

# Create a Partnership Covenant or Agreement Together

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*Mission in partnership is a transformational adventure. We do not realize when we initiate a partnership what kind of dynamic will be unleashed on the journey. Something new will be created which neither partner controls, which neither can anticipate or foresee. We step out in faith with a commitment to interact in a state of release and trust, rather than control and subordination. We are not sure where the partnership will lead us, so we feel vulnerable. We leave our safe haven, edge out of our comfort zone, and make a leap of faith. There is no guarantee of what will happen along the way to God's future. A risk. A discipline. An adventure. Heirs of Christ sharing grace.*

*--Sherron George,  
Called as Partners in Christ's Service:  
The Practice of God's Mission*

After you and potential partners have become acquainted through exchanges of letters, information and, perhaps, visits, the next step is to consider creating a partnership agreement or covenant.

It is vital that both partners have equal input into the creation of the agreement. A meaningful covenant is created or co-authored in a process that is based upon dialogue, mutual consideration, and mutual cooperation. The covenant should also include a commitment to a plan for regular evaluation of the partnership.

The purpose of this agreement or covenant is to define clearly your joint intentions and expectations for the partnership; the needs and gifts of

each; the ministries and ministry activities you covenant to undertake together within the partnership; the resources that will be provided by each; and how you will communicate, make decisions and evaluate together how the relationship is going. It should be broad enough to allow room for the Holy Spirit to provide new opportunities during the life of the covenant, but specific enough that expectations are clear on both sides.

An effective covenant includes the elements of:

- a faith statement;
- purposes of the partnership;
- mutual expectations of the partnership, including a plan for regular evaluation of the partnership;
- duration of the agreement;
- a brief outline of preliminary contacts that led to the covenant agreement may also be included, along with some initial activities to be shared; and
- any agreements about the financial component of the relationship.
- concurrence by both parties (signatures of the accountable officer on each side)

The sharing and accounting of financial resources is the area that causes the most difficulties in partnerships. Special care needs to be taken so that sustainability issues are considered and your plans reflect a commitment to the larger priorities of the international partner church or institution as well as the longer-term sustainability of the activities or programs.

