

Su-Min's story

10 year old 'Su Min' goes from Asian country of birth to an Arab country when her parents become missionaries. In both the home and host country, identifying themselves as "missionaries" will pose imminent danger to them. So they go with a business as mission (BAM) model.

Neither parents nor child speak English or Arabic when they arrive in the host culture. The parents do not have the resources to put the child in an international school so enroll her in a local, Arabic speaking school. The parents begin to study Arabic but it is a couple of years until they become fluent in it. (and the child picks up Arabic much quicker!)

The family speaks the 'mother tongue' at home but it is not the language of Su Min's educational system. When family returns to home country to visit family, how do they explain the situation they are in or why they have made this choice?

What are the extra challenges this family faces to a more traditional Western based missionary family?

What might be helpful to them to ameliorate some of these challenges?

What kind of support does this family need on the field and back home? What are steps others in the global missions community might do to support them in a better, more wholistic way?

Additional remarks

1. It's not technically illegal to be a missionary from their home country. But the government will not let them go abroad. They will question them why they are doing that, and "house arrest" their family.)
2. Families who do BAM, parents are often too busy to attend to their kids
3. Families who do BAM, they often struggle to produce enough "performance" either on the BAM side or the ministry side. Their supporting church or org back home often gives so much pressure for them to produce result on either end that they find it difficult to meet such expectations