

2-19-2016

Mind The Gap: Navigating the Pitfalls of Cross-Cultural Partnership

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Recommended Citation

Goad, Ashley Purcelle, "Mind The Gap: Navigating the Pitfalls of Cross-Cultural Partnership" (2016). *Doctor of Ministry*. Paper 129.
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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

MIND THE GAP:
NAVIGATING THE PITFALLS OF CROSS-CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GEORGE FOX EVANGELICAL SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
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PORTLAND, OREGON

FEBRUARY 2016

George Fox Evangelical Seminary
George Fox University
Portland, Oregon

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DMin Dissertation

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

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the Dissertation Committee on February 19, 2016
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Global Perspectives.

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To my Haitian Family,

Bondye beni ou.

*Mind the gap.*¹

¹ “Mind the gap” is an instruction used in the United Kingdom to warn passengers to be careful when leaving the train, as there is a gap between the train and platform. Accessed November 17, 2015. <http://www.usingenglish.com/reference/idioms/mind+the+gap.html>.

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ABSTRACT

Living Waters for the World is an organization that trains hundreds of mission teams to install clean water systems in Haiti and beyond; however, many of these projects lay in disrepair: unused, despite the best of intentions of the American² volunteers. Section One examines current problems of many existing partnerships in Haiti. Americans tend to have a skewed interpretation of what the word “partnership” means or what partnership connotes in a cross-cultural context. This results in an American organization providing a service or product *for* a community, which at first glance, seems positive, but, in fact, results in a lack of empowerment and dependency. Section Two highlights published works on the impact of misinterpreting the concept of transformative partnership in building mission relationships. A comparison is made between these views with this author’s proposed solutions. Section Three outlines the project’s thesis generated by the question, “How can American mission teams learn the foundational characteristics of a mutually beneficial cross-cultural mission relationship with Haitian communities and leaders?” The proposed solution is three-fold: 1. teach biblical *koinonia*; 2. gain understanding of the development, or stages, of relationships; and 3. recognize friendship as an alternative to the word “partnership.” If Americans want to participate in transformative partnerships, we must reform unhealthy one-sided transactional exchanges by investing in relationship building that seeks to place the person above the project. Sections Four through Six contain specifications of the Artifact, a video series and website promoting a new approach to cross-cultural relationships through faithful friendship and interdependent partnership.

² Though the term “American” can refer to inhabitants of North and South America, it will be used throughout this paper to identify United States Americans.

SECTION ONE: CROSS-CULTURAL GAPS

Story

An American mission team, trained to install clean water systems, learned of a community in Haiti lacking a clean water source. The team leader called Father Francois in Les Cayes, and Francois invited them to his community to meet with the leaders. The team set aside an afternoon of their trip to survey the neighborhood. They took measurements, sketched plans, and sat with community leaders while the priest's wife served pikliz³ and plantains. Following a cursory discussion, the Americans presented the Haitians with a covenant, generally outlining the installation of a water system and details of who would perform the installation, maintenance, and oversight.

Six months later, the Americans returned with suitcases full of equipment. Haitian Church leaders curiously observed the American team building the system, yet did not assist due to the language barrier. Five days later, the community enjoyed the first drops of clean water, dedicated the system, and waved farewell to the U.S. team, who departed with boasts of accomplishment, feeling blessed and used so powerfully by God. Two months later, the system broke. The Haitians were not adequately trained in the maintenance of the system, the manuals left behind were in English, and they did not have money to replace the broken parts. The Haitians were embarrassed to tell the Americans, and when the U. S. missions team dropped by a year later, they were disappointed to find an inoperable system.

³ A Haitian dish of spicy cabbage and carrots similar to coleslaw.

Though this is a fictional story, it is a composite of many stories indicative of a major problem in Haiti. American teams visit villages in Haiti knowing clean water is vital to eradicate disease and prolong lives. They see an opportunity to change the lives of individuals, and they fix a problem with their American-derived solution. Regrettably, nearly half of the clean water systems installed by teams representing Living Waters for the World (LWW) in Haiti are currently broken or underutilized.⁴ In most cases, the system operators are solely dependent on money and tools from churches or organizations in the United States, who have often moved on to saving other communities with more water systems or have lost interest in the project altogether. In the opening story, the transaction was complete, with no long-term partnership or solutions in place. Without knowledge or intention, mission teams trained by American organizations have contributed to the dependency syndrome in Haiti.

This problem is not restricted to LWW. Many cross-cultural relationships, including those outside of Haiti, involve an American organization providing a service or product *for* a community, resulting in a lack of empowerment, top-down decision-making, and dependency. While Americans may love tangible, transactional tasks, a project does not constitute a partnership. How can Western missionaries, pastors, and leaders bridge the gap between Western and non-Western worldviews to foster mutually beneficial cross-cultural partnerships?

This section will explore historical and contemporary problems in cross-cultural relationships specifically in Haiti. This discussion will identify gaps in the ideology of partnership, giving critical assessment of the Western mindset, as Americans tend to have

⁴ The LWW Haiti Network Committee gathered this information on a month-long survey assessment trip in October 2013.

a skewed interpretation of what the word “partnership” means in a cross-cultural context. Section Two will examine theories and solutions from popular authors, on-the-ground journalists, and missionaries based on their experiences with cross-cultural partnerships globally and in Haiti specifically. Section Three will focus on the theology of partnerships and the bridge of relationships and community. How will American mission teams learn foundational characteristics of mutually beneficial mission relationships and implement them in Haitian communities? The proposed solution is three-fold: teach biblical *koinonia*; gain an understanding of the development, or stages, of relationships; and recognize friendship and accompaniment as alternatives to the word “partnership.” If Americans want to participate in transformative—not transactional—partnerships, they must invest in relationships and place the person above the project. Sections Four through Six and the Appendices will present the dissertation Artifact and field research interview transcripts.

Brief History of Haiti

From French colonization to the first independent nation of former slaves in Latin America, Haiti has a colorful past, which bleeds into the present day republic. Haiti shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic and comprises the western one-third of the island. The original colonists, the French, used the island as a hub for slave trade among Africa, Europe and the Americas. They deforested the island to prepare fields for cotton and sugar cane, and filled Europe with fine wooden furniture. At its peak, Haiti became the largest exporter of coffee and sugarcane in the world, making

it the richest of all French colonies.⁵ In an unprecedented revolt, the natives and those who had been transported from Africa in the slave trade sought independence; which they won on January 1, 1804.

Once known as the “Pearl of the Antilles,”⁶ Haiti has garnered the title, “Republic of Non-Governmental Organizations.”⁷ Following two centuries of tyrants, massacres, incompetence, and mismanagement, it is now the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, and the individual per capita income hovers around \$250.00 to \$300.00 annually.⁸ It is a struggle for farmers to succeed with agriculture. Very few government services exist; potable water, garbage and sewer collection, postal service, and consistent electrical service are essentially nonexistent. The roads are poorly maintained, taking as long as two hours to travel twelve miles by vehicle. The country’s leadership has been corrupt, with infamous dictators using fear through ton-tons⁹ and voodoo priests to intimidate the public and insure their dependence on the scarcely provided government resources. This was the state of Haiti in 2010. When conditions appeared to be at their worst, a 7.0 magnitude catastrophic earthquake occurred near Port-au-Prince, the

⁵ Raymond Joseph, *For Whom the Dogs Spy: Haiti: From the Duvalier Dictatorships to the Earthquake, Four Presidents, and Beyond* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2014), Loc. 4263.

⁶ Ibid., Loc. 1567.

⁷ There are more Non-Governmental Organizations per capita in Haiti than in any other country in the world, except India. In some developmental circles, this is referred to as “Haitinization.” Paul Farmer, *Haiti: After The Earthquake* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), 99.

⁸ Laurent Dubois, *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2012), 3.

⁹ “Tontons Makouts,” a name given to the Haitian paramilitary force created in 1959 by Francois Duvalier, was a moniker from a bogeyman character in Haitian folktales that carries away naughty children in his *makout* (bag). The group committed systematic violence and human rights abuses to suppress political opposition. Dubois, 312. Philippe Girard, *Haiti: The Tumultuous History – From Pearl of the Caribbean to Broken Nation* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2010), 102.

capital.¹⁰ Hundreds of thousands died in the next days, followed by a cholera epidemic, which resulted in thousands of additional deaths. Exacerbating this horrible situation were humanitarian organizations with unaccounted-for-aid who bypassed structure and policies and formed their own *de facto* kingdoms. Haiti has been decimated by hopelessness, helplessness, and abject poverty.

What is the Problem?

To know Haiti is to understand her history,¹¹ yet the question remains: Why do cross-cultural partnerships have a significant risk of failure in Haiti? Gaps in cross-cultural partnerships are plentiful, but the answer may be simple: these cross-cultural endeavors were not partnerships in the first place. A better description would be “one-sided dependencies” or “transactional projects”. As a result, the subsequently described gaps between Americans and Haitians have grown wider and wider. Many Americans suffer from a lack of cultural intelligence.¹² While they believe they know what they are doing, in the eyes of their Haitian counterparts, the U.S. sending organizations are often clueless. Second, many Americans view the world through unsupported assumptions; and thirdly, they prefer to *speak and do* instead of *listen and be*. Fourth, instead of entering into a relationship with humility and recognition of an opportunity to learn, first-world humanitarians build a fence of superiority. Finally, among the most serious and often dangerous disconnects, Americans and Haitians differ dramatically in their

¹⁰ Joseph, Loc. 4263.

¹¹ Haitian authors have written volumes in an effort to explain Haiti’s history, voodoo religion, and culture. A suggested reading list for Haiti travelers is included in Appendix C.

¹² Though I travel extensively outside of the United States, and have lived briefly in Haiti and Mexico, I view the world through a Western, American lens. My perspective, as an American, is that many Americans do not have a high cultural intelligence. Not only would cultural intelligence expert David Livermore agree with this statement, but the Haitians interviewed for this research would also concur.

understandings of time and money. The following pages will give a broader look at each of the gaps.

Gap One: Lack of Cultural Intelligence

When specifically asked what they wished every American team knew before coming to Haiti, the Living Waters for the World (LWW) Haitian staff answered in unison, “Every American should have at least some knowledge of the Haitian culture and language.”¹³ Originally developed by Christopher P. Earley and Soon Ang, “Cultural intelligence”, also known as “CQ”, is defined as “a person’s capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is, for unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context.”¹⁴ David Livermore, a practical teacher of this concept, describes CQ as, “reaching across the chasm of cultural differences in ways that are loving and respectful.”¹⁵ This may be the largest gap in the majority of cross-cultural mission relationships in Haiti. In reviewing the story above, the American team members failed to acquaint themselves prospectively with Haitian culture and history.¹⁶ The Haitian culture and the American way of life could not be more different. Yet, well-meaning Americans simply do not have an interest in picking up a travel book or conducting an extensive search on the Internet. They tend to prepare for a trip by packing suitcases and shopping

¹³ Ancy Fils-Aime, interview by author, Port Au Prince, Haiti, November 9, 2014.

¹⁴ Christopher P. Earley and Soon Ang, *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions Across Cultures* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 2003), xi.

¹⁵ David Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 17.

¹⁶ Other than a 20-page country guidebook on subjects from transportation to directions for parts suppliers, LWW teams are left to their own initiative to learn about the Haitian culture.

at Wal-Mart, rather than studying the history or culture of their destination. This is not surprising when considering the western individualistic mindset. David Livermore describes Americans this way:

American culture is based on individualist perspective of pursuing one's own interests and rights. People from individualistic cultures are more inclined toward self-reliance and retaining functional, relatively loose bonds with others. Individualists tend to look out mostly for themselves and their closest family members.¹⁷

This may explain the lack of commitment and no strings attached approach to relationships in general, as well as in cross-cultural context. Americans respect work values, such as reliability, humility and commitment, and they promote their superiority, education, and, of course, material success. On the other hand, the Haitian culture emphasizes relationships and people. Haitians live in a collective society.¹⁸ Loyalty is the predominant feature of a collectivist culture, and it overrides societal rules and personal gain. Haitians tend to have strong personal relationships, in which everyone shows responsibility for fellow members of his or her family, church, or village.¹⁹

Ancy Fils-Aime, In-Country Director of LWW Haiti, once said that because he had a job, and his brothers and sisters did not, he was expected not only to take care of his wife and two sons, but also provide for his brothers, sisters, and their wives and

¹⁷ Livermore, 123.

¹⁸ Professor Geert Hofstede defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others." The high side of this cultural dimension, called individualism, can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families. Its opposite, collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. A society's position on this dimension is reflected in whether people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "we." Information cited from <http://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html>. Accessed January 16, 2016.

¹⁹ Ibid., 124.

children. Haitians treasure social values such as love, the call of God, and generosity. They live and work in community with complementary gifts, and everything is shared. Above all, Haitians value relationships. To many Americans, relationship is a means to an end. For example, “building relationships” or “networking” is to help accomplish a particular goal. For Haitians, the *relationship* is the goal. In the story, this was a serious gap between the fictional mission team and the Haitian community leaders.

Language is also a vital component of cultural intelligence. LWW mission teams may spend a week building a water system, but due to the language barrier, training the locals in operational procedures is often haphazard. Americans assume the Haitians will simply jump in and follow the lead, but without proper education and training there is only mimicking. Taking time to better understand Haitian Creole and the Haitian culture could lead to vastly different approaches, such as exploring courses on accounting and small business development, better empowering the Haitian partners to run their new clean water stations. Developing even a rudimentary knowledge of the Haitian Creole language would not only greatly enhance an American’s sensitivity to cultural issues, but would also create a deeper sense of investment in the mission and the partnership by demonstrating a certain level of care, interest, and investment to the local people. This helps build trust, which is critical for successful cross-cultural relations.

When the week comes to an end, a group may simply hand over the training manuals and say, “*Bon voyage.*” The fictional team celebrated with the community, slapped each other on the backs, and went home with the firm belief they had brought about a huge and positive change in the community. However, as Michelle Acker Fatherz claims, “Developing countries do not need short-term heroes; they need long-term

partners.”²⁰ Had the team studied the culture and the people, they would have known Haitians learn by repetitive action and memorization, not by reading a book or merely observing. Had some of the team members been familiar with Haitian Creole, they could have heard and responded to specific questions being asked and thereby gauged the level of understanding of their Haitian partners. When the American team left the manuals and training exercises behind, the Haitians did not have the appropriate training needed to use these materials effectively. The manuals collected dust. When the Haitians did open the materials, they found English text, which was not helpful, as only the most highly educated Haitians can read or even speak English. Increasing cultural intelligence will not make Americans experts in Haitian culture, but it can improve the ability to interact with a barrage of cultural differences and bridge the gap of cross-cultural partnerships.²¹

Gap Two: Unsupported Cultural Assumptions

A lack of cultural understanding results in stereotypes and assumptions. The stereotypes in which Americans label Haitians are astounding: “Haitians are lazy. Haitians are dumb. They don’t know how to work. They don’t have any skills. You can’t teach them anything. They are always looking for a handout. You can’t trust them. They will say ‘yes’ to anything. They see a white man coming and see dollar signs. They don’t speak English, but the first words out of their mouth are ‘Give me one dollar.’”²² The

²⁰ Michelle Acker Fatherz, “Things No One Tells You About Going on Short-Term Mission Trips: A Few Ways to Make Sure Your Mission Trip is Effective,” *Relevant Magazine*, June 2, 2014, accessed November 16, 2015, <http://www.relevantmagazine.com/reject-apathy/things-no-one-tells-you-about-going-short-term-mission-trips>.

²¹ Livermore, 122.

²² American teams speak freely when en route from Haiti to Miami. I have kept a journal on how many times I have overheard these statements on a flight.

average American visiting Haiti does not have favorable impressions of the Haitians, and after only minutes in country, they form snap judgments. Some will, on their first day in the country, begin their sentences with the five words, “You know what Haiti needs...”²³ They are now experts, or so they think. Given Haiti’s massive dependence on foreign aid and international financial institutions, even those who have spent their lives in Haiti studying the historical and economic situation find it extremely difficult to devise long-term patterns of self-sustaining economic growth and food self-sufficiency, much less transform Haiti into a more equitable society.²⁴

Ancy Fils-Aime said he has seen cross-cultural partnerships fail in Haiti when “Americans anticipate what they have to do regarding the partnership without really knowing the people they have to work with. There is a lot of assuming instead of knowing.”²⁵ The history of North American Christian missions demonstrates a tendency to believe “our ways are best.” This paternalistic approach is detrimental to relationships. The “us doing for them” mentality and “I know what you need” attitude prevails, which does not result in a mutually beneficial partnership. In fact, no one benefits; this mindset creates dependency among Haitians and an air of superiority among Americans.

This story told by Greg Allen-Pickett, General Manager of World Mission, is yet another example of unsupported assumptions:

²³ This phrase, “You know what Haiti needs,” is something I have heard on each of my 20+ trips to Haiti. Without fail, it is said early on in the trip before the team has even settled their bags. Though it may be said with good intentions or a good heart, it implies superiority and arrogance.

²⁴ Robert Fatton Jr., “A Circus With Serious Consequences: Haiti’s Fraught Elections,” *World Politics Review*, August 4, 2015, accessed November 16, 2015, <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/16376/a-circus-with-serious-consequences-haiti-s-fraught-elections>.

²⁵ Fils-Aime, interview.

A mission team from the United States visited a community in the mountains of Haiti. They noticed little red outhouses blanketing the mountainside. The kids needed to go to the bathroom, so the leader pulled over and warned them the outhouses would probably be dirty and unappealing. To their surprise, they opened the doors, and the outhouses were immaculate. They contained composting toilets, which had never been operated. The mission team met with community leaders and inquired about the outhouses. The Haitians remembered the United Nations had built the toilets, but never taught anyone what they were for or how to use them.

The team leader later visited the United Nations compound and spoke with one of the lieutenants. “Why did you build outhouses?” he asked.

“Well,” the commander answered, “we had a million dollars and decided to put up toilets.”

“Why didn’t you teach anyone how to use them?” the missionary asked.

Puzzled, the commander looked at the man and said, “Why do we need to teach someone how to use a toilet?”²⁶

Based on very little knowledge, Americans see a glimpse into the lives of Haitians, viewed strictly through first-world Western perspectives and experiences, and they naively believe they know what every Haitian needs. What they see is a snapshot of life, and from this they make assumptions. Though the United Nations (UN) was offering valuable support by installing the composting toilets, they did not truly understand the needs of the village. The project made sense; the village needed sanitation and latrines. The UN had time and money, and building toilets is a worthwhile project. While they may have been right in their assumption, they demonstrated insufficient grasp of cultural knowledge in their execution.

The same is true in the opening story of the fictional Living Waters mission team. Americans assume physical needs should be met through donated contributions.²⁷ The American team spent a single afternoon, not a week or even days, but only a few hours

²⁶ Story told by Greg Allen-Pickett, General Manager of World Mission, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), at the Living Waters for the World gathering on March 21, 2014.

²⁷ Jim Harries, “‘Material Provision’ or Preaching the Gospel: Reconsidering ‘Holistic’ (Integral) Mission.” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 32, no. 3 (July 2008): 262.

meeting with community members and leaders. The team did not travel to Haiti with the spirit of those who intend to learn and interact, but with the attitude of a group delivering a needed and wanted product. Americans know the value of clean water and proper sanitation, but if a team presents itself with no prior knowledge of the community history or the true needs of the people, their project money will very likely not realize its potential, and the equipment will be underutilized.

Many LWW teams enter a village, see no clean water available, and automatically assume it is wanted and needed. If a American hand is offering support, in terms of a water system, school building, or a herd of goats, Haitian culture and worldview prohibits the leader from saying “no.” Instead, he will say “yes” and agree, even if his community has no use for the product or project or a clear understanding of the underlying need for the project.²⁸ LWW teams often use solar energy to power the clean water systems. The Americans assume the community wants clean water, but the Haitian leaders’ may be predominately motivated by a desire to obtain the solar power system, which will provide electricity to their school and church. Certainly, this is a legitimate and important need, but a solar power system could be provided independent of a water system, if the latter is not needed or wanted. Clear communication and listening, rather than relying on assumptions, will escalate the mutual effectiveness of these partnerships. In the end, these practices will save money and time, avoid preventable frustration and exasperation for lasting relationship building, and minimize wastefulness of valuable equipment.

²⁸ Fils-Aime, interview.

Gap Three: Superiority and Arrogance

The danger of ethnocentric arrogance is exploding.²⁹ Americans are as guilty of ethnocentrism as any other people-group, as they see the world in light of their own cultural background and experience.³⁰ Ethnocentrism feeds superiority and arrogance, and this leads a person to think, “My experience is what’s normal and best.” Duane Elmer, author of *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*, asks the missionary to not, “...form an opinion about an important matter until you’ve heard all of the relevant facts.”³¹ What would it have been like if the French colonialists who came to Haiti asked for wisdom from the indigenous leaders and honored the people and traditions rather than tried to change them?

If leaders would listen before acting, less damage might be done to people. If we all saw ourselves as learners, rather than as people with the answers, and if humility—true humility—were the norm for leaders, it would be a different world; however, the same scenarios, such as the colonial mentality or paternalism, continue today. Following the catastrophic earthquake in 2010, NGOs and American ministries largely failed to approach Haitians on their own terms, recognizing their simple homes and informal jobs as assets, or showing them respect as potential partners rather than targets for

²⁹ Ethnocentrism is defined as evaluating other people and their culture by the standards of our own cultural preferences. Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), Loc. 18.

³⁰ David Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence: The New Secret to Success* (New York: American Management Association, 2009), Loc. 1099.

³¹ Elmer, Loc. 485.

instruction.³² Instead of breaking down prejudices and stereotypes by asking questions, creating companionship, and gaining perspective, they created their own kingdoms.³³

The opposite of superiority and arrogance is intimacy and vulnerability. American leaders often preach friendship, but practice intolerance. With friendship comes vulnerability. Are they being a friend to those they call partners? Are they letting go and being true? Are they intolerant because they are not comfortable with their own vulnerabilities? Donald Miller in *Scary Close* writes,

[As Christians, we yearn] to belong intimately to a group of people who know us and push us toward God. We all have the problem of going the wrong way when left to our own devices. Looking throughout history, kings and rulers, thinking they are above accountability, have fallen time and again once they reach the pinnacle of leadership or power. Interestingly, now our society is set up as though we are all little kings and rulers. Who really knows me; who really knows you?³⁴

Superiority and arrogance feed inauthentic relationships. Americans are losing out on the opportunity for fellowship, love, and accountability with others. In partnership, there is room to be ourselves—the truest versions of ourselves—human beings trying to live in surrender to Jesus. When we live within walls of superiority and arrogance, we forfeit this gift of authentic relationships and lose much of what it is to be a Christian. To be known and to know others cannot be understated. When all is left behind, all that will be remembered is the truth and authenticity we exchanged. These encounters are the vulnerable moments of life: the terrifying risks of love and the care we take to cultivate it.

³² Jonathan Katz, *The Big Truck That Went By: How the World Came to Save Haiti and Left Behind a Disaster* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 11.

³³ Elmer, Loc. 1372.

³⁴ Donald Miller, *Scary Close: Dropping the Act and Finding True Intimacy* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2014), 7.

We will never feel the gift of true partnership until we drop the act, until we are willing to be our true selves in the presence of the people around us.³⁵

Gap Four: Speaking Instead of Listening

Needs-based development, or a transactional relationship, focuses on what is lacking in the life of a community or person and asks the proverbial questions, “What is wrong with you? How can I fix you?”³⁶ Author Paul Borthwick encourages a paradigm shift for cross-cultural missionaries by exhorting, “With two eyes and two ears and one mouth, try to observe and listen four times as much as you speak.”³⁷ Assumptions could be counteracted by one simple skill—listening. Communication involves not only speaking, but also listening. Without listening there is only selfish giving. Listening as a form of communication has the ability to prevent a one-sided, dominant relationship. Unfortunately, Americans often prefer to jump in with both feet and ask questions later. As evidenced in the clean water story, the Americans initiated the conversation, letting their task have priority over learning from and listening to the Haitians. They built a machine without building a relationship.

Haitians emphasize the importance of relationship as opposed to task, whereas many Americans confuse relationship building with networking. In networking, people often consider first what they can gain from the other person. For some, this is a primary relational style. Ultimately, this is a task-oriented, rather than person-oriented, relational

³⁵ Ibid., xv.

³⁶ Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 125-126.

³⁷ Paul Borthwick, *Western Christians in Global Mission: What’s the Role of the North American Church?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 157.

style. At its worst, Werner Mischke explains, networking tends to objectify people into categories by what they do, rather than simply honor who they are as an individual.

American Christians, in many instances, use this superficial relational style as their default method of communication.³⁸ Networking has its place in the Christian sector, but not in a cross-cultural partnership.

Gap Five: Money, Money, Money

Money, or material aid, is often the center of attention in an unhealthy partnership, claims Elizabeth McAlister.³⁹ Wilson Kennedy's observation from his work in El Salvador and Haiti supports McAlister's claim:

I believe the hallmark for dependency is the words spoken during simple conversation. If the conversation is always led back to money or goods being provided by one party to another, then the party asking is dependent on the party that has the perceived power for necessities. The single biggest danger in a dependent relationship is a lack of authenticity. So often in the church we try our faithful best to be authentic to God and one another, but when finances are at stake our ethics go away.⁴⁰

Colonial missions, specifically in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, fed dependency on a global scale by importing foreign institutions, ideas, and funding, which indigenous people could not control, but soon could not live without.⁴¹ Though money is only one of many shared elements in a partnership, it wields a disproportionate power, primarily

³⁸ Werner Mischke, "Honor and Shame in Cross-Cultural Relationships: Understanding Five Basic Culture Scales Through the Cultural Lens of Honor and Shame—with Application to Cross-Cultural Relationships and Partnerships," *Mission ONE* (2011): 24.

³⁹ Elizabeth McAlister, "Humanitarian Adhocracy, Transnational New Apostolic Missions, and Evangelical Anti-dependency in a Haitian Refugee Camp," 27.

⁴⁰ Wilson Kennedy, interview by author, Jacksonville, Florida, March 26, 2015.

⁴¹ Robert Reese, *Roots and Remedies of the Dependency Syndrome in World Missions* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2000), 2-3.

because it is universally seen as the solution to problems. Economic inequalities, perceived need, and Christian charity, matched with American resources and initiative, easily lead into the dependency trap.⁴² If money is at the basis or foundation of the partnership, the relationship will likely remain unequal with one side having the upper-hand over the other.

When Living Waters for the World mission teams are asked why they often rush through partnership development and focus solely on the installation project, they give a number of reasons, but the most predominant are money and time.⁴³ Americans generally want to donate money to pay for a specific building project or program, or they want to send palpable items, such as food or other goods. A one-time clean water project is an easy sell to mission committees and congregations, but spending funds for airfare to cultivate relationships in-person with potential and existing partners is another story. This takes time and money the average American does not have. Americans believe they must justify expensive and long-distance travel by having something tangible to show for it—such as a finished building or a clean water system.⁴⁴ Relationships, however, are not tangible; and the desire to have a concrete deliverable is at the root of the ineffectiveness and failure of many of these clean water systems.

As in many other contexts, simply throwing money at a problem will not eliminate it. Dr. Kim Lamberty believes without serious dialogue and receiving careful

⁴² Don Fanning, “Dependencies and Partnerships,” *Trends and Issues in Missions*, Paper 3, 2009, 14, accessed November 16, 2015, http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgm_missions/.

⁴³ George Billman, Melissa Billman, Sally Block, interviews by author, November 23, 2014.

⁴⁴ Glenn J. Schwartz, *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency in the Christian Movement* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2007), 249.

input from the local community, long-term sustainability will not be achieved.⁴⁵ The investment of time is critical to solidify not only the relationship, but to also prepare the local community for the responsibility of operating and maintaining the clean water system after the American team leaves. This failure to blend funding with careful dialogue has led to failure after failure of a variety of projects, all conducted in the spirit of Christian mission and giving.⁴⁶

Haitians often have the impression that American money is endless. If there is a broken part, their natural response is that Americans will pay for a new one. If the Americans do not produce more money, the Haitians may believe money is being withheld in an effort to control or manipulate the relationship.⁴⁷ People from a wealthier context may want to help, but they often do so in a way that creates dependencies and undermines local leadership development. People from a materially poor context may want assistance, but they desire to be more than just objects of charity in the eyes of those who give.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Kim Marie Lamberty, "Toward a Spirituality of Accompaniment in Solidarity Partnerships," *Missiology: An International Review* 40, no. 2 (April 1, 2012): 185.

⁴⁶ For lengthy descriptions of failed projects in Haiti, see Timothy Schwartz's *Travesty in Haiti: A True Account of Christian Missions, Orphanages, Food Aid, Fraud and Drug Trafficking*, 2nd ed., 2010 (self-published).

⁴⁷ Jacob Sangster, interview by author, November 12, 2014.

⁴⁸ Lamberty, 192.

Gap Six: Different Understanding of Time

David Livermore, in *Serving With Eyes Wide Open*, asked several non-Western church leaders about their views of American mission teams coming to their communities. Here are few of their thoughts:

- “You too quickly get into action without thinking through the implications for our churches long after you go home.”
- “You come here for two weeks. We’re here forever. We’re not as panicked about finishing all the projects as soon as you are.”
- “You assume we aren’t focused because we haven’t written up our mission, vision, and values like you have. But we are very clear about what God is doing in our midst.”⁴⁹

In Uganda, a foreigner is known as an *mzungu*. If said aloud, the word sounds like “zoom-zoom”, which is indicative of the zoom in-zoom out American style of mission. Foreigners never stay long; they do not have all of the facts, yet continuously, for centuries, they have imposed their own thoughts and ideas without fully understanding the history and situation.

Does the general American view of time and urgency cause more harm than good? A popular saying in Haitian is, “Americans have the watches; we have the time.” Some cultures, such as Americans, are generally monochronic. In such cultures, time is linear. Activities and appointments are usually at set times, and people have difficulty tolerating lateness or interruptions. In comparison, Haitians are polychronic and think of time as being cyclical.⁵⁰ Americans have an obsession with time and urgency, placing priorities on schedules, tasks, and control.⁵¹ While Americans may be in monochronic

⁴⁹ David Livermore, *Serving with Eyes Wide Open: Doing Short-Term Missions With Cultural Intelligence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006), 63.

⁵⁰ Corbett and Fikkert, 160.

⁵¹ Livermore, 60.

high gear, the non-Western culture is predominantly in polychronic mode, working at a slower pace.⁵² Getting the job done is less important than being together and getting to know one another. This can quickly cause frustrations for the American mission team members, as they watch the seconds tick away while little is being accomplished, at least in their eyes. This results in Americans looking down on their polychronic brothers and sisters, quickly deciding they are inept or even lazy, which often causes paternalism to creep into the relationship. Americans may then take over and perform the work, under the impression that otherwise the project will not be completed prior to the end of the trip. From the American perspective, this would be a disaster.

Acknowledging this discordance of time is crucial for all facets of the cross-cultural relationship. In the instance of the LWW mission team, they have bought plane tickets and have a task to complete with a limited amount of time. Sitting down for long conversations and partnership development is not a high priority for their week; for many Americans, it is a waste of time. The North American “need for speed” undermines the slower processes essential for lasting and effective long-run development.⁵³ However, according to Mischke, if the time is taken to slow down and be extra generous with time, many of the conflicts or later breakdowns could be avoided.⁵⁴

Decision-making also falls into this category of understanding time. As stated previously, non-Americans hold the group in higher esteem than the individual. Because of the high value of individuality in the West combined with expedient accomplishments,

⁵² Corbett and Fikkert, 168.

⁵³ Ibid., 131.

⁵⁴ Mischke, 17.

American Christians may assume Haitian leaders will make decisions quickly—and without input from their community. Decisions, especially in Haiti, are made unhurriedly with a need to consult many more people, and this takes time.⁵⁵

The Dependency Syndrome

The aforementioned six gaps in cross-cultural partnership are predisposed to the same detrimental problem: dependency. Robert Reese wrote extensively on the dependency syndrome, explaining its deep roots in the historical development of the modern missionary movement—a movement developed during the colonial period, and was an unintended part of the colonial legacy.⁵⁶ It stems from the European imperialist concept of “the white man’s burden.”⁵⁷ The Europeans felt an obligation to share their success with the rest of the world. They viewed their culture as a civilization unparalleled in history, built upon Christian values that had produced unprecedented prosperity and technology. Missionaries moved forth with a “take-charge attitude,” too impatient to allow indigenous Christians to exercise initiative and leadership. With the assumption that local people were helpless and uneducated, the missionaries dove in with their unlimited resources and ethnocentric solutions to complex and ingrained problems. This inevitably created a dependency of the indigenous on the outside world. Though colonialism, as we know it, came to an end with the conclusion of World War II,

⁵⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁵⁶ Robert Reese, *Roots and Remedies of the Dependency Syndrome in World Missions* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2010), 3.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 117.

Americans continue to perpetuate stereotypes from the colonial period and regard natives as inferior people, in need of guidance and resources.⁵⁸

Today, a multitude of books, journal articles, and dissertations have centered on the dependency syndrome. From *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help*⁵⁹ by Robert Lupton, to *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency on the Christian Movement*⁶⁰ by Glenn Schwartz, to *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor*⁶¹ by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett, contemporary authors are tuned in to the devastating, long-lasting effects of dependency created by well-intentioned missionaries and church leaders. From the American perspective, tension is ever-present. For the Haitians, it has contributed to a cycle of poverty combined with hopelessness for centuries.

Over time, Haitians have fallen into a deep cycle of dependency. Haiti's reputation as a "Republic of NGO's" evolved out of persistent and staggering need. Not only could Haiti's government not provide adequate services for its citizens, but US law also prohibited direct investment in Haiti's public sector.⁶² The United States Congress cut off all aid to the country in 2003, and Federal grants that were helping Haitians dried

⁵⁸ Ibid., 119.

⁵⁹ Robert Lupton, *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help* (New York: Harper Collins, 2011).

⁶⁰ Glenn J. Schwartz, *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency in the Christian Movement* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2007).

⁶¹ Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012).

⁶² This included the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and other later revisions. Farmer, *Haiti After the Earthquake*, 99.

up.⁶³ Following the 2010 earthquake, Haiti desperately needed foreign contractors and NGO's because its implementation capacity and infrastructure had steadily weakened over decades, even centuries. It was time for new approaches to foreign assistance in order to create good domestic jobs and reduce Haiti's dependence on foreign aid. The following pages will explore the definition of dependency, the differentiation between other-induced dependency and self-induced dependency, and the signs, or results, of unhealthy dependency.

What is Dependency?

In its purest adjective form, 'dependency' is "the quality of being dependent; an area that is controlled by a country but that is not formally a part of it."⁶⁴ This sounds eerily similar to the definition of colonialism.⁶⁵ Dependence, as a noun, is "the quality or state of being influenced or determined by or subject to another." Dependency implies one is superior to another, one controls the other, or one is in *need* of the other. There is a lack of common, or reciprocal, connection. The word in no way connotes a mutual partnership of equal proportions. Lauren Blanco, a missionary serving in Uganda, agrees:

Dependency is a state where one individual or group of people cannot function healthily without the presence, providence or influence of another individual or group of people. In the context of our international work, dependency is an undesired state of operation where international partners would rely on and function solely (or heavily) from the presence, influence or providence of our organization.⁶⁶

⁶³ Joseph, Loc. 1012.

⁶⁴ "Dependency," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dependency> (accessed April 22, 2015).

⁶⁵ "The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically." Dictionary.com, s.v. "Colonialism," accessed July 21, 2015, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/colonialism>.

⁶⁶ Lauren Blanco, interview by author, Fayetteville, Arkansas, March 26, 2015.

Author John Rowell, speaking solely in the context of cross-cultural mission, defines dependency as “the unhealthy patterns of reliance on American financial support that are presumed to be encouraged when missionaries readily offer support for indigenous workers, for ministry projects, or for facilities development in pioneer settings.”⁶⁷ The seeds of unhealthy dependency are planted when the only deal struck in a mission relationship is the one-way flow of resources, whether that is money or personnel. Daniel Rickett adds, “If a partnership is not joining in a common purpose and sharing complementary resources, it cannot be reciprocal, and it will not be responsible.”⁶⁸ Dr. Patrick Murunga, Principal of African Theological Seminary, corroborates this, saying dependency is an attitude and belief that a group cannot solve its own problems without outside help. It is a weakness made worse by charity.⁶⁹

Glenn Schwartz is an expert on dependency. Since 1983, he has researched, written, and lectured about the issues of dependency and self-reliance in the Christian movement. He expands on the word, dependency, and conceives a distinction between ‘avoidable’ and ‘unavoidable dependency’.⁷⁰ For instance, unavoidable would describe a newborn baby’s dependency on its mother for milk. Cross-cultural mission, on the other hand, most often exemplifies avoidable dependency. Schwartz pares down this category

⁶⁷ John Rowell, *To Give or Not to Give? Rethinking Dependency, Restoring Generosity, and Redefining Sustainability* (Colorado Springs, CO: Authentic Publishing, 2007), Loc. 474.

⁶⁸ Daniel Rickett, “Dependency in Mission Partnership”, adapted from *Building Strategic Relationships: A Practical Guide to Partnering with Non-Western Missions* (Minneapolis, MN: STEM Press, 2008), 3.

⁶⁹ Dr. Patrick Murunga, lecture in Capetown, South Africa, September 2014.

⁷⁰ Glenn Schwartz, “How Missionary Attitudes Can Create Dependency,” *Mission Frontiers* (May-June 1998), <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/how-missionary-attitudes-can-create-dependency> (accessed April 22, 2015).

further by identifying two types of avoidable dependency: ‘other-induced’ and ‘self-induced.’

Other-Induced Dependency

The first type of avoidable dependency is ‘other-induced dependency.’ Schwartz made this observation in his article presented to the Southwest Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Missiological Society in 1998:

[An] assumption which sows the seeds for dependency among mission-established institutions has to do with the way in which Western missionary candidates are recruited and motivated. One of the assumptions is missionary candidates are being recruited to go out to do something significant among the world’s poor, needy and un-evangelized people. The emphasis here is on doing something, which I believe often results in the development of the dependency syndrome. Without a proper understanding of how to help, Americans end up doing things others could do for themselves. As a result of this doing, Americans often create projects, programs and institutions, which cannot be carried on or reproduced by those they are trying to help. Sometimes those who create this outside-induced dependency carve out a future for themselves from which they cannot seem to be extricated, if indeed they want to be extricated. If they don’t really want to be extricated, a conspiracy develops which thrives on the need to be needed on the part of the outsiders. The need to be needed is a very powerful force.⁷¹

Education about the dependency syndrome is paramount. Though it may be at the forefront of mission conferences and undoubtedly fills many pages in mission books, Americans often find themselves in a quandary. Corroborated by Kim Lamberty, when pastors and non-profit leaders garner support for mission partnerships, money easily rolls in for building projects and clean water systems; however, it is extremely difficult to encourage donors to contribute toward projects that generate income and livelihoods,

⁷¹ Ibid.

and, in turn end or reduce dependency on charitable aid.⁷² It is even more challenging to convince congregations or non-profits to invest in time and relationships. While this type of investment would push dependency aside and foster local empowerment and leadership, completing specific, funded projects is much easier and takes far less commitment and time in our current society of easy fixes and instant gratification.

According to Blanco, this laziness leads to other-induced dependency:

Dependency is the easy/simple solution. Just pump some money into the poor countries, and all it requires is connecting your bank account to another's. ...It's easy to keep receiving money when you need it, and when you have immediate needs, it's easy (and culturally appropriate from a developing country) to act on immediate needs and not save or invest in the future. This leads to the cycle of poverty. From ignorance and laziness, both parties act on what they know and what they have been taught. I have many American friends who have never asked themselves if it could possibly hurt those they give to in the long-term. If you multiply that on a large scale, I would assume that some organizations don't realize the long-term detriment their charity has on communities that cannot overcome the poverty trap because they are dependent on donor funds.⁷³

Exacerbating the problem is the fact that Americans love to be heroes.⁷⁴ They want to be needed. They love "high-fives", recognition, and the photo opportunity with the half-clothed orphan to post on a Facebook page. Most of the time, they do not even know the name of that child or his or her story. Money, as evidenced in the previous section, is an easy solution. Jean Johnson observes,

Many missionary and aid agencies poured into the country [of Cambodia] with financial aid programs, virtually paying people to do what they could or should have been able to at least start doing for themselves. If the Cambodian people had any remaining dignity and self-respect, it was not being helped by the well-

⁷² Kim Marie Lamberty, "Toward a Spirituality of Accompaniment in Solidarity Partnerships," *Missiology: An International Review* 40, no. 2 (April 1, 2012): 183.

⁷³ Blanco, interview.

⁷⁴ Jean Johnson, *We Are Not the Hero: A Missionary's Guide for Sharing Christ, Not a Culture of Dependency* (Sisters, OR: Deep River Books, 2012), Loc. 133.

meaning outsiders who were reinforcing the feeling of inadequacy that gripped the nation.⁷⁵

Those well-meaning outsiders can even come in the form of U.S. Presidents.

President Bill Clinton unknowingly contributed to the other-induced dependency syndrome in Haiti. He convinced Haitian leaders that large, corporate U.S. farms could more efficiently and less expensively produce more rice than Haitian smallholders.⁷⁶ The Clinton Administration enticed Haiti to purchase rice in bulk from the U.S., thereby losing the need to grow and sell a crop. When rice prices increased with inflation, Haiti had no choice but to continue paying the U.S. for food, creating not only deeper poverty, but also a generation of Haitians without the skills to grow rice. Only in 2014 did Haiti invite agronomists from Southeast Asia to teach young adults how to grow rice in order to emerge from this particular example of dependency. What will stop the cycle of dependency? Just as Schwartz hypothesized, American leaders could avoid other-induced dependency by setting aside egos, superiority, and heroism, and replacing it with relationship and acts of empowerment. What will it take for Americans to realize the value of investing in people, not projects?

Self-Induced Dependency

Schwartz's second coined term is 'self-induced dependency.' For example, self-induced refers to a person's choice to begin and continue using alcohol or tobacco. This is another avoidable type of dependency. Reading Schwartz's *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency on the Christian Movement* brings this

⁷⁵ Ibid., Loc. 110.

⁷⁶ Jonathan Katz, *The Big Truck That Went By: How the World Came to Save Haiti and Left Behind a Disaster* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 47.

question to mind: Can other-induced dependency lead to self-induced dependency? Is dependency as addictive as tobacco or alcohol? Is dependency a learned trait that becomes self-imposed from generation to generation?

Blanco, with experience in Uganda and Burundi, would answer affirmatively:

The Ugandans could have only ever seen dependency modeled for them. It may be their only understanding of survival. I would consider this a poverty mindset, when one thinks/believes he or she is not capable of achieving more for themselves or sustaining themselves. This mindset is perpetuated by a dependency model of charity, and it prevents one from having true dignity.⁷⁷

Bob McCoy, founder of Holy Spirit Haiti Mission, also believes dependency can be a self-induced trait:

If a person is hungry and they are unwilling to seek food because they know from experience that one of several organizations will give them a meal, this is self-induced dependency. Knowing they will likely get fed somehow, they will never climb out of the trap they are in. Additionally, well-meaning organizations contribute to the dependency in an effort to make their numbers look good by feeding more people. This certainly destroys the dignity of God's people in the process. It's one thing to feed a person to get them on their feet and quite another to continue to feed them without accountability.⁷⁸

Dependency is not simply a cycle that Americans must be willing to break.

Haitians specifically must also guard their hearts and minds from the temptations of dependency. Counteracting dependency with homegrown solutions and innovations may be the answer to breaking the cycle. This requires a worldview change on both sides. It is not an easy task, but it is possible with long-term relational engagement. Elizabeth McAlister spent months in Haiti following the 2010 catastrophic earthquake surveying a group of charismatic Pentecostal Haitian refugees and their plight to fight victimhood and passivity. McAlister observed, "They rejected material humanitarianism aid whenever

⁷⁷ Blanco, interview.

⁷⁸ Bob McCoy, interview by author, Huntsville, Alabama, March 5, 2015.

possible and developed a stance of Christian self-sufficiency, anti-foreign-aid, and anti-dependency.”⁷⁹ The Haitians did this by only accepting visits from American missionaries with spiritual offerings, but not material, tangible gifts or resources. Sadly, of the thousands of books and articles written on the subject of dependency, McAlister’s story is but a rare example of fighting against dependency.

Signs of Unhealthy Dependency

How will American mission leaders or non-profit organizations guard against dependency, and instead participate in authentic relationships with and empowerment of local leaders? As a American church or nonprofit organization, it is easy to fall into the dependency trap. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere; the United Nations has labeled it a Fourth-World Country.⁸⁰ Haitians have overwhelming need. Haitians need clothes. They need food. They need jobs. They need education. Haitians have problems, and Americans think they have solutions. Americans want to jump in with both feet and do; however, this is not helpful to anyone. The solution to the underlying issues of poverty involves walking with people, as opposed to doing for them. The challenge is to try to understand their realities and together search for solutions. All people have at least some of the resources to change their situation. Outside resources can

⁷⁹ Elizabeth McAlister, “Humanitarian Adhocracy, Transnational New Apostolic Missions, and Evangelical Anti-dependency in a Haitian Refugee Camp,” *Nova Religio* 16, no. 4 (May 1, 2013): 11.

⁸⁰ This is a term used by the United Nations to identify the 48 least developed countries in the world. They have the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, with the lowest Human Development Index.

build upon what is already there, but those resources should never supplant one's innate capacities.⁸¹

This, regrettably, is rarely understood. Americans tend to drop in for one week and leave the next, only seeing a snapshot of what everyday Haitian life is like. As a result, Haitians have learned the most pragmatic approach is to say “yes” to anything. If an American hand is offering, they will take whatever it is giving, even if it is not needed or wanted. As one Haitian replied, “It would be rude not to accept the gift.”⁸² By continuing to say “yes,” the Haitians have learned never to say “no,” resulting, for many, in a lack of essential initiative. This colonial mentality has never been broken. American attitudes of superiority and arrogance have diminished Haitian creativity and critical thinking skills. The current Haitian adult generation has little agricultural training and virtually no experience in the development of businesses or project plans. Haiti has become a culture of day-to-day survivalists with no understanding of sustainability.

Based on personal interviews and a review of current literature, unhealthy dependencies produce two additional, perilous gaps within cross-cultural partnerships in Haiti: transactional relationships and psychological damage. The following will describe and explore each.

Gap Seven: Transactional Relationships

A purely transactional relationship is also indicative of an unhealthy partnership. A transaction is an event, such as one person giving a tangible resource to another. The

⁸¹ Lisa Engelthaler, “The Poverty Fighters’ Bible”, *Christianity Today*, June 29, 2015, accessed November 16, 2015, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2015/june/poverty-fighters-bible.html>.

⁸² Fils-Aime, interview.

principle element in a transaction is the tangible item being transferred. This inevitably creates a focus on the ‘item’ rather than the people. Americans tend to focus on projects, rather than people. Americans love to fix things and impose their own ideas without listening to those sitting across the table. People are not projects to be fixed, but *stories to be experienced*. As Wilson Kennedy observed, “The single biggest danger in a dependent relationship is a lack of authenticity.”⁸³ Americans may paint the picture of a beautiful cross-cultural partnership, when, in fact, the relationship is one-sided, superficial, and depends completely on one party to sustain a project. This is not a relationship; it is a resource transaction.

In August 2013, Journalist Heather Ruiz traveled through West Africa. After nine months, Ruiz settled into a village in the Western Sahara to find answers for her questions about responsible volunteering and empowering communities. She interviewed a village chief in the Saharan interior and asked him about transactions in the form of resources and donations. He responded with these words,

[This village is] generations of desert wanderers, learning and toiling for their bread, meat, and homes. We are proud of this; we are empowered by this. Now, give a village man a handout? You’ve just weakened him. You’ve increased his dependency; diminished his sense of self-esteem. One of the most widely-accepted notions is that Americans are the solution to African problems. This requires portraying us as helpless and endlessly recirculating images only of abandonment and violence, or innocence and primitivism.⁸⁴

In order for short-term experiences to grow into long-term relationships with those with whom we seek to be in service, leaders and their teams must slow down, stop doing, and start being with others. Relationships are the bedrock of partnerships. One-

⁸³ Kennedy, interview.

⁸⁴ Heather Ruiz, “Voluntourism: More Harm Than Good,” *The Walla Walla University Collegian*, accessed July 23, 2015, <http://aswwu.com/collegian/voluntourism-more-harm-than-good/>.

sided relationships have very brief lifespans, but mutual partnerships move past seeing needs to seeing reciprocated contributions. Schwartz writes, “Without a proper understanding of how to help, Americans end up doing things which others could do for themselves. As a result, Americans often create projects, programs and institutions, which cannot be carried on or reproduced by those they are trying to help.”⁸⁵ This leads into the vicious cycle of dependency, resulting in devastating damage to psyche and spirit.

Gap Eight: Psychological Damage

Bob McCoy, a Catholic missionary active in Haiti for 14 years, observes,

One of the major signs [of unhealthy dependency] is when the expectation is a continued handout. Not only is this a drain on resources, but the psychological damage to the person is very subtle, yet profound. They lose confidence in themselves, they lose self-respect, their self-esteem is devalued, they have little motivation to do better and often just give up.⁸⁶

Dependency syndrome weakens the body, both physically and psychologically, to such an extent the individual becomes unable or unwilling to do anything. People suffering from this disease are unable to see or utilize opportunities. Dependency is a type of paralysis; it is a mentality stifling all initiative, which causes the sufferer to negate responsibility. A dependent person begs others to nourish and sustain him, but never receives enough.⁸⁷ He has no creativity and cannot think on his own. The expectation level constantly exceeds reality, and this mentality smothers all growth and life.

⁸⁵ Schwartz, “How Missionary Attitudes Can Create Dependency.”

⁸⁶ McCoy, interview.

⁸⁷ Don Fanning, “Dependencies and Partnerships,” 2.

An extremely oppressed culture, such as that of Haiti, lends itself to mistrust. Haitians have been treated as secondary. While they are proud of their heritage and who they are, they feel substandard. Laura Vaughan, President of FaithWorks, has seen those in the dependency cycle lose confidence, become deceptive and defensive, live in fear, and ultimately resent those who help them.⁸⁸ To make matters worse, dependency is a contagious disease.⁸⁹ It does not take long before other members of the community or other nearby organizations also become dependent on outside help, resulting in a community epidemic of a lack of sustainability and increased poverty.⁹⁰ Bryant Myers equates poverty to inauthentic, dependent relationships, “Poverty is the result of relationships that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable. Poverty is the absence of *shalom* in all its meanings.”⁹¹ Fostering poverty is the antithesis of what should be expected from missionaries, servants, and mission teams.

Psychological damage can result in a lack of self-sustainability. Blanco describes the damage caused by dependency as follows:

Dependency is the opposite of self-sustainability (or independence), the state in which one provides for and maintains him/herself and his/her family. [Generally], charity has fostered an expectation of funding from western donors and can propel an organization or donor to simply keep giving, without establishing expectations or practical steps for the recipient to learn/gain independence.⁹²

⁸⁸ Laura Vaughan, interview by author, Shreveport, Louisiana, March 27, 2015.

⁸⁹ In the case of colonial missions, dependency led to death. The locals became dependent on outside resources, such as medicine and food, and when the missionary or church was gone, they were unable to obtain these valuable resources.

⁹⁰ Fanning, 2.

⁹¹ Bryant Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* (New York: Orbis Books, 1999), 14.

⁹² Blanco, interview.

Fuller Center for Housing in Northwest Louisiana Director, Katie Weir, also observes,

Signs of unhealthy dependency include 1) not accepting responsibility as one grows up; 2) expecting others to always provide; 3) generational norm (more in the US) expecting government/agencies to always assist...Dependency can develop generations of families who expect the government to continue to assist and therefore, why does one need to seek employment or further one's education.⁹³

A lack of self-sustainability is a natural consequence of a relationship based on handouts of money and the absence of mutuality. This characteristic is almost always found in mission projects that are transactional in nature. One may argue that only when the non-Western partner's role in the partnership becomes valuable, and only when he understands and appreciates the significance of his contribution, will a project have a high likelihood of sustainability.

Summary

Gaps in cross-cultural partnerships continue to grow wider, as emphases are placed upon projects, and the heroism and personal experience of the Western mission teams. The problems are plentiful. Americans suffer from a lack of cultural intelligence. They view the world through unsupported assumptions and prefer to *speak and do* instead of *listen and be*. Instead of entering into a relationship with humility and recognition of an opportunity to learn, they build a fence of superiority. Americans and Haitians differ dramatically in their understandings of time and money. The ever-widening gaps produce one-sided dependencies leading to further transactional projects and even psychological damage in those they are intending to help. Section Two will

⁹³ Katie Weir, interview by author, Shreveport, Louisiana, conducted March 19, 2015.

discuss how others are seeking to solve the problems of current cross-cultural mission partnerships.

SECTION TWO: OTHER PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Introduction

Partnership, cultural intelligence, and short-term mission projects are hot topics at mission conferences. Published books and online resources are more readily available today than ever before to assist American leaders in planning and preparing for their global mission trips. This section reviews the works of popular authors, journalists, and doctor of ministry candidates, each of who have contributed to the conversation on cross-cultural partnerships and potential solutions to narrow the gaps unwittingly created by American missionaries.

Popular Authors

The following are the authors I most readily recommend to mission pastors, mission teams, and any current or future mission trip or partnership participant:

Daniel Rickett

Daniel Rickett is the author of *Building Strategic Relationships: A Practical Guide to Partnering with Non-Western Missions*⁹⁴ and *Making Your Partnership Work: A Guide for Ministry Leaders*.⁹⁵ These two works are, by far, the most useful books for American mission pastors and leaders. Filled with practical guides, tables, charts, and checklists, Rickett blends his vision, relationship experience, and partnership outcome data. His premise is that authentic partnerships are built upon defined values and shared

⁹⁴ Daniel Rickett, *Building Strategic Relationships: A Practical Guide to Partnering with Non-Western Missions* (Minneapolis, MN: STEM Press, 2008).

⁹⁵ Daniel Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work: A Guide for Ministry Leaders* (Enumclaw, WA: WinePress Publishing, 2002).

vision, all of which are recorded in a written covenant. Missing from both resources, however, are robust scriptural references and real-life examples of his principles in practice. These books are specifically designed for the American team leader craving order and how-to specifications.

Duane Elmer

Duane Elmer wrote a practical, easy-to-understand, multi-part cross-cultural series titled *Cross-Cultural Conflicts*,⁹⁶ *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*,⁹⁷ and *Cross-Cultural Connections*.⁹⁸ Elmer also assisted Mary Lederleitner in *Cross-Cultural Partnerships*.⁹⁹ Elmer writes through a lens of evangelism and converting non-believers to Christianity. He concludes that without adequate training, especially as it pertains to understanding people and cultures, Americans may intend to help but actually end up damaging the people and even harm the cause for Christ.¹⁰⁰ *Cross-Cultural Conflicts* focuses specifically on conflict-resolution, while *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*, encourages missionaries to rid themselves of superiority and exemplify Christ-like humility. Likewise, *Cross-Cultural Connections* emphasizes openness, acceptance, and trust when serving or traveling. In reality, these books should be required reading for any

⁹⁶ Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993).

⁹⁷ Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*.

⁹⁸ Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Connections: Stepping Out and Fitting In Around the World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002).

⁹⁹ Mary Lederleitner in *Cross-Cultural Partnerships: Navigating the Complexities of Money and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Books, 2010).

¹⁰⁰ "A Dialogue with Dr. Duane Elmer's Cross Cultural Connections," Think Theology, October 10, 2013, accessed July 17, 2015, <http://thinktheology.org/2013/10/10/a-dialogue-with-dr-duane-elmers-cross-cultural-encounters/>.

American mission team, or even traveler, to formulate the mindset of how to depart from the U.S. and leave arrogance and ignorance behind.

David Livermore

David Livermore is renowned in the cross-cultural mission world for his work on Cultural Intelligence. *Serving With Eyes Wide Open: Doing Short-Term Missions With Cultural Intelligence*¹⁰¹ and *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*,¹⁰² along with a multitude of other books, online components, assessments, surveys, workshops, and conferences, are cornerstones for any mission leader. Livermore utilizes technical and academic terms, meant for seasoned, or at the least experienced, mission leaders. From the outside looking in, this is much like the Myers-Briggs Personality Tool, in that once you know who and what you are, tools are available to improve yourself and to strengthen interactions with others of different personalities, or cultures.

Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert

Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert hit the mission scene with their groundbreaking book, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor*.¹⁰³ The authors take readers on an uncomfortable journey through best intentions gone wrong, and propose a relational, rather than material, understanding of poverty as one that has to do with the dislocation of one's foundational relationships with God, self, others, and the

¹⁰¹ Livermore, *Serving With Eyes Wide Open*.

¹⁰² David Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009).

¹⁰³ Corbett and Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*.

rest of creation. The authors claim, “Poverty is rooted in broken relationships, so the solution to poverty is rooted in the power of Jesus’ death and resurrection to put all things into right relationships again.”¹⁰⁴

Corbett and Fikkert have recently released practical application tools designed for pastors and mission team leaders and participants to engage in solutions to empower those they intend to help, instead of unintentionally causing harm.¹⁰⁵ The curriculum includes videos based in the U.S. and Africa, real-life scenarios, and thorough discussion guides on helping without hurting, especially in short-term missions. Lacking from these resources are positive success stories.

Glenn Schwartz

Glenn Schwartz is known for his research investigating methods of eradicating dependency caused by American Christians in the mission movement. In his well-known compilation, *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency in the Christian Movement*, Schwartz describes the dependency syndrome.¹⁰⁶ Though unhealthy dependency is widespread, he claims it should not be considered an incurable disease. Speaking mostly with an African worldview, Schwartz offers suggestions for avoiding or overcoming unhealthy dependency in Christian partnerships. He advocates that American churches not give resources and non-Western churches not accept them.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 77.

¹⁰⁵ Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *Helping Without Hurting in Short-Term Missions: Leader’s Guide* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014).

¹⁰⁶ Schwartz, *When Charity Destroys Dignity*.

Journal Articles

Though there are an abundance of scholarly articles written on partnership, two journalists in particular speak to the heart of cross-cultural partnership:

“The Theology of Partnership”¹⁰⁷

Cathy Ross beautifully writes on the definition of partnership through a theological lens. She identifies the following requirements necessary for authentic partnerships: vulnerability and suffering, self-emptying, humbling ourselves, submission, listening, and learning. Each of these requirements are counter-intuitive to human nature, but embody Christ-like attributes, such as giving and forgiving will create a mutual partnership.

“Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity”¹⁰⁸

Dana L. Robert takes the reader on a journey from colonialism to friendship to partnership in this much-too-short article. She summarizes an address delivered by a newly ordained Anglican priest in South India, by interweaving the history of colonialism, cross-racial friendship, and postcolonial partnership. Robert believes friendship will be the key to solving many of the global missions problems. This is, by far, the best article written on the need to transform thinking from colonialism and partnership to true, authentic relationship in the form of friendship.

¹⁰⁷ Cathy Ross, “The Theology of Partnership,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 3 (July 1, 2010): 145-148, accessed October 28, 2013, EBSCOhost.

¹⁰⁸ Dana L. Robert, “Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35, no. 2 (April 1, 2011): 100-107, accessed September 30, 2013, EBSCOhost.

Dissertations

“Zanmi: Church-School Partnerships”¹⁰⁹

Serena Beeks wrote her dissertation based upon an existing partnership between an American Episcopal Church and a Haitian Episcopal Church and school. She gave a thorough history of the partnership, including how the changes in leadership at both institutions affected the partnership and the resulting conflicts and attempts at reconciliation. She asked the question, “Could the two institutions be brought together into a closer, more mutually beneficial relationship through a joint project?” Beeks concluded an outward focus on shared work within a system or community creates a mutual bond that can withstand the occasional conflict or disagreement. Her project goals were to learn more about: what motivates individuals to join together for a common purpose; how to lead institutions toward habits of problem-solving and independence teamed with mutual respect based upon relationship; how to give direction without becoming the focus of the project; how to steer a project toward new leadership and sustainability; and how to help other institutions see this sort of partnership as a way forward. Essentially, the project was the basis and the focus of the partnership.

“Short Term Missions, Long Term Change”¹¹⁰

Chris Ellis, while focusing on short-term missions and the experience of the individual, emphasized leader training and preparation for mission teams. Ellis

¹⁰⁹ Serena Beeks, “Zanmi: Church-School Partnerships,” DMIN diss., Virginia Theological Seminary, 2014.

¹¹⁰ Christopher Ellis, “Short-Term Missions - Long-Term Change,” DMIN diss., George Fox Evangelical Seminary, 2015, Paper 111, accessed November 16, 2015, <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin/111>.

thoroughly examined *missio dei* and the purpose of mission to promote change within American mission teams and to curb harm to local ministries. He proposed focusing on the practical cross-cultural aspects, which decreases the likelihood that participants will do irreparable harm to local ministries and can give proper perspective on one's home culture and how to engage it appropriately.¹¹¹

Thesis Differentiation

While the resources for partnership are plentiful, cross-cultural partnerships continue to fail. An abundance of material exists for training new missionaries in cultural sensitivity, empathy, and intelligence; yet each of the resources, including those described in this work, still have one primary emphasis: a project. Technique and tactics are emphasized in an American contractual model where someone plays the role of the boss and someone is relegated to the role of the employee. The authors have distorted a genuine relationship into an American formula. The essential components are not people, or a shared friendship and relationship; instead, the project is the central ingredient to the partnership. Herein lies the predominant problem. Genuine relationships cannot be created by formula. There may be similarities between one partnership and another, but one partnership cannot simply be replicated into another.

How is this dissertation different? While checklists and tangible materials may speak to the American mission team, they do not teach community and relationship. Section Three will focus on the root of the solution for rehabilitating partnerships—relationship and friendship. Moreover, this thesis encourages the reader to step away from the word “partnership” and embrace a new sense of relationship and community.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 65.

True community enables one to move to deeper levels of understanding and resolution than could be reached alone. In community, the journey becomes more than intellectual and ideological. Community is not built around strength, but around weakness; together gaps may be bridged to create something more significant, effective, and permanent.

SECTION THREE: THE BRIDGE OF FAITHFUL FRIENDSHIP AND INTERDEPENDENT PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

In Haiti, the average income is fewer than two dollars a day; abject poverty is rampant. The American's answer is to pump money into the country and participate in transactional projects; however, *people are not projects*. When people are reduced to projects, they are dehumanized, and the reality of mutuality and reciprocity are lost. How can Americans start treating Haitians as equals and with humanity and humility, instead of checklists? Poverty can be thwarted with community, yet for many Americans, authentic friendship is a foreign concept. Haitians may live in abject financial poverty, but Americans live in social poverty. This study argues that real relationships and real partnerships would change Haiti and transform Americans. In mission, a project may be the means, but is never the end. If the project becomes the focus, the work in God's mission is distorted.

Section One identified eight common gaps, or impediments, in cross-cultural partnerships. Section Two presented leading voices and well-known resources for training new missionaries in cultural sensitivity and intelligence, yet each was found to still have one primary emphasis: a project. This Section will propose solutions, or bridges, to create faithful friendships and interdependent partnerships. The first step is to unpack the word 'partnership' from a social and biblical perspective. What is *koinonia*, and what are the bridges to build a *koinonia* partnership? What are the stages of relationship development to prepare an American mission team to slow down and focus on authentic relationship building before jumping into a project? Finally, the word

partnership may be an impediment for American mission teams. What are alternative words or descriptions to better capture the spirit of partnership?

What is Partnership?

The word ‘partnership’ remains a sticky, negative term in some cultures, especially in Haiti, where it brings to mind memories of colonialism and oppression.¹¹² Many leaders in non-Western cultures do not hold partnerships in high-esteem due to the mistakes of those who have invaded their territories and forced foreign customs and procedures on indigenous populations. With this in mind, how do members of two cultures develop a partnership characterized by autonomous bodies with a trusting relationship and agreed-upon expectations, sharing complementary strengths and resources to reach their mutual goal?¹¹³ Additionally, is ‘partnership’ a word that can be appropriately used to describe this cross-cultural relationship without hampering the relationship?

Biblical partnership is rooted in relationships. Developing a Gospel-centered definition and identifying the biblical traits of sustainable partnership will assist current and future missionaries and leaders in building more effective ministry plans and in developing stronger and deeper relationships with their in-country partners. Building more effective and responsible partnerships will transform not only the lives of those in Haiti, but also the hearts and attitudes of the American church leaders.

Although no single word or phrase fully encapsulates and describes partnership, the following concepts intermingle personal, biblical, and theological understandings of

¹¹² William Taylor, “Introduction: Setting the Partnership Stage.” *Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions*, ed. W.D. Taylor. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1994), 6.

¹¹³ Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work*, Loc. 173.

the word. Reaching from academic scholars to those on the front lines in Haiti missions, this section will synthesize the various meanings and etymology of the term partnership and its biblical illustrations. A simple definition of partner found at dictionary.com is this: “a person who shares, takes part, is associated with another in some action or endeavor; sharer; associate.”¹¹⁴ Partnership was first used in the 14th century, and partner stems from the Middle English *partener*, or the Anglo-French *parcener*, an old legal term approximating co-heirship.¹¹⁵ Cathy Ross, author of “The Theology of Partnership,” explains, “Co-heirship evokes overtones of ancestry, with suggestions of property rights, ownership, status and dignity, as well as its underside of power, wealth, jealousy, suspicion, and litigation.”¹¹⁶

In its simplest form, partnership can be described as “using mutual gifts to accomplish a task.”¹¹⁷ Others expand on this definition by saying, “partnership is 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.”¹¹⁸ Daniel Rickett perhaps gives the best succinct definition: “A partnership is a complementary relationship driven by a common purpose and sustained by a willingness to learn and grow together.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ “Partner,” *Online Etymology Dictionary*, accessed December 3, 2013, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/partner>.

¹¹⁵ “Partner,” Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed November 30, 2013, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/partner>.

¹¹⁶ Ross, 145.

¹¹⁷ Taylor, “Introduction: Setting the Partnership Stage,” 4.

¹¹⁸ Luis Bush and Lorry Lutz, *Partnering in Ministry: The Direction of World Evangelism* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 90.

¹¹⁹ Rickett, *Building Strategic Relationships*, 13.

Max Warren, the general secretary of the Church Mission Society from 1942 to 1963, was a visionary. With his futuristic dreams and foresight, he knew the importance of partnership and how it would blend into the world of cross-cultural missions. Sadly, in 1954, he concluded, “Partnership is an idea whose time has not yet fully come.”¹²⁰ Sixty years later, cross-cultural missions are continuing to wrestle with the idea of partnership—what it is, and even where to start. As Warren observed, recognizing the original meaning of the word is pertinent so as not to repeat the same mistakes, generation after generation. Instead, developing a theological and biblical understanding of the word ‘partner’ will fully unpack the meaning and give context to an ideal “complementary relationship with common purpose and sustained willingness to learn and grow together” in today’s modern community.

A Closer Look at *Koinonia*

Partnership is a word widely used in business and church alike. Unearthing the biblical and theological foundations allows a leader to discuss partnership in a meaningful way, as it relates to mission. Warren, with his impeccable foresight, proposed that partnership is rooted in the nature of God and His relationship with people.¹²¹ The Biblical term most closely approaching the translation of partnership is *koinoneo*. This word appears eight times in the New Testament. Greek lexicons give the verb several definitions: to come into communion or fellowship with; to become a sharer, be made a partner; to enter into fellowship, join one’s self to an associate, make one’s self a sharer

¹²⁰ Max Warren, *Partnership: The Study of an Idea* (London: SCM 1956), 11.

¹²¹ Ibid., 34-50.

or partner.¹²² The English translation used in the New Testament is ‘contributing, participates, share or shared’.

Its sister word, more recognizable to contemporary Christian scholars, is *koinonia*. Found seventeen times in the New Testament, this noun is described as: “fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse; the share which one has in anything, participations, fellowship, intimacy; the right hand as a sign and pledge of fellowship; a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship.”¹²³ Its usage is most often translated as ‘fellowship.’

Expanding this translation one step further, *koinonia* is akin to a promise for a united purpose. The type of bond and relationship depends upon the nature of the purpose. Kyle Pope, in his article “Fellowship of the Gospel,” uses an example found in Luke 5:10 to illustrate the varying uses. Luke, the physician author, describes future-disciples James and John as ‘partners’ (*koinonos*) with Peter in the fishing business. Their bond was that of a common occupation, and their shared purpose was to catch and sell fish.¹²⁴ Alternatively, in Matthew 23:30 Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees for claiming they would not have been “partakers (*koinonos*) with them in the blood of the prophets.” The bond in this case was a common spirit and the purpose was shared

¹²² Thayer and Smith, “Greek Lexicon entry for *Koinoneo*,” *The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon*, 1999, accessed November 30, 2013, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/koinoneo.html>.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Kyle Pope, “‘Fellowship in the Gospel’: A Study of the Greek Word *Koinonia*,” *Biblical Insights* 4, no. 7 (July 2004): 4, accessed December 1, 2013, <http://ancientroadpublications.com/Studies/BiblicalStudies/FellowshipintheGospel.html>.

opposition to God's prophets.¹²⁵ Seen in both examples is a united partnership—a shared responsibility and a cohesive cause.

Relationship Development between American and Non-Western Cultures

Biblical partnerships are rooted, both horizontally and vertically, in deep *koinonia* relationship. Even 2000 years later, the relationships between the Apostle Paul and the churches in Philippi and Ephesus provide a model to guide today's relationship and partnership development.¹²⁶ Horizontally, Paul nurtured relationships with his mentee, Timothy; his partner in mission, Barnabas; and his friend, Titus. In response to Paul's Epistles, Phil Arendt, of Partners International, observes the following qualities shared in the Apostle's partnerships with his fellow servants:

- Free, open interchange of resource personnel and their expertise
- Transparency and risk-taking on both sides about motives, money, and potentially touchy, personal issues
- Quality times devoted to prayer
- Passionate communication
- Intimate relationships¹²⁷

In each instance, rich partnerships in the New Testament arose out of deep relationships based on shared passion, mutual goals, and significant time spent together.¹²⁸

Relationships are the foundation for building a strong partnership; without the base of *koinonia*, the partnership is likely to develop into a co-heirship or dissolve before it can be effective.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Phil Arendt, "What Does the Bible Say About Partnership?" *Partners International*, accessed October 8, 2013, <http://www.hiskingdomprophecy.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-partnership/>.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

Based on these observations, how is *koinonia* practiced in today's modern context of cross-cultural missions? In a survey conducted of missionaries and church leaders in and from Haiti, the word partnership elicited these responses:

- Rev. Roger Bowen, Episcopal Priest and Assistant to Father Kesner Ajax of The Episcopal Diocese of Partnership Program, says, “Co-equals, both sides benefit, a spiritual relationship, involves prayer, involves physically looking into each other’s eyes, means listening, means it’s two ways, not one side just helping the other.”¹²⁹
- Rev. Serena Beeks, assistant to Rev. Bowen, describes partnership as, “...two entities working together on the same goals. Partnering means forming an agreement to stick together, listen to each other, not be absent during hard times, and celebrate good times together.”¹³⁰
- Cindy Corell, Haiti mission co-worker with Joining Hands, says, “Partnership is an ongoing relationship among groups and/or individuals who share goals and philosophies and who carry the best interest of the other to heart.”¹³¹
- Akeisha Johnson, Program Director/Creator of The Oshun Project, says, “Partnership comes down to collaboration. Where people look to put in what is missing from the complete picture for another, to the degree that the outcome is maximized and expanded. I also think of support, in the sense that all parties are required to accomplish a goal or desired result. Like legs to a chair—all four legs

¹²⁹ Roger Bowen, interview by author, Port Au Prince, Haiti, November 25, 2013.

¹³⁰ Serena Beeks, interview by author, Port Au Prince, Haiti, November 25, 2013.

¹³¹ Cindy Corell, interview by author, Cheridant, Haiti, November 16, 2013.

are necessary to hold up the seat, one not more important or relevant than the other.”¹³²

- Tom Durant, founder and CEO of EcoCafé Haiti S.A., describes partnership as, “...a relationship formed on the basis of two or more coming together to serve a common purpose, ideally a relationship that mimics the model demonstrated by our Lord and Savior. Theologically, this includes the God-Human relationship, the Human-Human relationship, and the Human-Rest-of-Creation relationship.”¹³³

Synthesizing these explanations, key attributes of partnerships emerge: a Triune model; participatory relationships; a covenant of trust and accountability; mutuality and interdependence; communication; responsibility; clearly defined roles; and conflict resolution. The following portion of this study will individually explore each of these bridges across existing gaps in cross-cultural partnership, though in reality, these traits intertwine and bleed into the next.

Bridge One: Triune Model

Ross wrote, “Partnership is an idea essential to the very nature of God.”¹³⁴ Is this not true? Consider of the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity reflects partnership within the three-in-one Godhead. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live in and provide a perfect model of partnership.¹³⁵ In his article, “Empowering as a Missional Concept,” Amon Eddie Kasambala argues,

¹³² Akeisha Johnson, interview by author, San Francisco, California, October 24, 2013.

¹³³ Tom Durant, interview by author, November 30, 2013.

¹³⁴ Ross, 146.

¹³⁵ Arendt, “What Does the Bible Say About Partnership?”

In empowering the other, the church is demonstrating the true nature of the Triune God, as the God who empowers in *self-giving* love—because the *self-giving* and *other-receiving* God *is* and *acts* relationally in totality of creation through the sending of the Son and the Spirit. In this *act* of *self-giving* and *other-receiving*, God also invites the church to partner with Him with the object of reaching out to His creation in grace and love. ...the solution to the inequities and economic disparities that exist in Christian mission today does not necessarily lie in the call for moratorium by the churches in the developing world, but should be found in the spirit of being empowered to do something about such situations.¹³⁶

Though the members of the Trinity come together to work as one, they continue to hold steadfast to their individual characteristics. This is a true example of a relational partnership.

As Durant emphasized in his interview, partnership speaks to God's relationship with humanity. In the personification of Jesus, Ross reflects, God delivers Himself to the world and establishes a relationship with humans. Thinking in terms of partnership, God is first involved with humans in a supreme act of trust, manifest in the incarnation. God is responsible for the redemption of humans, and His self-emptying, exemplified upon the cross, was the liability accepted by God for our creation and subsequent free will to choose how we will live and for whom we will live.¹³⁷ Unlike puppets whose movements are controlled through the strings of the puppet-master, humans are free to respond to God or not. Without this freedom, there is no true partnership.¹³⁸ The relationship is not forced; a choice is involved.

¹³⁶ Amon Eddie Kasambala, "Empowering as a Missional Concept vs. Empowerment as a Political Ideology," *Mission Studies: Journal of the International Association for Mission Studies* 22, no. 2 (October 2005): 268.

¹³⁷ Ross, 147.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

Modeling the Trinity, the key characteristics in developing partnership are dialogue, love and respect.¹³⁹ Ross drives home this point by observing, “Love cultivates mutual sharing, mutual serving, mutual forgiveness, and mutual suffering. Love is not feeling sorry for, giving charity to, or taking advantage of. It means coming alongside, trying to feel what others feel, experiencing what others experience, taking a walk in someone’s shoes.”¹⁴⁰ Love, so essential to the relationship within the Trinity, is meaningful and prevalent in strong partnerships.

Additionally, partnership is the epitome of both the horizontal and the vertical relationship. Partnership is an honest, true real example of the vertical relationship between God and humans, and likewise, it illustrates the horizontal relationship between human beings.¹⁴¹ The Pharisees asked Jesus to identify the greatest commandment, and he replied to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul and mind.¹⁴² He immediately added to also love your neighbor as yourself. Love is a skill; love is a gift. Love needs constant attention and nurture, and it is central to both horizontal and vertical partnership.

Relationships, even those full of love, are complicated and messy. It is much easier to tell a person what to do or to even to do it for him. This, however, is not an act of *koinonia*, or “partaking together in” or “sharing.” Ross wrote, “Humans experience God in relationship with the other, in partnership, within community. The concept of the Trinity allows space for the created individual, but only in relationship to the other. To

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Matthew 22:37.

achieve full, true partnership, one cannot exist without this intermingled relationship.”¹⁴³

That is to say, each party cannot achieve the purpose based solely on their own set of gifts or resources. Only with the other can the project, or the community, or the mission, succeed and make a difference to those around them. Should not this be true of any partnership? The mutually decided upon goal cannot be accomplished without the partnership. Each partner brings to the table his own set of unique talents and gifts, while shining the light on the equally important attributes of the partner.

Bridge Two: Participatory Relationship

Partnerships will fail without solid, loving relationships. The Apostle Paul took extraordinary measures to spend quality time with the churches in Ephesus and Philippi. He carefully tutored and mentored Timothy, Titus and Barnabas, who then encouraged him to remain steadfast in his mission and ministry. One-sided partnerships are destined to fail. One person cannot do all of the work. Each party must remain engaged and participative in the relationship to continue moving it forward. Haiti Missionary Cindy Corell eloquently described a healthy partnership with two freely participatory entities:

Healthy relationships are essential to growing partnerships. Without a healthy relationship, the partnership not only likely will fail, but people will be hurt. All parties must be able to trust one another—and themselves—within the workings of the relationship. Acknowledging that every day is not going to be perfect, that not all projects will end with desired results, that our human flaws will be more apparent at times—but when all parties can put the partnership and the welfare of others first and foremost, together they can confront obstacles and make progress toward the goals. Of course, an essential ingredient of a healthy partnership is the understanding that no matter the results of planned activities, the time spent together is the most meaningful element of partnership. It is when the relationship matters as much as the partners themselves that partnerships will thrive.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Ross, 147.

¹⁴⁴ Corell, interview.

Koinoneo, when used in reference to fellowship and partnership, involves a person's relationship with God and his relationship with others. Relationships are participative. One who is in fellowship with God is in fellowship with all others who are truly in fellowship with Him. This is expressed in 1 John 1:3, "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

This concept runs throughout the New Testament. First Corinthians 1:9 refers to "the fellowship (*koinonia*) of His Son," and Second Corinthians 13:14 speaks of "the communion (*koinonia*) of the Holy Spirit." Those in Christ are "partakers (*koinonos*) of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Christians have received the things of God's Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10), and Christ dwells in us through faith (Ephesians 3:17). Each of these concepts highlights participation and the mutual existence and relationship. Furthermore, the participatory nature of partnership leads both to relational intimacy and fruitful momentum of the Gospel as referenced in Philippians 1:5.¹⁴⁵

First Corinthians 3:9 claims we are laborers together with God. We are ambassadors for Christ. He has entrusted to humans the message of reconciliation. While not an easy task, this partnership with God, between God and humanity, is a vertical relationship that becomes discipleship. Our partnership with God and with others may lead to difficulty and suffering, but this brings the opportunity to know an individual, to experience what that person experiences, and to live his life with ours.¹⁴⁶ By being present, feeling each other's pain, reacting with compassion, and joining in solidarity,

¹⁴⁵ Arendt, "What Does the Bible Say About Partnership?"

¹⁴⁶ Ross, 146.

partnerships personify the call of Christ to be ambassadors in caring and loving of neighbors and being His Gospel to all nations.¹⁴⁷

Bridge Three: Covenant of Trust and Accountability

“Trust is the ability to build confidence in a relationship so that both parties believe the other will not intentionally hurt them but will act in their best interest,” writes Elmer in *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*.¹⁴⁸ In agreement, missiologist Sherwood Lingenfelter identified building trust between partners as the single most difficult challenge for a leader.¹⁴⁹ Trust takes time. Just as intimacy with God cannot be rushed, neither can intimacy and trust within a partnership. In fact, Cindy Corell equates partnership to the covenant of marriage:

To partner is to intentionally enter into a commitment with another. To partner is to understand that the resulting union at times will be messy, difficult and not very much fun, but if fully committed, all parties will find joy, strength, and outlets for known gifts and hidden talents and—along the way—accomplishments and victories that will be more happily celebrated than if accomplished alone. I think many people set out in partnerships with only the end goal (build a school, dig a well, install a water system, train teachers, improve test scores, etc.) in mind. But true and lasting partnerships are like great marriages—they buoy individuals through tough times and provide the most comfortable settings for celebration through victories small and large.¹⁵⁰

This is a missing link in many partnerships. The messiness is too uncomfortable for many to push through, but if the two parties are committed to walk through the tension, the partnership will become stronger and sustain through the good and the bad.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*, 77.

¹⁴⁹ Sherwood Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), Loc. 78.

¹⁵⁰ Corell, interview.

Many successful partnerships have found developing a covenant of trust accountability enhances their ability to serve together for a common purpose. Defining the relationship together via a written agreement, outlining responsibilities and effective evaluation tools, stirs confidence in both sides of the partnership. Living Waters for the World instructs its teams to enter into a covenant relationship before installing a clean water system. While it is meant to work out details and logistics of the installation, however, the contents of the document and the manner in which it is presented and signed often do not promote a mutual partnership. In the covenant, the American partner is listed as the ‘Initiating Partner’ while the local counterpart is referred to as the ‘Operating Partner.’¹⁵¹ These are business terms indicative of a transactional contract, and this is where a differentiation between a contract and a covenant must be made. A contract imposes obligations of payment or action on each party and reflects transactional procedure, but a covenant differs from a contract. A covenant is a solemn binding promise, made with a commitment based on one’s faith in God and made for a purpose blessed by Him. It includes reciprocal promises, and it seals the two parties in a permanent union.¹⁵² Partnerships cannot exist without relationships. It is impossible.

Marriage is an intriguing metaphor for missional partnerships. Like a romantic relationship, the first order of business is ‘courting’: truly getting to know one another, assessing whether or not the relationship holds promise.¹⁵³ It may take years to know the other well and build enough trust to move to the next level of engagement. Though it is

¹⁵¹ An example of a Living Waters for the World covenant is in Appendix B.

¹⁵² James F. Jackson, *Covenant Friendship: An Ex-Loner’s Guide to Authentic Friendships* (Houston, TX: Banlican House Publishers, 2014), 5.

¹⁵³ Lederleitner, *Cross-Cultural Partnerships*, 40.

tempting to move through this step and straight to the marriage, the relationship cannot omit this step. A commitment to the relationship, or partnership, is vital and required of both to move forward. Trust is rarely instantaneous, and building a relationship takes time. It requires acceptance of risk and willingness to nurture.

Jonathan Rowe, in his article, “Dancing with Elephants,” outlined a two-way street to partnership, wherein each party must be accountable to the other.¹⁵⁴ There must not be a recipient and a donor, but equal contributing parts. At first sight, trust and accountability appear incompatible. Americans and Haitians alike naturally equate accountability with the absence of trust. Indeed, it is difficult to trust someone who is unwilling to be accountable. Likewise, it is humiliating to be accountable to someone who does not trust the other. It is a double-edged sword. Rowe proposes a “trust and verify” approach to accountability.¹⁵⁵ This requires investments in relationships, not simply numbers and books. Shared expectations conceived mutually and recorded in a covenant, signed by both parties, increases confidence in the partnership. The covenant may also include the role and nature of partners’ mutual accountability. Included in the “trust and verify” approach is a commitment to learn and change together based on a common identity in Christ.¹⁵⁶ These concepts are critical for anchoring the relationship and forming a Christian basis for collaboration. Without them, the mission partnership will become transactional in nature.

¹⁵⁴ Jonathan Rowe, “Dancing with Elephants: Accountability in Cross-Cultural Christian Partnerships,” *Missiology* 37, no. 2 (April 1, 2009): 155, accessed October 28, 2013, EBSCOhost.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Bridge Four: Mutuality and Interdependency

One contemporary definition of mission partnership is “using mutual gifts to accomplish tasks.”¹⁵⁷ Too often, what is thought of as a partnership is, in reality, a dominant-dependent relationship.¹⁵⁸ Instead of both parties working toward a mutual goal, one party dominates and directs the other, treating the relationship as a transaction, and as a result, creating a one-way dependency instead of a two-way partnership. American culture is firmly rooted in monochronic individuality.¹⁵⁹ Missionaries and non-missionaries alike place a tremendous emphasis on self-reliance. Because the contemporary American church does not always foster community, many Christians have never experienced true *koinonia*. Instead, Americans are self-aware, self-possessed, and self-determined individuals.¹⁶⁰ On the other end of the spectrum, Haitian culture is collectively oriented and intertwined. They have very little frame of reference for existence aside of their family and community.¹⁶¹ To enter into a true partnership, the American and the Haitian must build a bridge of understanding, mutuality and interdependence. The Haitian must guard against total dependency, while the American must open his/her heart and mind by accepting that the Haitian has something to contribute to the relationship. This is, by no means, an easy process. The relationship should bear the necessities of longevity, nurture, and love.

¹⁵⁷ Taylor, “Introduction: Setting the Partnership Stage,” 4.

¹⁵⁸ Rowe, 155.

¹⁵⁹ Craig Storti, *Figuring Foreigners Out: A Practical Guide* (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1999), 82.

¹⁶⁰ Glenn Rogers, *Holistic Ministry and Cross-Cultural Mission in Luke-Acts* (Bedford, TX: Mission and Ministry Resources, 2003), 161.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

Coming from a culture of independence and dominance makes understanding and learning from others difficult for the American. It is easier to believe one's model is paramount and to impart one's own "best practices" to those around him/her. However, partnership is not one absorbing the other. Warren emphasizes,

There is no suggestion whatever that partnership in the things of God or in obedience to the Gospel means a loss of individuality, an ironing out of differences. The differences remain: the unity is discovered in the person who operates all the diversity and to whom all owe allegiance.¹⁶²

As stated before, though the Trinity works as one body, each limb has its own gifts and purpose. So it is in partnerships. The working people or organizations stand in relationship to each other. They are neither isolated nor independent, but interdependent. Each piece has a necessary role, and healthy performance depends heavily on all members being willing and able to fulfill their proper function.¹⁶³ The efforts of both partners working in harmony exceed the sum of each working alone.

First Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 beautifully illustrate partnership in the body of Christ.¹⁶⁴ The Apostle Paul issues his readers a challenge, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!'" Each part of the body needs the others, just as each person relies on the gifts given to others in the larger body of Christ. Each member has something to contribute, and all of the parts constitute the whole. To create an effective partnership, missionaries and organizations must learn about and come to know each other and work together. This cuts across the boundaries of culture and language; no part of the Church can do it alone. For a visual

¹⁶² Warren, 52.

¹⁶³ Rowe, 150.

¹⁶⁴ Ross, 147.

learner, think of the Olympic sport synchronized swimming. What would happen if just one member of the team failed to attend the big event? The absence would be glaringly obvious. Though the team may try to close the gap, the onlookers will surely notice the inescapable hole.

Additionally, the Book of Philippians offers a stunning example of partnership. The Apostle Paul and the Philippians were partners in many ways—in giving, receiving, working, praying, rejoicing, struggling, and suffering.¹⁶⁵ Ross concludes,

Philippians 2 illustrates the model of incarnation. When we let go of our pride and power, our privilege and sense of entitlement, and model our life after that of Jesus, we empty ourselves of pride and ethnocentrism, our feelings of cultural, religious and technological superiority. We seek to empty ourselves of the need to initiate, control, dominate, impose, manipulate, and run ahead in partnerships. We seek to empty ourselves of autonomy and independence.¹⁶⁶

The Philippians shared a common purpose with Paul, and stood together interdependency with him in spreading the Gospel.

Bridge Five: Communication

To mention communication as a bridge may seem overly obvious, but many well-meaning missionaries overlook this important piece. Partners easily make assumptions of responsibility—who is doing what, how one should act, or who knows best. For the sake of efficiency, Americans commonly omit steps and assume rather than participate in a simple conversation to smooth out details. Likewise, if Haitians perceive a problem or sense conflict, they become uncommunicative. Neither act is productive. Haitian Episcopal priest Kesner Ajax emphasizes communication in this way,

¹⁶⁵ Philippians 1:3-8.

¹⁶⁶ Ross, 148.

Good coordination requires good communications. Often, communication, clarifications, fact-finding, and cross-cultural understanding, can resolve thorny situations and assist in strengthening relationships. If we address these issues with love, open minds and hearts, and a willingness to grow beyond the narrowness of our own experience and worldview, we will continue to grow in partnership.¹⁶⁷

Listening is integral to communication. As the old saying goes, “God gave each person two ears and one mouth to do twice as much listening as speaking.” Americans tend to listen for the sole sake of replying, but listening to the stories our partners live and tell cultivates humbled hearts. Without listening, giving can become a selfish rather than a selfless act. Through listening, we understand the needs of our brothers and sisters in partnership. Through listening, we may find the need for forgiveness. Through listening, we come to understand.

The importance of listening does not negate the importance of speaking from the heart and being transparent and honest. Partners should establish good communication early in their relationship. Having a covenant that outlines the forms and frequency of communication from each party creates clear expectations, and while electronic email is easy and necessary, there is no substitution for face-to-face meetings. Emails and text messages easily hide body language, true feelings, and honest assessments. The times of personal, quality time are where partners set objectives and have open, honest conversation. Good communication promotes honesty and further builds the relationship of trust and accountability. As Father Ajax observed, communication can often cut off conflicts before they even begin and solve problems while keeping the relationship lovingly intact.

¹⁶⁷ Father Ajax Kesner, interview by author, Les Cayes, Haiti, November 17, 2013.

Setting communication parameters and systems for sharing information is highly valuable. The Methodist Church warns leaders to be aware that it may take some time to establish contact with a partner due to cultural expectations. Practical communication problems and expectations regarding responses to communications are important examples.¹⁶⁸ Spending one hour in a developing country will help Americans appreciate the rarity of a consistent Internet signal. When electricity does not freely flow, holding a charge on a phone is nearly impossible. The second part of this warning demonstrates the importance of bridging the gap between a American's immediate response time and a non-American's relaxed communication style. In Haiti, for instance, everyday life moves less quickly than in America. There is no expectation that an email will be answered the same day, or even the same week. Practical communication problems exist and cultural attitudes vary worldwide. This requires patience and understanding.

Sherwood Lingenfelter wrote a meaningful model for individuals and groups to use in assessing cultural differences. He identifies Americans as time-oriented versus non-Americans who are often event-oriented.¹⁶⁹ Americans are highly concerned with punctuality, schedules, and dates. Non-Americans, on the other hand, emphasize the present experience rather than the past or future. They want to experience the current event, regardless of the time required. To be effective in cross-cultural ministry, he says, both sides must be willing to adapt.¹⁷⁰ Specifically, he encourages Americans to embody the attitude of Christ and satisfy the time and event priorities of others before considering

¹⁶⁸ "International Partnership Development for Local Churches," 8.

¹⁶⁹ Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, and Marvin K. Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003) 40-41; and Storti, 82.

¹⁷⁰ Lingenfelter, 45.

their own.¹⁷¹ While time is equivalent to tasks in America, time in most other societies is subsumed into relationships.¹⁷² This may be the biggest hurdle a cross-cultural relationship jumps.

A healthy partnership includes frequent and open communication. Information flows freely in both directions. During the commencement stage of a partnership, a number of specific actions can be done to develop the relationship between partners—sharing letters, photographs, and emails; exchanging videos; sending newsletters; and learning the other’s language.¹⁷³ With time, communication deepens, and effective information sharing builds a healthy relationship. Asking these questions will precipitate solid conversation: “What are the key pieces of information we need to manage this partnership;” “What decisions do we need to make that require critical information;” “How would we go about collecting this information;” and “What form should the data be put into for easy access and use?”¹⁷⁴

Bridge Six: Responsibility

Another bridge to the relationship development gaps is responsibility. The Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in Switzerland brought together church leaders from every corner of the earth in 1974 to sign a new statement of faith. This signified the recognition of the dissipating dominant role of Western missions, and the

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 50.

¹⁷² Stephen Hoke, and Bill Taylor, *Global Mission Handbook: A Guide for Cross-Cultural Service* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2009), 118.

¹⁷³ “International Partnership Development for Local Churches,” 10.

¹⁷⁴ Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work*, Loc. 644.

call to action for churches to create constant self-examination to evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Church's mission.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, it brought social responsibility to the forefront of mission. Instead of focusing solely on evangelism, the new statement emphasized other issues such as the elimination of poverty, injustice, and hunger. Though the covenant clearly called for missionaries to flow freely *from* and *to* all continents, many Americans misunderstood this as an exclusively Western call to action. God created all of humanity and He calls each person to go to the ends of the earth and find the least of these.¹⁷⁶ Are non-Americans not called to serve, too?

With the new realities of a globalized world, the context of the mission field is changing.¹⁷⁷ Mission is no longer Western churches going forth. Americans and Haitians, Americans and non-Americans, are united by a dual purpose—to love God and love neighbor. God did not solely call Americans to go and make disciples. He did not call Haitians to simply hold out their hands and accept gifts. Christian social responsibility requires all people to care for one another and treat each other equally. Americans are not acting responsibly by continuing to believe they alone have answers. When they do so, they feed into Haitians' expectations that foreign countries will save their country from poverty.¹⁷⁸ Americans have the responsibility to empower Haitians and to support their efforts to lead themselves.

¹⁷⁵ Ralph D. Winter and Steven C., Hawthorne, eds., *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 764-766.

¹⁷⁶ Acts 1:8; Matthew 25:40.

¹⁷⁷ Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 164.

¹⁷⁸ Dubois, 10.

Rowe claims, “The key for both partners is to foment trust in mutually accountable relationships.”¹⁷⁹ The growth of the relationship, the trust that arises from this growth, and the development of mutual interdependency, all combine to create the mutual responsibility and commitment that creates accountability in a successful partnership. Ross adds, “Partnership involves a ready acceptance of responsibility, a readiness to serve the purpose of the common enterprise.”¹⁸⁰ This readiness to serve the common purpose means that each partner is invested in the venture and committed to doing his part to make it successful.

Bridge Seven: Clearly Defined Roles

Nothing can harm a relationship more than a partner who does not fulfill its part of the bargain. This requires both parties to express clearly their respective expectations. Yet, we are not always clear about our own interests, much less the interests of others. Partnerships succeed or fail on the perception of the value gained or lost in the relationship.¹⁸¹ A failure by one partner to meet the other’s expectations inevitably results in judgmental attitude and a loss of trust.¹⁸² When asked if he would do anything differently in establishing his current partnership, Tom Durant answered,

Ensuring that the Haitians fully understood what it took to create and manage an entrepreneurial venture. Because of the dire situation in the community, I naively assumed that an entrepreneurship opportunity would be welcomed. I was wrong. Unfortunately, many Haitians are so accustomed to hand-outs that the prospect of

¹⁷⁹ Rowe, 149.

¹⁸⁰ Ross, 145.

¹⁸¹ Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work*, Loc. 130.

¹⁸² Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Connections*, 60-61.

income derived through hard work and risk-taking is a foreign concept and not automatically accepted.¹⁸³

Because of years of dependency ingrained in the Haitian culture, few completely grasp their personal responsibility. Without building the relationship and plowing through the labors of love, one party may not understand its role and responsibility in the relationship. As Wilcox notes, conflicts can arise in partnerships because people are looking for different things and may not understand the other's hopes and expectations. It is critical to see partnership as a process for creating a shared vision, building trust, and learning to communicate.¹⁸⁴

Clarifying expectations is not something partners do only at the onset of relationships, but throughout all stages of the partnership. Rickett says, "Defining expectations poses a strange irony. Change will more likely occur when expectations are precisely defined. Conversely, broadly stated expectations are less likely to change, simply because they allow more latitude. [Partners] must find the middle ground between machine precision and wishful thinking."¹⁸⁵ Identifying and assigning roles are key points in the coordination stage. While it may be tricky, each party is to address responsibilities and to be as specific as possible to avoid misunderstanding. This must be done with utmost honesty and truthfulness. As things begin to change, communication is key in being flexible and creative to overcome difficulties.

¹⁸³ Durant, interview by author.

¹⁸⁴ Wilcox, "A Short Guide to Partnerships" (London, 2004), 4, <http://www.partnerships.org.uk/part> (accessed: January 14, 2014).

¹⁸⁵ Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work*, Loc. 860.

Bridge Eight: Conflict Resolution

Duane Elmer, in *Cross-Cultural Conflict*, wrote nearly two hundred pages on handling conflicts and disagreements. At the end of his book, Elmer identifies six critical perspectives on how Americans may avoid conflict with their non-western partners:

1. Because most people in the world value relationships above other values, trust is vital, and this takes time.¹⁸⁶ Partnership development and relationship building is not to be taken lightly, nor is it to be rushed.
2. Unlike a majority of Americans, “most people do not separate the person from the person’s words or acts.”¹⁸⁷ Kind words and a slow tongue are items for Americans to remember if they are hoping to avoid hurt feelings and disagreements.
3. Especially in the commencement stage, observing before speaking is recommended. Cultural differences are not right or wrong, nor are they good or bad.¹⁸⁸ They are simply different. Americans are advised not to offend their new friends by accusing them of driving on the “wrong” side of the road.
4. Instead of quickly assigning blame when something goes awry or demanding to know who is responsible, it may be wise for Americans to hone their skills in “reading between the lines and interpreting people who express themselves indirectly.”¹⁸⁹ For instance, Haitians cannot bear to disappoint their partners and would rather agree or say “yes” than risk offending their American friends by

¹⁸⁶ Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Conflict*, 178-179.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 179.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 23-24.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 179.

saying “no.”¹⁹⁰ Americans must be prepared to ask direct and indirect questions and patiently await truthful responses.

5. When an ambiguous conflict arises, Americans are recommended to be gracious, courteous, calm, and patient. On the other hand, as Elmer observes, non-Americans should realize indirect strategies, avoidance, or lack of communication may be interpreted as devious or deceitful because their Western partners welcome forthrightness.¹⁹¹
6. When commencing a relationship, Elmer advises to build at least one friendship neutral from the partnership and allow that person to be a cultural interpreter, cultural informant, or cultural bridge-builder.¹⁹² This does not mean, however, that the partners do not talk directly about cultural differences and how they can overcome such conflicts in behaviors. The bridge-builder is an additional component to the relationship and partnership to give advice, be direct, and intervene on one or both partners' behalf.

God calls his servants to love and respect each other. Sherron Kay George in *Called as Partners in Christ's Service* highlights, “Love cultivates mutual sharing, mutual serving, mutual forgiveness, and extends to mutual suffering.”¹⁹³ Love and unity weave partnerships together. Avoiding the conflict, or cutting losses and running away, does not solve the problem. When conflict arises, it is best to walk through the tension

¹⁹⁰ Sarah A. Lanier, *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures* (Hagerstown, MD: McDougal Publishing, 2000), Loc. 336.

¹⁹¹ Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Conflict*, 179-180.

¹⁹² Ibid., 180.

¹⁹³ Sherron Kay George, *Called as Partners in Christ's Service: The Practice of God's Mission* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2004), 21.

together with love, faithfulness, respectful communication, and forgiveness. Jesus did this; the Apostle Paul did this. Elmer offers practical advice for dealing with cross-cultural conflict resolution. Those desiring to enter into a mission partnership may wish to memorize these points.¹⁹⁴

Stages of Partnership Development

Americans like to know what to expect before jumping in to partnerships. With the risk of sounding technical or formulaic, it is important to know the stages of partnership and how to navigate slowly through each to build a solid relationship.¹⁹⁵ Proper partnership development and cultural education bring forth the ability to bridge gaps in cross-cultural mission relationships. As in any relationship, there is a time to get to know one another, a time to define the relationship, a time to consider moving forward, and a time of evaluating and growing, argues Rickett in *Building Strategic Relationships*, Rickett. Some have given titles to these stages, i.e., “friendship, formation, function and fruitfulness,”¹⁹⁶ while others such as the Diocese of Sheffield, Mission Partnerships Task Group refer to them as “competition, cooperation, coordination and coevolution.”¹⁹⁷ The best description of the stages are: commencement, coordination, collaboration, and continuation. These stages encompass pre-partnership relationship building, identifying

¹⁹⁴ Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Conflict*, 180-181.

¹⁹⁵ Many authors make the case for long-term relationships versus short-term contractual agreements, or even short-term trips. Nilufa Akhter Khanom is a proponent of durability and long-term partnership, especially as it relates to poverty alleviation in developing countries. Khanom, *Partnership for Development: Alternative Approaches to Poverty Alleviation in Bangladesh* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 12, eBook Collection, EBSCOhost.

¹⁹⁶ Rickett, *Building Strategic Relationships*, cover.

¹⁹⁷ “The Mission Partnership Journey,” Diocese of Sheffield, Mission Partnerships Task Group, May 2013, accessed April 11, 2014, <http://www.sheffield.anglican.org/mission-partnerships>.

the needs and establishing the purpose of the partnership, entering into the partnership, operating the partnership and executing on the activities needed to accomplish its purpose, and creating the attitudes and conditions needed for a permanent and sustainable result.

Intimacy with God cannot be rushed, just as closeness and intimacy in faithful friendships and partnerships cannot be hurried. Authors Heuertz and Pohl observe it takes years to build the kind of relationships that result in transformation.¹⁹⁸ Taking time to carefully and methodically move through the stages of commencement, coordination, and collaboration results in a fuller understanding of what it means to be both a giver and receiver; however, because many Americans are uncomfortable receiving, they do not know how to receive in a humble manner. Instead of embodying Christ-like humility and allowing someone to serve them, the Western tendency is to push through and say, “Let me do this for you.”¹⁹⁹ This leads to the problem identified in Section One—dependency.

Common ground agreed upon during the commencement and coordination stages, and recorded in the covenant, may assist both partners in reaching their potential. What is given and what is received may be different, depending on each partner’s needs. Setting ground rules will be an important step toward the realization that through partnership, a community focused on learning can be developed.

¹⁹⁸ Christopher Heuertz and Christine Pohl, *Friendship at the Margins: Discovering Mutuality in Service and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2010), 28.

¹⁹⁹ Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*, 34.

Stage One: Commencement

David Wilcox identifies the first stage of partnership development as “initiating.”²⁰⁰ This appears to be the most important of all of the phases of partnership. The behavior established at the partnership’s initiation will be, in most cases, replicated throughout the lifecycle of the relationship. Who begins the partnership will influence its initial style of operation. Continuous evaluation and accountability are key, as the initial style may need to change with time.

Time is crucial during the commencement stage; this period should not be rushed. It is a time to truly get to know one another, assessing whether or not the relationship holds promise.²⁰¹ Both entities should find out everything they can about the other, ask as many questions as possible, learn the values of the other, and determine if the relationship has potential. In his presentation at the Living Waters For The World 20th Anniversary Celebration, the General Manager for the Presbyterian Mission Agency Greg Allen-Pickett said, “Relationships are at the core of partnerships; there must be time allowed to understand who the other person or organization is.”²⁰² This may include visits to a church, meetings with community elders, or strolls through the local market and parks. Authentic, strategic conversations are important, and each partner should purposefully get to know the other.

²⁰⁰ David Wilcox, “A Short Guide to Partnerships” (London, 2004), 4, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.partnerships.org.uk/part>.

²⁰¹ Mary T. Lederleitner, *Cross-Cultural Partnerships: Navigating the Complexities of Money and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Books, 2010), 40.

²⁰² Greg Allen-Pickett, “Doing Mission in Partnership,” heard by author in Oxford, Mississippi, on March 22, 2014.

It is also during the commencement stage that paternalism has the most opportunity to creep into the relationship. If this happens, maintaining equality and interdependence between the partners will become increasingly difficult. For example, if one partner comes to the table with demands and lists of objectives without first having learned about the other, then the larger or more financially stable organization will almost certainly dominate everything that happens. The result will be a one-sided relationship rather than a true partnership.

The commencement stage includes long and unhurried conversations, visiting homes, worshiping, fellowship, and sharing meals. If carefully implemented, this stage of the partnership will allow each partner to comfortably begin to trust the other. For instance, this trust might be demonstrated by sharing problems concerning children or work. Without this important “coming to know each other” and the careful development of trust, the partnership cannot develop strength and resiliency. If this stage of the partnership is not undertaken carefully and thoroughly, one partner inevitably will feel inferior and often will simply give in to the other’s wishes. During the important commencement stage, the two parties must lay the groundwork utilizing intentional conversations to establish the necessities of their partnership—a Triune model, a participatory relationship, a covenant of trust and accountability, mutuality and interdependency, communication and responsibility.²⁰³

When both participants feel comfortable, it is time to move past the commencement stage and into coordination. Here the parties, together, define the relationship. This is the time to make an honest and real assessment of the other’s nature and character. Observes Daniel Rickett, “Compatibility is a function of having common

ground in operational values and ministry priorities. To be compatible is to be able to work together with a minimum of modification.”²⁰⁴ If the compatibility is not apparent at this stage, it may not be in the best interest of either party to move forward.

Stage Two: Coordination

The next stage of partnership development is coordination. Commitment is challenging for many people, young and old alike, but with a partnership, it is the foundation. Partnerships are not made of bricks and cement and purchased with dollars; rather, they are spiritual entities created with people and hearts, purchased with commitment.²⁰⁵ The Methodist Church encourages leaders to formally recognize the beginning of the partnership.²⁰⁶ Just as a man would go to a woman’s father and ask permission to court his daughter, so should the partners formally recognize the start of the partnership, perhaps in a celebration or through a time of worship.

Upon the decision to move forward into a partnership, Wilcox identifies several other important areas upon which to focus during deliberate conversations: reviewing current trends and recognized authorities in the field; understanding the styles of working and the preferred means of communication; working together to develop a list of mutual goals; sharing an understanding of problems, projects and activities designed to meet those goals; and discussing arrangements for decision-making, potential staffing,

²⁰⁴ Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work: A Guide for Ministry Leaders*, Loc. 517.

²⁰⁵ Melvin Flores, “Stages of Partnership,” heard by author in Oxford, Mississippi, on March 22, 2014.

²⁰⁶ “International Partnership Development for Local Churches,” 8, accessed January 14, 2014, http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/me_Partnership_document.pdf.

administration and project management.²⁰⁷ These conversations lead to a smoother transition into logistics and specifics.

Melvin Flores, the Living Waters for the World In-Country Director in Honduras, agrees with Wilcox. Aligning with the proposal of “Bridge Seven—Clearly Defined Roles,” Flores identifies the coordination phase as “Who will do what? Who is in charge of what?”²⁰⁸ Putting these decisions into writing gives a clear vision and picture of the road ahead, for which a covenant of trust and accountability, as discussed in Bridge Three, will be extremely helpful. A covenant differs from a contract. By definition, a covenant is a solemn binding promise made with a commitment based on one’s faith in God and made for a purpose blessed by Him. This is a guiding document to be revisited often in the partnership. Both partners need to remain consciously and continuously sensitive to each other’s interests. Each should remain guarded against the tendency to push his/her own agenda.²⁰⁹ If the established covenant is mutual and interdependent, as discussed in Bridge Four, an overriding theme of equality and mutuality will emerge and be seen as critical for success. Once there is cooperation, coordination can begin to develop. Once a sense of partnership begins to grow, along with a mutual understanding of the mission and goals of the partnership, and an exploration of how gifts can be shared, the result will be collaboration, the next stage of partnership.

²⁰⁷ Wilcox, “A Short Guide to Partnerships.”

²⁰⁸ Flores, “Stages of Partnership.”

²⁰⁹ “International Partnership Development for Local Churches,” 8.

Stage Three: Collaboration

Flores identified the third stage of partnership development as collaboration. It is identifiable when both partners have the same vision and work together effectively toward the same goals. He described it as walking through a storm and sharing an umbrella.²¹⁰ United by one purpose, the partners carry the load together, as opposed to behaving as separate entities. If a true partnership exists, one sees the need for the other, and vice versa. The relationship makes each party stronger, and in the end, it will become a stepping-stone to empowering the leadership and strength of the other. On a wall of Agape Christian Academy in Mukono, Uganda is this quote, “What you do for us without us is not for us.” This effectively illustrates the detriment of paternalism and the significance of collaboration.

Communication continues to be at the forefront of collaboration, especially if the partners live in different cities, countries, or hemispheres, and evaluation does not happen only at the end of the relationship. Embedded within constant communication is constant evaluation. Effective collaborating relationships progress beyond doctrinal statements and organizational style to ask broader questions like, “Is the partnership simply supplementing each other’s needs, or are we truly seeking what God is inviting us to do together?”²¹¹

By this stage in partnership, conflict, as discussed in Bridge Eight, will surely arise. Even the healthiest of partnerships can include unmet expectations,

²¹⁰ Flores, “Stages of Partnership.”

²¹¹ Wilcox, “A Short Guide to Partnerships,” 3.

miscommunication, and cultural miscues.²¹² Acknowledging conflict is important, and it should be resolved in a spirit of mutual openness, respect, sensitivity, and commitment to one another. The result will be immense learning, growth, and continued collaboration.²¹³ Christ and the disciples are ideal models for the empowerment of conflict. Christ led the disciples into and through conflict and failure. Instead of avoiding conflict, ignoring it, or cutting and running, Christ guided them through the tension. He answered tough questions and created thoughtful dialogue. For deep leadership and authentic relationship to emerge, partnership cannot avoid failure, but must fall, change, and rise again. With appreciation of differences in partner identities, each can learn from the other and grow through mutual empowerment, allowing each to maximize the attributes they bring to the table.

Stage Four: Continuation

Though evaluation is essential through each stage of partnership, a time comes when each partner asks, “Where are we? Are we where we intended to be? What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?”²¹⁴ This begs the question: is partnership forever? How will mission partners know when and if the partnership is over? Rickett contrasts that for Americans a partnership is usually over when the objective is accomplished, but for non-Americans, the partnership may graduate to another level, but it never ends because it is a relationship, not a task.²¹⁵ This is a gap of the widest

²¹² Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work*, Loc. 689.

²¹³ “International Partnership Development for Local Churches,” 10.

²¹⁴ “The Mission Partnership Journey,” Diocese of Sheffield.

²¹⁵ Rickett, Loc. 719.

proportions. If partnership is viewed through the lens of *koinonia*, why would anyone ever enter into a friendship or relationship with the thought of there being an ending?

Evaluation is critical in every relationship. For instance, many married couples meet once a year to discuss their individual goals, collective dreams, and to affirm and grow with their spouse. If the partnership establishes mutual expectations during the commencement and coordination stages, partners may want to use the continuation stage to reflect on what is working and what is not. Is the partnership still needed or necessary? Is it adding any value?²¹⁶ Is the partnership contributing in a meaningful and purposeful way to the community in which it exists? Is it adding value and growth to the partners themselves? Is it glorifying God and serving as a testament to His love and commitment to His children? These are serious questions that must be addressed by both mission partners, and if the answers are not “yes” to each, it may be time to discuss modifying the partnership.

Alternative Words or Descriptions for Partnership

To this point, the concept of partnership has been thoroughly assessed. Knowing the history of colonialism and the implication of partnerships gone awry, having explored biblical *koinonia*, and understanding the stages in partnership development, is ‘partnership’ the best word to use to describe Christ-centered cross-cultural relationships? Perhaps there are better alternatives, such as accompaniment or friendship.

²¹⁶ Wilcox, “A Short Guide to Partnerships,” 5.

Accompaniment

The concept of accompaniment combats many of the negative connotations of partnership. ‘Accompaniment’ is usually defined as a musical part that supports or partners with a solo instrument, voice, or group. Webster’s Dictionary also gives accompaniment the definition of, “something added for embellishment, completeness, or symmetry.”²¹⁷ As Christians, we exist to be *with*, rather than to do *for*. Wilson Kennedy adds, “We walk together as Christ walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We react to what we see and then realize that it is Christ with us.”²¹⁸

The old phrase, “God created human beings, not human doings” applies here; as such, Christians are called to walk alongside their fellow servants and partners. They are invited to share their lives and stories and find common ground. Within the unity of the body of Christ, we find completeness in authentic partnership. We are here to accompany each other.

Friendship

Dana Robert asked in her article, “Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity,” if it is realistic to emphasize friendship as a contemporary framework for relational mission in today’s globalized world.²¹⁹ Structured partnership models replaced personal relationships amidst ongoing struggles over the decolonization of missions in the 1950s. While structured models may have broken some

²¹⁷ “Accompaniment,” *Meriam-Webster Dictionary*, accessed April 22, 2015, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accompaniment>.

²¹⁸ Kennedy, interview.

²¹⁹ Robert, 101.

patterns in dependency and paternalism, these partnerships emphasized business models and projects while pushing mutuality and equality aside. With the minimization of personal relationships, the crucial element of friendship also lost recognition. Friendship will resolve many mission problems and will lead the work to a more successful issue. In today's world of instant communication, short attention spans, and the equating of material development to mission, the sacrificial practices of friendship stand as evidence of God's love for all people.²²⁰

The word 'friend' is indicative of a vertical and a horizontal relationship. Vertically, friend is a covenant word. Jesus calls His followers friends: "You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends."²²¹ Horizontally, because of the same indwelling Holy Spirit, Christians are called to experience deep connections with each other, as illustrated in Paul's letter to Philemon, "I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people."²²²

Koinonia, as used in Acts 2:42, implies intimate communion and selfless sharing. For instance, a "covenant friend" is not just a friend who you like; a covenant friend is a person God ordained you to love unconditionally. This kind of love for another human being can be challenging to maintain. Adversity tests friendships, and friends must go

²²⁰ Robert, 106.

²²¹ John 15:14-15.

²²² Philemon 1:6-7.

through trials before the friendship completely qualifies as a covenant friendship. This is essentially the thesis in Elmer's *Cross-Cultural Conflicts*; partnerships will succeed and last when unconditional, freely given love bridges a friendship together through gaps, trials, and adversity.

Ugandan Michael Badriaki, interviewed by London School of Theology's

President Krish Kandiah for *Christianity Today*, adds,

When a person, who has experienced the love of God, decides to be present with other people, there is nothing as generous as that, and I think the Western world needs to understand this. Most cultures in Africa, as imperfect as it may be, have familiarity with a sense of connection to one another through principles like *ubuntu*, hospitality, mutuality. These things God has allowed us to share are priceless. I am so floored by some Christians in the West who think the best things to give are finances or material stuff. As if Jesus could have flashed us with money, sent us a trillion dollars, and not died on the cross! Giving ourselves is primary. Giving resources is secondary.²²³

Giving of ourselves is indicative of friendship and community. Our friends are not projects or personal embodiments of a cause, but partners in community.²²⁴ Desmond Tutu defined community by explaining the ancient Southern African philosophy *ubuntu*: "It is to say, 'My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours.' We belong in a bundle of life. We say, 'A person is a person through other persons.' It is not, 'I think; therefore, I am.' It says rather: 'I am human because I belong.'"²²⁵ The sense of neighborliness, of care for others, is the essence of both *ubuntu* and of the body of Christ.

²²³ Krish Kandiah, "When does Western aid to Africa hinder more than it helps?" *Christian Today*, accessed April 15, 2015, <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/when.does.western.aid.to.africa.hinder.more.than.it.helps/51983.htm>.

²²⁴ Heuertz and Pohl, 38.

²²⁵ Lindsay Linegar, "You Need Africa More Than Africa Needs You," *Relevant Magazine*, accessed April 15, 2015, <http://www.relevantmagazine.com/reject-apathy/you-need-africa-more-africa-needs-you>.

African missionary Godfrey Callaway observed that African *ubuntu* and the ethics of Jesus converged into friendship, which is a sign of hope for the future of the Church.²²⁶ In friendship, people are not objectified as potential converts or projects but encountered in a relationship of mutuality and reciprocity. Authors Heuertz and Pohl write, “Friendships are revelatory of truth. Within friendship we learn about ourselves as we see our love and action through the eyes of another who loves and trusts us.”²²⁷ In addition, no two friends are exactly the same. Friends are met through all courses and facets of life, and friendships have unique personalities of their own. So it should be in partnership. Despite the common bridges and the general stages of development, there is no one-size-fits-all mentality. God uses different people throughout all walks of life to teach and mold us.

As Robert concluded, friendship remains the proof and the promise that Christianity is a multicultural, worldwide religion.²²⁸ Cross-cultural partnership is not just a kind of global networking that looks good on a resume. It is more than a status update on Facebook; it is a state of true understanding realized by walking in someone else’s shoes.

Summary

American mission strategy continues to perceive partnerships as a functional activity with strategic technique. This stems not only from confusion about the word ‘partnership,’ but how partnership is viewed through the Gospel message. Partnerships

²²⁶ Robert, 102.

²²⁷ Heuertz and Pohl, 10.

²²⁸ Robert, 106.

begin in Christ; they are not man-centered or project-focused. If not grounded and propelled by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, well-intended Christians will continue building lop-sided, transactional partnerships.

Having fully discussed gaps in cross-cultural partnerships in Section One, Section Three focused on how to navigate the pitfalls by building bridges of faithful friendships and interdependent relationships. The solution presented is three-fold: teaching biblical *koinonia*; gaining understanding of the development, or stages, of relationships; and recognizing accompaniment and friendship as alternatives to partnership. A simple change of language may be one key to transforming Western thought. A change in terminology is symbolic of the need for a new perspective and approach to global missions. By adopting a Christ-centered attitude of humility and focusing on the gifts and contributions of others, rather than focusing on predetermined agenda and task, Western missionaries will better serve God's purposes. God does not intend for Americans merely to save souls or build projects. God expects all of His children to share each others' burdens and work together in communion to meet each other's spiritual, emotional and physical needs through mutual *koinonia*, accompaniment, friendship, and above all, through Christ's love.

SECTION FOUR: TRACK 02 ARTIFACT DESCRIPTION

American mission strategy often presents a one-sided view of partnership, resulting in unhealthy relationships with non-Western partners. The term ‘partnership’ itself has become controversial, both in Christian and international development circles. Partnership is most commonly used in the Western world, and much of the definition of the word, even in the context of the Church, derives from a business vocabulary. Although the business perspective of the term partnership has value, one of the major challenges is the viewpoint of one doing something tangible for the other. The partnership ceases to exist upon completion of the project.

Partnership does not likely mean the same thing to an American or European Christian as it does to a Ugandan or Haitian Christian. It is not that one’s understanding is better than the other; the word simply has different meanings in different cultures. If an American Christian leader insists on using the term, even to the extent of indoctrinating his or her non-Western counterparts in a Western understanding, yet another problem arises. This is why we resonate with Dr. Patrick Murunga’s critique and seek to use descriptors other than partnerships.²²⁹ For our artifact, Michael Badriaki and I consider a working modification of the term ‘partnership.’

The West, especially the American Church, has historically, and currently, dominates the short and long term missions market. We would like to contribute to the discussion by emphasizing the necessary shift away from a one-sided model of partnership in missions. By bringing this to the forefront of missional thought, we will be

²²⁹ Dr. Patrick Murunga is the Principal of African Theological Seminary in Nairobi, Kenya. During his lecture in Capetown, South Africa, he challenged the DMINLGP students to rethink cross-cultural missions and create a new understanding of the word partnership.

sensitive to avoid a monopoly model of partnership, especially since church partnerships around the world are increasingly with non-Western communities of faith in Jesus Christ.

Additionally, our artifact will capture an understanding and willingness to look at the cross-cultural life of Christ-followers from around the world with a global perspective of unity within diversity. For example, even though we are using the English language for our academic artifact, we are mindful in choosing words that communicate universal values, feelings and concepts about what partnership looks like in non-Western communities, such as Haiti and Uganda.

In step with the Scriptures, partnership will embody Christian principles of unconditional love, respect, trust, truthfulness, listening, sharing in joys and sorrows (suffering together), equality, mutuality, repentance, and good works of service. This results in what we would like to call “faithful friendship and interdependent partnership” in mission and the Gospel, inspired by the encouraging words written by The Apostle Paul, “I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”²³⁰

Lastly, the phraseology of “faithful friendship and interdependent partnership” points back to the foundation and fundamental reason for a discussion about “partnerships in missions,” which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many have made partnerships transactional and contractual in nature because modern church missions are frequently equated to only short-term visits and doing projects. Worse yet, partnerships in missions usually promote the understanding of the Western donor church’s goals and ideals to work towards the implementation of its programs. However, a biblical

²³⁰ Philippians 1:3-5.

understanding of any rationale for the global church to be united in service is about the proclamation of the Gospel. This includes our love for God and one another and our identity as ambassadors of Christ and citizenship in the Kingdom of God, from where the acts of good works of service to the world proceed. Because of the love of Jesus Christ, the Gospel, and its liberating power, which God has lavished on us, Jesus calls us friends: “You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends.”²³¹ As friends of Jesus Christ, we are called to extend this friendship to our sisters and brothers in the global Church particularly for Gospel partnerships. In Paul’s sociocultural context, the concept of partnership was *koinonia*. However, *koinonia*, or joint participation, calls for “faithful friendship and interdependent partnership” transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To exemplify this concept, Michael Badriaki and I have produced an eight-part video study to guide Western mission leaders and organizations in thinking about their future “faithful friendships and interdependent partnerships.” Together, we present a unique point-of-view, as Michael is Ugandan, and I am American. We have embodied this artifact and dissertation through attempting to humbly cultivate a faithful friendship and interdependent partnership. We recognized early on that working together to complete the artifact was not a means to an end, but only the beginning of a lifelong interdependent partnership to achieve something greater and change the way American Christians view missions.

²³¹ John 15:14-15.

SECTION FIVE: ARTIFACT SPECIFICATION

Our dissertation artifact is an eight-part video commentary, each video not exceeding two and a half minutes. They are practical tools to begin a conversation to promote a change of heart and a change of mind. Included with the videos are a number of questions for mission leaders to ask their groups to challenge their current understanding of partnership. Below are the audience, goals and strategies, scope and content, and a description of each video:

Audience

- The primary audience of this dissertation is church mission committees, short-term mission teams, and mission or non-profit organizations.

Goals and Strategies

- Christian community depends upon authentic relationships. This artifact and dissertation will be helpful to Western churches and groups looking to create cross-cultural relationships. It will provide a starting point to build a foundation for a spiritual and relational formative journey.
- The series will challenge American church mission teams and leaders to rethink how their church and teams participate in cross-cultural mission. Are they looking to complete a project only, or are they ready to build a faithful friendship and interdependent partnership?
- A collaborative mission strategy will help American churches avoid the practice of cultural superiority and foster healthy relationships with their non-Western partners.

- As a result, cross-cultural partnerships will transform lives by encouraging unity and bolstering respect, with significant roles for each member, empowerment of local leaders, and appreciation of the need to learn cultural norms, communication, and trust.

Track 02 Artifact Scope and Content

- My dissertation outlines partnership development between American mission organizations and Haitian communities and leaders.
- The content is organized simply in eight videos. Each session includes a narrative that illustrates the topic or question. A series of questions accompany the videos for the mission committee or church group to discuss amongst themselves.
- Shonnie Streder, a videographer from First United Methodist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, filmed and produced the video series, “Cross-Cultural Talks: Faithful Friendship and Interdependent Relationships”:
 1. “Introducing the Cross-Cultural Talks Series” – Who are we? Why are cross-cultural conversations necessary?
 2. “What are Faithful Friendship and Interdependent Partnership?” - In this video, we unpack this alternative phrase for traditional mission partnerships. Christian community depends on personal relationships.
 3. “Mission and the Gospel” - Do we really need each other? What is the difference between transactional mission and transformational mission? What guidance do you receive from Philippians 2?
 4. “Assumptions” - How do assumptions influence relationships?
 5. “Prayer” - How do you pray for your friends and partners?

6. “Worship” - How does worship affect partnership?
7. “Generosity” - Can you give without loving? Can you love without giving?
8. “Closing Thoughts” - How do you walk through tension instead of going around it? How are *Koinonia* and *agape* love illustrated in partnerships?

Standards of Publication

We have developed a website—www.crossculturaltalks.com. This houses all of the videos with corresponding questions for group discussion and biographical information about the authors to encourage interaction and feedback. The videos can also be accessed at <https://vimeopro.com/firstshreveport/cross-cultural-talks>.

Artifact Development Process

Expert adviser, Dave Merwin, coached us through the Alpha-Beta-Gold evaluation process. We developed a specific timeline for script review, filming, and editing, and chose six individuals to help us hone the scripts for each video. The evaluators accompanied us as we edited the video content and developed the website. This was a team effort between two students, six evaluators, and one videographer/editor. Shonnie Streder donated her time and equipment to film and edit the videos, and Emily Andrews donated her time in building the website. Other than buying the domain name, www.crossculturaltalks.com, we did not spend money to develop the Artifact.

Artifact Promotion

The Artifact will be available on www.crossculturaltalks.com. We will primarily promote it through social media. Ashley has also arranged for the Louisiana Volunteers

in Mission network to use the videos in their team leader training, and for Solar Under the Sun to incorporate the videos into their partnership development course. Even before completion, we had requests from various non-profit and cross-cultural ministries to use the video series in their management and leadership trainings. As we continue to expand the video series and discussion questions, we have discussed moving the artifact into a marketable resource for mission teams, churches, and anyone interested in participating in cross-cultural partnerships.

SECTION SIX: POSTSCRIPT

At the same time I began the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) program at George Fox Evangelical Seminary, I started work as the Global Missions Pastor at First United Methodist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana. It is a large church with close to 5,000 members on roll, and the Senior Pastor had announced a new ten-year vision with emphases on discipleship, leadership, small groups, and missions. In the area of missions, God had given him the vision to create a mission partnership on every continent. While I participated in missions for nearly half my life, I had never started from the ground up; I had participated only in existing partnerships.

Studying cross-cultural partnerships could not have come at a better time for me. As I researched, I put the lessons learned into practice. My ministry team spent time in prayer and discernment about where we felt God was calling us to be in the world. Instead of jumping right in to tangible projects and short-term trips, our ministry teams flew around the globe meeting community leaders in Haiti, Costa Rica, Uganda, Ecuador, and Russia. These were not ‘doing’ trips, they were ‘being’ trips. The goal was to learn from leaders and listen to stories. We focused simply on getting to know the people and the places. Likewise, our partners began visiting our faith family in Shreveport, Louisiana. They saw the needs in our community, and now four of the five partners have made the commitment to visit every other year to work with our local mission ministry.

Simultaneously, for the DMin, I wrote academic essays each semester on partnership principles I read in books and journals, and how they performed in practical, real-life situations. The more I researched, the more I realized and valued the importance of relationships, friendships, community, and connection. After a third trip to Uganda, the

children at one school said to me, “You came back! You kept your word.” They were used to broken promises and unfulfilled dreams from other Western groups. After a return trip to Ecuador, an older lady uttered the words, “You being here makes me feel like I matter. No one ever comes back.” My heart was broken and filled, all at the same time.

Partnerships are not about projects. Partnerships are about uniting the body of Christ and bringing children of God together. That is not an easy sell to my congregation. Though we have had 141 members in the last two years go on one of our partnership development trips, the question I am most frequently asked is, “What will I do when I get there?” Relationship building is not as glamorous as building a new clean water system for a community. When I reflect on my twenty years of cross-cultural mission experience, and the last seven years in Haiti, many projects have been completed, but what I remember are the people. I recall with joy the relationships, the conversations, my learning about the culture and the country, and the knowledge that the people I have come to know and love have changed me. I have been transformed and changed because of partnership. I remember the people I met. I remember how I felt. I remember what I learned. The project is only secondary.

What has fascinated me about the process of forming new partnerships is how no two partnerships are the same. Our relationships in Ecuador are different from those in Uganda and Russia. In each place, our spiritual gifts are being used differently, and we are learning lessons. The one consistent factor in each is this: two years later, after multiple visits to each site and sharing and learning with our partners, we are greeted and treated like family. Within each partnership, I have a ‘sister’, a ‘brother,’ and at least one

child calling me “Mom.” Slowly and steadily, we have formed, and are continuing to form, faithful friendships and interdependent partnerships.

The scope of this paper only scratches the surface when it comes to cross-cultural partnerships. For additional study, I recommend an in-depth look solely at the developing world’s thoughts on present-day partnership. How would a Haitian, or a Ugandan, create a partnership from the ground-up with an American church or team? It would also be fascinating to analyze the psychological and sociological effect dependency syndrome has had on the Haitian people. Who are the leaders addressing the problems and actively seeking solutions? Americans, Haitians, and I especially, still have so much more to learn.

APPENDIX A

Field Research Interviews

Over the course of two years, I conducted many interviews in Haiti and in the United States. I spoke with priests, pastors, leaders, scholars, businessmen, and non-profit directors and asked countless questions about their roles in partnerships and what they have learned working in Haiti. The following pages include each of the interview transcripts I completed for field research.

**Interview Transcript – Father Kesner Ajax
Conducted November 17, 2013 in Port Au Prince, Haiti**

What is your position and for how long have you been in this position?

I am the Coordinator of The Episcopal Diocese of Partnership Program. While it is ultimately overseen by The Diocesan Bishop of Haiti, the Rt. Rev. Jean Zaché Duracin appointed me specifically to run the program and meet with the partners. I am assisted by a volunteer in the USA, the Rev. Roger Bowen, to carry out the program's mission and goals.

What does it mean to partner?

The early church reached out in partnership with the church in Jerusalem, and today the broader church must join together in the service of our Lord in Haiti. As sisters and brothers in Christ, Haitians and Americans come together to share God's love with each other in many different ways.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Good coordination requires good communications. Our program exists to keep everyone fully informed. Often, communication, clarification, fact-finding, and cross-cultural understanding, can resolve thorny situations and assist in strengthening relationships. If we address these issues with love, open minds and hearts, and a willingness to grow beyond the narrowness of our own experience and worldview, we will continue to grow in partnership.

What makes partnerships effective?

The Partnership Program serves Haitians and Americans by giving them a system through which they can work in confidence, trust, accountability, and transparency.

Have you observed overwhelmingly successful partnerships? If so, what made them different?

Our Partnership Program has worked well. The Partnership Program serves Haitians and Americans by giving them a system through which they can work in confidence, trust, accountability, and transparency. The love of God is expressed through the mission and ministries of the Partnership Program in a variety of ways: education, healthcare, agriculture, micro enterprise, nutrition, food and clothing. These are ways through which we can share the story of God's love, the joy of Christ, and accomplish God's work in Haiti. Together, the partners seek to discern God's particular placement and timing in these mutual ministries.

On the contrary, groups fail when they do not communicate and work well with the Partnership Program. We are the bridge between the American group and the Haitian group. We facilitate partnership; we are there to answer questions, to be culturally mindful of both groups, and to ensure things are not difficult. Groups must ask questions, especially when they do not understand why. When there is no communication, partnerships fail.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

Partnership is about building relationships. We do many wonderful things together in Christ's name, but most of all we come together to grow in oneness with each other and with Christ our God. All that we do and all that we are, by God's grace, grows out of our inspired hearts, which moves us to serve. Blessings abound for all that are involved, receivers and givers alike.

The coordination of these efforts is essential for their proper functioning. The Partnership Program exists to provide such coordination. These organized efforts help the Bishop of Haiti to be better involved and informed for his oversight responsibilities.

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

Let me share with you the final thoughts in our partnership booklet that is given to every team and member of the Partnership Program:

The people of Haiti are a wondrous blessing to all who come to the dear land of Haiti. The deep and abiding faith of the people, the beauty of the mountains and the sea, and the beaming smiles on the faces of those who have experienced such tremendous difficulty, delivers strength and warmth to all who are blessed to encounter them. The power of the love of God is apparent in Haiti in a way that is seen in few other places around the world. It is truly a blessing to be able to serve in Haiti. God is good.

Haiti as a people and as a country struggle desperately. Bishop Duracin often prays publically that Haiti and her people may be delivered from their misery. That is happening in and through the work of Christ, which is revealed through the work of the Church. The Church in Haiti is just as directly involved in bringing the incarnate presence of Christ into the lives of people as anywhere else in the world. There is no doubt that if there have ever been "some of the least of these" in this world, they can be found in Haiti. There is no doubt that the Church in Haiti is faithful in serving these "least" among us. Thousands of Americans join in this vital mission and ministry of love. Sisters and brothers in Christ join hands and hearts across cultural and national divides to become one in service for Christ to the people of Haiti. The Partnership Program offers a way to facilitate these ministries and provides a direct, transparent, and sound financial framework. Money and goods that are sent to the Partnership Program go directly to the Diocese and are used for their intended purposes. Come. Join us in Christ. Be blessed and a blessing. And may our Lord bless you.

**Interview Transcript – Roger Bowen
Conducted November 25, 2013**

What is your position in Haiti and for how long have you been in this position?

I am a retired Episcopal priest and school headmaster with 30+ years of collaborating Episcopal schools in the States with those in Haiti. I complete 4-5 trips to Haiti each year. Working with 50-70 pairs of partners.

What does the word “partnership” mean?

Co-equals, both sides benefit, a spiritual relationship, involves prayer, involves looking—in person—into each other’s eyes, means listening, means it’s two ways, not one side just helping the other.

Is there such a thing as “sustainable partnership?”

I hope so.

What does it mean to partner?

A generality = American have stuff, Haitians have spirit... Pretty good trade off.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Cross-cultural sensitivity, putting oneself in the shoes of the other.

What makes partnerships effective?

No assumptions.

What do you wish every American short-term mission team knew before coming to Haiti?

Don't start with comparisons: “Oh, this is like... fill in the blank.”

Partnership is a long-term process.

No one has the “answers.”

Partnership in Haiti redefines giving and receiving.

This Pledge, written by Jackie Williams, Arts Center Director for Partners in Health Socio-Medical Complex in Cange, is telling:

1. Mindful that I am traveling to the third world country where life is harsh, I promise that no matter how tired, thirsty, sore, hot or uncomfortable I may be, I will not complain.
2. Mindful that I am privileged to visit a new country, I will go with an adventurous attitude, full of curiosity and enthusiasm.
3. Mindful that finding food is a daily struggle for most Haitians, I will gratefully accept whatever nourishment is offered me with gratitude, and that I will at least taste every dish.
4. Mindful that I represent America, the richest and most privileged nation on earth and in history, I will try my best to be always polite and always humble.

5. Mindful that I am a guest in Haiti, I will do my best to utter at least a few words in my hosts' language, Creole.
6. Mindful that the Haitians played a huge part in our history, stopping Napoleon's army, which intended to reclaim the Louisiana Purchase by invading New Orleans, I will go with gratitude.
7. Mindful that the Haitians, being poor in material goods are infinitely rich in spiritual goods, I will attend church with joy, expecting to be blessed.
8. Mindful that Jesus came on earth as a poor person saying: "The poor you have always with you," I will try my best to see poor people as a beacon and not as a burden.
9. Mindful that my time on earth is short [even if I am very young] I will make a valiant effort to use my time in Haiti to contribute something—in honest work, in music, in art, in playing games with children...something—so that the Haitians that I meet will be glad that I came.
10. Mindful that I will soon return to good roads, good plumbing, creature comforts and all of the things that I think are my right, I will earnestly endeavor to live as an humble servant during my stay in Haiti.
11. Mindful that there are often delays en route, I will carry with me something with which to amuse myself: playing cards, a paperback book...
12. Mindful that the Good Lord created all beings, when I encounter fellow mortals with 4, 6, 8 or more legs, I will not freak out.

THIS IS MY SOLEMN PLEDGE TO GOD AND MY FELLOW HUMANS

Thus far, have you observed overwhelmingly successful partnerships? If so, what made them different?

Practicing the pledge.

Have you observed partnerships that have failed tremendously? If so, what are the characteristics of a dysfunctional partnership?

The opposite of the above.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

The central, abiding and only role.

**Interview Transcript – Serena Beeks
Conducted November 25, 2013**

What is your position in Haiti and for how long have you been in this position?

I volunteer through the Episcopal Church helping to establish partnerships between Episcopal Schools in the United States and in Haiti. I assist the Rev. Roger Bowen, who is the Haiti Partnership Coordinator for the National Association of Episcopal Schools. We take turns escorting groups to Haiti on their first couple of visits, helping with arrangements, vehicles, driving, cultural sensitivity, and so on. I have been travelling to Haiti every year since 1999 and have had five trips there in 2013, five more coming up by the end of March 2014.

What does the word “partnership” mean?

To me it means two entities working together on the same goals.

Is there such a thing as “sustainable partnership?”

Partnerships are sustainable if equality is established—that each entity realizes that it gains something significant from its association with the other, and each entity operates from a place of generosity and hospitality.

What does it mean to partner?

Partnering means forming an agreement to stick together, listen to each other, not be absent during hard times, and celebrate good times together.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Flexibility, listening skills, sense of humor, tact, ability to commit, real interest.

What do you wish every American short-term mission team knew before coming to Haiti?

There is a long list! Here are my main ones:

1. Jesus already lives in Haiti. We will have an opportunity to meet Him there.
2. We need to listen to the Haitian community and hear what its hopes and dreams are—do not impose our own. There is a great Parker Palmer quote, something like this: “‘Doing good’ to people against their will is violence.”
3. We need to avoid projects that take work away from Haitians who desperately need jobs.
4. We need to think in terms of building the capacity of Haitians to solve their own problems, not in terms of doing their work for them. Haitians know how to do things.
5. We need to work with our partners toward a future in which our travel to Haiti will be for the beautiful beaches, art, music, mountains, food, worship, and to visit friends, as we would travel to any other beautiful part of the world.

Jackie Williams, who lives in Cange at Zanmi LaSante, wrote a wonderful travelers’ pledge. (See Roger Bowen’s interview.)

Thus far, have you observed overwhelmingly successful partnerships? If so, what made them different?

Recognition of mutual benefit. An exchange—for example, high school students trading music lessons for Kreyol lessons. Real friendships built through face-to-face contact.

Have you observed partnerships that have failed tremendously? If so, what are the characteristics of a dysfunctional partnership?

1. Only one or two people involved = not enough relationships = people move on and no one takes their place to sustain the partnership.
2. The partner with the money insisting on controlling decisions.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

Key! Otherwise, the partnership disappears, leaving the Haitians high and dry.

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

Work through local Haitian organizations that have significant Haitian leadership and are already on the ground there—church, local clinic, Partners in Health, etc. We see far too many groups that “drop in” for a week without assessment of need or follow-up. They feel good about volunteering, but their impact is not always good. I am sure there are some communities where children have had their teeth painted with fluoride several times a year by well-meaning groups who never bothered to ask if anyone else was doing the same thing!

**Interview Transcript – Cindy Corell
Conducted November 16, 2013**

What is your position in Haiti and for how long have you been in this position?

I am a mission co-worker with Joining Hands, an initiative of the Presbyterian Hunger Program. I arrived in Haiti in late May 2013, and I have a three-year commitment that hopefully will be renewed.

What does the word “partnership” mean?

Partnership is an ongoing relationship among groups and/or individuals who share goals and philosophies and who carry the best interest of the other to heart.

Is there such a thing as “sustainable partnership?”

Absolutely. The optimum partnerships are made of people and/or groups who are transforming. If the partnership is not sustainable, none of the partners can continue transforming.

What does it mean to partner?

To partner is to intentionally enter into a commitment with another. To partner is to understand that the resulting union at times will be messy, difficult and not very much fun, but if fully committed, all parties will find joy, strength, and outlets for known gifts and hidden talents and—along the way—accomplishments and victories that will be more happily celebrated than if accomplished alone. I think many people set out in partnerships with only the end goal (build a school, dig a well, install a water system, train teachers, improve test scores, etc.) in mind. But true and lasting partnerships are like great marriages—they buoy individuals through tough times and provide the most comfortable settings for celebration through victories small and large. Partnerships designed and committed to forever are gifts shared with anyone within or even close by.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Is love a skill? If not, then the ability to set aside ego and personal goals, is required. Also, the willingness to understand that we all are human in this equation, that we all will make mistakes, that we must be ready to ask tough questions and at the same time create a space for forgiveness and equality. And listening. Quality communication is essential.

What makes partnerships effective?

The motivation for partnership always fascinates me, and I think that needs to be taken into consideration. Too often one or all sides get so excited about the possibilities that could be accomplished, the essential first steps (think courting) get missed. It’s definitely a case, I think, for remembering that it is the journey that counts, not just the destination.

When someone chooses to enter into partnership with a group or institution in a fragile situation, both must honestly examine their true motivations, set achievable goals and decide on workable timetables. It is too easy to make promises that can’t be fulfilled and for very real feelings to be hurt.

Also, all partners must understand that they all have something to give and to receive. In my mind, the purpose of partnership with entities in Haiti is to transform everyone.

What do you wish every American short-term mission team knew before coming to Haiti?

- Read up on healthy models of mission. *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, *When Helping Hurts*, *Toxic Charity*, *Killing With Kindness*. There are loads of books, magazine articles and websites devoted to working WITH others rather than simply helping the needy.
- Know yourself. Figure out why coming to Haiti appeals to you. There are no wrong answers, but it's important to understand from the start if doing this kind of work is just so you will feel better about yourself, your own situation. If that's the case, understanding your motivations might help you find and guide you toward even more rewarding results.
- Giving isn't usually the answer. Doing something for someone else often looks and feels good, but is more like charity than friendship. Don't give into the temptation to hand out dollar bills or candy to children every single minute. An occasional, well-thought out gift can work, but don't be known as the one who just gives.
- Imagine how you would feel if you were in need and someone showed up in your face ready to help you get back on your feet. Consider what you would like that person to say, to do, how you would like that person to approach you, what you would like that person to share. Then be that person.

Thus far, have you observed overwhelmingly successful partnerships? If so, what made them different?

I've not been involved in too many direct partnerships. Just a handful, really. But one sticks out to me because it has been, well, messy. It's a collaborative that was started in my hometown. Six churches and an Episcopal school (and me, the stray Presbyterian) entered into a partnership with a small school in Cerca-La-Source. Over a course of four years, the collaborative sent small groups to Cerca-La-Source to meet with the people there, to learn what the community needed as far as a primary school, to see the land, to measure the property and finally, to design the building and raise funds for the school. Along the way, we got to know people in the community, spent time with the children, worshiped with them, brought the priest to Staunton, Virginia, for meetings and to lead worship and continue raising funds for teachers' salaries. The school opened a cyber-training center with donated laptops and actually began raising some money on its own. Will St. Marc's Episcopal School be self-sustaining anytime soon? Probably not. But people there have grown, and just as importantly, I've witnessed people in Virginia feel for their brothers and sisters in Haiti, make plans to go on the trips, begin emailing one another and—yes—be transformed by it all. It hasn't always been easy. There have been miscommunications, charges of a lack of transparency and frustration. But that's relationship. That's partnership. What is at the center of it is that this God's work, and he has asked us to participate. So when it gets hard, both sides settle in prayer and ask for his help. And, it comes. The partnership is a blessing for many. AND we're educating kids.

Have you observed partnerships that have failed tremendously? If so, what are the characteristics of a dysfunctional partnership?

I've heard second-hand stories of people who have been hurt by partnerships. I would say a common characteristic would be that one side of the relationship feels they have more to offer than the other. And a general lack of respect. The attitude must be that all partners are at the table, each has a voice and the table is round—no one is higher than another.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

Healthy relationships are essential to growing partnerships. Without a healthy relationship, the partnership not only likely will fail, but people will be hurt. All parties must be able to trust one another—and themselves—within the workings of the relationship, acknowledging that every day is not going to be perfect, that not all projects will end with desired results, that our human flaws will be more apparent at times—but when all parties can put the partnership and the welfare of others first and foremost, together they can confront obstacles and make progress toward the goals. And, of course, an essential ingredient of a healthy partnership is the understanding that no matter the results of planned activities, the time spent together is the most meaningful element of partnership. It is when the relationship matters as much as the partners themselves that partnerships will thrive.

**Interview Transcript – Akeisha Johnson
Conducted October 24, 2013**

What is your position and how long has your organization been working in Haiti?

Program Director/Creator of The Oshun Project, a program I created while working at The George Washington University (GW) in late 2010. Our focus is to support sustainable/green technology projects in Haiti as part of an educational development curriculum for students. Our fiscal sponsor organization Kledev has been in existence since 2008.

Can you tell me a little about your history? How you came to partner with MPK3 in Haiti?

I will give you the whole story I share:

When I was a child the song, “We Are the World” was VERY popular. It was surprising to me then that people—especially children—were starving and living in deep need and that these people looked like me and members of my family. When I would ask my mom if we could sponsor a child, she said we did not have the money for things like that. Yet, back then I knew that I wanted to do something for children around the world. I felt responsible.

Then while in undergraduate French class at Howard, my professor showed us a documentary on Haiti and what life was like there. The documentary reviewed the country’s political issues and showed how people struggled to live in Haiti. It even spoke about people selling their children into slavery. Around this time, I had spent some years dancing with an Afro-Haitian dance group named Alafia and was interested in Haiti. In addition, I was a big-ole Francophile, and always found the Haitian Revolution fascinating. So, at the end of the class I recall thinking specifically, “the most powerful thing I can do as an African-American is invest in Haiti...” This was the spark that really got my mind going. In 2004, I had graduated from undergrad and had a vision that I was in Haiti addressing a group of people because I had done some kind of work there, so by the time I began doing personal development work and organization named Landmark, I had this work in mind to do.

After the 2010 earthquake, I thought that there was a HUGE opportunity for Haiti to be an innovative component to sustainable development. I saw a great need and a lot of potential for new technology to commence there which people would resist implementing in the developed world.

So, I participated in a program called the Self Expression and Leadership Program (SELP) with Landmark, which focused on a “community project” something which would require a group of people to accomplish within a targeted community. I was working at GW then and chose the university and my vision.

I started talking with people at the university about my idea of innovative technology in Haiti, and they referred me to others over and over. One of my contacts was a classmate

from Howard who is an environmental engineer with a focus in water management. His wife was of Haitian descent and was interested in my ideas. Eventually, I landed a contact with the Intra-American Foundation, Jenny Petrow. I told her I wanted to work with The Cine Institute because I was personally interested in filmmaking. Yet, because a Hollywood film director Jonathon Demme was on their board, many people were interested in them, and they could not manage additional volunteers.

When I shared with Jenny about how I got to her, she told me about MP3K and their need for a water filtration system. Jenny put me in touch with them, and we started to discuss what they were looking for and how we could support and partner with them.

What does the word partnership mean to you?

To me, partnership comes down to collaboration. Where people look to put in what is missing from the complete picture for another, to the degree that the outcome is maximized and expanded. I also think of support. In the sense that all parties are required to accomplish a goal or desired result. Like legs to a chair—all four legs are necessary to hold up the seat, one not more important or relevant than the other.

Is there such a thing as “sustainable partnership?”

When I think sustainable, I think renewable—a new thing springing from an original source, like children from parents. This is the ultimate goal of how we are developing The Oshun Project. The vision is that various projects identified in Haitian communities will be consulted by student leaders here in the US, specifically interested in the focus of these projects in partnership with Haitian organizations to accomplish its completion.

I believe that having education at the source of the partnership will provide sustainability. Personally, for me, doing The Oshun Project is a part of my own education in managing people, my performance, and delivering outcomes. This is what has kept me going when things become difficult—my own development tied into another's.

I believe this is what keeps any partnership going: people understanding that they are moving each other forward by the other's presence and feedback about each other.

What does it mean to partner?

Hmm... I would say being a witness and an acknowledger of another and their lives. A partner provides perspective to what one would not see without their partner's presence and feedback. The idea being that there is no me without you to see me and vice versa; because without you being there I would not really know I even exist. This point of view is a part of my developmental philosophy and training as well, which is at the foundation of what we are building up as the educational program aspect of The Oshun Project.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Listening, commitment, keeping your word, faith, desire, and believing in another person beyond what they may believe in themselves...

With whom did you work directly in establishing a partnership?

Jenny Petrow (IAF), Chavanes Casseus (MP3K), Clay Kilgore (Kledev), The Bower Hill Community Church—Darenda and Tim Lease, Pat and Rick Jacobs, Karl Casey, Pastor Brian, ... Various staff, students, and faculty at GW—John Ralls, Jennifer Joslin, Chris Perrin, Pierre Vigilance, Joelle LaGuerre, Bridget Mburu, Jennifer Sieck, Royce Francis, David Dow, Shelbie Atkins, The Caribbean Student Association, ...

What are things you feel you have done well in establishing a partnership with the community in MPK3?

Hmm... I think keeping the lines of communication going. Also, letting them know we are not a charity and don't believe that they need us—we are their partners looking to empower them to see things (resources, possibilities, etc...) that they may not be aware of like a solar-generated system instead of the gas one they originally had procured when we first started.

Knowing what you know now, what would you have done differently in establishing your mission?

Well... Where I am now is really looking to take the focus off of me and what I want and put it into the hands of interested people and communities. This is where partnership is very powerful, it takes my ego out of the mix. I was really attached to things being a certain way when we started which was very stressful for me. More and more, I see that bringing in more people and ideas is what will make what we are doing go beyond what I could possibly imagine by myself.

What would you tell other American mission organizations who are looking to establish partnerships or missions in Haiti?

Get out of the way! The solutions to what is happening in Haiti is within the country already and the Haitian people—who do not need to be pitied, nor do they need charity. Haitians may cater to the charity aspect of many people's good intentions, yet the actual result is enabling the citizens there to remain in the conditions they are presently in, I believe. Trust that the people there can and will sort out what is happening to them effectively. They DO have the answers, it may just require our new perspective to access their own solutions. Haitians do need outside resources and abilities to spread their messages. Listen more.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

Relationships are the key to maintaining partnerships. It is the foundation from where the partnership is formed and grown. You and me—for example, we got related due to our commitment to bringing potable water to Haitian communities. Just look at how our relationship expanded to a place where we can say from our partnership there are 20,000 people within a Haitian community who have access to potable water affordably. Also, from our relationship, I am participating in this interview, which sustains our partnership at various levels. Who knows what else will come out of us? Good stuff, I'm thinking!

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

MP3K is now looking to make the building, which shares the filtration system into a local market. The people in Rhe, Camp-Perrin can avoid crossing that treacherous riverbed which claims the lives of community members when it swells during the rainy season on their way to a market which is 10 km away. What The Oshun Project added, as their partners, was to create the market as a social enterprise where the profits from the market will go towards funding scholarships for local kids to attend school. We came up with the idea from a discussion we had while installing the water system about MP3K providing scholarships to children because they used to and could not on a larger scale after the 2010 earthquake. This is an example of our listening as a partner, and then sustaining our partnership to move towards the next phase.

The Oshun Project has also partnered with a computer application developer on a technology which will specifically put interested folks—like us—together to share information. Our target is to create a platform where MP3K, and other organizations like it in Haiti, can communicate directly with communities in the U.S. about partnering and other things happening. I would love to have you talk with her and potentially identify additional test communities in Haiti.

**Interview Transcript – Tom Durant
Conducted November 30, 2013**

What is your position and for how long have you been working in Haiti?

I have been in Haiti since 2005, and founded EcoCafé Haiti S.A. one year later. Currently, I serve as the CEO. EcoCafé Haiti is a for-profit Haitian corporation, operated by the Haitians for the Haitians in rural Haiti. EcoCafé Haiti is a sustainable enterprise with a mission to enable economic self-sufficiency in Haiti, while also feeding the poor and restoring the deforested ecological environment back to good health.

Can you tell me a little about your history? How you came to Haiti?

We formed the corporation after doing a resource assessment of the community in Ranquitte, Haiti, after which we concluded that agriculture was the one thing rural Haitians knew well. We narrowed our product focus to coffee, largely because of the abundance of now-native coffee plants and the quality of that coffee.

I went to Haiti on a whim. Three things served as a catalyst for my decision to do work in Haiti, including, my destiny to do mission work using my business experience, prior sponsorship of a Haitian girl through another Christian organization, and the dismal situation in Haiti.

What does the word partnership mean to you?

To me, partnership means relationship formed on the basis of two or more coming together to serve a common purpose. Ideally a relationship that mimics the model demonstrated by our Lord and Savior. Theologically, this includes the God-Human relationship, the Human-Human relationship, and the Human-Rest of Creation relationship.

Is there such a thing as “sustainable partnership?”

Based on the above definition of partnership, I certainly hope so. The above described relationships necessitate that the partnership is everlasting, viable, and reciprocal.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Perhaps the best model to define/build viable partnerships is provided by James Austin. He references the 7 Cs: connection, clarity of purpose, congruence of goals/objectives, creation of value for each partner, communication, continuous learning, and commitment. I can't do better than that.

What were the first steps you took in establishing a partnership in the community?

First steps included: choosing a community with strong leadership, a desire to help themselves, the community's willingness to devote time/energy to produce results, and the community's acceptance of someone from a different background/culture.

With whom did you work directly?

Georges Derval, the magistrate of Ranquitte, Haiti, and local patriarch. Through Georges, we have organized 300 farmers and 25 employees, connected with each of the different church groups in the community, and connected with many other NGOs in rural Haiti.

What are things you feel you have done well in establishing a partnership in northern Haiti?

Getting to know the people and their culture. I met/interviewed each farmer and employee at their homestead, usually with all family members present. Regular communication with all families, directly through periodic mega-meetings and frequent visits, or indirectly through my onsite managers.

Knowing what you know now, what would you have done differently in establishing your partnership?

Ensuring that the Haitians fully understood what it took to create and manage an entrepreneurial venture. Because of the dire situation in the community, I naively assumed that an entrepreneurship opportunity would be welcomed. I was wrong. Unfortunately, many Haitians are so accustomed to handouts that the prospect of income derived through hard work and risk-taking is a foreign concept and not automatically accepted.

What would you tell other American teams or mission organizations who are looking to establish partnerships or missions in Haiti?

Look elsewhere unless you are willing to persevere and navigate the country's corruption, lack of resources, cultural peculiarities—all made worse by the misery and suffering. It takes a strong stomach. Too many NGOs make great promises. Fewer actually follow through on those promises, and even fewer stick it out in the long run.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

See my above answers. Additionally, being adaptive, forgiving, and loving are key ingredients for sustainable partnerships.

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

My advice is as follows:

- Start small and grow from there. Too many try to do too much all at once.
- Ensure that you have compatible objectives, quality people, and the resources to make your partnership work.
- Persevere. Everything takes at least twice as much time as one would ordinarily think.
- Navigate the corruption by learning the “ropes.” Haiti's corruption is notorious.
- Don't get distracted by taking on tasks that are off-purpose. There is too much for any one organization to handle.
- Learn the culture (language, religion, communication, protocol, etc.).
- Network with others to achieve your objectives.
- Plan for the unexpected (e.g. weather, discrimination, dishonesty, disease, etc.).

**Interview Transcript – Sally Block
Conducted Thursday, November 6, 2014**

What is your position and for how long have you been in this position?

I have served as the team lead for the HUMC Living Waters team since July 2011.

What does the word “partnership” mean to you?

In the simplest of forms a partnership is two people/organizations coming together to advance a mutual goal. The partnerships I lead in the business world fit this description (two or more companies coming together to capture revenue), as do the partnerships developed to advance the goal of Living Waters as well as the greatest commandment.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Leadership and communications skills are the building blocks of a strong partnership.

What makes partnerships effective?

A successful partnership begins with a clear definition of the objective, roles and responsibilities. In order to avoid a dependent relationship touted as a partnership, the definition of who does what is necessary from the start.

What do you wish you had known, as a mission leader, before going to and working in Haiti?

This is truly a loaded question, the fact is I knew very little and went on faith, trust, and a strong push from God. I left myself open to experience the raw emotion that is Haiti, the truly ugly side of the difficult life in this country. God has used this basis to build my passion for continued service. Had I been more prepared, more knowledgeable, more organized, my experience would have been much different. Every mission trip I have led has been filled with details, organized to the nth degree. The responsibility of leading youth puts added pressure on making sure that every detail was taken care of, every possible situation accounted for. That said, Haiti was my first adult mission trip and I had the benefit of partnering with an experienced team. I appreciated their insight in doing business in Haiti. The philosophy of empowering instead of doing, training the trainer and most importantly how to interact with our partners are all lessons that I learned from the experienced team and have added to my preparation for future missions.

How did you first find out about Living Waters for the World?

All good things happen when you are ready—my youngest daughter was graduating, my job was un-fulfilling and I found myself in Ashley’s office talking about who knows what, and she asked if I was interested in joining the Living Waters team.

How did you first communicate with Living Waters for the World?

I signed up for the training in Mississippi through the website and communicated mainly through email.

How did your partnership begin with Blanket Baptist Church?

Ashley Goad met Pastor Evens in July 2009 during a survey trip. As the team at HUMC began the training process with LWW, Ashley suggested HUMC initiate a partnership to install solar/ water at Blanket. We began communications through Ashley and arrived in Blanket in January of 2011.

Would you say that your partnership with Blanket Baptist Church is successful? If yes, what has made it successful?

The partnership with Blanket is a success in progress. It was the first partnership for both parties, and we continue to define success as we go. The key has been the commitment by all of us to stay engaged. The week we spent in Blanket doing that actual installation gave us an opportunity to develop relationships with the pastor, teachers and church leaders. From that point, each of us found our own connection—Sheri was drawn to Fedo’s music, I was drawn to the power of education and found two boys in need of support, and we all were drawn to Pastor Evens. The emails, Facebook chats and follow-up visits worked to make us closer, and as with all good partnerships, more in tune with each other’s needs. When we came to worship in the spring of 2014, it felt like we were coming home; we were excited to see family. After the hugs and good wishes, we did what families do, talked about what was new, our hopes for the future and our needs. At the start of this school year, the HUMC pre-school adopted the school at Blanket and will be sending play-clothes, books and toothbrushes when we go back in January 2015. The objective is to have a cultural and spiritual exchange with the students and expand the partnership beyond water.

Knowing what you know now, how would you have started the relationship or what do you wish had been done differently?

Blind faith is one option and in the case of Blanket, it worked. We had the benefit of an established relationship between Ashley and Pastor Evens. In hindsight, it would have been beneficial to have established email/Facebook communication prior to meeting face-to-face. We would have had a jump-start on discussion about needs, covenant issues, responsibilities and goals.

Have you observed or participated in other partnerships that are overwhelmingly successful? If yes, what made them different?

Costa Rica Mission Projects is a successful partnership driven by the same foundation of developing relationships in service to God. From their website “they believe that they have been called to provide opportunities for churches in Costa Rica and churches from other countries to serve one another and explore what it means for us to be part of a body that extends far beyond the walls of our own individual churches. Their hope is that they might be able to help foster long lasting, fruitful relationships between the congregations who participate in this ministry. It is very important to them that they avoid establishing or reinforcing already existing relationships of dependency, but rather, that the churches involved will discover the benefits of interaction with one another.”

Have you observed or participated in partnerships that have failed tremendously? If so, what are the characteristics of a dysfunctional partnership?

The LWW installation at L'Ecole de Choix in Mirebalais was a failed partnership from the start. From the time the partnership was proposed, changes occurred in leadership at the school, and we were in the country when we realized that we were dealing with the wrong people. In addition, the goals were not clearly defined, the need was not established, and there was not a mutual agreement on responsibilities.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

Relationships are the foundation of strong partnerships. When I look at it through a business lens, the most profitable partnership I have is one where I have regular interactions outside the day-to-day deliverables. The CEO and I have lunch, know about each other's families and generally enjoy spending time together. It lays the foundation for mutually beneficial negotiations and advances the goals of both companies.

How would you advise teams to create an equal, mutually beneficial partnership?

There are volumes of books written on this subject by relationship gurus and business professionals. My take on it is simple—start with building the relationships, invest the time and energy in getting to know what is most important to each other and build on that foundation.

How would you advise teams to prevent creating a one-sided dominant relationship?

It's easy to "do good" for a week and go home feeling fulfilled and never know that you are leaving behind a community/church dependent on the next team of do-gooders. The hard part is defining the expectations of both parties. I look to the model of Costa Rica Mission Projects, churches serving churches, being together in service and communion. My advice for teams wishing to establish a partnership is to clearly define what service means from both sides.

How do you define clear roles in your partnership?

The simpler the better—Who, What, Where, When and How.

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

Leading with your heart and soul is what we are conditioned to do. I would encourage teams to add knowledge to the equation, reading about the country, working to understand how helping can hurt and defining in conjunction with in-country partners the metrics for success.

**Interview Transcript – George Billman
Conducted Thursday, November 6, 2014**

What is your position and for how long have you been in this position?

I am a member of Herndon United Methodist Church, and I have gone to Clean Water U for “103 Standard System” training. I have also attended Solar 2 school (Installation and Equipping Partners). So I can truly say my position is needed, as I have been involved in this adventure (providing safe drinking water to people in need in Haiti) since mid-year 2010.

What does the word “partnership” mean to you?

Partnership to me means that two or more people are in an agreement as to the terms of an arrangement made between each of the members forming of the partnership.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

The skills are pretty much the same as those for a successful marriage, and that is trust and willingness to make things work in the face of adversity.

What makes partnerships effective?

An effective partnership is one where all members are doing more than their fair share. That way when one member is unable to fulfill their share, others can pick up the slack. However, the key component to effective partnerships is clear and precise communication between members with crystal clear expectations laid out.

What do you wish you had known, as a mission leader, before going to and working in Haiti?

How to speak French and Creole. Other than that is to be still and listen.

How did you first find out about Living Waters for the World?

Ashley Goad.

How did you first communicate with Living Waters for the World?

Enrolled to attend Clean Water University.

How did your partnership begin with Blanket Baptist Church?

Ashley Goad introduced me to Pastor Evens. Our church decided that it would provide funding for a solar powered water system at the Baptist Church.

Would you say that your partnership with Blanket Baptist Church is successful? If yes, what has made it successful?

The success of the project rests mainly on the people of Blanket and mostly on the pastor of the Baptist Church there, Pastor Evens.

Knowing what you know now, how would you have started the relationship or what do you wish had been done differently?

It would be my wish to have the ability to spend more time with the people of Blanket and see for myself the needs and aspirations of the pastor and the people over a period of time. This would provide a better understanding of the long-term aspirations and not just the short-term need for water.

Have you observed or participated in other partnerships that are overwhelmingly successful? If yes, what made them different?

Yes, my marriage, and what makes it different is the ability to build trust over time.

Have you observed or participated in partnerships that have failed tremendously? If so, what are the characteristics of a dysfunctional partnership?

Yes—one sided.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

Depends—there could be business relationships, personal relationships, or unwillingness to develop relationships; however a sustaining partnership can still develop with trust and understanding. Are military truces a type of partnership? I believe trust and clear expectations are the key ingredients for sustaining partnerships.

How would you advise teams to create an equal, mutually beneficial partnership?

Even though Blanket is a successful partnership, it is mainly due to the efforts of one man—Pastor Evens. Teams need to have backup plans and persons to fill the gap created by any one leader. I would advise teams to create a water advisory board in the area served and not depend on just one person.

How would you advise teams to prevent creating a one-sided dominant relationship?

This needs to be done at the very beginning of the relationship and the relationship needs to be built on mutual respect and participation with each party bringing value to the relationship.

How do you define clear roles in your partnership?

Hopefully by verbally communicating what the expectations are and also documenting them with signatures of good faith between parties.

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

Partnerships are just people working together for a common good, no matter what country. Therefore never underestimate the contribution of anyone for the common good. Perhaps from our position of plenty, it would serve us well to be reminded of the widow's mite. All persons have potential in the eyes of God. It is up to us to lift each other up.

**Interview Transcript – Melissa Billman
Conducted Friday, November 7, 2014**

What is your position and for how long have you been in this position?

I recently retired (last week) from a 30+-year career in water quality, concentrated in drinking water laboratory and regulations. I have been a volunteer for LWW since 2010, 103 trained. Three installations of Solar/Water systems in Haiti in 2011, 2012, 2013. Two additional visits to Haiti for surveys, and system checks/maintenance.

What does the word “partnership” mean to you?

Individuals or groups working together for a common good and goal.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Ability to work harmoniously with others, effective communication skill, capable of working with the majority even if your opinion is different, dedication to participation.

What makes partnerships effective?

A strong facilitator to keep all parties on point, established working guidelines, common goals communicated and discussed by all prior to any tasks.

What do you wish you had known, as a mission leader, before going to and working in Haiti?

It would have been helpful to know more of the language and culture.

How did you first find out about Living Waters for the World?

It was introduced at HUMC by Ashley Goad as a mission opportunity for our congregation.

How did you first communicate with Living Waters for the World?

Through attending the Clean Water U.

How did your partnership begin with Blanket Baptist Church?

Through a previous LWW survey performed. Then HUMC took it on as an installation.

Would you say that your partnership with Blanket Baptist Church is successful? If yes, what has made it successful?

Yes. Based on other experiences with other partnerships in Haiti, Blanket has been successful because of the consistency of the Haitian partner and his willingness to continue the relationship. Communication between Blanket and HUMC has been key to the continuation of the partnership.

Knowing what you know now, how would you have started the relationship or what do you wish had been done differently?

We would appoint a leader/facilitator that only has that role, so as to keep all parties on track instead of having other responsibilities to take care of.

Have you observed or participated in other partnerships that are overwhelmingly successful? If yes, what made them different?

Yes, common goal, limited and only necessary meetings, effective communication, timely responses to questions, strong facilitator.

Have you observed or participated in partnerships that have failed tremendously? If so, what are the characteristics of a dysfunctional partnership?

Yes, lack of timely communication. No goals or timelines established.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

There has to be some type of good working relationship for a sustaining partnership. It must be taken seriously by all groups involved, and communication and interactions cannot be one-sided.

How would you advise teams to create an equal, mutually beneficial partnerships?

All members take part in goal setting—both for the team and the future partnership.

How would you advise teams to prevent creating a one-sided dominant relationship?

Create and uphold a covenant or contract with the partner that has established duties, requirements, and goals for all sides.

How do you define clear roles in your partnership?

Written and discussed guidelines, with a verbal and signed commitment by all parties. Leader or facilitator will keep the roles in check.

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

Do not assume what the partners can read and understand or hear and understand. With the written documents, have multiple languages, i.e. English, French, and Creole versions. For spoken discussions, have a trusted interpreter, and ask for a repeat of what is being understood.

**Interview Transcript – Pastor Evens Cherenfant
Conducted Monday, October 13, 2014; Monday, November 10, 2014**

What is your position and for how long have you been in this position?

I am Evens Cherenfant, pastor of Blanquette Baptist Church. I began my ministry at Blanquette on Sunday May 3, 2009. My time is unlimited.

What does the word “partnership” mean?

Partnership is a relationship between individuals or groups. This is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility for the achievement of something, or a goal.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

Building a partnership needs the following skills:

- a) Collective understanding of the purpose of the partnership;
- b) Performing effectively within clearly defined functions and roles;
- c) Establishing and promoting values of the partnership;
- d) Taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk;
- e) Developing skills, knowledge and experience in order to lead effectively;
- f) Engaging all partners equally.

What makes partnerships effective?

This makes partnership effective:

- Developing a culture of trust between of partners;
- A mutual respect between partners;
- Promoting of values between each other.

How did you first find out about Living Waters for the World?

I found out about Living Waters for the World in July 2009 by Jean Ancy Fils-Aimé, who has worked with this organization in Haiti. He brought Ashley Goad to Blanquette.

How did you first communicate with Living Waters for the World?

I first communicated by email of Chris McRae, a responsible (leader) of LWW.

How did your partnership begin with Herndon United Methodist Church?

My partnership begun with HUMC in January 2011 when the representatives of this Church came to Haiti with LWW to support and build a water system at Blanquette Baptist Church.

Would you say that your partnership with Herndon United Methodist Church is successful? If yes, what has made it successful?

Yes, because our contract has been respected. We have reached our goal of serving all of the community in giving good water to drink. And we still have a very good relationship between us, especially with my friends Sally Block and George Billman. This partnership continues in supporting my ministries—the school and church.

What do you wish had been done differently?

I do not think that something needed to be done differently. All partnerships have a beginning and can grow to different ways and become a great partnership.

Have you observed other partnerships that are overwhelmingly successful? If yes, what made them different?

Yes, I have observed other partnership are overwhelmingly successful. What made it different is the respect and application of the answers of questions 3 & 4.

Have you observed partnerships that have failed?

Yes, other partnerships are not successful because partners do not respect and apply the answers of 3 & 4 and develop a good relationship between them.

What role do relationships play in developing partnerships?

Relationships are the main element that makes a partnership successful. Keeping a good relationship between partners strengthens the partnership and keeps it in good health.

What do you wish every American mission team knew before coming to Haiti?

What I wish that every American mission team know before coming in Haiti are:

- Information about Haitian culture
- The infrastructure of Haiti
- Information about touristic sites to visit
- The needs of the people
- And what the Haitian people can offer the team

Interview Transcript – Ancy Fils-Aime
Conducted Friday, October 10, 2014; Sunday, November 9, 2014

What is your position and for how long have you been in this position?

I am the In-Country Director (ICD) for Living Waters for the World in Haiti. I've been working in this position for three years.

What does the word “partnership” mean?

From my point of view, the word partnership means that two or several organizations work closely together to reach a common goal.

What skills are needed to build a partnership?

As skills to build a partnership, we need to be flexible, good behavior, understanding, respectful, leadership, being able to work in team, availability.

What makes partnerships effective?

Respect for each other, engagement.

What do you wish every American mission team knew before coming to Haiti?

They need to know about Haitian culture.

When an American says he will arrive at 8:00am, he will usually arrive at 7:55am. If his partner has not arrived by 8:15am, he will be tense. If his partner has not arrived by 8:30am, he will be mad and leave. What is the Haitian standard of time? What is the culturally appropriate time to arrive for a meeting?

I would say that not all Americans are always on time and not all other nations are always late. For example, speaking about Haiti, I know there are a lot of Haitians that are always on time, and from experience, I know some Americans that are not always on time! I think it depends on the person, not so much the culture.

Have you observed partnerships that are successful? If so, what made them different?

Yes, I have. They really knew the potential partners they have to work with before signing a partnership agreement.

Have you observed partnerships that have failed? If so, what made them fail?

Yes, I have. Mostly they anticipate in what they have to do regarding the partnership without really knowing the people they have to work with. There is a lot of assuming instead of knowing.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

Relationships play a major role in developing and sustaining partnerships... like changing courier in reasonable time, having frequent contact, communication

How would you advise teams to create an equal, mutually beneficial partnerships?

At some point, partnership would mean equality. Basically, in establishing a partnership, we need to be very sensitive of the character of the people this partnership with whom we establish a partnership.

How would you advise teams to prevent creating a one-sided dominant relationship? (One partner telling the other partner what to do without asking...)

It is very dangerous in these cases when there is “super” partner in a partnership because by definition partnership means equality, respectfulness, exchange. So, when there is one side dominant relationship, it is usually due to people who are in great difficulty and ready to accept any kind of situation...but they know there is no partnership. It is just one accepting from the other. American teams should be careful of this. Haitians should also know better.

How do you define clear roles in your partnership?

Partners must write it down and be meticulous in their engagements. Haitians tend to not deny what is written and signed.

Why do you think some clean water systems operate well and some do not?

I think it is question of not taking time to get to know some Haitian Partners and how they manage their institutions. Also, those that do not operate well are due to a lack of interest of clean water or lack of instability of some Haitian partners.

Does partnership development have anything to do with this?

I would say yes because mostly, like I said before, Americans are not patient in the way that they come down and install the systems without a pre-survey site assessment.

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

You know culturally we are completely different. In one way or another, Americans should have an idea about how Haitian cultural, and vice a versa! Mostly the problems are cultural. If that can be overcome, partnerships will be more fruitful.

Interview Transcript – Frantzou Avril
Conducted Saturday, October 11, 2014; Thursday, October 30, 2014

What is your position and for how long have you been in this position?

I am working as a technician and an Education Agent for the LWW since March 2013. I am also a translator for different mission teams, and I am in this position since March 2010.

What does the word “partnership” mean?

For me partnership means: honesty, confidence, friendship and a very strong relationship that is based on the truth and respect for each other.

What skills are needed to build a partnership in Haiti?

I do believe that competence is the first one, and after that... contacts, experiences, and your testimony is sometime required. And also in the position that you are. You should not try to start a partnership if you do not have appropriate leadership skills and a prominent position.

What makes partnerships effective?

The things that make partnership effective are: respect for each other, always tell the truth even through it may hurt. And I do believe that prayer is the best key of a strong partnership.

What do you wish every American mission team knew before coming to Haiti?

First, they need to know the kind of persons that they will deal with, and the real needs of these people. Eventually they need to know a good place to stay in Haiti before coming. Lastly, they need to know the kind of mission and the leadership of those who lead this mission in Haiti.

When an American says he will arrive at 8:00am, he will usually arrive at 7:55am. If his partner has not arrived by 8:15am, he will be tense. If his partner has not arrived by 8:30am, he will be mad and leave. What is the Haitian standard of time? What is the culturally appropriate time to arrive for a meeting?

I would say that depend on the kind of the meeting. Haitian people usually give importance to the meeting that they will benefit something. For example—Job Interview, Visa request Appointment and so on. And sometime people are really mad and often leave when you arrive at least one hour after the time! The culturally appropriate time to arrive in a meeting in Haiti is between 15 to 30 minutes after the scheduled time.

Have you observed partnerships that are successful? If so, what made them different?

Of course. I have observed some partnerships that are successful, and the differences are their respect, their Honesty and confidence, their behavior and Humility. Also, their faith and love for God tends to make them different.

Have you observed partnerships that have failed? If so, what made them fail?

Of course. I have also observed some that have failed. Sometimes it is due to their love for money, and they do not always tell the truth. Their incompetency and non-experience in the position that they hold is also a cause for failure.

What role do relationships play in developing and sustaining partnerships?

For me, relationships are the key in developing and sustaining partnerships because a very good and strong relationship will lead to partnerships in a very great and positive way. That will also be part of success in building good partnerships.

How would you advise teams to create an equal, mutually beneficial partnership?

I would advise them to know those people that will be working with, and learn about their experiences and testimony. Respect their choices of projects, and do not force them to do what you only have in mind. Learn from what they have instead. Respect their choices, and propose, do not insist, on what you would like for their mission.

How would you advise teams to prevent creating a one-side dominant relationship?

(One partner telling the other partner what to do without asking...)

This is exactly what I just said. Asking what needs to be done before coming and proposing what you have in mind. Agree with one another in the choice of your projects!

When thinking of partnership, specifically in Haiti, is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

I would like to add that so many mission teams keep coming and are not very satisfied with their mission just because they do not communicate very well with their partners in Haiti. Some don't really ask about what needs to be done; they just propose what they have to give. Even if they don't need it, some partners take it because it was free! And I would add also, the need to determine what exactly needs to be done!

**Interview Transcript – Bob McCoy
Conducted March 5, 2015**

What is your ministry and for how long have you been in this position?

Holy Spirit Haiti Mission (HSHM). We serve those in need in Haiti through education, water purification, medical, construction, and housing resources. I have been involved in Haiti since 2001 and the Team Lead since 2003.

Describe how your ministry serves others

We began through a parish twinning program with St. Rose de Lima Church in Leogane. We provided clothing and other financial assistance. When I took over I recognized that there was no accountability and began requesting accountability for funded projects. Ultimately we never received this from either of the priests, so I changed our focus to work through the Petit Freres St. Therese who agreed to the accountability and have held to it to this day. The true value of the PFST is that they are a Haiti-wide organization, well respected by the communities they serve, as well as with the government. This relationship has enabled us to work with them, as they better know the need of the Haitian people than do we. When a project comes up, they are almost always involved if for no other reason than advisors. The one possible exception to this would be our work with Notre Dame de la Charite Orphanage, which is an independent Haitian entity with its own constitution and not related to PFST. However, for many things we do at NDC, PFST is involved. So our method of serving is through others. We teach the teachers if you will. While it is true we will construct solar systems or water purification systems or pay for children's education, these activities are done with Haitians by our side. In most cases the Haitians simply do not have the resources to implement a water purification system, for instance; but when we are through, they have helped build the project (like a Habitat for Humanity home owner has to do), they have been trained on its use and they are now responsible to fund its operation through the sale of purified water to other Haitians. Education is a little different in that we pay outright for children's education expenses and pray the investment will pay in the future through their becoming productive Haitian citizens in their community.

How would you describe "dependency" in your own words?

I think dependency has degrees. We are ALL dependent on someone or something at varying times of our lives. So inherently dependency—that action upon which you are dependent upon someone else - is not a bad thing. And it is not necessarily bad to be dependent all of your life on some things, like love, air and water. However, all people need to learn to function on their own as much as possible and to varying degrees of competency. Doing this makes them a productive member of society as opposed to a drain on the social structure, so I believe dependency should only be acceptable to the point where through your own resources you are not able nor capable of being independent for that situation. Note I did not say willing. Just because you are not willing does not exempt you from becoming independent.

What are the signs of unhealthy dependency?

One of the major signs is when the expectation is a continued hand out. Not only is this a drain on resources, but the psychological damage to the person is very subtle and profound. They lose confidence in themselves, they lose self-respect, their self-esteem is devalued, they have little motivation to do better and often just give up. Another sign I see a good bit is it is easier to ask than to try and figure it out yourself first and then ask if you are stumped. Those who try to direct their own paths, even if they fail, are those who become independent. Failure is only a temporary point on the journey to success.

Do you think there is a difference between self-induced dependency and other-induced dependency?

I want to separate out what I call normal dependency that I described to some extent above as opposed to abnormal dependency, which I will discuss here. I think these can feed off each other. For instance we can provide a service (other-induced) of some type to someone, and if we do a poor job of setting expectations, this person may turn around and expect the same service again some short time in the future (self-induced). If a person is hungry and they are unwilling to seek food because they know from experience that one of several organizations will give them a meal, this is self-induced dependency. Knowing they will likely get fed somehow, they will never climb out of the trap they are in. Additionally, well-meaning organizations contribute to the dependency in an effort to make their numbers look good by feeding more people. This certainly destroys the dignity of God's people in the process. It's one thing to feed a person to get them on their feet and quite another to continue to feed them without accountability.

In your organization, how do you guard against dependency? What steps have you taken to teach or support self-sustainability?

Setting expectations from the beginning, I believe, is a very important. Along with that, I believe accountability is also crucial. With the Haitians, I have tried to keep accountability as simple as possible. Usually an email or a spreadsheet will suffice. If a signed document is necessary, just sending a picture is sufficient. All of this is because they have a minimum of technology to work with and what they have is often slow. I have learned how hard it is to set expectations in another language. Just because I think their expectations are set is not necessarily so because information in translation is often misinterpreted. Haitians tend to not elaborate on things too much, so you have to probe and ask them to tell you how they understand the arrangement. This may take two or three passes and patience is paramount so that you don't create a cultural embarrassment. If each side understands what is expected of the other side, then there should be a minimum of dependency.

Another comment I will make here is with regard to some forms of dependence; money being a big one. Haitians seldom have the funds to do many of the projects we help them with, but they do have the labor to execute part of the project so they have a vested part in the project. I think it is important for the Haitians to have some ownership. For instance, when we put in a water purification system they have to provide the building to house the system. There is a lot of dignity in knowing this is a partnership because each side

contributed some part. Equal shares of contribution are not important. God asks us to give of the resources we have available, He does not ask that they be equal.

What do you believe is the difference between dependence and reliance?

Dependence is more controlling and reliance is more trusting. While the two are interrelated, I think the difference is psychological as opposed to physical. For instance, Japan depends on imported oil, but they rely (trust) on their resources that it will come in a timely fashion.

Accompaniment is usually referred to as a vocal or musical instrument that supports another. Perhaps it could also mean “something added for embellishment, completeness, or symmetry.” How are you accompanying those you serve in your community at home or community abroad?

Partnership. This is why I like the word covenant, as opposed to agreement, so much. A covenant is a promise, and when I promise something I am bound to it. This perhaps is why I am bound to Haiti, because I have promised to help these people however I can. It has become a part of my DNA. It is like mass at church. I look forward to it. It is not stone around my neck. I generally get more out of these relationships than I think the Haitians do. I get their love and they get mine. We have helped build something or helped someone or made someone's life easier to live, but I get their love in return and knowing most of all that I have done what God has asked of me and there is no greater gift than this.

What other thoughts might you want to add at this time?

Your questions are not inherent to Haiti. They are inherent to ALL social justice work worldwide. I see this in the work I do at St. Vincent de Paul as much as I do in Haiti.

**Interview Transcript – Wilson Kennedy
Completed March 26, 2015**

What is your ministry and for how long have you been in this position?

I have served in Youth and Outreach ministry for 3 years. Currently I serve as Director of Youth Ministry at Palms Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville Beach, Florida and have been in this position 4 months. Previously I served as Director of Youth Ministries/Outreach Coordinator at First Presbyterian Church in Shreveport, Louisiana. During my time in Shreveport, First Presbyterian developed a mission partnership with the St. Matthias Episcopal parish and school in Cherident, Grand Colline, Haiti through the Haiti Education Foundation. Currently I serve on the Board of Directors of Solar Under the Sun, an organization affiliated with the Synod of the Sun within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This organization provides solar power to schools, churches, clean water systems, etc. in 5 countries.

Describe how your ministry serves others.

While serving in Shreveport, my ministry was one of mission development. I worked with many organizations locally and abroad to coordinate mission efforts, whether they be monetary in value or hours spent in the country. Currently I serve on a board that provides vision and mission support to a growing NGO that is looking to make a serious and faithful impact in economically depressed places.

How would you describe “dependency” in your own words?

Dependency is an inability to manage the basics of life and ministry without the assistance of those who are stakeholders.

What are the signs of unhealthy dependency?

During my travels to El Salvador, Haiti, and Russia for mission efforts, I have seen wonderful partnerships and unfortunate dependency. I have surmised that the hallmark for dependency are the words spoken during simple conversation. If the conversation is always led back to money or goods being provided by one party to another, then the party asking is dependent on the party that has the perceived power for necessities.

What are the dangers of dependence?

The single biggest danger in a dependent relationship is a lack of authenticity. So often in the church we try our faithful best to be authentic to God and one another, but when finances are at stake our ethics go away.

Do you think there is a difference between self-induced dependency and other-induced dependence?

It depends on the context. Is there bad training?

In your organization, how do you guard against dependency? What steps have you taken to teach or support self-sustainability?

Haiti Education Foundation has stopgaps in place to prevent dependency and promote self-sustainability. Solar Under the Sun also promotes self-sustainability through its partner-based program.

What do you believe is the difference between dependence and reliance?

Dependence is a desire where reliance is a necessity. Someone is dependent when the relationship could be sustaining but one party chooses not to be in that ethic of living. Reliance is when one party cannot operate on its own because of the economy around it and not because of choice.

Accompaniment is usually referred to as a vocal or musical instrument that supports another. Perhaps it could also mean “something added for embellishment, completeness, or symmetry.” How are you accompanying those you serve in your community at home or community abroad?

We walk together as Christ walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We react to what we see and then realize that it is Christ with us.

**Interview Transcript – Laura Vaughan
Completed March 27, 2015**

What is your ministry and for how long have you been in this position?

My ministry is working with a new non-profit called Faith Works, an ecumenical network of faith-based groups connecting those in need with the various services available in our community. Our non-profit is just now becoming operational but we have been working on it for two years.

Describe how your ministry serves others.

Faith Works serves churches, social service agencies and those in need.

1. Churches – Faith Works is a call center that churches can get information about services that other churches or social service agencies offer in the Shreveport/Bossier area.
2. Social Service Agencies – Faith Works is a place that agencies can share their needs for volunteers or items such as clothing or food and we can connect them with churches who can help.
3. Those in Need – Faith Works is a call center that someone in need can call or have a church call and gather what churches or organizations can assist them. More of a one place shop rather than having to go to one church and get clothing, another and ask for food...

How would you describe “dependency” in your own words?

Dependency is depending on someone or a substance for support. It is not taking responsibility for your own life.

What are the signs of unhealthy dependency?

When the person is feeling like they can't live without the support. When you are relying on someone or something outside of yourself to take care of you, survive or find happiness.

What are the dangers of dependency?

Losing confidence; being deceptive; defensive; living in fear; resentment towards those who help and seem to have it all together;

Do you think there is a difference between self-induced dependency and other-induced dependency?

Yes. Sometimes people find themselves in a place where there seem to be no options. It is harder when it is other-induced. When it is self-induced, there are more opportunities for others to reach out and share their journey, and by doing so maybe there is a light for someone who is in that self-induced dependency

In your organization, how do you guard against dependency? What steps have you taken to teach or support self-sustainability?

We will be entering information about each client into a database, and so we will be able to see patterns that may occur. We then will offer encouragement and other solutions to help the person with a hand up instead of the traditional hand out.

What do you believe is the difference between dependence and reliance?

If you rely on something you can find other sources or other ways to get what you need. When you are dependent—you are stuck.

Accompaniment is usually referred to as a vocal or musical instrument that supports another. Perhaps it could also mean “something added for embellishment, completeness, or symmetry.” How are you accompanying those you serve in your community at home or community abroad?

I am listening to peoples’ stories and companioning each person I encounter on this life journey. We are all in this together. How can I offer my gifts and allow the other person to offer their gifts. We all need each other. God calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves. I am trying to live my life and follow the calling.

**Interview Transcript – Katie Weir
Completed March 19, 2015**

What is your ministry and for how long have you been in this position?

Fuller Center for Housing is a faith based affordable housing outreach, and I've been involved as co-board chair for about 6 years.

Describe how your ministry serves others.

The FCNWLA (Fuller Center of Northwest Louisiana) provides first time homebuyers an opportunity they have never had before because no interest is charged; therefore, the mortgage is lower than any comparable rental. No homeowner pays more than \$350 a month for his mortgage, which is a considerable difference from the amount for a rental property, which can often be twice that.

How would you describe “dependency” in your own words?

I think of dependency as one who relies on another or relies on a system or group of support folks. Newborn and young children depend on parents/care givers in their early years, but then develop and grow to independence.

What are the signs of unhealthy dependency?

Signs of unhealthy dependency include:

- 1) not accepting responsibility as one grows up;
- 2) expecting others to always provide;
- 3) generational norm (more in the US) expecting government/agencies to always assist.

What are the dangers of dependency?

The dangers of dependency can help cause young people never to grow up, get a job and be productive citizens. Dependency can develop generations of families who expect the government to continue to assist and therefore, why does one need to seek employment or further one's education.

In your organization, how do you guard against dependency? What steps have you taken to teach or support self-sustainability?

As prospective homeowners are interviewed for a new home, they are informed of the necessary steps toward becoming a homeowner. They are required to attend a first time homebuyer's class, budget counseling and informed they will be responsible for \$1,100.00 in closing costs of their new home. The new homeowner is also required to do 350 sweat equity hours, either at one of the FC homes or at a partner agency of FC. If a homeowner gets behind in their monthly mortgage, they will have a visit from a family selection/support committee person to see how they can get back on track!

What do you believe is the difference between dependence and reliance?

Dependency seems to be when one does not see nor desire to become self-sufficient. Or this may be a generational pattern that is familiar! On the other hand, reliance may be situational, to assist one through the tough times and then move back to independence.

Accompaniment is usually referred to as a vocal or musical instrument that supports another. Perhaps it could also mean “something added for embellishment, completeness, or symmetry.” How are you accompanying those you serve in your community at home or community abroad?

The Fuller Center is indeed accompanying each homeowner. As Millard Fuller said, “If your homeowners don’t have struggles with their mortgages, then you’ve picked the wrong homeowners!” The family selection/support committee meets with families if they get behind on their mortgage payments. They meet with each family unit to determine the best strategy, through additional budget counseling, assistance with more employment or FC willingness to “be patient, if there is a crisis that prevents the mortgage payment being met.”

What other thoughts might you want to add at this time?

The Fuller Center for Housing is truly a hand up, not a hand out. This ministry is indeed building lives and changing community. There is great pride in the neighborhoods that have been transformed!

**Interview Transcript – Lauren Blanco
Completed March 26, 2015**

What is your ministry and for how long have you been in this position?

I have worked for non-profit organization ForgottenSong for a little over two years. ForgottenSong sustainably empowers communities in war-torn countries by meeting health, educational & vocational needs through innovative small business development. We are dedicated to the idea that empowerment in war torn countries can be native-led, self-sustainable and reproducible and that foreign investment in development projects can and should be limited.

Describe how your ministry serves others.

ForgottenSong serves war-torn communities, especially women and vulnerable children, through sustainable small business development. Our projects focus on empowering these communities to meet health, educational and vocational needs.

We currently have a Poultry Project—a system of poultry farms in Uganda and Burundi that provide a sustainable source of income, nutrition, education and occupation to orphans and vulnerable communities.

How would you describe “dependency” in your own words?

Dependency is a state where one individual or group of people cannot function healthily without the presence, providence or influence of another individual or group of people. In the context of our international work, dependency is an undesired state of operation where international partners would rely on and function solely (or heavily) from the presence, influence or providence of ForgottenSong.

What are the signs of unhealthy dependency?

Signs of unhealthy dependency (in the context of international development) are mostly expressed in a continued need for/reliance upon donor funding. I would say money is the most prominent resource, particularly from Western donors to developing countries, which causes the most frequent and intricate problems of dependency. Traditionally, aid or charity is used most simply to provide funds or a basic resource to a community/country in need. Because charity is a practically *easy* way for a donor to give, this predominant form of Western giving has created a sense of dependency in developing countries. When development organizations or ministries go to work with international communities, it is not uncommon to encounter international partners who might have the expectation of unlimited Western resources, or to establish a partnership with the expectation that the donor will always continue funding a project (rather than finding a way to generate their own income, etc.).

Dependency is the opposite of self-sustainability (or independence), the state in which one provides for and maintains him/herself and his/her family. In a general sense, charity has fostered an expectation of funding from western donors and can propel an organization or donor to simply keep giving, without establishing expectations or practical steps for the recipient to learn/gain independence.

Through my experience with ForgottenSong, we have learned that these signs of dependency are shown at the beginning of a relationship/partnership. We have learned to discern what to look for when vetting our potential partners. Not to be exclusive, but to find the leaders that will lead these projects on to success, without need for our resources/presence down the road. For example, in Uganda we have started a system of poultry farms that provide for health, educational and vocational needs. We needed community leaders that had resources and a large network that would multiply a small financial investment to influence their entire country. We call them the “big rocks”—when you want to fill a bucket with the most possible substances, and you have large rocks, little rocks, sand and water. You must start with the big rocks. Then you can follow with smaller and smaller “influencers,” so to speak, until you have filled the entire bucket...or reached an entire country.

They needed to already have, or be willing to adopt, a mindset for self-sustainability. After time, we realized they also needed to be willing to invest their own funds, as this is a sign of taking ownership (another sign of independence from a donor), which ultimately plays out into long term success, international partner taking responsibility, etc. While expanding in Uganda, we had planned to partner with an *extremely* well connected and *highly* influential leader that was a part of the network we were already working with. When we initiated the agreement stage for the project at their orphanage, this particular partner was unwilling to make a significant investment. This showed us two things: that this group was not heavily *interested* in our money, project or time, and they weren't willing to take *ownership* of their project. This organization had many resources and is very successful in the region. While we originally wanted them as a partner, we found they did not end up fulfilling the needs of a partnership with us. We found that many of the financially poorer organizations and individuals are willing to invest more in their farms because they actually *value* the opportunity for a small business and *need* it.

What are the dangers of dependency?

If an international partner is reliant upon a Western donor for a long term/unrestricted period of time, there is no room for growth. Ultimately, whatever is given/established by the western donor—whatever project or funding—it will END when the donor runs out of funds, dies, or disconnects from that international partner. Everything becomes reliant upon the donor and when the donor leaves the international partner for whatever reason, ALL of the investment comes to nothing. It is over. Done. Every dollar, all the time invested will go to waste if it cannot be sustained by those in need of the investment.

Do you think there is a difference between self-induced dependency and other-induced dependency?

I'm assuming self-induced dependency would be on the part of the international partner, and other-induced is on the part of the donor. I think there is certainly a difference, but both parties can fall into dependency if one agrees to the others' initiation of dependency.

I think both are derived from laziness and/or ignorance. Laziness meaning dependency is the easy/simple solution. Just pump some money into the poor countries, and all it

requires is connecting your bank account to another's. Same goes for both sides, self- and other- induced. I'm sure it's easy to keep receiving money when you need it, and when you have immediate needs, it's easy (and culturally appropriate from a developing country) to act on immediate needs and not save/invest in the future (cycle of poverty). From ignorance, both parties act on what they know and what they have been taught. I have many American friends who have never considered an alternative to charity. It's all they know and have ever learned, and they think it is always good for others. They have never asked themselves if it could possibly hurt those they give to in the long-term. So if you multiply that on a large scale, I would assume that some organizations don't realize the long-term detriment their charity has on communities that cannot overcome the poverty trap because they are dependent on donor funds.

The same goes for a self-induced "ignorance" explanation. The international partner could have simply only ever seen dependency modeled for them. It may be their only understanding of survival. I would consider this a poverty mindset, when one thinks/believes he or she is not capable of achieving more for themselves or sustaining themselves. This mindset is perpetuated by a dependency model of charity, and it prevents one from having true dignity.

In your organization, how do you guard against dependency? What steps have you taken to teach or support self-sustainability?

For us, it all begins with the original partnership. For our project strategy to succeed, we are focused on empowering leadership to teach and train their communities to empower each other. Fortunately, we have been able to partner with those who have an even better understanding of self-sustainability than we do. *They* have taught *us*. In return, we invest in them so they can continue to influence their communities in such powerful ways.

So again—it's all about partnership. The "right" people are out there, and our experience has been that of provision from God to provide those partners who understand sustainability to its core. They're the ones already farming acres of land, initiating community micro-finance programs, etc. And as I mentioned earlier, one of our guards against dependency is asking a partner to invest financially. It's proving to be a good filter and proof that our partners are wholeheartedly invested to see their project through to success.

What do you believe is the difference between dependence and reliance?

I think any partnership should have a healthy reliance. I mean otherwise, you might as well be strangers.

Dependency tends to be paternalistic—the recipient is dependent upon the donor (mostly always over money). Perhaps reliance can be more balanced, where the donor relies on the international partner to the same degree the partner relies on the donor: for collaboration, ideas, wisdom, as well as financial management, empowerment and eventually independence.

Accompaniment is usually referred to as a vocal or musical instrument that supports another. Perhaps it could also mean “something added for embellishment, completeness, or symmetry.” How are you accompanying those you serve in your community at home or community abroad?

What a beautiful explanation. I love that. What a beautiful picture of what our relationships should be. The way ForgottenSong does this—we come alongside those who are already leading self-sustainable initiatives in their community and who have a network that they can reach and empower. We come alongside these communities and make a small financial investment that helps them launch their own business. Aside from a few regulations that go alongside the financial investment, the follow through has often been up to the partners, simply because we come alongside them and ask what they need. We don't give them something they don't need. They know what they need, how to manage it, and—most of the time—how to make it successful with some suggestions and input from us and what we have.

Interview Transcript – Rochelin Forzene
Completed April 13, 2015

Note: An American team leader, Darenda Lease, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, conducted this interview to seek solutions for her clean water team's struggles in Haiti. I was part of the interview, as a third party to simply listen to the exchange. Rochelin is an agronomist in Les Cayes, Haiti. The discussion was fruitful and corroborated many of the points of this paper. Rochelin's English is limited, and the transcript below has been edited solely to improve a reader's understanding.

Darenda: Some of our uncertainties in our involvement revolve around the fact that Frantzou is now responsible for Education/Health & Hygiene. (He is working with 3 of our communities). Do we need to do more? Can we enhance what Frantzou is doing or should we? This job for Frantzou just started and he is doing very well. We have made a few trips to Haiti to do continuing education for health and hygiene. We may not need to do this in the future at each site.

Rochelin: Well, working in those sites on health and hygiene is a lot of work, as some communities contain a lot of people. They certainly focus on the importance of the water systems when you guys are here, and forget very fast when you guys leave. I think it will be up to Frantzou to tell you if he can do those works by himself or if he needs help. But, I would suggest you to do the Health and Hygiene training another way. I would recommend you to hire one or two agents from each community, these agents will wear t-shirt and cap with the logo for LIVING WATERS FOR THE WORLD to identify that those guys are from the LWW. As they wear t-shirts and caps, people will respect and listen to them. Those agents should be well-trained, and chosen based on the level of education, because we should hire people who are able to transfer the messages clearly to the population. Remember the last training we have made in Camp-Perrin, about 15 people participated in the seminar? Of course, they did a great job and learned from us. But, I am not sure that they were able to spread out the information you have given to them to the whole community. Agents should be able to give a report of how many people they have seen every weeks/months with pictures attached. We have to make sure that it is more important that agents see 3 or 4 people from the community, and the message is well-delivered.

Darenda: We feel the Water Board of Directors could be better work to improve issues with water distribution, continuing health and hygiene education classes/opportunities and getting the word out to those that need clean water...what we call marketing strategies. Is it beneficial for us to sit in on a meeting once or twice a year and help with ideas and be involved in the discussion? Why or why not?

Rochelin: You can still be continuing with the education classes when you come there, but make sure you keep the list of people that have already attended classes with pictures, so that next time different people will attend the classes. But, remember the most important works will be done by agents because most of the time the community have more people and more other localities than what you can see. Yes, it is important to sit in on a meeting once or twice a year because you all have to remember and know what it is happening on different sites, as the localities are very different from each other. The

experience from one site (weakness/ strength) from sites to sites will help you to resolve some problems.

Darenda: As you know the language barrier makes communicating a little difficult. We want them to speak honestly and openly. Will this happen if we are present?

Rochelin: Language will always be a barrier if you guys don't speak creole fluently and if they don't speak English fluently. The most important thing is to have a good translator to know and tell things as they're happening. But this translator should have a great support and consideration from Living Waters for the World, so that we can truly know if the water system is a failure or success.

Darenda: How do we best communicate with the Water Board of Directors before and after our trips? Because we don't speak or type the language it makes it difficult to do follow-up.

Rochelin: I would suggest you to do a group conversation with those people if they are all connected on Facebook. Someone who speaks both Creole and English can manage the group conversation so that we can make the communication easier. But, visits also should be made to make sure that what is said is happening. I would ask for attached pictures, if possible.

Darenda: We also don't want to be looked at just for a money hand out. We want to encourage these boards to discover the resources they have in their own community. We do not know what those may be but we want to encourage them to find those resources and work with what they have. How do we do this?

Rochelin: Yes, it's important to identify a project, could be about anything (rather big or small). The community should choose it by themselves, as they are on the field. Could be about agriculture, school, scholarships, church supplies, business, medications.

Darenda: ALL of our water systems seem to have "taste" issues. We have consulted Living Waters, and it seems the system does do what it is designed to do. We, in the States, do not taste what our Haitian friends taste.

Rochelin: I am not an expert on the water issues and I cannot make a comparison between the taste in the States and Haiti. But, I think, once you dig a well here, if you do not go to the depth required, you might not get the good tasting water.

Darenda: The surprise to us with this "taste" issue is that most of the people in the areas we have systems were drinking contaminated dirty water before we installed the purification system. Is the taste from the water system worse than what it was before we filtered and purified it?

Rochelin: Yes, of course they complained. This is what they called adaptation; they were used to it (bad water) and liked it. That is the reason why should have people (agents) to convince them to switch to the purification water. Tell them the impact that the water they like has on their body. Education is very important.

Darenda: What are the people expecting?

Rochelin: Sincerely, the taste is a little bit different; this is the water I drink. But, it's happening as the water filtered from materials during the filtration system and washes the water. But, some of them don't know that, they really need to know that...

Darenda: Do they understand that it may taste different but it is CLEAN and free of harmful life threatening bacteria? ... That means that it is better than what they were drinking before.

Rochelin: People used to consider water bags as clean water, but this water is treated by osmosis inverse and tastes different. This is probably what they were expecting as clean water.

Darenda: How do we convey that message? Can "WE"? If not, then who could?

Rochelin: I think this question is answered already; those who got the message are more than happy to drink the water as they know it is safe. But, others are still pessimistic. Hire Education Agents and continue to spread out the message until it gets through

Darenda: Since we were not very integrated into the community before we arrived to install a water system, we are not sure how to proceed with each village. It seems to us that giving a water purification system would provide an opportunity to help their immediate surrounding community and also provide them with a business opportunity. This isn't happening very well in any community. During negotiations we told that there were many people in the village that needed the water, how far people in the village had to walk for clean water, that many people would come to get the clean water if we installed a purification system for them... people came out for the celebration and not many since! What is it that we are not getting or understanding about this?

Rochelin: It is important to give water systems in the village, and people are aware of that, too. But, let me tell you that some villages are different from others. Remember for the business part, there is a fee required per 5 gallons of water. I am convinced that sometimes people from a village will need water at a certain moment of time, and they won't be able to pay that fee. Sometimes, I understand that they give water to some people for free. But, if they also do business, they cannot give it to everybody for free.

Darenda: We do not want to pick just one village to work with; however, it may be that we connect with one village better than another. Will it make any difference to only show up a couple of times a year, just to visit? Should we simply stop in to talk and say hello or should we stop in with a purpose? How often should we be visiting each site so they understand that we care?

Rochelin: Oh yeah! It is important to visit every site as many times as you can. They are all important, and people will be happy and trust the water more. But, your visit will not be sufficient to spread the message to the whole communities. You would better stop in with a purpose. Please, notice that all people in the communities do not have the same level of education. Some will understand and apply faster than others. I do not know about your budget regarding to travelling to Haiti as the team has a lot of people. Two times a year is ok, but three times a year would be better.

APPENDIX B

Living Waters for the World Covenant

A Covenant Between

_____, *the Initiating Partner*

and

_____, *the Operating Partner*

The partners to this Covenant commit to work together to plan, install, and operate a Living Waters for the World water treatment system at:

(*Name of the facility where the water treatment system will be installed*)

in order to provide safe water to:

(*Name of the community to be served*)

(*Country*)

The partners further commit to provide continuing Living Waters for the World health, hygiene, and spiritual education (hereafter referred to as “education”) for the community being served by the water treatment system.

The partners agree as follows:

I. Both Partners will:

A. Work together to:

1. Prepare, agree to, and sign a Project Preparation Plan for the installation of the water treatment system and completion of the initial education sessions during the installation.
2. Prepare, agree to, and sign a System Management Plan to guide the operation and maintenance of the water treatment system.

B. Identify any local regulations and work together to secure any required permissions or certifications for the operation of the water treatment system and the distribution of safe water to those in need.

C. Communicate with each other frequently prior to the scheduled installation of the water treatment system to confirm progress is being made on tasks agreed to by the partners’ in the Project Preparation Plan.

D. Commit to continue communicating with each other regularly after the water treatment system is installed to share information about the effectiveness of the System Management Plan; to discuss the operation and maintenance of the system; to share information about the amount of safe water produced and distributed; to discuss the continuing education sessions for the community; and

to share any other information about the benefits of or sustainability of the project.

- E. Cooperate** to identify other potential sites in the area needing a Living Waters for the World water treatment system.
- F. Agree** to follow all methodologies, policies, and procedures of Living Waters for the World and the Network responsible for the partners' location.
- G. Agree** to provide mutual support to other Living Waters for the World partners working on projects in the same geographic area, particularly in pre-networked areas.

II. The Operating Partner will:

- A. Complete** the tasks they are responsible for in the Project Preparation Plan discussed, agreed to, and signed by both partners.
- B. Follow** the operating procedures and complete the requirements detailed in the System Management Plan as discussed, agreed to, and signed by both partners.
- C. Form** a Water Committee to manage and ensure the operation and maintenance of the water treatment system, the production and distribution to those in need of safe water produced by the system, the honest and accurate handling of money received from the sale and distribution of safe water, the expenditure of the money for the maintenance and operation of the water treatment system, and the continuation of periodic education sessions for members of the community.
- D. Maintain** a team of trained System Operators responsible for operating and maintaining the water treatment system.
- E. Maintain** a team of trained Health and Hygiene Educators to continue conducting education in the community.
- F. Attend**, whenever possible, the country wide or regional Operator/Educator conferences that Living Waters for the World or its Network sponsors as continuing education is important to the long-term success of the water system.

III. The Initiating Partner will:

- A. Complete** the tasks they are responsible for in the Project Preparation Plan discussed, agreed to, and signed by both partners.
- B. Train** the Operating Partner's System Operators in the proper installation, operation and maintenance of the water treatment system.
- C. Train** the Operating Partner's Health, Hygiene, and Spiritual Education Trainers in the techniques, information, and materials for providing a continuing education program.
- D. Train** the System Operators in the basics of good health and hygiene and the proper use of safe water.

- E. Report** any problems with the operation of the water treatment system or the quality of the water it produces to their Living Waters for the World Network. The Initiating Partner will work with the Network or with Living Waters for the World staff to diagnose the cause of a problem and develop an adequate and appropriate plan to resolve the issue.
- F. Communicate** with Living Waters for the World about the status of the project and partnership based on the procedures of the country's Network.
- G. Maintain** up to date information concerning this partnership, the Operating Partner, the water treatment system, and other project related information in the Living Waters for the World Status of Projects database.

IV. Terms of the Covenant:

- A.** The minimum covenant period is for three (3) years, however, a longer term may negotiated between the parties if desired. The covenant will remain in effect until terminated with sixty (60) days advance notice in writing by either partner to each other and their Network.
- B.** If this covenant is terminated because the water treatment system is no longer in operation; because of the improper operation of the water treatment system or because of the production of unsafe water, either Partner will notify Living Waters for the World or their Network, who will work with the Initiating and Operating Partners to develop a plan of action concerning the future use of the system equipment.

V. Sustainability:

- A.** It is the Operating Partner's responsibility to properly operate and maintain the water treatment system and to make certain the water they produce with the system and distribute to those in need is safe for drinking, cooking, and other uses taught in the Living Waters for the World education.
- B.** It is the Operating Partner's responsibility to immediately report any problems with the operation of the water treatment system or with the quality of the water it produces. The Operating Partner should make immediate contact with their Initiating Partner or Network to report any problems or issues.

VI. Contact Information:

Each partner will designate someone who will serve as the person responsible for maintaining regular communication between the partners.

A. Operating Partner Contact Person

Name: _____

Position or Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

B. Initiating Partner Contact Person

Name: _____

Position or Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

C. Living Waters for the World or Network Coordinating Team Representative

Name: _____

Position or Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

IMPORTANT: Copies of this covenant are to be kept by the Operating Partner's Water Committee, the Initiating Partner and the moderator of the Living Waters for the World network coordinating team for that country.

This Covenant is agreed to and signed by:

Operating Partner's Water Committee Leader

Date

Initiating Partner's Mission Team Leader

Date

Living Waters for the World or Network Representative

Date

APPENDIX C

Suggested Reading List for Individuals or Groups Serving Alongside Haitians

- Boers, Ted and Tim Stoner. *Demons of Poverty: One Entrepreneur's Experience with Addressing Poverty in Haiti*. Grand Rapids, MI: Micah Enterprises, 2012.
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APPENDIX D

Personal Acknowledgements

I have learned more in the last two years than I ever imagined possible. Dr. Jason Clark challenged my critical thinking on a weekly basis. I stand in awe of his natural reflective abilities and unending knowledge. Dr. Loren Kerns and Dr. Cliff Berger encouraged me to ask difficult questions and focus my research. Their kindness and calmness carried me from an anxious applicant to a seasoned student. Dr. Patrick Murunga not only served as my adviser, but also walked alongside me as my trusted pastor and encourager. Because of these four men, I am a better thinker, a better writer, and a better person. Dr. Donna K. Wallace joined my cheering section later in the writing process, and I could not be more thankful for her kindness and encouragement. My appreciation also goes to my editor, Cierra Wallace.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize others who were instrumental to my success. The FUMC staff and congregation have encouraged and loved me for two years. I could not be in a more suitable place. Shonnie Streder donated her time and talent by producing the eight-part video series accompanying this written statement. Additionally, my artifact-collaborator, Michael Badriaki, is the ultimate partner in ministry. I cannot wait to see how God uses our friendship to break new ground in the world of missions. Finally, Bill Mendenhall, my travel-buddy-turned-best-friend-turned-significant-other, read every blog and paper I wrote during the last two years. Can you imagine what a weekend or trip will be like without homework? Though two words seem incredibly insufficient... Thank you.

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