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Dependencies and Partnerships

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What is the most effective means for accomplishing the task of world evangelism? How does one manage the resources from the First World for accomplishing this "mission impossible" in the Third World? How can you avoid creating dependency (and all the evils contingent to it) while developing a healthy partnership to maximize the resources that God has made available to the churches of the 21st century? Is there a wrong way to manage finances to accomplish a good task?

Sometimes it is hard to harmonize all the biblical principles, practical sense, and expectations of different people into a beneficial strategy for fulfilling a mission. It is not easy to balance, "The love of all evil is the love of money" (1 Tim 6:10) with "Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share" (1 Tim 6:18). Later Paul warned that in the last days "men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, …ungrateful…" (2 Tim 3:2) because godly men or pastors must be "… free from the love of money" (1 Tim 3:3). Those who live in the West, even from the poorest families, have little idea how even a little money can corrupt believers and unbelievers in under developed countries. What seems so normal, big-hearted, generous and giving in our culture can actually generate more harm than good.

A university student in Bogota, Colombia, who attended one of my Bible studies, once told me, "Don, don't trust us, any of us. We will find a way to take all we can from you."

Disillusionment, envy, resentment, and disappointment all breed bitterness and animosity. Perhaps the chief root of this downward spiral is the misuse of money, even when used for good intentions.

My father once told me that the surest way to create your worst enemy out of your best friend is to loan him money. When he is suppose to return the funds, he will likely not be available to do so and the mere reminder to him will begin a deteriorating relationship that inevitably will end in animosity.

In this chapter we will deal with the following topics:
- The dangers of dependency
- Short-term trips and dependency
- How to avoid dependency
- Four Perspectives for Using Money in Missions

Westerners typically have a difficult time grasping the depth of resentment and jealousy that improper use of funds can create. We are usually clueless about the inevitable envy an American generates, just because he comes from America, regardless of his economic background. The vast majority of the unreached peoples of the world are living in extreme poverty and depressed conditions that have little hope of improving. Many are willing to clutch at any opportunity afforded them and willing to adapt to any benefactor in order to better their lot in life. This chapter will introduce the inter-cultural student to the difficulties of building relationships in an emotionally charged environment.

The dangers of dependency

Robert Reese defines *dependency* as the unhealthy reliance on foreign resources, personnel, and ideas, which stifles local initiative. It may seem relatively harmless but it has far reaching effects. It is expecting someone else to do for you what you could do for yourself. "In mission history, dependency resulted from western missionaries importing foreign forms of worship, church organization, institutions, and theology during the colonial period. Indigenous people could not operate such foreign systems and found they had to depend on outsiders to run them. It is for this reason that some churches in developing nations continue to be weak and ineffective" (Reese, 2007).

Dependency of a church or an individual can be understood as the psychological effect of poverty. Kritzinger's research has revealed that it is "tragic, but true, that poverty breeds a "culture of poverty," which takes away people's dignity and ability to such an extent that they become unable to do anything positive for themselves. The "beggar mentality" causes a person to only sit and wait on other people to do something for them" (Kritzinger, 1996, p. 14). Dependency is certainly one of the most serious diseases a church can contract.

All these, and more could be added, are aspects of the deadly disease called dependency. This syndrome weakens the body (the church) to such an extent that the church, or individual, becomes unable or unwilling to do anything. People, or the church, who are suffering from this disease, are unable to see opportunities or to use them. It is a kind of paralysis, a mentality which stifles all initiative and causes the sufferer to negate all responsibility.

A dependent person (or church) depends on others to nourish and sustain him or her... but never receives enough, always complains. The expectation level is always higher than the reality. This mentality stifles all growth and life, and is certainly far from what can be expected from the church.

To make matters worse, dependency is a contagious disease, it catches on. It doesn't take long before all the members are just as dependent on outside help as is the church. "In a country in which the prime human struggle is to climb out of the deep morass of poverty and powerlessness, the church is of no help if it is itself poisoning the people with the virus of not taking responsibility for its own affairs. The church should take the lead with a theology and practice of responsibility and reconstruction" (Kritzinger, 1996, p. 16).

Some evangelicals would like to implement a Marshall Plan for Christ in response to the global economic inequities (Rowell 2006:141-4); short-term mission is one way they can take action directly. They form partnerships with under-funded ministries in the developing countries that they visit. "Eager to solve global problems with American money and technology, they plunge in with solutions before they understand the local situations and forge financial relationships with people they scarcely know. The stage is set for creating massive dependency in the developing world" (Reese, 2007).

Bruce R. Reichenbach commented, "Consistent with their guilt-complex, the Western churches continually search for new ways to infuse financial and material aid into the Third World churches," so creating "money greed" (Reichenbach, 1982, p. 170).

When people come into the Christian faith for the material possessions they get - something goes terribly wrong in the spread of the Gospel. That might be the "single

most important reason why the dependency problem so often cripples the Christian movement and why it is so urgent that it be avoided or dealt with where it exists" (Schwartz, 2000, p. 3).

Rick Wood interviewed Steve Saint who reported that the Waodani ["Auca"] Indians of Ecuador had turned from independence in the 1960s to dependence in the 1990s because of short-term mission projects. Saint said that dependency had crept in through two types of well-meaning short-term missions: Bible conferences and constructing church buildings. Those Americans who conducted Bible conferences furnished rice and sugar to create "a big festive occasion." Since the Waodani could not provide the resources for this event, "They figured this is something that the outsiders do. So they never have a Bible conference of their own. Americans who built a church building for the Waodani likewise used material and methods beyond the capability of the local people. Saint noted that the result was that for almost two decades after that project, "the Waodani, to my knowledge, have never built another building to be used for a place of worship" (Wood, 1998).

Well meaning donors gave a portable saw mill to the Waodanis, but how were they to get the fuel to run it, much less get it out to the tribe. It has sat in Shell Mera, nearly the end of the road, for years. Commercial fishermen came to the villages and dug pits to keep and breed fish for their tribe. When I visited the trip several years later the holes are dry because their concept is that men catch fish in the river, thus demonstrate their value to the tribe. A schoolhouse was built and has been repainted ten times, but it is never used for a school since there were no teachers. All of these and more were the foreigner's way of solving jungle problems that wasted a lot of resources and created the expectation that foreigners would do things for the tribe.[1]

When expectations are not met (which they seldom are) disillusionment, and resentment, either with themselves or outsiders result. This either destroys the value of the tribal, or national, identity or creates a thirst for the resources and wealth of others.

Short-term trips and dependency

One of the most remarkable phenomena of the later 20th century was the exponential growth of short-term mission trips into every region of the world. Most of these trips were designed to get Americans who were marginally interested in missions at least aware of the immense difference in cultures and living conditions. Most short-termers do not take it much further than a summer substitute for camp.

Richard Slimbach estimated that 450,000 short-term missionaries were sent from North America in 1998, calling this a "short-term avalanche" (Slimbach, 2000, p. 441). According to Scott Moreau, United States mission agencies reported that a total of 346,270 short-term workers (defined as going from two weeks to one year) were sent out in 2001 (Moreau, 2004, p. 13). He adds, "we assume that this still represents only a small fraction of the total U.S. short-term workers, since it does not include those who went under the auspices of local churches or on their own" (Moreau 2004:33). Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed estimate that one million short-term volunteers went out in 2003 (Peterson, 2003, p. 243). One can only guess how many short-term workers are moving from North America around the globe as each year the number

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[1] Personal observation from a trip to the Waodanis in the summer of 2006.

increases to a staggering number. The question is what kind of beneficial impact does this movement have for the cause of Christ overseas?

Teams from the United States fan out across the globe to do Christian missions of mercy and evangelism, but they usually know little of the local situations that they encounter. They see things that American ingenuity can fix and having the means to do it, they proceed to solve the problems in the few days they have been in the foreign country and then return home satisfied with a job well done. They may not see, however, the long-term results of their quick-fix solution (Reese, 2007).

Parson describes "one field worker among an unreached people who receives volumes of requests for short-term teams (from the US, Korea, Philippines, Canada, etc.). He could spend so much of his time hosting these teams (sometimes just making sure they don't hinder the on-going work) that he would never get to the work of establishing the church. And very few of these teams ever return to work with him in any on-going partnership (Parson, 1999).

Johnson noted that American materialism and a sense of pity toward citizens of developing nations often combine to produce a dependency on short-term trips. Some people can barely live from one short-term trip to the next one. Visible poverty can create a compassionate reaction in the short-term missionary that combines with a sense of guilt for having so much stuff. This, in turn, can cause rash decisions that produce dependency on the part of the recipient. This may be done through actual donations of money or materials, or simply through making promises to do more that are soon forgotten when the trip is over and the scenes of poverty have faded from memory (Johnson, 2000, p. 44).

Reese asked an African pastor what factors are prolonging dependency after the end of colonialism; he responded that short-term missions are creating dependency on a far larger scale than colonial missions ever did! When asked to explain that statement, he said, "Short-term volunteers are currently supplying pastors in Zimbabwe with all sorts of money and equipment, from computers to cars, without accountability for their use. Church members become amazed that their pastor is driving a new car and has money to send his children to the best schools, or to visit foreign countries, while they remain in poverty" (Reese, 2007)

Because short-term groups often want to solve problems quickly, they can make third-world Christians feel incapable of doing things on their own. Instead of working together with local Christians, many foreign groups come with a "let-the-North-Americans-do-it" attitude that leaves nationals feeling frustrated and unappreciated. Unbeknown short-term missions may unwittingly contribute to a feeling of powerlessness or inadequacy among the very people that they seek to help. This in turn creates more dependency.

Groups are sent to 'fix up' their buildings, do their evangelism, preach in their services, lead vacation Bible schools. Often these churches find that their own efforts fail to bring about the same results as the well-funded foreign campaigns. They can lose their initiative. Some become corrupted, seeking an inside track to foreign groups and the resources they bring. The church may abandon its indigenous efforts and become dependent on the foreign support (Reese, 2007).

How to avoid or at least manage dependency

No one should look for quick and easy solutions to the problem of dependency "especially where it has been in place for many years. Old habits are hard to break" more so when changing them means learning a whole new way of getting support for the church ministries.

Those Nationals receiving salary from overseas funds may be reluctant to see the system change. Those responsible for creating dependency in the first place (like missionaries) may hesitate to see it change because they have been getting a good feeling from giving, even if it has created dependency and left others unable to stand on their own two feet (Schwartz, 2000, p. 2). It is like a necessary evil to accomplish a better good. Likewise missionaries are able to accomplish more by paying someone else to work in the church(es), so they look better before their supporters.

On the other hand, Schwartz gives six principles to help avoid dependency while trying to help Nationals establish a ministry.

First, it should be recognized that the healthiest churches are not those in which leaders or members constantly look to outsiders for financial support. If you want to see joy and a sense of satisfaction on the faces and in the hearts of believers, don't expect to see it among those who are dependent on foreign funds. Rather look for it among those who have discovered the joy of giving back to God something of what He has given to them - from whatever resources which He has put in their hand.

Second, begin to recognize the kind of things which cause dependency and seek to overcome the temptation to establish or continue such practices. It will take serious determination not to think of solving problems with outside funds and quick fixes. Furthermore, the problem cannot be solved if the concept of stewardship is not first built into the Christian message.

Third, it is important to realize that the need for spiritual renewal is at the root of this problem. Do not expect people who do not know the Lord to joyfully support their own churches. Do not expect believers whose faith has grown cold to be willingly to pay their tithes and offerings to the Lord. True growth in spiritual life must precede an emphasis on stewardship teaching.

Fourth, there is something else which must precede stewardship teaching. This is what I call a feeling of true personal ownership. Without this, people in dependent churches will often look to someone else to build their buildings, pay their pastors, buy their vehicles or support their development projects. Imagine what could happen, however, if people were to take full personal ownership for their own churches. Things which previously were thought to be impossible would all of a sudden become possible. Resources would be discovered which prior to this no one could see. These would be resources which were close at hand all along. Only when local ownership is fully in place will people begin to discover the joy of supporting their own church and the work of God's kingdom.

Fifth, there is sometimes an initial high price to be paid for transitioning from dependency to self-reliance by God's provision. Some local church leaders may need to say "no, thank you" to the outside funding which has been supporting them and their families. Schwartz described how this happened in East Africa about thirty years ago when local leaders asked the people overseas to stop supporting them financially. They

were actually declining the funds used to pay their own salaries. What followed, however, was dramatic. The leaders soon learned that local believers were not only capable of paying their salaries, but also able to pay for their own church buildings and vehicles. They also planted new churches from their own resources. They started a pension fund for retired pastors, something no one until that time thought could be done with local resources. Then those believers in East Africa heard about homeless children overseas and took a collection in Kenya shillings equal to about US$30,000 to help with that need. All of these things happened after they paid the price to stop the outside funding.

Sixth, one might ask why it is so important to resolve the problem of dependency among mission-established churches. "Think for a moment about how many funds are being raised for evangelism yet are actually being used to support churches where people are already evangelized. Is it right to keep on supporting those who have heard the Gospel many times when there are millions of people elsewhere who are still waiting to hear it for the very first time? In some places the Gospel has been preached for a hundred years or more and yet the people are still looking to others to support their pastors or build their buildings. For those who have not yet heard the Gospel even once, that is just not fair" (Schwartz, 2000, pp. 3-4).

What steps should be taken to ensure better results? Several steps are fairly obvious. We can classify them in three broad categories: better training, integration of short-term missions with long-term strategy, and a commitment to avoid creating dependency.

Better Training

Evaluation is a major tool for North Americans in most fields of endeavor, so it makes perfect sense to evaluate short-term missions too. As churches and Christian groups gain experience from multiple excursions abroad, hopefully they will begin to have questions about those experiences. What impact has the short-term mission had, not solely on the volunteers who went, but more especially on the people they visited? The impact on the people visited is clearly more difficult to assess, but this only makes the question more crucial, since mission by its very nature seeks to know its impact on those it ministers to. The answer to this question will indicate the direction training must take.

By stressing the target people, cultural issues become prominent. Cross-cultural sensitivity will be the most immediate training need, accompanied by studies of the cultural, linguistic, religious, and historical background of the people visited. What is their worldview and how does it compare to the normal North American worldview? For this important information there is an increasing number of helps (Johnstone, 2001).

Included in the need for better cross-cultural communication is the fundamental principle of putting human relationships ahead of tasks. Generally, North Americans tend to put tasks first. For short-term missions, this is especially true because of time constraints to complete some project that will preferably have visible results. Whereas a particular project may be in the forefront of the volunteers' minds, the people visited will probably rather be fascinated by the visitors themselves. This is because most cultures value relationships over tasks and the people visited probably feel little or no time pressure for the short-term mission project. Good training before going, therefore, will

take the emphasis off of time and task and transfer it to building relationships with local people.

This is not just a cultural issue, because people must always take precedence in God's work. If the people visited are not Christians, then interaction with them is crucial for the testimony that the short-term missionaries will leave behind. If the local people are Christians, then fellowship with them in God's work is essential, as they must carry on with whatever work remains after the volunteers depart.

Integration with Long-Term Strategy

Culturally it is important to be people-oriented, which leads logically to the need for long-term strategy. The best short-term missions must become so concerned with the impact that they are having that they will desire to integrate their own short-term goals with long-term planning. This leads naturally to more interaction with career missionaries or local Christian leaders in the places the short-termers want to visit regularly. By asking field missionaries or indigenous leaders how the short-term mission might best fit into long-term goals, the focus will again shift away from the foreigner's needs to the needs of the people on the field.

By focusing on a specific people group in one place for a longer period, the short-term mission will be taking a major step toward developing important relationships. When long-term goals take precedence, this increases the vision and purpose of each trip, which now becomes part of a larger plan. Training becomes more directed. Now the short-term missions can start to take advantage of all the helpfulness of mission history, writings, and field expertise. Even with this advantage, it may not be sufficient to overcome dependency, since many long-term missions also created this problem, but at least it is an essential step.

Avoiding Dependency

Colonial missions, especially of the nineteenth and twentieth century's, created dependency on a large scale by importing foreign institutions, ideas, and funding which indigenous people could not control, but soon could not do without. The amount is not as important as the act of creating dependency.

When short-term missions continue in this fashion, they inadvertently conform to a long-established, but flawed mission model. Local people will automatically see the volunteers as an extension of colonialism or colonial practices when missionaries were expected to give and local people to receive. It becomes easy to slide back into comfortable but damaging co-dependent relationships. By co-dependent, I mean that local people are used to asking for and receiving material goods, while the donors receive a good feeling about themselves from helping people in need. Recipients even learn to place donors on a pedestal making them feel special, in return for favors granted.

In the case of a short-term mission, the tendency to create dependency is even greater if long-term contact is not maintained. The short-term aspect creates a lack of accountability that colonial missions had, since the two sides stayed in contact with each other. In the case of short-term missions, neither side may really care about the ultimate outcome as long as the interaction feels good at the time.

The way to avoid dependency is to keep some simple rules, like those of environmental clubs that insist that hikers in the bush leave a minimum of physical traces of their passing presence. By traveling light and having an agenda of learning and sharing on a level of equality, short-term missions will avoid rushing in to help before understanding a situation. The goal is to create no dependency by keeping an eye on the future of the ministry in that place. Reese (2002) concludes his article with four simple rules to avoid dependency:

1. Do nothing for others that they can do for themselves. This eliminates most building projects, because most cultures have been building suitable structures with local materials for countless generations. The only way to justify a building project is if it fits into a long-term plan and can be done under the leadership of local people.

2. Let the local people determine your project. Assuming that there are responsible and mature local Christians, becoming their servant will be the most important exercise a short-term missionary could have.

3. Undertake no project that is not sustainable by local people. This eliminates most medical short-term missions. Whereas local people may be grateful for free medical care, there will always be some who fail to receive treatment or whose chronic illnesses will not be helped by short-term engagements. How much better would it be if western Christians actually improved health care year round by training local people in their art? In other words, a better short-term project would be to empower the local people to deal with their own medical or dental problems.

4. Don't create expectations that will burden future short-term missions in that place. By keeping an eye on the future, it will be easier to refuse to create dependency despite the temptations to do so. Most problems of poverty and disease are long-standing and have no simple solutions, so it is better to do the little that the short-term mission can do without making promises about what will be accomplished. Giving away lots of free materials will not only create dependency but may also set a precedent that future groups will find hard to follow. Charging small fees for services, for example, can actually add dignity to the transaction and make the project more sustainable.

Five ways to create an unhealthy dependency:

Looking at the situation from the opposite perspective, here are five strategies to avoid because they inevitably create a dependency.

1. Make an alliance with a Lone Ranger. "If you're not working with a ministry that has a local board of directors or the equivalent, there's a chance you've been found by a fortune hunter."

2. Send money directly to individuals, especially with no accountability and whom you barely know.

3. Finance pastors and local churches. "It can cause pastors to become preoccupied with raising foreign funds from abroad, and fail to be creative in maximizing local resources. Foreign funding of some pastors and not others creates jealousies, and frees them from accountability to the local Christian community." According to Rickett this is the highest risk of creating an unhealthy dependency.

4. Give resources based only on need. "Needs alone are insatiable." Giving based solely on need creates a pipeline of supply that in turn raises the expectation of future

need satisfaction. Money is one form of power, and in international partnerships it has proven to be the most problematic. Rickett wrote, "Unhealthy dependency thrives on the imbalance of power."

5. Hiring local Christians to run Western programs. Hiring local Christians is not a partnership; it is employment. Whenever a Western agency hires local people, at any level, they assume all the responsibilities of an employer: fair and competitive wages, medical insurance, retirement benefits (in Argentina this is 52% of monthly wage paid to the government monthly) direct management of performance, vacation pay and extra-month's salary put in escrow, and compliance with all local labor laws. Law suits are common when there is the inevitable non-compliance, often through the ignorance of local labor laws (Rickett, 2003). I knew a missionary who departed from Argentina in the mid-1980s with nineteen law suits against him for failure to comply with all the labor laws. He was attempting a "tentmaking" ministry with three businesses that he attempted to manage with an American business philosophy, but this is another chapter.

Beginning with just a few such simple steps may chance short-term missions from being a well-meaning but harmful exercise to one that contributes to world mission in a positive way. It may be helpful to ask the nationals how they would respond to swarms of short-term volunteers from other nations who came to do good in their neighborhood, and then apply the Golden Rule. Certainly we would appreciate those who treated us and our culture with dignity and respect (Reese, 2007).

Four Perspectives for Using Money in Missions

Financial resources have great potential, but it is very difficult for both the giver and the recipient to resist the temptations of being the corruptor (or manipulator) and the corrupted (who likewise learns the art of manipulation for selfish ends). The following section presents four models of how different ministry philosophies have dealt with this issue.

1. Missionary support model
2. Indigenous model
3. Partnership model
4. Partnership/Indigenous model (Van Rheenen, 2003)

1. Missionary Support Model

A missionary argued that there is no difference between a missionary raising the funds and hiring a national worker to be his associate pastor in the US or overseas. It is common practice to offer a pastor in the US a better salary to lure him from a present ministry to a more lucrative ministry with greater possibility of influence and personal security. Of course whoever pays the bills, pulls the strings. This approach seeks to recruit the best leadership for any ministry. When this philosophy is carried overseas rarely does it work well.

Such programs are varied and wide-ranging. Some claim to be "revolutionizing" world missions through their approach of having western Christians sponsor national missions, churches, evangelists, missionaries and pastors. Claiming to be more efficient and culturally adaptable, such groups appeal to the western desire to be cost and labor

effective by claiming that such an approach provides more "bang for the buck." Or alternately, "they bemoan the fact that these poor servants of God have to labour so hard to meet the needs of their families that they have no time to spread the gospel (to which I respond, "Paul didn't seem to have that problem" (Penner, 2007).

Wayne Allen in his 1998 article in the Evangelical Missions Quarterly "When the Mission Pays the Pastor" demonstrated conclusively how churches in Indonesia that numerically through the use of culturally appropriate methods, led and financed by local believers and open to allowing God to direct them. Their growth, however, plateaued or halted when westerners began to subsidize national church workers. Why did the initiation of subsidy coincide with the cessation of growth? Interviews that Allen conducted with village leaders and personal observations suggest the following possible causes:

"First, a loss of lay involvement. When the subsidy began there was less and less reliance on lay leadership and a trend toward dependence on the missionary or "professional" pastor. The lay leadership increasingly came to feel that the work of the church was the responsibility of the paid pastors.

Second, loss of focus. Those receiving the support began to "concentrate more on pleasing the missionary, who paid their salaries than on meeting the needs of their churches. Further, the paid workers lost the vision for evangelism. They increasingly gave their attention to ministering to the needs of the congregation, neglecting to visit the neighboring villages to preach the gospel." Ultimately the paid workers became increasingly aware of how little they were being paid, especially when they discovered how the missionary was claiming the results of the hired worker as his own. This resulted in increased focus on how to increase their level of remuneration, and less attention on the work of the ministry.

Third, loss of devotion. When the churches realized that the missionary was paying the salary of the pastor, paying for the building, etc., they lost their sense of ownership of the ministry. They increasingly came to see the pastor as the missionary's hired worker. They felt "no obligation to give toward the pastor's support. When the pastor saw that the congregation was not concerned with providing for his support and well-being, he devoted himself even more to pleasing the missionary who paid his salary. The pastor also increased his efforts to persuade the missionary to increase his salary" (Penner, 2007)

The national leaders learn how to network with various North American partners (often unbeknown to each other) both within and outside of the organization to which they receive their primary support to secure a steady flow of additional funds. Thanks to this foreign money, he drives a car and lives in a house at a significantly higher level than the vast majority of the people in his church. Most of his personal income, along with a major portion of the salaries of his co-workers serving with him in ministry in this country, does not come from the local network of his denominational churches. Rather it comes from sources outside the country. When funds are needed for a building or a new ministry initiative, this leader tends to go to his foreign network to seek the needed funding (Fetherlin, 2005).

Internationally it is very expensive to form and keep a class of professional, well qualified, full-time leaders in the church as is customary in America. "When these leaders have socio-economic needs and expectations above those of the average church member,

it becomes virtually impossible for a medium sized church to afford such a minister. Such churches simply cannot afford an old- style ministry. If the "mother church" regards these academic standards as absolutely necessary, it will have to foot the bill!" (Kritzinger, 1996, p. 15).

However, this "benefit" comes with a price to the national. Not only is it damaging to the motivation of an individual, but it is worse to the recipient of the support. "To receive payment from someone in many cultures is not to be viewed as a partner, but as an employee or a client. To be supported by outside (and especially Western) finances is to raise a cloak of suspicion upon the recipient's motivation for serving (or even being a Christian), and his loyalty to the country." The recipient is no longer viewed as "one of us" but "one of them!" This sometimes results in increased persecution or rejection of the gospel, although not necessarily because of Christ but because the "gospel has become wrapped up in dollar bills" (Penner, 2007).

Often local church leaders were converted and discipled by missionaries and now receive their salary from outside support. They have concluded that their people are too poor to support their own churches - and especially their own development projects - so they might as well let the situation continue. Unfortunately, such churches are unlikely to learn the joy of sending out their own missionaries. Some of them feel they cannot support their own pastors, let alone help to plant new churches beyond their borders (Schwartz, 2000, p. 1).

Furthermore, "jealousies between those who do and do not receive support erode Christian community. Many church leaders go through intense **faith dilemmas** when their support is terminated and frequently jump to another religious group or entirely lose their faith" (Van Rheenen, 2003).

Penner gives four suggestions for dealing with personal support in the ministry:
1) Consider other ways that you can assist God's work.
2) Encourage the organization that you are supporting this worker through to change their practices. A more biblical and sustainable approach would be to assist members of local churches with self-generating loans, job training, and stewardship teaching so that the church can become more financially stable, enabling them to support their own workers.
3) Encourage others to not get involved in such programs and to discontinue if they are. There is big money being made through such sponsorship programs. In 2004, the four largest groups in the world who focus on sponsoring national workers distributed over $53,000,000 USD worldwide. This does not include the amount that they kept for administration. That is a lot of money. Many groups have found that sponsoring national workers is a great way to increase donations. I suspect that until such groups realize that it is no longer profitable to engage in dependency creating programs, they will not change their ways.
4) Get behind ministries who are working at creating sustainable ministries for those who, when they are persecuted, are persecuted for Christ's sake and not because of their financial links with westerners (Penner, 2007).

The personal support model is perhaps the easiest model for the western church to engage in its global program. All they have to do is to write a check, post periodic newsletters somewhere visible and, perhaps, make a visit to the field. However, during such visits the supporters tend to get a glamorized perspective of the work with little of the reality or

understanding of what is actually going on between workers and in the community. If this has been the policy of a church it is recommended that they transition to a partnership model in order to keep the accountability factor in the hands of other local Christians of integrity.

2. Indigenous Model

In the 60's and 70's the *indigenous philosophy* made a major difference in the way missionary work was done. Hundreds of foreign supported institutions and ministries were "turned over" to national churches and organizations, many, of which unfortunately, did not survive and innumerable misunderstandings and resentments broke long-standing relationships between missionaries and national associations. Accusations of hording, selfishness, prejudice, discrimination and corruption were leveled at expatriate missionaries.

"In many cases missionaries hold to perspectives of self-support while national leaders fell that these perspectives are rooted in paternalism and prejudice... The issues become so emotional and personal that effective communication is impossible" (Van Rheenen, 2003). As a bitter result, many independent national associations were formed. Great wisdom is required for how finances are utilized internationally. It is much harder to *indigenize* a work than to begin the work following the indigenous model.

Robertson McQuilkin, former president of Columbia International University and executive director of the Evangelical Missiological Society, quoted Bishop Zablon Nthamburi of the Methodist Church of Kenya, when he said, "The African Church will not grow into maturity if it continues to be fed by Western partners. It will ever remain an infant who has not learned to walk on his or her own feet" (McQuilkin, 1999, p. 58).

Although Bob Finley, chairman of the Christian Aid Mission, Charlottesville, VA, in his article, "Send Dollars and Sense: Why giving is often better than going," basically agrees with the ultimate goal of an indigenous church. He declared that "churches, by their very nature should be self-supporting" and that "the most effective indigenous mission organizations are those independent of foreign control and not affiliated with foreign denominations or missions organizations" (Finley, 1999, pp. 73-75). However, he then declared that "providing financial support to indigenous ministries is effective if a clear distinction is made between directly supporting individual workers … and … supporting such workers … and … supporting such workers indirectly through indigenous mission boards that give oversight to the handling of funds" (Finley, 1999, p. 74).

Consider the rapid growth of a church in Ethiopia from 1938 to 1943. During this five-year period, membership increased from 100 to 10,000 believers with no missionaries and no outside funding present. The church in China increased from one million to perhaps as many as fifty million believers following 1951 when all missionaries and outside funding were removed (Schwartz, 2000, p. 2).

However, in the indigenous model the missionary strategy is to never involve personal finances, rather only operate on the resources within the Christian community, thus making the ministry self-supporting from the beginning, never letting them taste of the benefits of foreign money, yet never missing it.

Scaffold principle doesn't work

Sometimes missionaries and agencies with great resources begin supporting national pastors, especially in poorer sections of the world, causing inevitable dependency, which hinders maturity. However, this initial support is considered a "scaffold" around a building in construction. Upon completion of the building project the scaffold (foreign support) is removed and the building remains. This metaphor has a number of flaws, though often used to justify foreign involvement. The scaffold never is the building, nor supports or stabilizes the building. It is only a devise for the worker to reach different parts of the building as it grows. When the metaphor is applied to foreign support it fails, because the scaffold is the building itself! When removed, there is nothing left!

Once foreign support is begun or experienced it is very difficult to transition to local support. Van Rheenen states it this way, "Once supported by outsiders, always supported by outsiders."

Indigenous policy is a challenge

At first the work will go slower and require much more person to person involvement with less emphasis on the big rally or congregational meetings, rather more on evangelistic Bible studies or house-churches. In rural areas the churches will develop around families or extended families.

Pastors will not be trained previous to or for the ministry, but rather will be discipled, trained and mentored while in the ministry. Not only is there no dependence on the missionary for economic resources, there is little dependence on him for leadership, if done wisely. The only dependence on the expatriate is for training specifically applied to a given situation. The missionary is always in the background equipping leaders in the making as they lead their people.

Only as these small house groups multiply and require a national leader to continue to train and encourage them will a "full-time" position become necessary. This becomes a decision of the different groups of believers, not a foreign system or an institution imposed on these young believers.

This is usually not an imposing presence for a number of years since it is dependent on the slow building process of national leaders. The more the expatriate needs to justify his ministry with numbers and a show of followers, the higher the temptation to "buy it" with foreign investment. Ironically, the more invested, the less effective this model becomes

3. Partnership Model

The partnership model recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of the first two models, yet recognizes that there are certain circumstances where foreign resources can be utilized to empower mission projects without creating dependency.

The missionary growth in the West is presently something over three percent per year. However, in non-Western countries that same growth rate figure is over 13 percent!

... Non-Western missionary workers now account for as much as 80 percent of all personnel in the various Strategic Partnerships that are operational (Bush, 1999, p. 2).

The greatest obstacle to partnership is that the churches in the West have too much of the money. Though money is only one of many shared elements in a partnership, it wields a disproportionate power, primarily because it is universally seen as the solution to all problems.

The New Testament church grew and multiplied, taught and suffered with little reference to trained leadership, budgets and buildings. Lutz contends that money tends to cloud the issue of equality, since "it too frequently becomes the dominant factor in a partnership."

A mission leader in the West complained, "Since we control almost all the money, they [two-thirds world churches and agencies] almost push us into positions of power because we have it."

On the other hand, a national development leader expressed the quandary of two-thirds world organizations. "If a man has his hand in another man's pocket, he has to move when the other man moves" Lutz, 1990).

When wisely coordinated these international bodies of resources are drawn together into strategic evangelism/church planting partnerships. Anglicans, Southern Baptists, and Presbyterians; YWAMers and Campus Crusaders; church planters, Bible Translators and agricultural developers are intentionally working together to achieve Kingdom objectives.

Definition

Lutz gives this definition of Partnership: An association of two or more autonomous bodies who have formed a trusting relationship and fulfill agreed upon expectations by sharing complementary strengths and resources, to reach their mutual goal (Lutz, 1990).

Collaboration and partnership have been identified as one of the main reasons for the tremendous success that is evident in the initial efforts to reach the great unreached peoples of the world for Christ.

> Mongolia is a case in point. In 1989 there were but a handful of national believers in the country and no church. Just 10 short years later there are now thousands of believers and over 50 Bible-believing churches! Most Mongolian church leaders give much of the credit to the effective witness by expatriate missionaries and emerging national leaders who have been working together in partnership. The breakthrough in Mongolia is not unique. Algeria, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and other regions are experiencing the powerful witness and blessing that comes when God's people work together (O'Connell, 1999, p. 2).

At great personal sacrifice and cost to their ministry, leaders agree to spend up to six or eight weeks every few years in North America, England or Australia representing their own ministries as well as the US organization. They see for themselves what kind of information churches are asking for, and the questions they want answered.

They also spend time at the mission headquarters and are made to feel special by the service of the mission staff. "They understand for the first time what is involved in keeping up mailing lists, sending out receipts, answering phone queries, and preparing

publications. They appreciate having partners who are putting out great effort to reach our mutual goal—the building of the Church around the world" (Lutz, 1990).

Partnerships are not without difficulties

Partnerships are newly planted churches where the people are actively seeking to attach themselves to individuals, churches or mission agencies willing to support them with foreign funds. This is the case in many parts of the former Soviet Union where western Christians are finding small groups of believers and adopting them as their "partners in the Gospel". In some cases, the outsiders visit for as little as two weeks and leave behind a church which they have "planted". That church may have a pastor dependent on salary from the outsiders, and the building in which they will eventually meet could well be provided through the good intentions of their new-found friends from England or North America.

When this happens, the dependency syndrome is developed within a very short period of time. The westerners who create this kind of dependent church planting have probably never heard about indigenous principles of self-support. Sadly, some do not want to hear about such things because it would spoil the good time they are having planting dependent churches.

Dominance encourages dependency-in children and in ministries. In Africa a missionary put up a church building for a growing congregation. A few years later the mission superintendent visited the church and noticed that the roof was leaking badly. He didn't say anything, assuming that the elders were making plans to fix it. A year later he returned again, to find the roof in even worse state of disrepair. The missionary asked the church leaders, "Why don't you fix the roof?"

The rather shocking reply was, "You built it, you fix it."

Some evangelicals would like to implement a Marshall Plan for Christ in response to the global economic inequities; short-term mission is one way they can take action directly. They form partnerships with under-funded ministries in the developing countries that they visit. Eager to solve global problems with American money and technology, they plunge in with solutions before they understand the local situations and forge financial relationships with people they scarcely know. The stage is set for creating massive dependency in the developing world .

Fetherlin quotes Alex Araujo of Interdev, an interdenominational agency focusing on creating healthy partnerships between North American and overseas church partners. These are some questions he asks to keep it sound:

- "Are local believers being prevented from learning to give sacrificially?
  A healthy indigenous church is able to exist on local resources. It is unhealthy when believers fail to give consistently to sustain the ministry of their local church because they are counting on outsiders to provide funds.
- Is the ministry failing to increase its income level from local/national sources?
  A healthy indigenous ministry will be able to raise at least a significant amount of funds in country. It is unhealthy when an indigenous ministry organization receives inadequate in-country support because national believers assume foreign groups are funding it.
- Is the ministry losing local credibility because of foreign funding?

It is unhealthy when locals (government, general public, or even other Christians) distrust an indigenous entity because it is perceived as controlled by outside funders.

- Is the ministry's goal-setting and decision-making unduly influenced by foreign funding sources?
  A healthy indigenous ministry knows what its country needs and what should be its goals and objectives. It is unhealthy when a ministry allows foreign donors to shape their goals and objectives in order to preserve the financial help.
- Is foreign funding stunting the development of indigenous para-church structures?
  A healthy national church is one that is able to develop its own para-church organizations to meet specific ministry needs. It is unhealthy when they fail to do so because they have become accustomed to having outside para-churches meeting local needs.
- Is the foreign funding agency assuming moral responsibility for personal care of workers, such as their medical and retirement needs?
  A healthy church looks after the needs of its own people. It is unhealthy when the indigenous church leaves it up to foreign sources to provide health and retirement care for its members and workers.
- Does the ministry leader have exaggerated power and authority because he has access to foreign funds?
  A healthy ministry's leaders carry no more power and authority than is appropriate to their role and responsibilities in the local context. It is unhealthy when a ministry leader wields too much power and influence because he gets lots of foreign funds.
- Is worker support level set by outside funding sources rather than by the worker's peers?
  A healthy indigenous ministry sets the support levels of its personnel in accordance with local standards and possibilities. It is unhealthy when outside donors set higher salaries than is appropriate by local standards" (Fetherlin, 2005).

Penner warns the Partnership Movement to always beware of the insipid evil of dependency, "I do not believe that persecution is the greatest threat to the continuing spread of the gospel. I am much more concerned about something that, at first glace, seems benign and even helpful but which I contend is far more insidious. I am referring to the dependency creating practices that ministries are increasingly promoting in the name of "partnership" .

Fetherlin describes the following steps to be taken in the development of a partnership agreement:

  * At the inception, it is imperative that the district leadership, field directors, and regional directors be involved in the communication and development of the partnership.
  * The partnership must be interdependent! Both partners must benefit.
  * It must recognize that every field/missionary team has a limited capacity to facilitate partnerships.
  * Prior to the development of the partnership, a vision trip to the partnering field or project is a must! To ensure that the partnership is successful, we suggest that the pastor of the North American church, along with key leadership, be a part of the

vision team. This is where the church/district connects with its overseas partner, sees the ministry, and discusses the vision in detail.

* All partnerships must include a *Partnership Agreement* or a *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU). This agreement should document all of the items agreed upon during the vision trip or in follow-up communications. What did the church/district agree to? What did the field agree to? Be detailed and specific (e.g., if you agreed to send short-term mission teams, when are they going? How many people will be on the teams? What will the teams be doing? Construction, evangelism, prayer walks, etc?)

How to partner:

* Fetherlin suggests that during the partnership period, additional vision trips take place to assure that the partnership is working and that both parties are benefiting.

* The Partnership Agreement or MOU should include a time period. We suggest that the period be no longer than three years; however a renewal clause should be included in the agreement to allow the partnership to continue as long as both parties agree. We also suggest that the Partnership Agreement (MOU) be signed by the pastor of the North American church and the field director (Fetherlin, 2005).

In addition, a specific exit strategy should be understood and agreed upon before the partnership is initiated. Great effort must be taken to avoid misunderstandings, as well as to fulfill promises.

4. Partnership/Indigenous Model

There is also a combination of the last two models: indigenous and partnership models. In the beginning stages of the partnership, the missionaries will establish the beachhead by planting the first churches, nurturing the church to a functioning level of maturity and disciple-train-mentor national leaders.

If done wisely in the early years, the work is indigenous and self-supporting in the formative stage of the development. Believers come to Christ without clouding their decision with possible personal benefits. At this stage a partnership is introduced to seek to develop "structures of continuity to nurture existing fellowships and train evangelists to enable this to become a missions-sending movement. In other words, national and missionary leaders collaborate with sending churches and agencies to develop these structures of continuity that will enable the national church to not only stand on its own but cause the movement to expand" (Van Rheenen, 2003).

Final distinctions and guidelines

There is a distinction that should be understood between rural and urban ministries. In the rural areas there is a greater danger of dependency so the indigenous or indigenous partnership models should be implemented. In the cosmopolitan urban areas there is less danger of dependency and the partnership model can empower without creating dependency syndrome and the need for external or foreign control.

Rickett gives seven principles that help Westerners manage dependency.

1. Goals and methods of helping are not defined unilaterally. Do not develop a plan then invite non-Westerners to join in at a later stage.

2. Do not base the relationship on a one-way flow of resources. "Complementarity, not assistance, lies at the heart of effective partnerships....A partnership moves beyond assistance to complementarity when each partner makes different but crucial contributions to a common goal."

3. Do not allow money to become the most highly valued resource. We tend to put a premium on our own resources rather than on the resources of our non-Western counterparts. In most cases, non-Western partners may rely on Western partners for financial and technological resources, but Western partners are dependent on the human resources, linguistic skills, cultural insight, and relevant lifestyle of their non-Western partners. ... If money becomes the driving force, the golden rule takes hold -- the one with the gold rules.

4. Do not fund the entire cost of the project without clear justification. "In the face of enormous economic inequities, there is inherent pressure on Western partners to be the "sugar daddy" or more "needy" partners.

5. Do not interfere in the administration of the partner's organization. It's okay to give advice when asked or to admonish a partner when a serious misconduct occurs.

6. Do not do for others what they can better do for themselves. People, like organizations, become strong and effective only when they make decisions, initiate action and solve problems. This may lower the level of accomplishment short-term, but will ensure a long-term progress.

7. Do not rely on a "one-size-fits-all" policy, especially with policies. For example, one agency gives only 10% of the total need in any project. This may work well in some circumstances and be detrimental in another.

The key principle today is the interdependency or mutual dependency in the task of world evangelism (Rickett, 2003). The task is simply too big for any one country to have the majority of the leadership, and it is growing exponentially. It will take a united effort of the entire Church to accomplish the task. Decisions about money, authority and mission must learn from past errors, glean the wisdom of the sages, gain the trust and confidence of all parties, and commit to one task and then another until the last people group and the masses of unevangelized are within earshot of the gospel message. If we understand the evils of dependency and paternalism, then we can progress in harmony, honoring the reputation of our Lord.

Appendix A

Thesis written on the subject of dependency:

Rowell, John, "To Give or not to Give: Dollars, Dependency, and Doing the Right Thing in Twenty-First Century Missions" Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Lawal, Julius Baamidele, "Concomitants of economic dependency: A comparative study of institutional pastoral education in Nigeria," Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Houghton, Graham, "The development of the Protestant Missionary Church in Madras 1870-1920: the impoverishment of dependency," University of California, Los Angeles.

Fox, Frampton F., "Money as water: a patron-client approach to mission dependency in India," Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Appendix B

Xenos Christian Fellowship/World Team Partnering Agreement

PARTNERSHIP PURPOSE STATEMENT:

The Xenos Christian Fellowship (XCF)/World Team (WT) partnership exists to jointly send and support a church-planting (CP) team(s) to selected, unreached urban centers or people groups so that Christ builds multiplying churches among them.

The partnership will cooperate in selecting, assessing, training, supporting, deploying, coaching and managing the CP team(s).

PARTNERSHIP ROLES:

ISSUES	XENOS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP	WORLD TEAM
POLICY	✶ Accepts and approves WT's policies as governing guidelines for CP activity.	✶ Provides policy to govern the activities of its CP team.
CHOICE OF FIELD	✶ May initiate choice of field. ✶ Approves the final selection.	✶ May initiate choice of field. ✶ Approves the final choice according to policy governing new CP field selection.

SELECTING TEAM MEMBERS	�֎ Selects CP candidates for teams according to WT Policy 3.2 *Church Planters Profile.* ✖ Presents CP candidates to WT for processing and acceptance. ✖ Selects isolated XCF CP's who may be candidates for ministry of pre-existing WT Church-planting teams. ✖ Assists WT with assessment process by providing up to two leaders from XCF to serve as assessors at the WT Assessment Center.	✖ Provides XCF with the Profile of a church planter. ✖ Channels CP's from other sources to XCF for possible integration into the XCF team. ✖ Processes, accepts, and appoints CP's. ✖ Provides XCF with appropriate data from screening process to facilitate further training of CP candidate. ✖ Assigns isolated XCF CP's to existing WT Cping teams where that is desirable.
SELECTING TEAM LEADER	✖ Provides insight and recommends an individual to WT. ✖ Approves appointed leaders.	✖ Appoints team leader in consultation with XCF.
TRAINING	✖ Continues personal development for CP appointee according to the needs revealed in WT's assessment process. ✖ Conducts pre-field training of appointee in consultation with WT. ✖ Provides meaningful CP internship experience as needed. ✖ In consultation with WT, conducts ongoing training of CP while on US assignment. ✖ Uses XCF/WT's profile of CP to set standards for training goals.	✖ Provides training in church planting through the WT Institute (Win). (All WT church planters are required to attend Win periodically.) ✖ Provide church-planting training modules to XCF as desired by church leadership. ✖ Provide the opportunity for two leaders from XCF as desired by church leadership.
COACHING THE TEAM	✖ Supervises CP during pre-field and U. S. Assignment. ✖ Participates with WT in caring for the spiritual and emotional needs of the CP while on field assignment. ✖ Delegates supervision of CP's field	✖ Supervises CP on field assignment. ✖ Delegates supervision of CP's U. S. Assignment activities to XCF. ✖ Is accountable to XCF for responsible oversight of CP while on field assignment. ✖ Provides an annual evaluation of CP to XCF.

	activities to WT. ✳ Reviews and approves annual evaluation of CP.	
FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	✳ Approves annual plans and budget of CP team. ✳ Reviews annual reports on CP team field activity. ✳ Assists CP in procurement of personal and ministry support as established by WT. ✳ Sends support funds to WT for management.	✳ Establishes annual plans and budgets with team. ✳ Accepts and approves annual field activity reports. ✳ Manages all funds received for CP team personal needs and ministry: salary, medical, retirement, reimbursement of ministry vouchers, etc. ✳ Provides annual audit statement of WT financial activity upon request.
BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIP	✳ XCF and WT will each appoint a person as liaison to facilitate communication. The liaison person from XCF and WT will: 1. Meet at least annually; 2. Review team progress toward annual objectives; 3. Address any problems in the XCF/WT relationship and make recommendations to the appropriate entity; 4. Copy each other on pertinent correspondence with the team; 5. Invite appropriate counterpart to accompany them on visits to the field.	
DECISION MAKING	✳ Although WT is responsible for supervision of the CP team's field activities, XCF is encouraged and expected to give input to WT through the project coordinator with regards to the following: 1. Implementation of the philosophy of ministry; 2. Financial management on the field; 3. Emotional, physical, and spiritual care of the CP; 4. Application of biblical values in cultural context; 5. Expansion and extension of field ministries; 6. Redeployment of XCF personnel to new target areas. ✳ Although XCF is responsible for supervision of the CP team's activities while on U.	

	project coordinator with regards to the following: 1. Continued training and education of the CP; 2. The nature of care required before CP may return to the field; 3. The amount of additional funding needed before the CP can return to the field.
CONFLICT **RESOLUTION**	When disagreements or misunderstanding arise between XCF and WT, the following principles will be followed: 1. The liaisons will discuss the matter and seek resolution; 2. The liaisons will report their solution to the field when parties on the field are involved, restricting those informed to responsible parties only; 3. In the event that a solution is not reached among the liaisons, a Board of Arbitration will be formed consisting of two leaders from XCF and two members from WT USA's Executive Committee or Board to seek resolution of the conflict; 4. In case of dissolution of the Partnership between XCF and WT, all residual account balances and items contributed by XCF will be returned to XCF.
ROLE OF **LIAISON** **PERSON**	1. Insure flow of pertinent information to involved parties; 2. Negotiate all terms concerning the Partnership; 3. Act as or procure a training consultant as needed by team and/or church; 4. Develop joint XCF/WT CP profile; 5. Channel annual plans, budgets, reports, and CP evaluations to the appropriate parties; 6. Schedule an annual meeting with his counterpart; 7. Monitor communications between XCF and WT; 8. Recommend any actions that need to be taken to the entities involved; 9. Notify the leadership of XCF/WT in the event of potential conflict and initiate formation of a Board of Arbitration in case of unresolved conflict.

Signed on behalf of the Elders of

XENOS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

_____

_____

(signature)

Signed on behalf of the Board of

Directors of WORLD TEAM USA, Inc.

_____

_____

(signature)

Date _____   Date _____

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