



Checklists for Building Strategic Relationships

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Values Checklist

Beliefs and Assumptions About Partnership

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Do we believe that the gospel—the good news that in Jesus, God has reconciled us to himself—is both the ground and the goal of Christian fellowship?				
Are we willing to put the fellowship of the gospel at the center of relationships with Christians abroad?				
Do we believe that partnership is compelled by a common purpose?				
Are we willing to forge a shared vision?				
Do we believe that partnership is held together by a mutually supportive and respectful relationship?				
Are we willing to invest in the relationship as well as the work?				
Do we believe that effective partnership produces tangible outcomes?				
Are we willing to track progress and evaluate results?				
Do we believe that we need mission partners to help us develop as God's kingdom people?				
Are we willing to learn and grow with our partners in obedience to God?				

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Readiness Checklist

Ten Things to Consider Before Forming a Partnership

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Do we have a clear understanding of the prospective partner's ministry?				
Does the prospective partner have a track record of fruitful ministry?				
Is the prospective partner autonomous and capable of standing on its own?				
Are we compatible in doctrinal beliefs and ministry priorities?				
Can we envision goals that would satisfy important values on both sides of the partnership?				
Do we have a clear sense of what each partner would bring to the relationship?				
Do we feel that the conditions are right for partnership?				
Are key personnel in each ministry prepared to champion the partnership?				
Can we define clear mutual expectations about how we will work together?				
Can we put adequate systems in place to measure and track progress?				

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Dependency Checklist

Eight Ways to Prevent Unhealthy Dependency

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Do we have a clear position on dependency?				
Have we discussed the risks of dependency with our partner?				
Can we spot the signs of unhealthy dependency?				
Are the lines blurred between who is the beneficiary and who is the benefactor?				
Does our partner make the most of local resources?				
Is dependency taken into account in major funding decisions?				
Is the relationship reciprocal?				
Does each partner make different but complementary contributions?				

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Assessment Checklist A: Partner's Ministry

Ten Signs of Effective Resource Sharing

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Does the outside agency set up programs only after consulting with the local Christian community?				
Does the outsider inquire of local Christian leaders about what needs to be done?				
Is the outsider guarded about using strategies that depend on expensive technology that is otherwise beyond the capacity of local ministries?				
Is the outsider cautious about the possible negative effects of his relative affluence on the communication of the gospel?				
Does the outsider avoid exploiting the local situation to promote his own ministry?				
Does the outsider launch funding programs only after establishing the trustworthiness of a local ministry to receive and handle outside funds?				
Is the outsider keenly aware that outside support can potentially destroy the selfhood of the recipients?				
Is the outsider aware of how foreign support may dampen reliance on local funding?				
Does the outsider avoid recruiting local Christians and paying them salaries far above local standards?				
Does the outsider guard against taking on so many projects that he cannot provide satisfactory attention and accountability to this one?				

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Assessment Checklist B: Your Ministry

Ten Signs of Effective Resource Sharing

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Are local Christian leaders generally in favor of your financial relationship with the partner ministry?				
Does the outside support enhance the recipient ministry's capacity to make its own decisions and chart its own course?				
Does the outside support in no way limit the recipient's ability to collaborate with other local Christian communities?				
Does the outside support enhance the recipient ministry's sense of selfhood and dignity as co-laborers in the work of the gospel?				
Does the recipient ministry reflect dependence upon God, and not money, as the source of ministry success?				
Is the proportion of outside support below the level of support from within the region?				
Does the recipient ministry avoid partiality in its stewardship of outside support? Does it avoid showing favoritism to ethnic groups, churches, or individuals?				
Does the alliance implied by the outside support in no way alienate local Christians from their community?				
Does the recipient insist on sending money to the overseeing body of a church or mission rather than to an individual?				
Is the program and money for the program from different sources, rather than both from a single outside source?				

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Accountability Checklist

Eight Steps to Manage Accountability

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Do we really know what we mean by accountability?				
Are we convinced that accountability works both ways?				
Do we understand what our partner means by accountability?				
Do we have a joint statement on the purpose of accountability?				
Have we identified the confidence factors crucial to both partners?				
Do we have clear ground rules for managing accountability?				
Are the confidence factors reviewed at least annually?				
Do we walk the talk?				

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Development Checklist

Eleven Qualities that Help Build Capacity

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Do we separate our contributions from our need to feel good about ourselves?				
Do we understand the needs as our partner sees them?				
Are we familiar with the context in which the needs exist?				
Do we understand the scope of the needs?				
Do we have the capacity to help meet the needs?				
Are we building our partners' capacity to do things themselves?				
Are we enabling our partners to maximize their own resources?				
Do our partners chart their own course and make their own decisions?				
Are the partners well respected within the wider Christian community?				
Have we reviewed and justified the level of our financial contribution?				
Have we taken time with our partners to listen to God?				

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Prevention Checklist

Fourteen Ways to Avoid Common Pitfalls

	Current Status			Action (When and By Whom)
	Have it	Don't Have It	Needs Work	
Are our theological beliefs and ministry priorities adequately compatible?				
Do we have a clear picture of what the partnership can achieve?				
Do we know what each partner must pay in terms of costs and changes to achieve the benefits of partnership?				
Do we have the resources and skills to keep our promises?				
Do we have meaningful goals for the partnership?				
Do we have clearly defined roles and responsibilities?				
Have we negotiated fundraising policies and procedures?				
Do we have a communications plan for the partnership?				
Do we have a system in place to measure progress?				
Do we have a working knowledge of our partner's culture and way of doing things?				
Do we understand how our cultural tendencies affect the partnership?				
Have we given enough attention to building interpersonal relationships?				
Do we have a way to resolve conflicts and disagreements?				
Do we know what steps to take to modify or end the partnership?				

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About The Author

Daniel Rickett is executive vice president of She Is Safe (www.sheissafe.org).

He is the author of *Making Your Partnership Work* (eBook, 2014) and *Building Strategic Relationships* (2008). Information about Dr. Rickett's teaching and consulting services can be found at www.danielrickett.com.