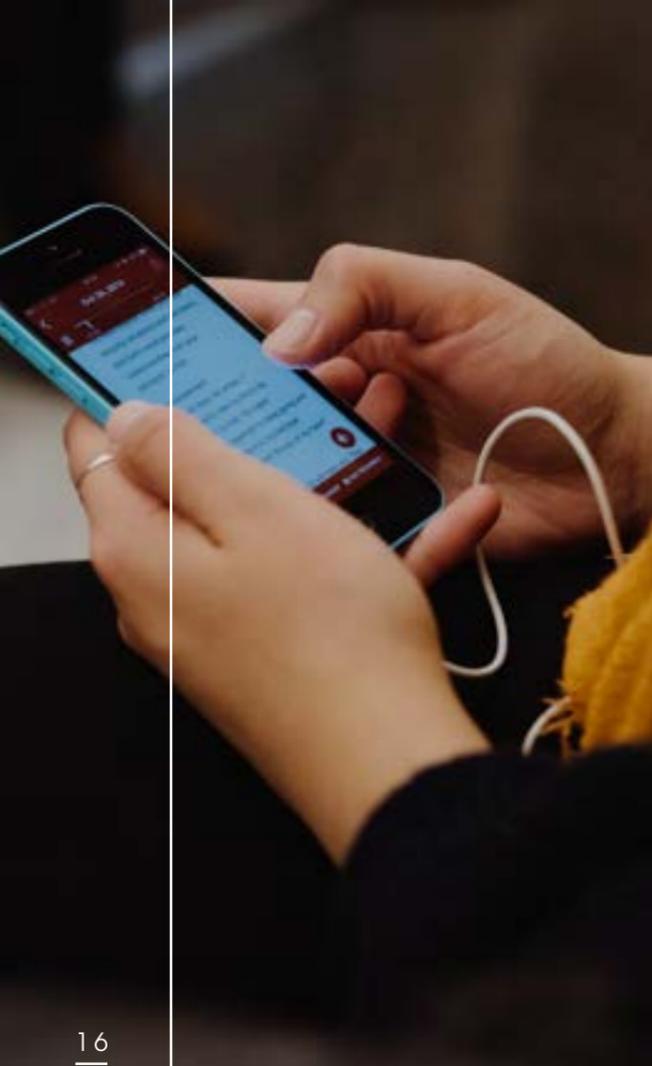
## Transforming Parishes (TP2020)

In August, 683 delegates from 31 countries representing over 200 parishes attended TP2020 hosted online. It was live streamed over Facebook and YouTube to over 2,000 viewers on the day of the conference. The event was run for the first time in 2019 in Kuala Lumpur and Mumbai, and explores what Alpha looks like in the Catholic context. The goal of the conference focused on the concept of mission and the role that everyone needs to play in evangelisation.

## GLOW

The GLOW youth conference in October hosted 377 delegates from 119 churches from Malaysia, Australia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. Designed for personal, spiritual and leadership development, the conference typically comprises of 4 empowering conference sessions, ministry time, worship and workshops based on the Alpha Youth Series. As a direct result of GLOW, we have experienced these youth flourishing in their communities as they do life together, become equipped with the Word of God and are empowered to live out an invitational lifestyle using Alpha.





## Resource Development

### Translations & Updates: Alpha Film Series (AFS) & Alpha Youth Series (AYS)

The utmost priority for AFS and AYS in the region is contextualisation and high quality translations. In 2020, we worked on translating and updating translations of those resources into 12 Asian languages. We completed translations of AFS into 4 more languages in 2020, which includes Korean, Marathi, Punjabi and Malayalam, while AYS was translated into Lao and Bahasa Indonesia.

To date, we focus our resource development work in 20 Asian languages.

### The Marriage Course Remake

On the 17th and 24th of June 2020, Alpha Asia Pacific held a regional online launch event for The Marriage and Pre-Marriage Courses (TMC and TPMC) Remake. 868 delegates (including 162 pastors) from 240 churches across 15 countries joined via Zoom for both sessions. It led to 365 new courses in 15 countries last year. As a result of a generous contribution from a donor, we were able to initiate translations in the second half of the year for Mongolian, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia, Thai, Burmese and Hindi.

### Bible in One Year (BIOY)

As for the Bible in One Year, we found that 96% of users worldwide engaged with the English commentary, while 1% and less than 1% respectively preferred Chinese and Hindi. Nevertheless, there is a demand for the BIOY from amongst non-English speaking users of the app across Asia Pacific. In 2020, we worked on translating updated commentary and content in Simplified Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia and Hindi for readers.



# Looking Ahead

evangelism through Alpha, exponentially.

### Supporting churches for Alpha online

Guided by the CEF blueprint of cultivating Hub Churches, last year we were able to meet local churches where they were, particularly to understand their unique needs based on their individual contexts. There was a shared need for churches to pivot online, and to eventually learn how to run Alpha online.

Hence one of the crucial ways we supported churches across Asia Pacific was by filming and releasing a wealth of resources that equipped and empowered them to adapt to a newer way of doing Alpha. This included endorsement videos, Alpha stories and 'Why Run Alpha' videos for use by churches in Indonesia, Taiwan, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia, India and Thailand. Churches also needed to be swift in pivoting online, so communication assets were designed with ease-of-use and quick implementation, on top of collaterals for online Zoom events.

## Church Engagement Framework

### The Alpha journey with the local church

The Church Engagement Framework (CEF) is an in-depth framework that Alpha employs as a core tool to articulate and execute its strategy. It moves us from a posture of promoting Alpha merely as a resource, to supporting and journeying with churches as they engage with Alpha over the long-term.

Three stages make up the

pillars of CEF:

- Explore, where churches consider running Alpha in their communities
- Experience, where churches run Alpha and continually improve their courses
- Extend, where churches model great Alphas and encourage others in their network to run Alpha.

Its ultimate aim is to raise up Hub Churches: local churches who model Alpha well, have experienced the impact of Alpha in their church and culture, possess a vision to help other local churches and have the influence and capacity to do so. Hub Churches play a vital and powerful role to contextualise and scale up

## The case of a Mega Alpha in India, as local churches connect, new and young leaders emerge

When India went into a nationwide lockdown in March 2020, the Alpha team in South India chose to explore an uncharted path. Not wanting the COVID-19 pandemic to be a deterrent to their mission, they gathered over 50 churches from the Chennai Metropolitan Area and cities in other parts of the Tamil Nadu state to execute against an ambitious plan—to run a Mega Alpha.

With over 500 participants logging on from some 200 devices, the team ended up hosting the world's largest Alpha in July 2020!

Rather than jump in completely, the team started by testing the waters, 3 multi-site Alphas were conducted between January to June 2020 for groups of 5 to 10 churches—to experience running Alpha online for large groups and to identify and raise

new leaders, hosts and helpers for the upcoming Mega Alpha.

After the completion of the Mega Alpha, these young leaders initiated their own multi-site Alphas which has had tremendous impact among the Tamil youths in South India. They replicated what Alpha did for the Tamil Mega Alpha and grew to be influencers.

The Alpha India team encouraged and connected these influencers to the youth community in North East of India. Then, through the Nepali diasporic churches in India, the Nepali youth community in India also got involved. As a result, many young North Easterners and Nepali leaders have stepped up within the local church.

Mega Alpha began as a planned event for young people to explore Christianity but became an extraordinary event that encouraged new and young leaders to step up in faith, inspired by the Holy Spirit in a climate of need.



"We aren't able to go outside and run Alpha due to COVID-19. However, these external constraints are not a problem for going online. And when we learnt about Alpha online, we were excited and it put us at ease. This is because I can easily invite my friends to join, and I don't drive anywhere to avoid Bangkok traffic. All of us just stay at home, which is perfect! You can also eat as much food or snacks as you want from your refrigerator. Don't wait, this is the perfect time to join Alpha online!"

**Kampee, Alpha online host,  
Church of Joy Bangkok**



# Alpha Online

## Putting the needs of others first

The pandemic hit Asia Pacific fast and hard affecting both church leaders and their congregations. For almost three months it was the only global region tackling the pandemic without access to the extensive resources that have since been developed. The innovation and resilience would become a source of hope that other global regions would draw on as the pandemic spread.

Alpha placed the needs of church leaders and congregations first and focused on helping them learn how to take church online before discussing how to run Alpha online. Our teams developed guides and videos on how to use different video conferencing platforms which were made available for free. Where needed, Alpha teams also rolled up their sleeves and worked alongside churches to train them on how to use these tools. We were able to do this at scale due to having invested significantly in building deep relationships with church leaders and our digital capability.

The result was that church leaders were more open to running Alpha online. We were ready because in parallel our 2020 focus of 'adapt fast and innovate hard' meant every church had the means and the content to run Alpha.

Since pivoting Alpha to run online, we scaled up digital marketing on our social channels with the objective to build awareness of Alpha online among churches. We picked 5 countries (Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, India and Vietnam) and Asia Pacific as a sample size to study

# Alpha Film Series Contextualisation

social media analytics from April to July. At the end of the case study, we found that we reached an average of 28,500 people per month (far exceeding what we anticipated would be a monthly stretch to reach 10,000 people) ; 770% more than the benchmark based on the global average for social media reach before the pandemic.



"I am grateful because through Alpha online, I found what I really felt all this while but never got the answer to. It was all finally answered at Alpha online and God revealed them to me. Alpha made me realise that life is all about God and His mercy. At first I thought that if it is 'online' it would definitely not be possible for something to happen, but that was all refuted. The Holy Spirit really exists and when God works, nothing is impossible. Through any media, God keeps working."

**Rusdy, Alpha online guest,  
Indonesia**



"Much to our surprise when we offered Alpha online, where normally we had 40, maybe 50 people sign up, this time we had 150 people sign up. Alpha is such an effective tool. It builds new believers. It instructs older believers and it is especially welcoming for pre-Christians who have a lot of questions and need a safe place to ask those questions."

**Pastor David King, Evangelical  
Church of Bangkok, Thailand**

## What's different about Alpha online?

As Alpha courses ran online globally, we discovered that it worked. Firstly, more people attended Alpha when they found that they could do so online. No longer facing the restrictions of needing to travel to get to an Alpha course, people were able to join at the click of a button from home. Alpha became more accessible to a wider audience, who previously would never have done it had it not been online.

We heard stories of single parents who were unable to get a babysitter for 10 weeks, people with disabilities who struggled to get to a church, as well as city workers who were stuck at their desks—all able to attend Alpha because it went online.

People were more relaxed and for many, the familiar environment of being at home meant that they could let their guard down and be more open to new experiences. What happened was extraordinary—as Alpha weekends ran online, we began to hear stories of people being filled with the Holy Spirit by themselves in their living rooms or bedrooms. People were moved to tears at their laptop, responding to a prayer online of 'Come Holy Spirit'.

## Alpha Film Series Translations

Contextualisation unlocks greater opportunities for meaningful impact. That's why we have invested into 22 Asian languages in the region.

In 2020, we prioritised translations for 17 languages for both AFS and AYS as well as for their various resources. This included a version of AFS with Catholic terminology for Alpha in the Catholic Context use, which was translated into Simplified Chinese.

For 2021, we are translating content and updates covering 14 languages, 2 languages for AFS and 12 languages for AYS.

**Simplified Chinese (Mandarin), Traditional Chinese (Mandarin), Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Malaysia, Urdu, Cantonese, Thai, Vietnamese, Burmese, Tagalog, Mongolian, Tamil, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, Khmer, Japanese, Korean, Sinhala, Lao, Nepali.**

## Alpha Film Series-D (AFS-D) — Same Alpha, New Format

An additional resource has been made available as Alpha Film Series-D (AFS-D), where the D stands for 'discussion'. It offers the same loved content in a new interactive format which intersperses discussion breaks within each episode of AFS, along with updated interviews for a fresher take on encouraging conversations in Alpha groups.

AFS-D was released in March 2021 and is being used by 5 NAOs: India, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore and Philippines. It is available now in Asia Pacific in English. More translated versions will be released in Asia Pacific (and eventually in other regions) by the end of 2021, including Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Mongolian, Thai, Urdu, Tamil, Sinhala, Khmer and Burmese.



# The Marriage Course

**T**MC has been so loved and well received by couples all over the world since it launched in 1995. Prior to this, The Pre-Marriage Course (TPMC and previously known as The Marriage Preparation Course) had been running for 10 years.

The completion of the TMC Remake marked a significant milestone, we launched it across the region last year and are working on translations and contextualised versions of the TMC Remake videos. They cover translations for 12 Asian languages, including Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese (with Cantonese subtitling), Vietnamese, Mongolian, Thai, Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia, Korean, Japanese, Burmese and Hindi. In Hong Kong, the dubbed Cantonese version will be launched mid 2021.

The TPMC Remake videos launched at the same time and translations are lined up for Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese (with Cantonese subtitling), Hindi, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Mongolian and Korean. They are expected to be completed in the second and third quarter of this year.

The new series, supporting resources and contextualised training videos will be available for free via the new Marriage Builder platform that will be launched in 2021.

Regionally, The Marriage Course Experience (TMCE) online gathering is being organised for 500 pastor couples and this will run from the 28th of June to the 16th of August 2021. A total 14 countries from the region will be taking part.



“We had a couple from Mongolia and their ministry was to reach out to the nomads who basically move around in the wilderness. This couple would drive and minister to these individuals, and because they’re always on the road it’s very hard for them to take a course in a fixed physical location. But because it’s online they were able to do it this time around. They would reach a place where there’s strong Internet signal on the phone and they would wait until the (marriage) course begins.

“One time I asked the husband to take out his phone just to show me his surroundings. There was not a single person, not even a single animal all around. It literally looked like the ends of the earth. At that moment we felt wowed—isn’t it wonderful that we can disciple people to the ends of the earth?”

**Jacob and Josephine Li,  
TMC Leaders, Singapore**

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# The Bible in One Year (BIOY)

**B**IOY has been an effective tool for making the Bible accessible and helping users stay consistent with their daily devotions, wherever they are on their journey with faith. Based on the number of users, the top countries in Asia Pacific include Singapore, Malaysia, and New Zealand. Accessibility has been expanded by translating into other languages (Simplified Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia and Hindi) to increase the reach among the Asia Pacific population.

This year, the app is becoming more convenient for users too. It has been updated to include three new editions: Classic (25 mins), Express (10 mins) and Youth (specially written for 13–18 year olds)—with easy switching between the editions at any time.

We are expecting to have the Thai version ready by end of this year for the Classic edition and also an updated version for Hindi. Once the languages have been fully integrated into the BIOY app, they will be available on the YouVersion Bible app under the BIOY devotional reading plan.



“I have been listening to Bible in One Year for nearly two years now, and it has brought me back to the Lord after a long absence - so thank you for being a big factor in saving me.”

**James**





**Sunil,**  
Alpha online guest,  
**India**

"Before Alpha I had no peace, and I wasn't able to carry forward in life without discouragement and feeling defeated, but after the Alpha Holy Spirit session, I've experienced a peace in me and my life that I've never had before. I know now God is present and is with me."



**Ps Joseph Hung,**  
Alpha Leader,  
**Word of Life Church Vietnam**

"Even though the church couldn't gather for the past few weeks, thanks to Alpha online, we still managed to continue to share the Gospel. Yesterday in our first gathering after the lockdown, our Alpha was at week 5. One of our guest from Alpha online joined us in the service and offered her life to Jesus."



**Reverend Father Gerard Theraviam**  
—on Alpha online,  
**Church of Divine Mercy, Malaysia**

"The quality of sharing in terms of depth has sometimes been stronger. People seemed to be braver without having to face everybody (in person). And even people who didn't want to pray out loud were typing out their prayers and sending it to us."

"That was something beautiful."

# Alpha Stories

**Life-changing conversations. Still happening wherever we are.**

Stories about God's work to transform lives through Alpha around the region continue to amaze and inspire us. With Alpha online, the same content and conversations that help people explore life's biggest questions are now at our fingertips. It's never been easier to help people have a deep and personal encounter with Jesus.



**Pastor Jones Hui (HK)**  
— on Alpha online,  
**The Church in Hong Kong Church Assembly Hall (Christian Stewards)**

"What's good about Alpha online is that it's so much easier for people to join in. And since we no longer have the eat-together part, the time becomes more flexible and goes on according to people's lifestyle..."

"The most memorable experience when we ran the first Alpha online was receiving a text message from a new guest right after the session ended. He was saying that he was so happy that even in times of this pandemic, he was still able to connect and chat with Christians. I could even feel his joy through the text message."

"The guest did not turn on his video during the chat, and apparently he was lying down on his bed comfortably chatting with everyone."



**Tomoko Komatsu**  
(小松智子)  
**Alpha online guest, Japan**

"I was invited by a colleague and came to church for the first time in July 2020. Then I was invited to join Alpha online that started on 12 July. Every time I went to Alpha, I found that the atmosphere was relaxing and everything was well-organized. I received more than I could express, and I could not wait for time with Alpha every week!"

"When I came to church, I felt the sense of joy and of being surrounded by peace. In those sacred moments in Alpha, God spoke to me and renewed my soul. I accepted Jesus and decided that I want to build a deeper relationship with God who loves me so much."



**Stephanie (Alpha Host)**  
Alpha online host  
**SS Gospel Centre, Malaysia**

"Our church has never run Alpha online so I became the guinea pig batch. I was really anxious and worried at first because I couldn't anticipate the responses from the guests but by faith our team practiced, prepared and just ran for it. We were so glad that we had ready participants - 5 non church goers and 1 church goer."

"Throughout the sessions we grew closer with each other and as a host team, we grew more confident as well. I found that as a host, prayer is so important. The best part about running Alpha online is that I get to focus on prayer and not be distracted with the set-up. I can dedicate the whole session just asking God where He wants to lead the questions and amazingly God always shows up and gives us just the right questions to ask."

It was amazing that all this built up to our Weekend Away to which one became a Christian, and another now continues to come to church! We had such an amazing time together that we spent half a day just talking after the session during that weekend. I speak for two of my helpers and say that we were personally very encouraged to see people come alive and be curious about the faith - it also increased ours."

# Financial Review

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## 2020 Financial Review – What We Spent

### £0.92 million

#### Ministry Development (59%)

Covers outreach, awareness, training, equipping and envisioning for local churches to run Alpha effectively in 12 countries.

### £0.21 million

#### Operations (14%)

Represents staff cost and administrative overheads in support of development and governance to mobilise regional strategy.

### £0.40 million

#### Ministry Support & Resource Development (26%)

This covers marketing and communication support for the NAOs and their need for rigorously contextualised product translations and media materials. Alpha's resources are digitised and available online.

### £0.01 million

#### Leadership Development (1%)

For regional strategic initiatives hosted at the Asia Pacific Hub such as Alpha Collective (AC21) and Regional Experiencing Alpha event. This represents only 1% of the total budget this year as the events were mostly held online due to COVID-19.

Total Expenditure:

**£1.54 million**

## 2021 Budget For Asia Pacific

### £1.07 million

#### Ministry Development (57%)

### £0.31 million

#### Operations (16%)

### £0.49 million

#### Ministry Support & Resource Development (26%)

### £0.02 million

#### Leadership Development (1%)

Total Expected Expenditure:

**£1.89 million**

# Partner with us

We estimate that over 25 million people have experienced Alpha. Alpha has run in 140 countries and in over 100 languages. Your support not only makes it possible to give Alpha away for free to every church, but to also equip churches with the tools and training to evangelise more effectively. As more churches become equipped in this manner, more people will be given the opportunity to come to know Jesus. Your generosity makes that possible. Last year more than 170,000 people around Asia Pacific experienced Alpha.

Here are 3 ways you can partner with us:

## pray

- For the churches and their leaders with varying challenges going online and crucial decision making needs that has emerged from this pandemic – pray for their congregation and financial provision.
- For guests coming onto Alpha online to experience God's love wherever they are.
- For Alpha and our efforts to walk alongside churches amidst the challenges.
- For the creation and translations of Alpha's resources for content, training, social media, marketing and communications into many more Asian languages.

## give

You can give online at [asiapacific.alpha.org/give](https://asiapacific.alpha.org/give). If online giving is not for you, you can give via cheque or bank transfer by scanning the QR code below.



You can also leave a legacy by making a bequest to the work of Alpha in Asia Pacific in your will. For more information about giving, please contact: [give2asia@alpha.org](mailto:give2asia@alpha.org)

## serve

Get involved in Alpha through your local church or volunteer at your local National Alpha Office. You can also find out more about how to run Alpha online at <https://asiapacific.alpha.org/alpha-online>.

Thank you for being part of what God is doing through Alpha in Asia Pacific and globally, helping even more people come to know Jesus.



Alpha Asia Pacific

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