

**Alpha International**  
**Annual Review**  
2014



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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

I am delighted to present to you Alpha's Annual Review for 2014. In the following pages we can share with you only a glimpse of how God is using Alpha around the world but our hope is that in this report you will see the faithfulness of God, using Alpha as a tool to impact lives, churches and communities.

In 2014, Alpha continued to grow on an international scale and established the groundwork necessary for future exponential growth.

Last year alone, 2.5 million people experienced Alpha across more than 76,000 courses and 40,000 churches worldwide. External estimates indicate that by the end of 2014, 26.5 million people had tried Alpha in 169 countries and 112 languages. This growth is wonderful but, to see our vision truly fulfilled, we aim for more.

At Alpha, we want to see the re-evangelisation of the nations, the revitalisation of the church and the transformation of society. We play our part in all three, empowering the local church to see this change where they are.

**Invite a generation  
to try Alpha**

The exciting work of Alpha Innovation in envisioning, targeting and equipping the next generation – half the world's population – is key to enabling us to achieve our goal.

In 2014, Alpha Innovation entered its second phase: we launched the first global Alpha App, ran our first young leaders' training conference, unified branding across countries and their

websites, began translating the Alpha Youth Film series into the world's top five languages, and prepared for the 2016 launch of both the Alpha Film Series and our first ever global advertising campaign with Bear Grylls.

As we look ahead, we are excited to see where this work will lead as we invite a generation to hear, respond to and share the good news of Jesus Christ through Alpha – transforming lives worldwide.

We would like to thank all our partners for their generous support in 2014. It is your contributions that make our work possible.

With best wishes,

**Ken Costa**  
Chairman of Alpha International

# WHAT IS ALPHA?

Alpha is a series of interactive sessions that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith.



### ALPHA IS AN IDEA

Alpha creates a safe space for everyone to ask their questions.



### ALPHA IS A STORY

Over the past twenty years, Alpha has exploded across borders and boundaries, with 26.5 million participants and as many unique stories.



### ALPHA IS A TOOL

Alpha is a simple tool that anyone, anywhere can use to reach their friends.



We have been astonished to see how God has used Alpha to transform millions of people's lives all around the world. We have helped lead more than seventy-five Alpha small groups at HTB since we were invited to take over the leadership of the course and we have seen many lives wonderfully and profoundly changed. The same is true of millions more lives around the world and we are astonished, deeply grateful and excited about what God may do next.

### Nicky and Pippa Gumbel

# ALPHA THROUGH THE YEARS



**2014**  
26.5 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE NOW EXPERIENCED ALPHA IN 169 COUNTRIES AND 112 LANGUAGES.



# ALPHA AROUND THE GLOBE: 2014

Alpha has 58 offices worldwide, with hubs in South Africa, Egypt, Malaysia and Singapore.



**UK**

Over 5500 leaders from 1600 churches, 60 countries and 26 denominations attended the largest ever Leadership Conference.

**SOUTH KOREA**

South Korea is now Alpha's fourth largest country in terms of participant numbers, growing 13% in 2014.

**KEY**

- Hub
- Office
- ◉ HQ

**UK**

Run Alpha, the new interactive training conference for the next generation, was launched and 75% of the attendees were under the age of 35, helping us to reach new Alpha leaders.

**USA**

94% of Alpha church leaders in the USA believe Alpha helped their church transform lives in 2014.

**ITALY**

Nicky Gumbel was invited to meet the Pope alongside the Archbishop of Canterbury in June, as part of his official visit to the Vatican.

**MALAYSIA**

Alpha Malaysia ran 42 Alphas for over 2,000 members of the armed forces.

**LATIN AMERICA**

In Latin America, where young people face wide-spread poverty, inequality, and lack of education, Alpha brings hope through the gospel. The number of Alpha – Youth courses increased seven-fold in 2014, thanks to the new Alpha Youth Film Series which is translated into Spanish.

**ZAMBIA**

Alpha is transforming the way countries and continents run their prison systems. The number of participants of Alpha – Prisons tripled in Zambia, where Alpha partnered with the Zambian Prison Services under a Memorandum of Understanding, urging that Alpha be run in every prison in the country.

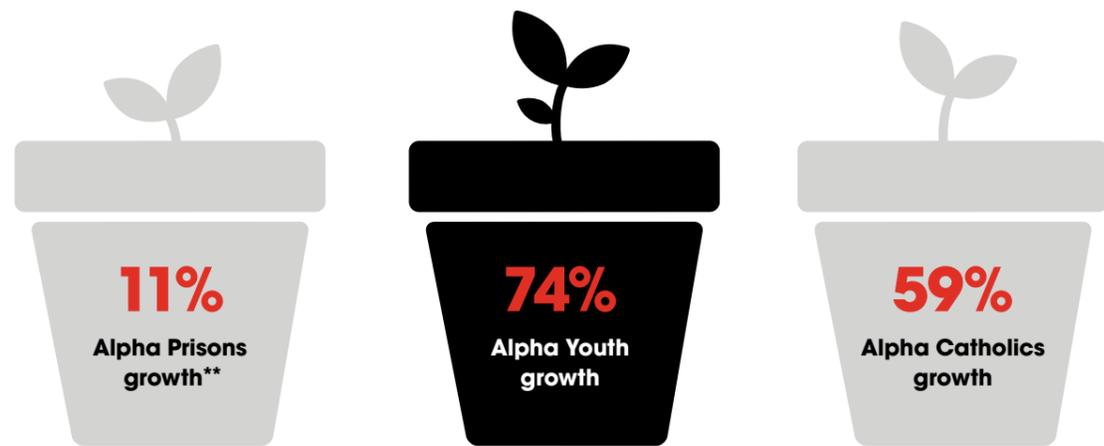
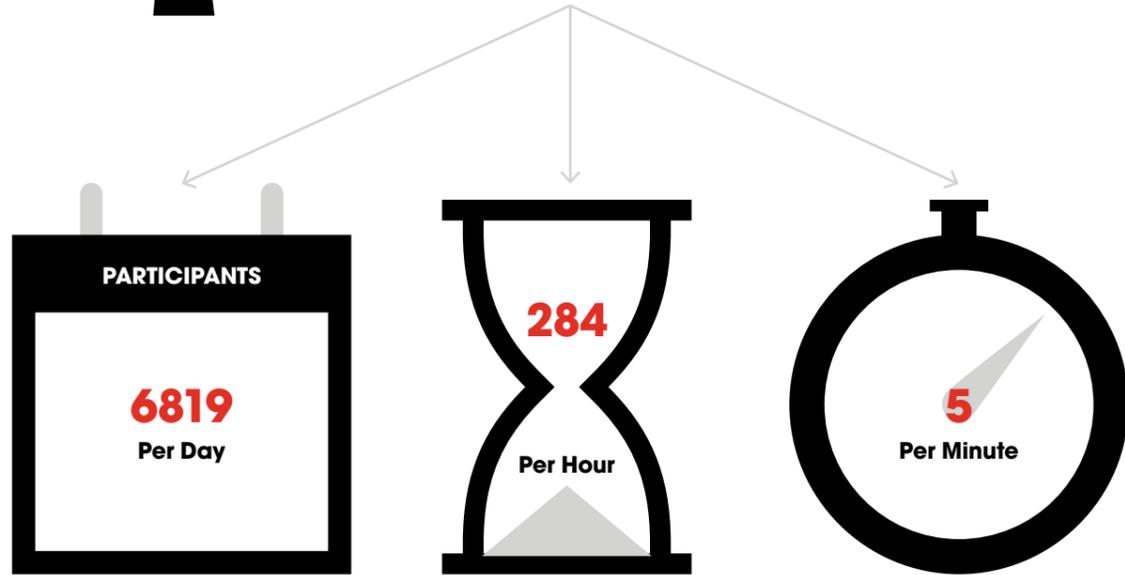
**EGYPT**

In a region strife with conflict and geopolitical pressure to stay silent about issues of faith, the total number of Alphas in Egypt increased by 27%.

**INDIA**

In a country where over 90% of the population practise Hinduism or Islam, the good news of Jesus Christ reached over a million people in 2014 through Alpha, with over 16,000 courses.

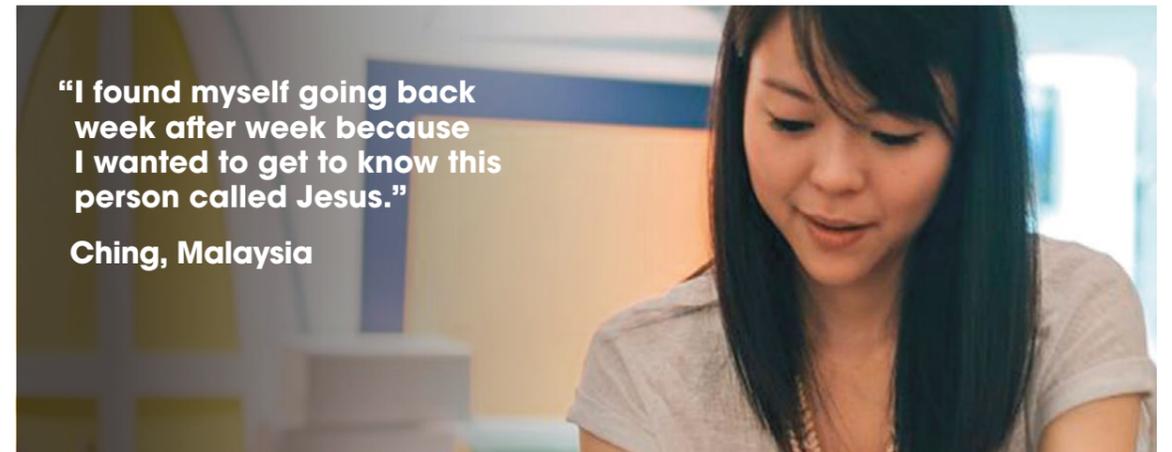
# 2014 IN NUMBERS



\* Data collection and evaluation has come a long way since we started in 1992. This year, we have been able to use a new more reliable methodology to evaluate course data. As a result, the previously reported 2013 headline of 2.7 million Alpha participants worldwide has been revised to the more accurate 2.45 million. This represents a 2% growth in 2014 over 2013.

\*\* Excludes US data.

# WHAT THEY SAY



## TIME

"Alpha uses modern methods to promote and explain Christian teachings around the world."

## The Daily Telegraph

"Alpha is an unqualified triumph."

## GQ

"Alpha is the Christian organisation that is quietly spreading throughout Britain's prisons. Its techniques are so powerful that it's transforming the most brutal inmates."



"We are amazed as we behold God radically transform lives through Alpha's communication of the gospel in the Holy Spirit's power."

The Right Revd Rennis Ponniah,  
Anglican Bishop of Singapore



"Alpha is a tool for mobilizing men and women to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost."

Joyce Meyer,  
Joyce Meyer Ministries



"Alpha has shown across the world that it can be a most effective tool for evangelisation. It empowers lay people."

The Most Revd Buti Tlhagale,  
Archbishop of Johannesburg

# ALPHA STORIES



**Growing up, my parents weren't religious and the only time I remember going to church was for my brother's christening. I always believed there could be a higher being, but I thought Christianity was outdated and irrelevant.**

To me, Jesus was nothing more than a wise guy. I suppose I thought life was about finding success, and that meant having loads of friends, being well liked, and finding my dream job. I expected that once I had ticked all these boxes, I'd be satisfied.

When I was sixteen, a friend of mine was diagnosed with cancer and died months later. I really didn't know how to react and was totally shaken. I had nowhere to channel my grief, so I fell into a self-destructive mode. The easiest thing to do was to push everything down further.

I started going out way too much, drinking and dabbling in drugs. None of these things made me happier and I didn't understand why. Even though the selling point is, 'Take these and you'll have a great night,' every morning I woke up with the same feeling of emptiness.

When I was nineteen, I moved to Brighton to study Music Business. I kept up this lifestyle but I hit rock bottom a couple of months in. I was alone in a new city and I had no one to turn to.

Around this time, a friend, Lydia, invited me to a student party at church and I thought I'd go along. I remember walking outside the church building thinking, 'An abandoned church? Great music? This is going to be amazing.'

It wasn't quite what I expected, but I remember going home and noticing that I had never felt so valued and loved in my life. That night, the emptiness inside me almost began to disappear.

I started helping out at the church's homeless outreach project. Every week I had so many questions – about Jesus, prayer and worship – that eventually Lydia suggested I go along to Alpha to find out what faith was all about.

**It was refreshing to see that Christianity isn't outdated; it's contemporary and relevant to our generation.**

I was really surprised to see so many young people in church. When I asked questions, people really opened up about their own doubts and experiences. It was refreshing to see that Christianity isn't outdated; it's contemporary and relevant to our generation.

I didn't become a Christian overnight, and there wasn't one huge event that made me decide to follow Jesus. It was very gradual, a slow understanding, which suited me as I needed time to think things through. I felt lighter, and began to find ways of channelling my feelings instead of shutting them up like I had done for years.

It's so liberating to know that there's someone out there who cares about me, who cares about the way I'm feeling. Instead of hiding behind a lifestyle or material things, I feel a lot more confident in my identity because I know I've been created this way for a reason.

My journey into faith started when a friend invited me to Alpha and invited me to find out about Jesus. I'll always be grateful to her for having that courage. At the time, she didn't know the effect it would have on my life.

**Tom, UK**



"When my uncle – who had it all – collapsed one day, I realised how meaningless everything is that we strive for in this life. I started going to church but I didn't personally experience Christ, so it was very difficult for me to accept what I was hearing. It was only when I joined Alpha that I got to explore the questions I had and find out more about Jesus. It was there that I really experienced God. Where before I was stressed, angry and tired, now people are telling me I'm glowing!"

**Marco, Hong Kong**



"At seventeen, my life was complete chaos. One day my cousin invited me to Alpha; I wasn't sure about it but I promised her I'd give it a go. At first I thought Alpha was just more of the same that I'd heard before, but there was something attractive about that place and every week I made the choice to go back. Over the sessions I discovered more and more about Jesus. I was introduced to him, experienced him and felt his love."

**Gimena, Argentina**



"I run out of words to describe the impact Alpha has had. I have been transformed. After delivering my first talk at a rehabilitation centre for boys, I saw a dozen young men come to faith. In Nairobi, most people don't like to talk about religion, but when we get into small groups you can see that there is a real eagerness to know more. I think that's why Alpha works – it gives young people a chance to really talk openly and ask questions."

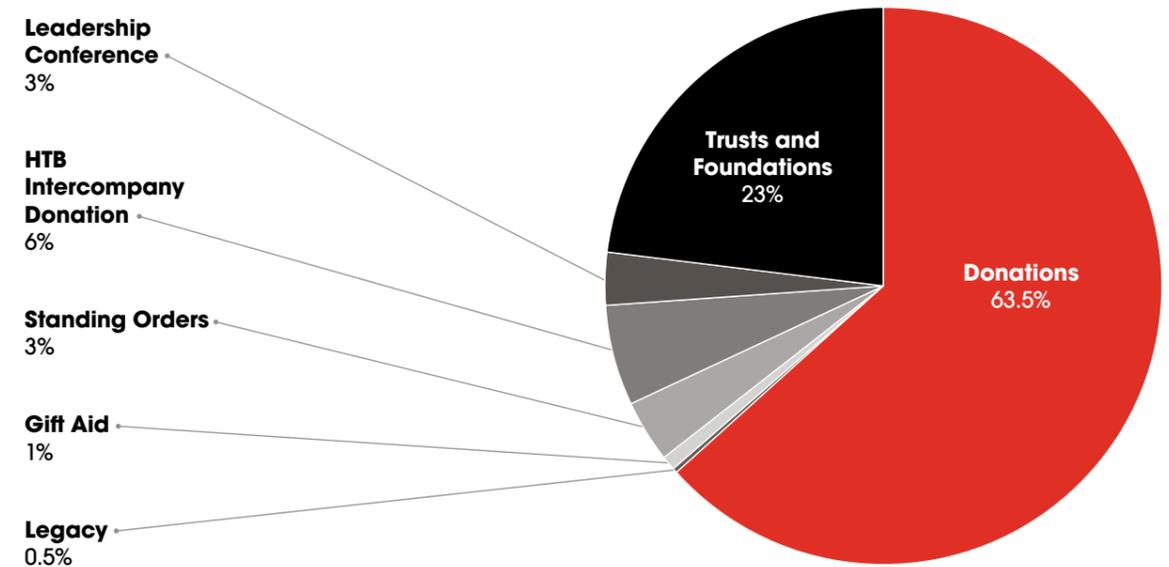
**Chris, Kenya**

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

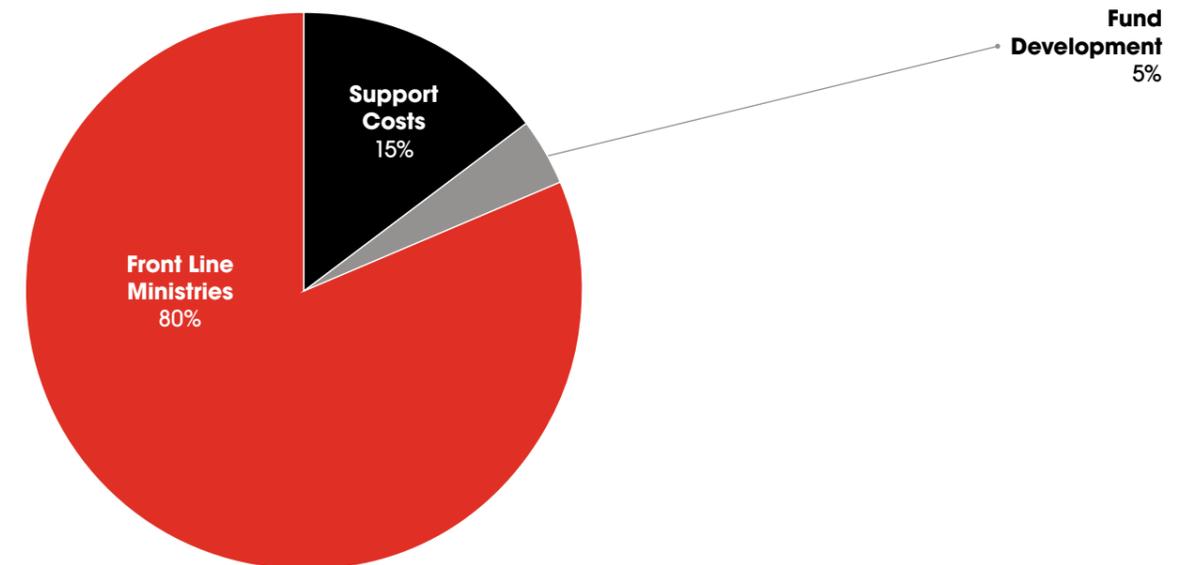
	TOTAL FUNDS 2014 (£)	TOTAL FUNDS 2013 (£)
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		
<b>Donations, legacies and similar income</b>		
Donations under Gift Aid	250,840	222,920
Other donations and similar income	7,583,690	7,875,001
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>7,834,530</b>	<b>8,097,921</b>
<b>Incoming resources from operating activities:</b>		
In furtherance of the charity's objects	1,241,417	1,125,490
Other incoming resources	8,965	5,903
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>9,084,912</b>	<b>9,229,314</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>		
Fund development	446,427	444,356
<b>Charitable activities</b>		
Strategic Leadership	829,585	589,821
UK Development	826,772	546,562
Media and Publications	1,909,971	1,605,180
International Development	2,456,342	2,523,205
Alpha Context Development	887,305	1,056,025
Other Ministries	533,188	502,649
Conferences	1,328,988	1,392,745
<b>Total of charitable activities (expenditure)</b>	<b>8,772,151</b>	<b>8,216,187</b>
Governance costs	8,510	10,000
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>9,227,088</b>	<b>8,670,543</b>
<b>NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>(142,176)</b>	<b>558,771</b>

The figures above are summarised from the charity's accounts, audited by Mazars LLP, for the year ended 31 December 2014. A complete set of the accounts is available on request, or can be downloaded from the UK Charity Commission Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission).

## HOW YOU GAVE



## HOW ALPHA SPENT



## THANK YOU

We are so grateful to all our Alpha Partners around the world for facilitating all we have done in 2014 through praying, serving and giving. We thank God for you.

## ALPHA INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Ken Costa** is Chairman of the AI Board. Ken served as Vice-Chairman of UBS Investment Bank where he worked for over thirty years before being named Chairman of Lazard International. Today, Ken is the Church Warden of Holy Trinity Brompton, where he preaches regularly.



**Nicky Gumbel** is Vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB), an Anglican church in central London with ten Sunday services over four sites and a regular attendance of around 5,000 people.



**John Mackay** is a board member of Alpha International, Alpha USA, Alpha Canada and Alpha Asia Pacific. He is a founding principal of the Strand real estate organisation. He has been actively involved in various charities.



**Sandy Millar** practised for ten years as a barrister before being ordained into the Church of England, joining HTB as a curate and becoming Vicar in 1985. He oversaw the growth of HTB to the largest church in the Church of England and was responsible for leading Alpha from a small local parish resource to one used by thousands of churches around the world.



**Tricia Neill** is the President of Alpha International. Tricia joined HTB in 1994 from News International, where she headed up News International Exhibitions. Tricia sits on the boards of numerous Alpha offices worldwide.



**Chris Sadler** is a board member of Alpha USA and from 2004 to 2013 was also Chairman of Alpha Asia Pacific. Chris is a Non-Executive Director of Daniels SharpSmart Group (Healthcare) and New Standard Energy (Oil & Gas). Prior to 2004, he spent twenty years working in several leading international investment banks.



**David Segel** is an American businessman, investing in financial services and media assets. In 1999, he founded Mako Global which has become one of Europe's leaders in options market-making. He is also an Executive Partner in MPower Pictures, Telescope Magazine and the Video Genome Project, and sits on the Alpha USA board.



**Ramez Sousou** is Founder and co-CEO of TowerBrook Capital Partners, an international investment firm. He was previously co-Head of Soros Private Equity and, prior to that, served as a senior member of the Principal Investments Group of Goldman Sachs.



**Rebecca Stewart** has served as Head of Alpha UK, Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff. In January 2014, she was appointed CEO of the HTB Group which comprises Alpha International, HTB, William Wilberforce Trust and St Paul's Theological Centre. Before joining HTB, Rebecca spent ten years working in the city, initially in banking and consulting and later on as a headhunter.



**Michael Timmis** was senior partner of Timmis & Inman L.L.P lawfirm and the co-founder and Vice-Chairman of Talon LLC., a privately-owned company with extensive interests in manufacturing and real estate. Michael serves or has served on the boards of many charitable organisations and foundations including: St. John Healthcare Systems, Cornerstone Schools, Inc., The Navigators, Wayne State University Foundation and Prison Fellowship International (Chairman).



**Hong Yeoh** is the Executive Director of Malaysian conglomerate YTL Power Generation, one of the largest international utility businesses in Southeast Asia. He is also Director of both holding company YTL Corporation Berhad and Wessex Water. Kathleen, Hong's wife, is a qualified barrister and is Chair of the Alpha Asia Pacific Advisory Board.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**At Alpha, we want to make really useful tools that equip the local church anywhere, in any context, to tell others about Jesus.**

We are thrilled to be releasing some landmark products, which we believe will lead to huge future growth for Alpha and set in motion our journey to reach 100 million participants.



### GLOBAL INVITATION: BEAR GRYLLS CAMPAIGN

In 2016, we want to invite a new generation worldwide to try Alpha through our global invitation, fronted by Bear Grylls – a British adventurer, writer and television presenter with extraordinary reach in our target demographic.

Currently over fifty countries are set to participate in the campaign. Content will first be released to churches for translation, with a simultaneous global guest release alongside the Alpha Film Series. The invitation will be a powerful vehicle to scale mass awareness and communicate a simple, concise message of Alpha through one man's story.

### THE ALPHA YOUTH FILM SERIES (AYFS)

The AYFS has already had tremendous impact, increasing participation in Alpha Youth in Canada by 1783% since release. It is currently available in seven languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch, and Traditional and Simplified Chinese.

Sixteen further translations are underway, including Hindi, Arabic, Thai, Malay, French and Russian, allowing millions of youth in Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia to experience Alpha in their own language, meet Jesus and have their lives changed. With half the world's population under twenty-five, this product is needed more than ever.

## "INVITE A GENERATION"

### ALPHA WITH NICKY GUMBEL

Since the last update of the Alpha video series with Nicky Gumbel in 2006, the content and format of Alpha at HTB has been significantly improved and updated. In June 2015, we will release the most recent talks – revised and rewritten - in HD online.

This product will provide leaders of local Alphas with the best, most relevant examples of talks to learn how to effectively deliver their own Alpha talk to their community. It also enables those Alphas without live speakers to hear the definitive version of Alpha, as given by Nicky, live at HTB.

### THE ALPHA FILM SERIES (AFS)

Following the phenomenal success of the AYFS, we are excited to begin production of the Alpha Film Series, a new product which will communicate the full content of Alpha in a contemporary visual format.

Having sent the scripts to our world-class scriptwriters and confirmed an expert production team, we are confident that the AFS will be of the highest standard: innovative, engaging, and interactive, with a truly global DNA. Due for release in 2016, we anticipate the AFS will generate an increase in the number of churches running Alpha globally by 10% over the following 12 months.

**Every context, country and continent have their own exciting plans for 2015 in addition to these international projects. We cannot wait to share their successes with you next year.**

In 2014, our generous Alpha Partners around the world made it possible for 2.5 million people to experience the gospel through Alpha.

Each of these 2.5 million people had their own journey, their own story.

Help us empower the church to create millions of new stories in 2015 through Alpha. We can't wait to share them with you next year.

**Donate online: [alpha.org/give](http://alpha.org/give)**

