



Alabaster Needs Listed

Editor's Note: The following question was recently posed to the World Mission regions: **How many Alabaster projects are now pending due to lack of funds?** Each region handles Alabaster requests differently, so the answers are varied; however, it comes down to this—Alabaster funds are still greatly needed!

Africa Region

An approximate statement—"For every Alabaster project that is approved, there are five that do not get funded."

Horn of Africa Field—have to turn down five to seven Alabaster projects every year because of insufficient funds to meet them all

Africa Central Field—denied four Alabaster projects this year due to lack of funding

Africa Lusophone Field—estimate 15 projects unable to fund

Africa East Field—estimate 20 projects denied for lack of funds

Eurasia Region

On our region, Alabaster requests are only held for one year and then cancelled or renewed. At our last Alabaster meeting, we sent letters to those requesting funding of over \$1.4 million denying the requests. Many were very legitimate. Some were projects that are very expensive.

On balance, we are only able to grant about 30 percent of the requests, and many of these we leverage with donors, partnerships, etc.

We have around 32 projects which we can't fund at this time, totalling around \$1 million. This does not include 200 that could be sent from the South Asia Field if we had funds available; this would be another \$1 million.

South America Region

Our list of unfunded Alabaster projects [over time] could go on and on—it would almost seem limitless.

However, for the SAM Region during 2003 we had about 55 unfunded potential Alabaster projects.

Caribbean Region

Please put down 50 unfunded Alabaster projects for the Caribbean. That is conservative.

Mexico/Central America Region

We now have 516 or more new Church Type Missions, plus another 1,000 churches that don't have active projects. We have over 1,200 churches without parsonages. We also need to build at least 15 district-educational centers.

What Can You Do With This Information?

Idea 1: Map It!

Display a large world map in a prominent location in your church. Cut bright construction paper in eye-catching shapes, print some of the statistics on the paper, and attach them to the map. For variety, change the statistics or add to them from week to week. If you add to them, you may cover the majority of the map with Alabaster needs.

Idea 2: Tap It!

Tap untold Alabaster funds by stating the statistics from week to week during the announcements on Sunday morning. Explain the purpose of Alabaster, and close with the statement, "Alabaster funds are greatly needed. Participate in our church's Alabaster Offering, (date)."

Idea 3: Zap It!

If your church uses PowerPoint, have someone make slides with the sobering statistics. Animate the slides, so the information comes up with flair. Close with a slide that reads, "Alabaster Funds Are Needed! Please Participate! (Date of Offering)"

Evelyn Sutton (adapted) • Salem, Oregon