



Overseas Mission and Local Communities Group
Panel on Review and Reform
Church of Scotland

Overseas Mission in the Life of the Local Church

Report

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Preface

The General Assembly of 2008 approved a deliverance from the Church without Walls Planning Group that the Panel on Review and Reform in collaboration with World Mission Council “commission a study into the effect of overseas mission on the life of local church communities where they have an interactive partnership with an overseas project”. (*Church without Walls report 2008, deliverance section 8*)

Initial meetings of representatives of the two bodies along with other interested parties were held to determine the likely scope of this work.

Dr Virginia Cano and Dr Austin Reid of WBL Consultants were commissioned to undertake the work and agreed to provide a “rich picture” of the wide variety of interactive links which exist in congregations throughout Scotland today.

The Panel would like to express its gratitude to Ms Carol Finlay, Associate Secretary (Local Development), and World Mission Council, who worked closely with the researchers throughout the project.

The picture they have painted is rich and full, covering congregations involved in World Mission twinning and extending to the many and varied other links which exist between congregations in Scotland and organisations overseas.

It is a challenging report but one which brings much encouragement as we see the blessing brought to congregations in this country and throughout the world as a result of shared faith and shared relationships.

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10 November 2009

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SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The report is in three main sections, with initial recommendations and subsequent appendices

- Recommendations
- Introduction and Background, in three chapters
- The Extent of Mission, in five chapters
- Partnerships, in eight chapters
- Appendices

The numbering in the following paragraphs reflects the numbers of the chapters of the report.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1 THE COMMISSION

This report derives from the commission by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for ‘an overview of the number and extent of overseas mission undertaken by Church of Scotland congregations and a study into the effect of overseas mission on the life of the local church communities, where they have an interactive partnership with an overseas project’. The report has two major parts; ‘Extent of mission’ and Partnerships’.

2 THE CONCEPTS OF MISSION AND PARTNERSHIP

The study is about Mission in the Church of Scotland, and in local congregations, and particularly about the role of Partnership in mission. The view by the Church of Scotland of the role of mission has changed over the years, from one where the Scots evangelised the heathen, towards mission being recognised as being a partnership between the churches in Scotland and churches and organisations overseas, but still with a role for the mission partner. This is in line with the deliverance of the General Assembly, “*That congregations research an area of the world church and establish a personal partnership with a congregation or project.*” The essential elements of mission in this context have been identified as evangelism, personal witness, and social responsibility.

The essential elements of partnership were identified as mutual respect, trust and friendship, mutual benefit, and communication.

3 METHODOLOGY

The Extent of Mission was studied by analysing the responses to a questionnaire issued to all churches. It was designed to elicit information on the existence of a link or partnership, on its nature and on the activities undertaken in that relationship.

The Partnership study was based on a selected representative sample of 15 partnerships, chosen from the 169 of which the Local Development Office of the World Mission Council has a record, and which they call ‘twinings’. Interviews were held with 12 Scottish churches and 3 presbyteries. Telephone conversations were held and correspondence entered into with a number of the overseas partners and with churches involved in a presbytery –presbytery linkage. Questionnaires were issued for distribution to the congregations of the 12 partnership, finally reports by the churches of their visits to the overseas partners and reports submitted by Faithshare visitors were analysed.

The Partnership study was undertaken prior to the Extent of Mission study, but they are presented in the reverse order in this report for clarity of presentation.

EXTENT OF MISSION

4 CATEGORIES OF RELATIONSHIPS ENCOUNTERED

Churches have a great variety of relationships and with a great variety of people, organisations, and other bodies. They are categorised in terms of partnerships with a community in a specific locality, in terms of links with person, and in terms of links with an organisation not closely linked to a particular community:

- Partnerships with churches,
- Partnerships with trusts such as schools or orphanages,
- Links to a person, a mission partner, eg a member of the church in Christian service overseas,
- Links to missions and other organisations where the relationship is more remote, and is not with a particular community in a defined locality.

5 THE NUMBER AND NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIPS

Churches have many relationships and many types of relationship with mission. Of the questionnaires issued to 1471 churches, 636 (43%) responded. One third, (225, 35%) said that they did have a partnership or link, and two thirds said they did not.

- 76 churches had a partnership with a church overseas.
- 50 churches had a partnership with a trust overseas linked to a local community, (included here are the small number of charities linked to a Scottish church).
- 100 churches had links with an individual mission partner,
- 26 churches had a link with a trust or charity where the relationship was remote from an identified locality or groups of people.

The relationships were not all one-to-one relationships. Some mission partners had links with several Scottish churches. Some churches had many partnerships and links; with various people, with other churches, with mission bodies, and with international charities.

6 AIMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE RELATIONSHIPS

The responses show that the main aims of the relationships that had been established were prayer and support. The number of churches active in sending visitors to the partner overseas was not high, but a number of churches had sent groups of five or more visitors to the other organisation, and such groups will undoubtedly have a significant effect. Funding was identified as an important aim and this was largely substantiated by the response to the question about the amount of funding. A high proportion of the churches said they had a partnership or link, but chose not to reply to many of the questions.

7 RELATIONSHIP WITH A MISSION PARTNER

The links of churches to their mission partners are varied. In many cases, the mission partner was a member of the congregation who had gone to Christian work overseas, In some cases a group of churches, generally geographically contiguous, supported one mission partner, thus over half (62) of the 116 links between churches and mission partners were concentrated in eight people. Not all of these links showed active involvement by the church, but in some the mission partner had established written contracts with their supporting churches indicating a high level of commitment and of organisation. Some of the mission partners were appointed and employed by the Church of Scotland.

We found that a charity had been established by or for some mission partners, closely linked to their work. We found cases where a mission partner previously supported by a missionary body had moved to 'go it alone', establishing lines of support from churches or by setting up a trust or charity, clearly as a means of gaining the financial benefits of charitable status.

8 GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The links and partnerships span the globe, as might be expected from Scots, However, a disproportional high number of the links to churches and trusts are with Malawi.

PARTNERSHIP

9 AIMS OF THE PARTNERSHIPS

In studying the partnerships between churches and overseas churches and other organisations, the study found that there were three main aims.

- Christian witness and fellowship,
- Friendship and sharing,
- Social responsibility, cooperation, and help.

The study found that church-to-church partnerships always included Christian witness and fellowship as an aim, but this was not seen as an alternative to or inimical to practical support. The community partnerships did not have Christian witness and fellowship as an aim, they emphasised a social relationship. The study found no basis to support the notion that a project emphasis excluded friendship. In some partnerships, the objectives were not clearly articulated. Few partnerships had a mechanism for evaluating the achievement of their aims.

The study found different approaches to mission, expressed by different partnerships and by different people within a partnership.

10 BENEFITS

The perceived benefits to the local congregations arising from different types of relationship were studied from the questionnaires issued to all churches. This showed that the partnerships with churches and with local trusts give a greater benefit to the local congregations than do links to mission partners and links to remote trusts, and that in nearly every case the partnership with a church provides a greater benefit to the local church than do any other form of link or partnership

From this, as well as from the detailed study, derives our conclusion that the development and encouragement of partnerships with churches and other trusts will contribute greatly to the health of the local church.

The perceived benefits of partnerships with churches and trusts were examined in more detail in the 15 case studies examined. This showed that a partnership with a church or community overseas provides enormous benefits to the members of congregations involved. It provides participants with a new and changed perspective. Issues at home or in the church are seen in different terms and in a broader context; problems that seemed huge seem less important.

People no longer see the social habits and culture in Scotland as 'that is just the way things are' but as factors that can be challenged and changed. Working with other people from the church or the community has provided a bond; working together to achieve something, especially if it was difficult, has a uniting benefit, and some churches set out on a partnership with that as an explicit intention. There is a gain in personal development and in personal self confidence in facing challenges and overcoming them, whether this was in organising a visit of in travelling abroad.

Partnerships have given churches and their congregations a better knowledge of the world and of Christianity in different countries. It has helped to establish a realisation that there is much to learn from other people. There has been a sense of sharing hopes and cares, of walking the Christian life together, and of growing friendship; it has given the churches a different idea of worship. Three hour long, African-style services have not been widely adopted, but new approaches to music and informal worship, and a greater perception of God are evident in some churches.

There is a strong sense of being needed,

'What I do can be of help and change lives',

'What I do is important to other people and therefore to myself', '.

The sense of success has proved attractive to people in the community, especially to young people, and has drawn people into the partnership, including those without a church connection,

'I am of value' and 'I have been successful in helping',

'The partnership has given church members an opportunity to talk about the work of the church and their faith to people in the community'.

Partnerships that have been initiated to be of help to others have changed the lives of those participating and have thereby changed the life of the church in Scotland and increased their sense of responsibility in our own society.

The benefits mentioned are particularly true for those who visited the overseas partner, or who interacted with overseas visitors whilst in Scotland, but it is also true of those who had with less direct contact.

Apart from the sense of sharing described above, the benefits to the overseas partners that were most often mentioned, were the sense that they were cared for and loved, that they really mattered to us the Scottish partners, and the very practical help provided.

11 COMMUNICATION AND LINKS

Communication between partners is the lifeblood of any partnership. Without it there can be no conversations, no sharing, no friendship, and no partnership. Visits provide the essential face to face interaction, they were highly valued, but they are also expensive, and need to be planned and have clear aims. The main form of communication was email. The partnerships have been instrumental in developing important links between the church and the community, and in developing links between community groups (eg schools) in the two partner's communities, thus spreading to the entire community, the idea of cooperation, and of learning about and from others.

There was generally widespread knowledge of the partnership inside the church, with most people having heard about it through the minister, the church newsletter or by word of mouth. Participation by the congregations was high; with a remarkable 14% having hosted a visitor in their homes, 13% having visited the partner, and 83% had given money.

12 THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships can be initiated for many reasons, to achieve something missing eg to engage young people, or to participate in Christian mission or sometimes just to add excitement to church activities. Many churches have established formal agreements but these do not seem to be essential. However, the process of developing an agreement and the symbolic nature of a tangible record are helpful. Partnerships can decline and sometimes die. Many include a formal review point, where continuation or termination can be decided.

13 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND PRESBYTERY FACILITATING ARRANGEMENTS

Three of the partnerships in the study are community based partnership legally separate from any church, although still maintaining some links to the initiating church. Reasons for them to seek charitable status included a wish for independence and greater community involvement. The establishment of a partnership as a separate entity or as a charity does not of itself change its aims, and can have significant benefits. However, the impetus, which led it to become an independent body, might also lead it to shed its Christian connections.

The three presbytery facilitating arrangements were planned to facilitate church-to-church partnerships. In one presbytery there was evidence of healthy church-to-church partnerships, and the contribution made by the presbytery clearly identified, in another there was as yet little evidence of effective partnerships, and in the third the presbytery was more of a blockage than a help.

14 RECOGNISED AND 'INFORMAL' PARTNERSHIPS & LINKS

The survey of all the churches revealed a widespread misapprehension that the Church of Scotland approves or recognises partnerships, and those partnerships and links not so recognised are not entirely proper, and are seen as 'informal' links. There is also an understanding that the Church of Scotland 'appoints' mission partners to churches. This general perception will do little to encourage churches to be entrepreneurial in establishing links and partnerships.

15 CHALLENGES

The challenges facing the partnerships are to do with:

- The challenge of ownership - this is a challenge which in most churches is being addressed, with a high level of ownership of the partnerships,
- The challenge of the imbalance of resources. Most partnerships have recognised that they are beneficiaries as well as donors. However, this is a continued challenge for all since the sense of doing good can easily drift into a superiority donor mentality, with damaging consequences on the relationship.
- The challenge of communication. Friendships need steady communication and particularly with partners in developing countries, there are many potential blockages, including organisational, technological and human factors. Communication takes time and effort.
- There are additional challenges; of mutual respect and high expectations, of culture, of accountability, and of planning.

16 SUCCESS FACTORS

The success of the partnerships seems to depend on trust in God and on good management. The following are crucial: good leadership, organisation, volunteer workers, clear objectives and aims, meticulous planning, good communication, and some physical contact.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has demonstrated that a partnership, when working well, of a Scottish church with an overseas community or church has an extensive and beneficial impact on the church and community here in Scotland and deserves to be strongly promoted. To promote them the following are needed

Resources and processes

- Identify areas where support is needed to establish and strengthen partnerships.
- Establish resources for churches in the areas identified.
- Establish mechanisms for allowing the experience to be shared,

People

The core of any development programme is people.

- Encourage and empower existing staff.
- Establish a regional network of experienced people, able and willing to support the establishment and development of partnerships.

Finance

- Finance is needed to support the development of partnership
- Congregations should be made to feel responsible for raising much of their own funds, and for raising outside funds.
- Where finance is allocated in support of a partnership the criteria for funding should be made explicit and public, and should require the inclusion at the commencement of the partnership, certain essential elements in the absence of which many partnerships currently languish.

Policy

Congregations are urged to research an area of the world church and establish a personal partnership with a congregation or project.

The World Mission Council is urged to support the development of partnerships and twinings in the ways set out in the report.

The World Mission Council is urged a) to encourage congregations to act with independence in the establishment of partnerships overseas, b) to establish as a primary aim the support of congregations seeking to develop partnerships of their choice with overseas partners c) to reflect on its policy which restricts financial support to partnerships in countries with national churches linked to the Church of

Scotland and d) to provide for an inclusive policy in the financial support for those congregations with links outwith the national churches linked to the Church of Scotland.

The World Mission Council is encouraged to ensure, where presbytery to presbytery links are established, that their explicit purpose is to enable church to church partnerships.

Recommendations

A partnership between a local congregation and an overseas church or trust can be greatly beneficial to the life of the local church.

Congregations are therefore urged to *research an area of the world church and establish a personal partnership with a congregation or project*¹.

The World Mission Council is urged to support the development of partnerships and twinnings in the ways set out in the report. (See below)

*The World Mission Council is urged a) to encourage congregations to act with independence in the establishment of partnerships overseas, b) to establish as a primary aim the support of congregations seeking to develop partnerships of their choice with overseas partners*²

The World Mission Council is urged a) to reflect on its policy which restricts financial support to partnerships in countries with national churches linked to the Church of Scotland b) to provide for an inclusive policy in the financial support for those congregations with links outwith the national churches linked to the Church of Scotland.

The World Mission Council is urged, where presbytery to presbytery links are established, to ensure that their explicit purpose is to enable church to church partnerships.

Supporting the Development of Partnerships or Twinings

The study of the partnerships has demonstrated that a partnership, when working well, between a Scottish church and an overseas church or community has an extensive and beneficial impact on the church and community in Scotland and deserves to be strongly promoted. It has also shown that partnerships contribute more than links to mission partners or to remote trusts. To promote partnerships the following are needed.

Identify areas of support

Identify areas where support is needed to establish and strengthen partnerships. These will include:

- Updating communication skills – blogs, Skype, cheap telephoning protocols, using mobile phones in developing countries, video production, social networks
- How to overcome communication problems in developing countries
- Project Management skills in the Scottish churches and in the overseas partners, including leadership, accountability and good governance, and project management
- Social issues pertinent to each world cultural area
- Legal and technical experience in establishing an organisation as a charity or as a company
- The aims of partnerships, and written agreements
- Cooperation with non-church agencies and fund raising for projects.

¹ Deliverance 11 approved by the General Assembly from the Report of the Special Commission on Review and Reform: A Church without Walls 2001

² the Report of the Special Commission on Review and Reform: A Church without Walls 2001 recommended “that the shape of the church be turned up side down to affirm the primacy of the local Christian community supported appropriately by presbytery and central administration”; endorsed by the General Assembly

Establish resources in these areas

Establish resources for churches in the areas identified. Where such materials are already available, they need to be collated and conflated. They will include:-

- Written material eg leaflets that could form a handbook
- Workshops
- Training videos
- Networks of experts (see below)

Establish mechanisms for sharing experience

Establish mechanisms for allowing the experience to be shared, including:

- A 'mentor' system whereby someone from an experienced partnership mentors a new recruit.
- A yearly conference of partnership churches to share experience
- Use network communications eg video conferencing to develop identity and mutual support
- A blog or web page for Scottish partnerships to which all churches, and not only recognised twinnings, can contribute

Encourage people

Encourage and empower existing staff

- Some staff in some central role are needed to co-ordinate the work, they could be a mixture of full time and part time
- There are many staff in the Church of Scotland with leadership roles; Ministers, Readers, Regional development officers, presbytery staff, etc. How can they be given a vision for a world mission using international partnerships?

Establish a regional network of the experienced able and willing to support the establishment and development of partnerships.

- In the church throughout Scotland there are numerous people with experience of living in Rwanda, of developing mission in the Himalayas, of organising a business in Glasgow, of setting up a charitable trust to work in Kenya, of using Skype, of nursing in the Congo, of working with street children in Iquitos, of working with churches throughout the world, etc. They are willing to help, and often will be flattered to be asked, and can form a network of advice. The advantage is that it will give the local church some role in the development of partnerships

Finance and policy

Finance is needed

- There is a strong case for funding to be allocated to support these endeavours; but congregations should be made to feel responsible for raising much of their own funds, and for raising outside funds.

Where finance is allocated in support of a partnership, eg through Faithshare the criteria for funding should be made explicit and public, and should require the inclusion at the commencement of the partnership of certain essential elements (see chapter 12 and 14), in the absence of which many partnerships currently languish.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1 Introduction

Summary *This study derives from the commission by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for ‘an overview of the number and extent of overseas mission undertaken by Church of Scotland congregations and a study into the effect of overseas mission on the life of the local church communities, where they have an interactive partnership with an overseas project’. The report has two major parts. ‘Extent of Mission’ and ‘Partnerships’.*

The Terms of Reference

The 2008 General Assembly agreed that the Panel for Review and Reform and the World Mission Council be asked to:

Commission a study into the effect of overseas mission on the life of local church communities where they have an interactive partnership with an overseas project.

Dr Virginia Cano and Dr Austin Reid of WBL Consultants were engaged to undertake the study and to work with Ms Carol Finlay, Associate Secretary (Local Development) to the World Mission Council, whose work remit is to facilitate and encourage church twinings with overseas partners. When Dr Cano took up a full time post with the Church & Society Council of the Church of Scotland, the contract continued with Dr Reid. A report to the General Assembly is planned for May 2010.

The consultants were commissioned to produce a report that

“... presents a rich picture of the impact of overseas mission work on congregations in Scotland, on people with no faith, and on the lives of the partner congregations or organisations abroad, with recommendations on how those effects might be enhanced or otherwise modified.” and to *“... present an overview of the number and extent of overseas mission undertaken by Church of Scotland congregations.”*

The work was divided into two parts, reflecting these two aims

Extent of Mission *“An overview of the number and extent of overseas mission undertaken by Church of Scotland congregations.”*

A questionnaire was sent to every church in the Church of Scotland to ascertain the extent of their partnerships and links. The results obtained up to 18 September were analysed.

Partnerships *“A rich picture of the impact of overseas mission on congregations in Scotland and on overseas congregations.”*

Fifteen partnerships between churches, presbyteries, and charitable organisations were chosen to reflect a range of age, region, overseas country, and economic circumstances. Interviews were held with the 12 Scottish partners and 3 presbyteries that had a partnership with an overseas partner. Telephone conversations were held and correspondence entered into with a number of the overseas partners.

This report draws together the two parts of the study and additionally makes

“Recommendations on how those effects [the perceived benefits of the partnerships] might be enhanced or otherwise modified.”

The report makes extensive use of the records made of all the interactions with partnerships and ministers, quoting from them extensively, sometimes with little additional commentary letting the quotations stand for themselves. Such quotations are printed in italics. References are not given for every quotation in the published report, but the sources may be traced if required.

2 Mission and Partnership

Summary *This chapter describes the changes in the role of mission in recent years in the Church of Scotland (2.1). It identifies the essential elements of mission; evangelism, personal witness, and social responsibility (2.2), and the essential elements of partnership: mutual respect, trust and friendship, mutual benefit, and communication (2.3).*

2.1 Changes in the Approach to Mission

During the past decade, the role of 'mission' as seen by the Church of Scotland has changed. There are various reasons that together have led to this change of focus. Kenneth Ross General Secretary of the Board of World Mission and subsequently Secretary of the World Mission Council of the Church of Scotland has described the development, and the following paragraphs draw heavily on his writing³

1 At the start of the last century mission was seen as the sending out of Scots missionaries to the developing world to preach the gospel. Scottish participants were confident that Scotland was part of the 'Christian world' and that their missionary responsibility was to take the gospel to unevangelised areas. One hundred years later, the world has changed: there are vigorous, active and growing churches in many of the countries where the Scots pioneered Christianity. By contrast in Scotland, there has been a recession of faith and a decline in the church numerically and financially. The churches in overseas countries are now generally able to take responsibility for their own Christian work; thus, it is appropriate for churches in Scotland to work in collaboration with those churches to help them, and for those churches to work in collaboration with our churches to help us.

2 The funding available for large numbers of full time staff working on a permanent basis in overseas positions and paid for by the Church of Scotland is no longer possible. This was explored in detail in the Carberry Consultation. Thus, the emphasis is for churches in Scotland to work in cooperation with the churches and organisations overseas.

3 An influential Church without Walls report in 2001 encouraged a greater emphasis in the operation of the Church of Scotland on the initiative being local rather than central⁴⁵. 'The twenty-first century has seen a move away from an HQ-led approach to mission towards a focus on the local church where Christ's mission is embodied on a daily basis'. The Church of Scotland is making radical changes to its mission strategy to move from 'a centrally run operation driven by . . . a church mission board to a radically decentralised form of engagement as local congregations make direct connections with their overseas counterparts.' The role of the World Mission Council was seen to need to change from an implementing agency to a facilitating agency.

4 'Whereas fifty years ago our relationships were sustained by a small number of people over a long period of time, we now have a large number of people becoming involved for much shorter periods of time'. Thus, the timescale has changed as well as the number of people involved.

Although the means may have changed the purpose of mission has not. Mission reveals itself in many ways. It is universal and catholic extending to global horizons, it is evangelical 'we are to proclaim the Gospel', and it is missionary 'take the message of the gospel of Christ to all people'.

2.2 Essential elements of mission

Mission is an all encompassing concept that penetrates every aspect of the church's work. There seem to be three main elements of Mission, which we have found in Church of Scotland documents and which were reflected in discussions with the partnerships.

³ Ross, Kenneth R (2008), The Changing Nature of Partnership IN 'Locally Supported Partnership Consultation - Dunblane 2008'. Church of Scotland World Mission Council, Edinburgh
Ross, Kenneth R. (2005), Partnership in Mission: Recalling the Past IN 'Partner Church Consultation Carberry 2005', Church of Scotland World Mission Council Edinburgh.

⁴ Report of the Special Commission anent Review and Reform 2001 (Church without Walls)

⁵ World Mission Council General Assembly report 2006

1 Evangelism “Go ye and preach the Gospel”.

3 Personal Witness “We incarnate God’s renewing power, primarily by the way we live, in all areas of life, in politics and citizenship, economics and u business, education and scholarship, family and neighbourhood, media and art, leisure and play.

3 Social responsibility We as a church are called to be part of society, our vision is of a community that acknowledges truth and justice as the basis of its existence that recognises the dignity of every individual. We believe that the Christian principles that direct our lives demand that we foster the society of which we are a part, and that those Christian principles form the basis of a good society, one that we see as the kingdom of God on earth. The role of this particular element of mission is particularly important in consideration of the work of the partnerships and we shall return to it.

We have looked at these three aspects of mission: and considered the extent to which the partnerships have sought to address them. This point is picked up in section 14.4 below.

The purpose of the partnership in mission is to establish a new approach to mission, in particular to international mission. In our meetings, there were extensive discussion of the partnership, its aims, the expectations that people had of it, the benefits it brought and the difficulties involved in its operation, but discussion of the nature of mission as a concept in its own right was implicit rather than explicit.

2.3 Essential elements of a partnership

‘Within World Christianity ‘partnership’ expresses a relationship based on trust, mutual recognition and reciprocal exchange. It rules out any notion of senior and junior, parent or child, or even older and younger. It is a term designed to show how different parts of the church belong to one another and find their fulfilment through sharing a common life. It implies a relationship in which two or more bodies agree so share a responsibility for one another, and in which each side meaningfully participates in planning the future of the other.’ It is a striking feature of the New Testament that being a Christian is so often expressed in terms of being a part of a church to church network, eg ‘In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of our partnership in the gospel.’ Phil 1:4.

There are three primary constituent elements of a partnership, Trust and Friendship, Mutual Respect and Mutual Benefit.

TRUST AND FRIENDSHIP

This implies

- Show of care, prayer, willingness to respond to need, emotional support
- Sharing of interests, of intimacy, of concerns, of prayer
- Trust and confidence in each other; openness to share strengths and weaknesses
- Recognition of each other’s strengths and weaknesses, freedom to take or reject advice given.

MUTUAL RESPECT

This implies

- Recognition of differences, cultural awareness, sensitivity
- Knowledge about each other
- Involvement of both partners in decision-making
- Recognition by both partners of the distinct contributions each has to offer the relationship.

MUTUAL BENEFIT

To friendship and respect there needs to be added benefit, not necessarily material benefit, for there to be a true partnership. Common law a contract requires each party to gain benefit, without this, it is not a contract. Mutual benefit can include

- Financial support, fundraising, and
- Joint project development.

COMMUNICATION

To develop these characteristics, communication, and contact between the two parties is needed;

visits, telephone calls, video conferencing, letters, but above all some physical meetings.

3 Methodology

Summary *The Extent of Mission was studied by analysing the responses to a questionnaire issued to all churches designed to elicit information on the existence of a link or partnership, on its nature and on the activities undertaken in that relationship. The Partnership study was based on a selected representative sample of 15 partnerships, chosen from the 169 of which the Local Development Office of the World Mission Council has a record, and which they call 'twinings'. The data for this part of the study was obtained from a number of sources. The Partnership study was undertaken prior to the Extent of Mission study, but is presented second for clarity of presentation.*

3.1 Extent of Mission

To study the extent of overseas mission activity, a questionnaire was circulated to all congregations of the Church of Scotland. It sought to elicit information on:-

- 1 The existence of a partnership, link, twinning or a mission partner, and its perceived purpose
- 2 The nature and strength of the partnership, including its level of activity, its duration, is it growing or declining, the number of people in correspondence with the partner, the number of visitors sent or hosted, the level of funding contributed, the sharing of music, prayer or worship, the development of joint projects, and the links with organisations outwith the church.
- 3 The visibility of the relationship within and outwith the church.
- 4 The status of the relationship: is there a written agreement, is it a separate company or charity.
- 5 How has the local congregations benefited from the relationship.

The questionnaire was planned to collect information on the mission activities of all the congregations in the Church of Scotland whether they were in partnerships with other churches, with other organisations, or had links to mission partners or to missionary societies, and in particular whether or not those links were supported through the central offices of the Church of Scotland.

After a pilot test, the questionnaires were issued to 1471 churches in early June. To improve the response, initial plans to have the questionnaire available for completion on-line were abandoned, and the questionnaires were issued by post, each with a self addressed envelope, to the World Mission Council representative in each church.

The questionnaire was kept as simple as possible. It was designed to fit on a single sheet, to be completed in less than ten minutes, to need no or minimal necessary reference to other documents, and to have no accompanying instructions, definitions and explanations, other than a covering introductory letter. In consequence, the definitions of the terms are as understood by the correspondent. Some telephone calls have been made for clarification where it was found to be necessary, but these were few and the information as supplied has been used and analysed.

By the end of August, 636 (43% of those issued) had been returned, of which 225 (35% of those returned) claimed to have a link of some sort, and 411 (69%) said that they had no link. A number said that they had no link but then gave evidence that there was indeed mission activity in the church, but unconnected with the Church of Scotland. Ten 'no link' respondents said that they were either in the process of establishing a link or were hoping to develop a greater mission involvement. There were seven 'spoilt' returns with either no information at all or where the originating church could not be identified. The number of questionnaires returned, in total and in proportion to the number issued, provides a sufficient basis for this report.

By their nature, churches are not strong on record-keeping, they have changing personnel, and it is not always certain that the person who completes a questionnaire, any questionnaire, is well informed. This was revealed in one case where two people from the same church completed the questionnaire and gave quite different information. Notwithstanding the imperfections of the information, there are a number of general themes that emerge from the overall data.

To identify the level of activity in partnerships, we have applied the following factors:-

- The extent to which the questionnaire was completed. Many questionnaires were completed in

part only, and often with only meagre information. We have taken this to mean that the correspondent was either unaware of what was happening (eg visits, support, correspondents etc) or else that little was happening. The questionnaire is attached as appendix 3.

- The number of visitors to and from the partners' organisation. This indicator was derived from the case study of the 15 partnerships in the study of partnerships. The analysis showed that meetings face to face and interactions were crucial to sustain a lively involvement.
- The financial support for the partnership. In most cases, the partner, was in a poorer country where the financial support was beneficial.
- The number of correspondents with the partner. The Partnership study report indicated that a measure of success was the extent to which the church as a whole was involved in information exchange, rather than being passive recipients of information mediated by one person.
- The sharing worship, music and prayer.

3.2 Partnership

For the study on Partnerships, an initial case study approach was undertaken with twelve Church of Scotland congregations and three presbyteries (the list is shown in Appendix 5). These were chosen from the 169 of which the Local Development Office of the World Mission Council has a record (Jan2009), and which they call 'twinings'. Three of these church-to-church partnerships were found later to be community-to-community partnerships. For the 12 partnerships overseas (ie excluding the presbytery facilitating arrangements), information was obtained in various ways.

- Interviews were undertaken with each of the churches in Scotland; in most cases this was with the group responsible for the partnership. In all but one case this included the minister and in two cases it was with the minister alone.
- Contact was made with the overseas church and their views on the partnership explored. In most cases contact was sought by telephone, but sometimes the correspondents chose to respond in writing by email.
- Questionnaires were issued for distribution to the congregations, returned and analysed.
- Recipients of Faithshare funding are required to submit a report to WMC. The reports of the partnerships that had been supported by Faithshare and for which there were reports were made available to the researcher.
- Additionally the churches made available reports that had been written about the visits undertaken to or from the overseas partners.

For the three presbyteries which had relationships with an overseas presbytery:

- Interviews (as for the churches having church to church partnerships), with the persons responsible in Scotland for the partnership;
- Telephone interviews were held with the ministers of two of the churches in each presbytery identified as having some involvement with the presbytery, and in one case a meeting with two such ministers.
- Telephone or email contact with people from the overseas presbytery.

In the cases of the interviews in Scotland a record of each meeting was sent to the local Scottish partner and corrections to the record accepted. Notes of telephone conversations to overseas contacts were made and these together with any emails from overseas were copied to the local Scottish partner.

The sources of information for this part of the study are set out in Appendix 4.

EXTENT of MISSION

4 The categories of Relationships encountered

Summary Churches have a great variety of relationships and with a great variety of people, organisations, and other bodies. They are categorised in terms of partnerships with a community in a specific locality, and in terms of links with person, or with an organisation not closely linked to a particular community and locality:

- Partnerships with churches,
- Partnerships with trusts such as schools or orphanages,
- Links to a mission partner, eg a member of the church in Christian service overseas,
- Links to missions and other organisations where the relationship is more remote, and is not with a particular community in a defined locality.

4.1 Categorisation

To give some structure and order to the study, we have sought to categorise the nature of the relationships that churches have, in terms based primarily on the nature of the relationship between the church and the overseas organisation or mission partner, rather than simply on the nature of the organisation with which the relationship is established.

The particular feature used is whether the relationship is with a community (is it with a group of people in a particular and identifiable locality, eg another church or a school or a hospital), or is it a personal relationship with an individual, or is it a relationship with an organisation which does not have a community in an identifiable locality with which the church can establish a close relationship. This categorisation is useful in giving shape to the analysis, but in practice, relationships form a continuous spectrum. We have found relationships that fall into each of these categories but also relationships that fall into all the possible interstices, and some that fall into more than one category.

4.2 Partnerships

The term partnership is used where the church's relationship is with a community, ie with a group of people in a particular and identifiable locality, eg another church or a school or a hospital. There are various types of organisations with which a church can have a partnership including church to church partnerships and church to local trusts partnerships.

a) Church to church partnership

A relationship between the community of the church and the community in a church overseas in a defined locality. Although it may be mediated through a minister in the church, or a leader or through a mission society, the focus, and the focus of the partnership is with the community of the church.

b) Church to trust partnership

A relationship between the community of the church and the community in an organisation overseas where, as with the church to church partnership, the focus of the arrangement is to establish a mutually beneficial and helpful relationship between the church in Scotland and the body overseas. We have used the term trusts as a short-hand term to cover a wide range of bodies, hospitals, schools, small missions, and similar bodies. These partnerships are dealt with in more detail in chapters 11 and subsequently.

Many of the charities to which the churches contribute are focussed on a local community or are missionary endeavours with a limited missionary cause like Maya Leprosy Mission. Some are set up for a limited charitable purpose, with which the church may have a more direct connection eg Abba's Rest Orphanage, Help for the Helpless in Chennai, On Eagles Wings (where a church member is a trustee). Individuals have set up charitable trusts. For example: -

"I am in the process of setting up a charitable trust under the auspices of OSCR and we will use that to channel funds to three schools in Uganda with which we have personal links"

c) Trust to trust partnership

This is where the partnership is between a charitable organisation in Scotland and an organisation overseas. Examples are the Chipembi Trust set up specifically to support that church's partnership with a school in Zambia, and Project Steadfast to support a BB activity. Three such cases were found in the sample of 15 partnerships, and they are dealt with in more detail in chapter 13, but they represent only a small proportion of all the partnerships and in the broad analysis of partnerships across the country, they have been lumped in with the church to trust partnerships.

4.3 Links

Link to a mission partner

In this case the relationship is a primarily a personal relationship with an individual such as a mission partner who may be based in an organisation, or a church or a school, and only secondarily with the community in which that mission partner is engaged, Thus where the mission partner moves to a new location or is employed in a new location, the link moves with the mission partner wherever he or she may move. The links to mission partner are dealt with in more detail in chapter 7.

Links to a larger and more remote trust

This category is for a relationship to an organisation that does not have a clear attachment to a local community. It includes links to international aid charities and missionary societies, and to bodies where the church's relationship stops at the society and does not engage with a particular community and the people in it. It may be that the charity works with definable communities and encourages supporters to become involved, but the church's relationship is primarily with the big organisation.

Payments are often made through trusts or charities to locally based activities eg contributions are made to Ekwendeni through the Raven Trust, a Scottish charity. Some churches have collaborated in the establishment of a charity or trust.

In addition to supporting our mission partners, we are part of network of churches called South Africa Link. Although not a charity, it has a trust deed, and helps those in need through money we send...

International organisations can be a barrier between the donor and what is happening in a community, but they also act as a conduit for funding and many work hard at bringing helpers close to the action. Tear Fund arranges for donors to visit Cambodia Hope Organisation or the street children project in Chisomo Malawi. However the intention to use the international body to promote involvement does not always work.

One of our aims in working with Water Aid in Tanzania was for it to be a stepping stone to greater involvement (failed).

A number of churches have a long term association with missionary societies, and are committed to the work of that mission, and this can lead to a close relationship to a church or community.

4.4 Presbytery Facilitating arrangements

Arrangements are being made to link presbyteries in Scotland to presbyteries overseas. These of themselves are not community to community partnerships, although they can in principle contribute to the establishment of such partnership (see the benefits and reservations discussed in chapter 13). They are thus classified as facilitating arrangements.

5 The Number and Nature of the relationships

Summary *Churches have many relationships and many different types of relationship with mission. Of the questionnaires issued to 1471 churches, 636 (43%) responded. One third, (225, 35%) said that they did have a partnership or link, and two thirds said they did not.*

5.1 Numbers

Churches have many relationships and many different types of relationship with mission. Of the questionnaires issued to 1471 churches, 636 (43%) responded. One third, (225, 35%) said that they did have a partnership or link, and two thirds said they did not.

Many churches (835) (57%) did not reply. We would expect that the level of active participation in mission amongst those who did not reply would not be better than amongst those that did reply, but if we take the sample of the churches who did respond to be representative of the entire church, then it can be said that one third of churches have an overseas mission interest or activity.

The responses from different presbyteries differ markedly, both in terms of the response rates and in terms of the types of relationships established. The full figures are set out in Appendix 1.

5.2 Relationships

- 76 churches had a partnership with a church overseas
- 50 churches had a partnership with a trust overseas linked to a local community, (included here are a very small number of charities linked to a Scottish church)
- 100 churches had links with an individual mission partner
- 26 churches had a link with a larger trust or charity where the relationship was remote from an identified locality or groups of people

A striking outcome of the study has been the range of the types of relationships that the churches enjoy. The categorisation set out in this report helps towards an understanding of the nature and role of these relationships but it needs to be realised that the categories are only a loose fit to what happens in each church.

The relationships are not all one-to-one relationships. Some persons, usually mission partners, have links with several Scottish churches (see chapter 6 below). Some churches have partnerships with more than one church or one local trust, some have links with more than one mission partner, many have links with more than one large mission, and some have all manner of links and partnerships. Thus, the number of links is greater than the number of churches, for example, there are 100 churches that have a link with a mission partner, but those 100 churches have 116 links

5.3 Level of activity

There is a very wide range in the levels of mission activity.

- a) Some churches had no active engagement
- b) Some churches had limited **engagement** in the form of a link to one mission partner, or to what is called here a remote trust
- c) Some churches had an **active relationship** with a church or other organisation such as an orphanage or hospital, or with a mission partner and were active in supporting that link, and had engaged in visits and correspondence
- d) At the other limit, a small number of Scottish churches are **exceedingly active** having, what appear to be, close relationships with a range of mission partners, a close relationship to one or more mission societies, and an active engagement with a church or other organisation. The

information that some such provided was extensive; others mentioned one main activity or partnership and commented on many others in passing or very briefly.

5.4 A Church's Activity

To give an indication of the diversity of possible links and relationships, here is an extract from the response by St John's Largs. It is not a typical example, but neither is it unique. Many other churches gave a rough outline of what they were doing but with insufficient detail to categorise all the relationships precisely.

The church has a partnership with St John's Church Katalonji in Malawi. The partnership is formally established, there is written agreement dating from about 2005. The partnership is crisply described as being to 'help address the need in Malawi and not the desire in Largs'. The partnership has been successful in raising over £10,000 in the past two years and has used this in the development of a number of projects; provision of electricity for solar and wind power for the church and school (see later), buying cows for the church, sponsoring 2 ladies to attend a course in tailoring and business skills, etc.

Linked to St John's Church in Katalonji is a primary school, Milala School. Largs sponsors two boys at that school, contributing to the provision of school books, school desks, schools supplies, and seeds.

The church also is in partnership with Ekwendeni Hospital where they have contributed to the training of engineers to maintain the hospital's X-ray equipment, for the provision of materials for the hospital.

Since 2000, the church has supported Ekwendeni School in Northern Malawi, and helps to support Helen Scott who is described as the church's 'official World Mission partner'.

Lastly, in Malawi, it has since 2004 helped Rev Wyson Jere and the work he does amongst orphans and HIV/Aids groups.

The church also has interests in Ghana. Since 2003, it has supported Rev Josephine Mate-Kole, and has provided study books during her training for the ministry.

In 2004, the church's BB started to support the BB at the Kanda Church in Accra, and later support was given to the BB headquarters in Ghana.

In 2008, the church started to support the Trinity Theological College in Ghana and provided support for the 'Vocational Training of Females' (VTF) at that College.

Additionally there are a number of missionaries or mission partners whom the church supports in prayer, Mary Alexander, etc.

6 What does the Partnership/Link seek to do?

Summary This chapter gives the responses from the churches to questions concerning the primary purpose of the relationship, the numbers of visitors to and from the partner organisation or mission partner, the level of funding, and the number of people in correspondence with the other party, and what was shared.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the responses supplied by churches to a number of questions, the responses are categorised according to the four categories:-

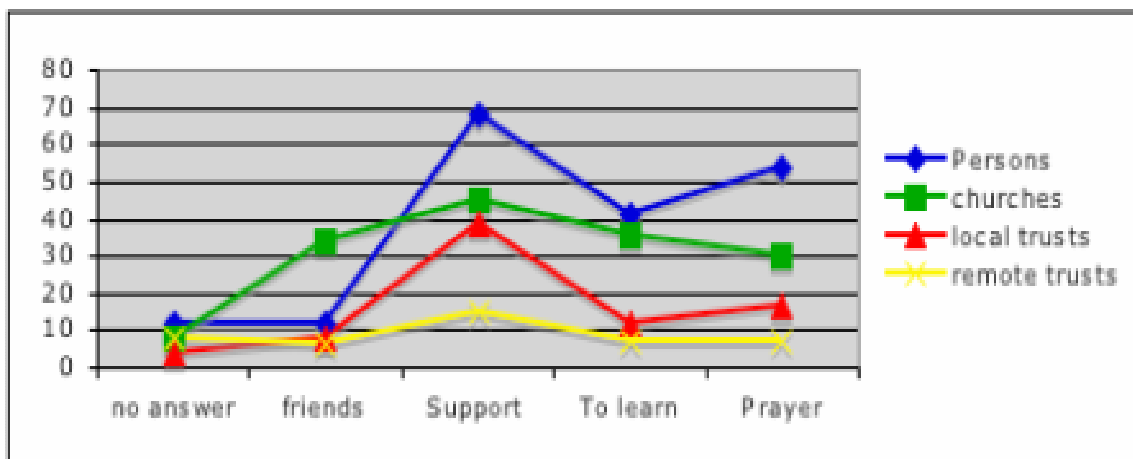
- Partnerships with a church
- Partnership with a local trust
- Link to a person, a mission partner
- Link to an organisation or trust remote from a specific community.

The figures are actual numbers and have not been normalised, thus the 'Persons' line referring to links with mission partners will nearly always come out at the top of the graph simply because the number of links to persons are high. To compare with the other lines, the reader should bear in mind the sample size from which the numbers are taken, eg there are twice as many links to persons as there are partnerships with local trusts, so if they had the proportional results the person line would always be twice as high as the local trust line.

6.2 Primary Purpose

Churches were asked what were the primary purposes of their partnership/relationship/link. More than one answer was allowed.

	no answer	friends	Support	To learn	Prayer	Sample size
Churches	8	34	45	36	30	78
Local trusts	4	8	39	12	17	54
Persons	12	12	68	41	54	112
Remote trusts	8	6	15	7	7	27

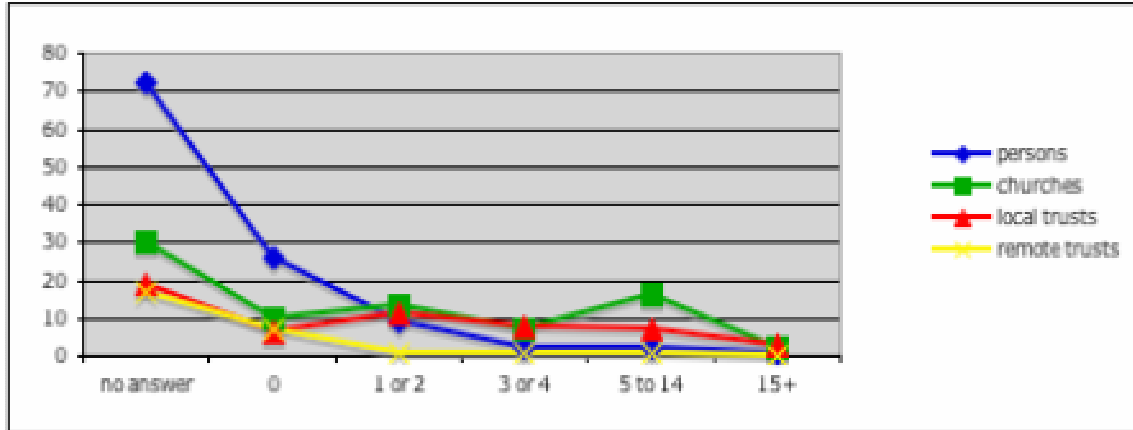


Support is clearly the primary purpose of all the relationships, but the balance of that support may well differ between person links and church partnerships, as the relative importance of prayer indicates.

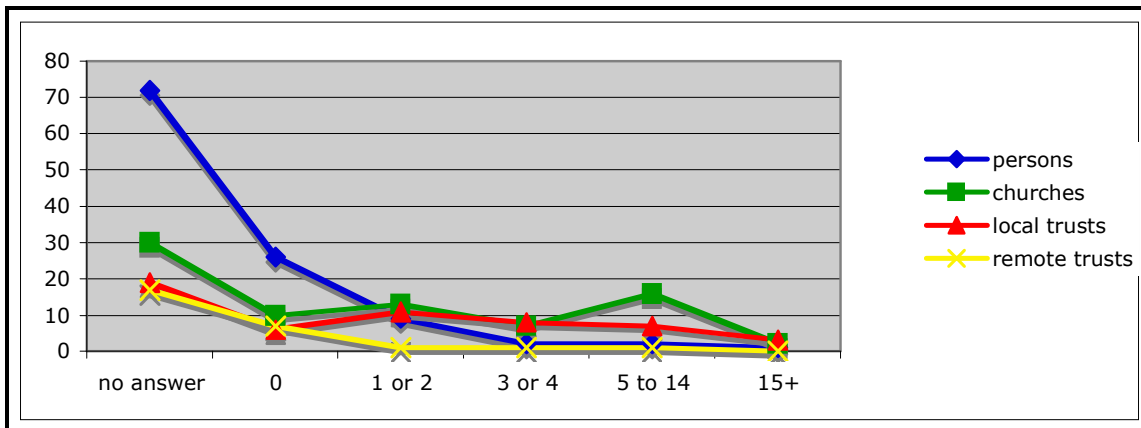
6.3 Visitors to and from our partners

Churches were asked about the number of visitors in the past two years that they had a) sent to their partner and b) received from them.

Sent	no answer	0	1 or 2	3 or 4	5 to 14	15+	Sample
Churches	30	10	13	7	16	2	78
Local trusts	19	6	11	8	7	3	54
Persons	72	26	9	2	2	1	112
remote trusts	17	7	1	1	1	0	27



Received	no answer	0	1 or 2	3 or 4	5 to 14	15+	Sample
Churches	24	7	26	10	6	5	78
Local trusts	24	7	13	7	3	0	54
Persons	55	8	38	10	1		112
Remote trusts	16	2	5	3	0	1	27

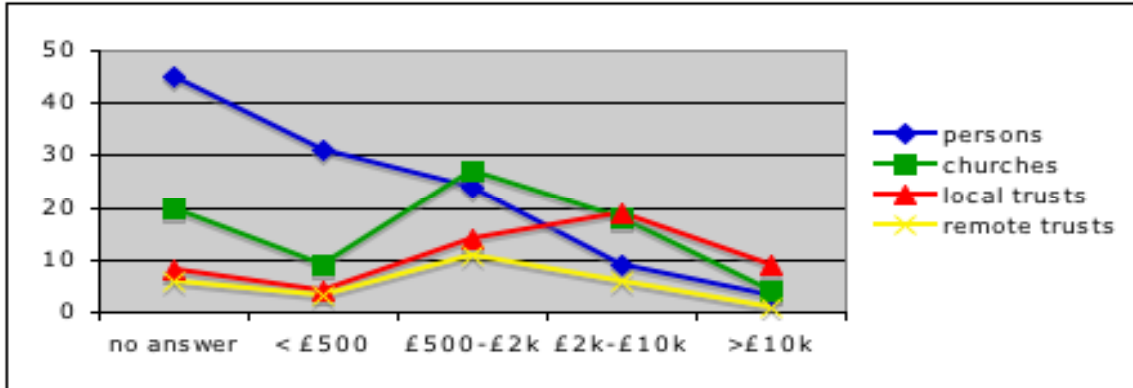


The number of churches who sent groups of three or more visitors to their partners or received like numbers from them is significant: these were visitors to partnership churches, or local trusts. The impact of a visit by half a dozen or so people going on a trip to a partner organisation in another country is significant on the originating church, on the visited organisation and on the participants themselves, and will impact them for the long term. The importance of visits on partnerships is explored further in the second part of this report. The high number of '1 or 2' visitors from the links with persons is likely to be the mission partners themselves returning periodically to Scotland, rather than visitors from their work coming to Scotland.

6.4 Funding

Churches were asked about their financial support over the past two years to their partners or to the organisation with which they are linked.

	<i>no answer</i>	<i>< £500</i>	<i>£500-£2k</i>	<i>£2k-£10k</i>	<i>>£10k</i>	<i>Sample size</i>
<i>Churches</i>	20	9	27	18	4	78
<i>Local trusts</i>	8	4	14	19	9	54
<i>Persons</i>	45	31	24	9	3	112
<i>Remote trusts</i>	6	3	11	6	1	27

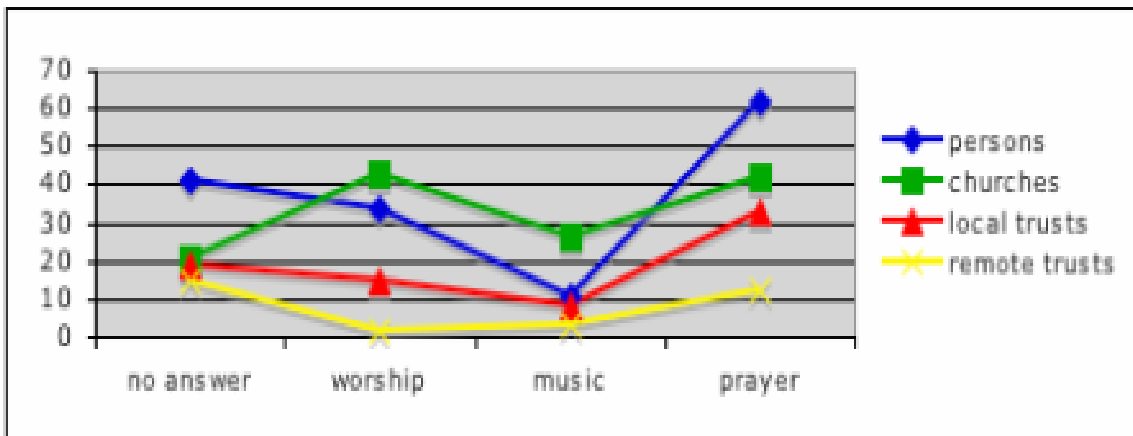


The majority of the funds were channelled to partnerships with churches or with local trusts, with remote trusts also receiving significant support. The peak of giving to the local trusts was higher than for any of the other categories. This ties in well with the information gained from the in depth interviews with churches discussed later.

6.5 Sharing

The churches were asked what they share or have shared with our partners

	<i>no answer</i>	<i>worship</i>	<i>music</i>	<i>prayer</i>	<i>Sample size</i>
<i>Churches</i>	21	43	26	42	78
<i>Local trusts</i>	19	15	8	33	54
<i>Persons</i>	41	34	11	62	112
<i>Remote trusts</i>	15	2	3	12	27

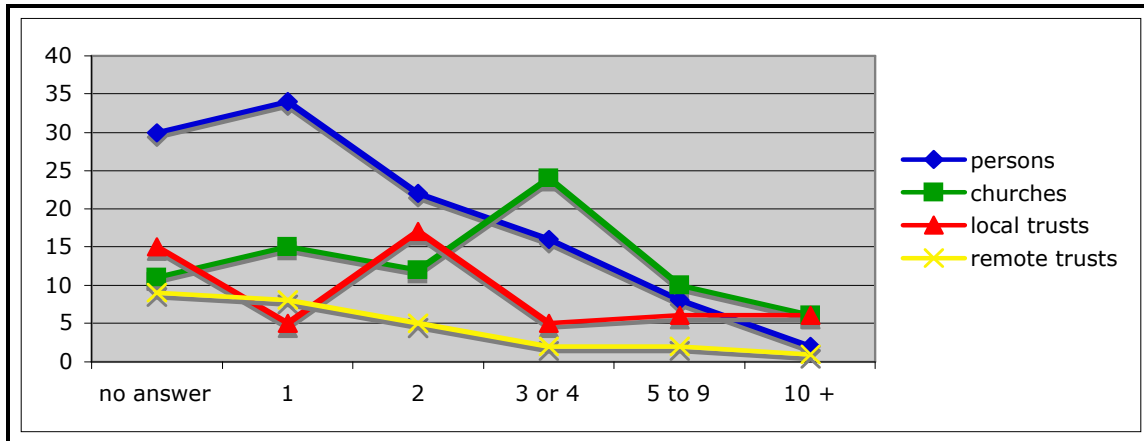


Again prayer was seen as a high priority to be shared, but a high number of churches did not reply to this question.

6.6 Correspondence

Churches were asked how many people in the church corresponded regularly, three or more times per year with the partner

	<i>no answer</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3 or 4</i>	<i>5 to 9</i>	<i>10 +</i>	<i>sample</i>
<i>Churches</i>	11	15	12	24	10	6	78
<i>Local trusts</i>	15	5	17	5	6	6	54
<i>Persons</i>	30	34	22	16	8	2	112
<i>Remote trusts</i>	9	8	5	2	2	1	27
							271

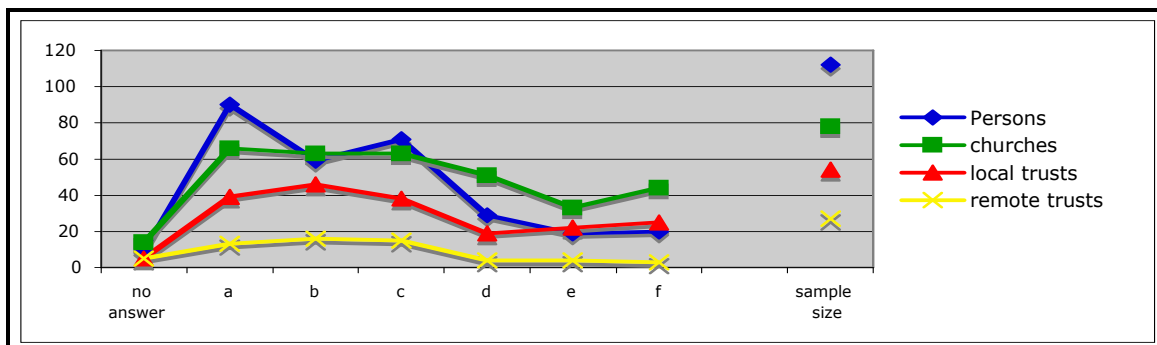


6.7 Benefit of the partnership and links to the churches

The churches were asked what they saw as the benefits to their church of the partnership and or links that they had established.

- a We have learned more about the world, and the church’s work in the world
- b We have benefited by being able to help others
- c It has lifted our eyes from local problems and put these in a larger context
- d We have seen other models of church operation and worship
- e The congregation has been brought closer together
- f The faith of some of our congregations has been strengthened.

	<i>no answer</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>
<i>Churches</i>	14	66	63	63	51	33	44
<i>Local trusts</i>	5	39	46	38	19	22	25
<i>Persons</i>	9	90	59	71	29	19	20
<i>Remote trusts</i>	5	13	16	15	4	4	3



7 Links with a mission partner

Summary *The links of churches to people are complex. In many cases, the mission partner to whom a church had a link was a member of the congregation who had gone to Christian work overseas. In some cases, a group of churches, generally geographically contiguous, supported one mission partner. Over half (62) of the 116 links between churches and mission partners were concentrated in eight people. In some cases, the mission partner had established formal contracts with their supporting churches. Some of the mission partners were appointed and employed by the Church of Scotland. Also, a number of the mission partners had established their own charity, clearly as a means of gaining the financial benefits of charitable status.*

In this category, the church's relationship is with a person, a mission partner, someone working in the service to God overseas; or is in training for that role. The relationship is focussed on support to that mission partner and only to a secondary extent (sincere and strong but secondary) on the work he or she is doing. If the mission partner moves, the link will be with the mission partner in his or her new environment.

We found that this relationship frequently arose from one of the church's members entering into full time Christian service overseas, sometimes with a well established missionary society eg OMF, and sometimes with a smaller missionary society, and the church supported that mission partner, as one of its family, in his or her work. The mission partner could also be someone appointed and employed by the Church of Scotland, and in some of these cases, the person would be allocated to the church as their mission partner.

We also found cases where a group of churches, generally geographically contiguous, had been canvassed to support one mission partner. Over half (62) of the 116 links between churches and mission partners were concentrated in eight people. Ten churches said their link was with George Shand and twelve said theirs was with Helen Scott. In most of these cases, there was limited evidence of involvement; very little information included in the questionnaire, limited, or no financial support, and a limited number of people involved in the contact with the mission. Thus, it seems that this form of relationship whilst providing widespread support does not necessarily provide in depth support and a close relationship from all the churches included in the list of supporting churches.

There were exceptions; two of the mission partners had established contracts or written agreements of support with their supporting churches, or at least with some of them, indicating a high level of commitment, and of organisation. Other than these, we found very few written agreements; the other exception being where the church was part of a presbytery to presbytery link (see chapter 6 below).

We found that a charity had been established by or for some mission partners, closely linked to their work. We found cases where a mission partner previously supported by a missionary body had moved to 'go it alone', establishing lines of support from churches or by setting up a trust or charity.

Not all the churches that identified themselves as having a link to these mission partners mentioned the charity and were perhaps unaware of it, but it seems that the support to them from the churches flows through the charity whilst the support is for them as mission partners.

The support for mission partners almost invariably included prayer support, and frequently included financial support; this could be support by the church as a whole, or private support by individual church members outwith the church accounts, or a mixture of these.

"This is an in-house arrangement, personal support for our members overseas. It is an internal challenge that we should help overseas projects at the same time as raising money for our own building project. None of the money for the overseas work [over £10k] comes from general church giving."

8 Geographical Distribution of the Links and Relationships

Summary *The partnerships and links with overseas churches, mission partners, trusts etc span the globe, as might be expected from Scots. A disproportional high number are with Malawi.*

The table of the countries showing the distribution of links and partnerships is shown in Appendix 2

Churches have partnerships with churches and trusts spread through out the world, but out of a total of 1562 partnerships there is a heavy concentration in only a small number of countries; India 21, Kenya 24 and Malawi 47.

The distribution of personal links is very widely spread throughout the world. The high values for Malawi (19), for Jerusalem (27) and for Jamaica (11) arise from a small number of people each with links to a large number of churches in Scotland.

The Church of Scotland is encouraging the establishment of presbytery to presbytery links. Of the 12 established or being established, five are with Malawi.

The reason for the concentration on Malawi is not clear, it could arise from the large number of people in the Church of Scotland who have a knowledge and love for Malawi, it could be a perception of particular need in Malawi, or it could be in response to a government initiative to target Malawi as a country to which Scotland could be of particular help.

PARTNERSHIPS

9 Aims of the Partnerships

Summary *The study found that there were three main aims a) Christian witness and fellowship, b) Friendship and sharing, c) Social responsibility, cooperation and help. Church-to-church partnerships always included Christian witness and fellowship as an aim, but did not see this as an alternative to or inimical to practical support. The community partnerships did not have Christian witness and fellowship as an aim and emphasised the social relationship aim (9.2). The study did not find a project emphasis to be inimical to friendship (9.3). It found a range of approaches towards the concept of mission both between partnerships and amongst people in a partnership (9.4). In some partnerships, the objectives were not clearly articulated, and very few had a mechanism for evaluating the achievement of aims (9.5).*

9.1 The Aims identified

We found three main elements in the aims.

1 CHRISTIAN WITNESS AND FELLOWSHIP; EG

- *To develop and strengthen faith through partnership in mission*
- *To become more effective agents and witnesses of God's coming kingdom as we learn from each other*

2 FRIENDSHIP AND SHARING EG

- *We plan to develop strong bonds of friendship, learning from each other ways of strengthening our Christian commitment and love. We hope to be in regular communication for many years to come*
- *To identify opportunities to develop their outreach into their own communities through learning and sharing*
- *To enrich and support each other, to build on friendship*
- *To learn about each other's daily lives. To develop and understanding of each other*
- *To develop an understanding of how our actions affect those in other countries*
- *We agree to pray for each other, and care about each other's worship, work and witness*

3 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, COOPERATION AND HELP

- *The partnership's objects are a) to promote the benefits of the inhabitants of Dunblane and Likhubula, b) to advance the education of the said inhabitants c) to provide facilities for recreation.*
- *The basic aim of the partnership is establish a relationship between the Christian communities of Barrhead and Kibera by sharing mission, education, and mutual friendship. As part of the partnership the Church has committed itself to building a school*
- *The partnership is an equal partnership between two communities where there is poverty, to explore common issues and to discover ways in which together they can make a difference for each other and for others in poverty The partnership is a growing relationship where ideas, support and advocacy are more important than money, Financial aid will only be a small part of the partnership.*

Sometimes this aim of social responsibility was phrased in Christian terms such as 'Love your neighbour as yourself' or 'If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him' I John 3 17

4 OTHER

The partnership documents included many other elements, some of them important, but subsidiary to the core aims. They include:

- Essential means to achieve the core aims (ie objectives)
 - Meetings, visits, joint prayer
- Principles set out to guide the development of the partnership, eg
 - *Good communication is vital through prayer, correspondence and visits*
 - *We listen to the needs of our partner church; resources may be required.*
 - *Gifts should be given with an understanding of the need it will meet and thus demonstrate love and consideration for the partner*
 - *Put projects and programmes before cash*
 - *Personal involvement in a project has extremely rewarding benefits for every one involved. Youth parents and children, retirees and anyone who can participate should be encouraged to do so*
 - *Financial gifts should be given widely, gifts should be given prayerfully judiciously and in response to requests clearly linked to the work of the church*
- General theological statements which set the general background but are not germane to the aims of the partnership
 - *We promise to seek God's guidance on the partnership, we embrace our interrelatedness, we acknowledge that we have gifts to give to each other, we share our dreams*
- Management issues. There needs to be an agreement about certain managerial issues, and it is appropriate that these are in the partnership document, albeit not aims eg
 - Who are the partners, and to whom are they accountable
 - Duration of the partnership, arrangements for evaluation, modification and dissolution
- Procedural rules; from experience some of the partnerships have chosen to establish procedural ground rules in a formal document eg
 - Setting out precisely with whom the partnership would be working,
 - Financial assistance will be used for the benefit of the community of, x and y (and by implication not elsewhere]
 - Quarterly financial statements

9.2 Who used what aim?

We commenced the study aware of two types of partnerships, churches, and presbyteries. We found that three of the 'church' partnerships were in fact community partnerships. This is discussed at length in chapter 8

All of the church to church partnerships included aims 1 and 2, and in most, these two ideas were not distinguished, friendship and sharing were seen predominantly in a Christian context. Most did not include aim 3 in their written documentation but did include it in other expressions of their aims.

The community to community based partnerships did not include aim 1 but for them the aim of social responsibility and cooperation (3) was particularly important. In the web page of one of the churches linked to a community based partnerships the theological perspective was expressed in the following robust practical terms

Nothing-spectacular just straightforward Christian work, which is of concrete and real benefit to many and future people. That is what real Christians do. Forget your obscure theology, this is my sort of theology.

9.3 Does emphasis on projects diminish friendship

We commenced the study with an expectation, that a project based approach to partnership was incompatible with the development of an approach which sought to foster friendship. We found that the church based partnerships see fellowship and friendship as the core of the relationship, but they do not see this as an alternative to, or as inimical to, practical support. They go together. One church put it as follows

“The basic aim of the partnership is to establish a relationship between the Christian communities of Kibera and Barrhead by sharing mission, education and mutual friendship. As part of the partnership, the church has therefore committed itself to building a school”.

And a Christian leader in Africa wrote to say

“The partnership has had an impact on us regarding our faith in Christ, and the provision of clean water and education”

One church described it in the following way:

“Sharing by itself might have been enough for the partnership but we felt not, and that a specific focussed project would help generate interest, and provide cohesion and a focus for our work and our attention”

9.4 Fulfilment of Mission

We identified three specific aspects of mission: evangelism, personal witness, and social responsibility, and considered the extent to which the partnerships sought to address these three aspects of mission

Evangelism

We see little evidence that the partnerships seek to address the issue of explicit evangelism. Ministers who are involved in visits to other churches are invited to preach in the church, but it seems that the contacts to non-Christians in the overseas countries are left to the local church.

Personal witness

This is something that happens every day in every action, and it is not something that might be expected to be an explicit aim or activity of partnership in mission.

Social Responsibility

The third element that we call Social Responsibility is a major emphasis in most of the partnerships, but within it can be seen three different approaches to the idea of mission

- 1 We help our fellow man; we want to do this because we love and him and because we are enjoined by God to do so. By the action itself, but also by being able to explain (in words) that this activity arises from our love for God, we witness to our fellow God's love for us and for him.
- 2 We help our fellow man; we wish to do so but we also do so at the command of God. Helping out fellow man IS the Christian gospel.
- 3 Helping our fellow man is a responsibility of every member of mankind; there is nothing specifically Christian about it.

For one church we found that there were no spiritual or worship outcomes recognised as deriving directly from the partnership, eg the partnership was not seen as having any possible effect on the prayer life of the community in Scotland.

What to one is a simple practical action to another may be seen as an evangelical activity. The distinction may be illustrated by discussions we had on the memberships of visits to the overseas partner. In many cases, members from outside the church were included in visits overseas. The views expressed were along the following lines

- a) We include external members, this allows them to see what we as a church are doing, it allows us to talk about the work in our church, about our faith, and it has resulted in some of them coming to church
- b) We involve people from the community; they have a wish to contribute; every bit as much as church members do.

Another way of addressing this question that we looked at was whether, in a partnership that has moved from being a church based organisation to a community based organisation, or a church based partnership whose emphasis is on the practical projects, there is a reduced sense that this is God's work or a reduced interest in evangelism. Does a greater emphasis on practical projects lead to a reduced interest in God's work?

We found that a variety of approaches is being taken by the various partnerships in the pursuance of the social responsibility aspect of mission, but also that there is variety amongst the people in a given partnership. This is an important topic and one that the study has not been able to penetrate deeply.

We found that there was no negative correlation between churches reporting evidence of benefit from the partnership, and churches which had a very active programme of funded projects. Within the limits of our study, therefore we cannot say that an active programme of practical help is inimical or undermines the aim of a partnership in mission.

9.5 Objectives and Outcomes

We found that sometimes the aims of a partnership included general expressions of spiritual sharing, of sharing and cooperation, without any mention of how these aims were to be achieved. This was generally, but not always, where the partnership was at the proposal stage or was still being developed. In one case, the absence of practical outcomes and of practical objectives became apparent:

"The covenant signed in 2006, set out to deepen individual solidarity... It identified a number of aims including: the fullest possible expression of unity in Christ, the fullest respect for those aspects of life and witness that are local and specific, listening to and learning from each other, etc

"By 2008 it was recognised that talking about helping and meeting visitors inevitably produced a surge of warm feeling; but clearly something more vital and purposeful was needed. The aim of the 2008 visit was thus to get beyond the feel good factor"

There was often no mechanism for the evaluation of the aims of the partnership, and little evidence that any such evaluations were being undertaken.

10 Benefits from the Partnerships

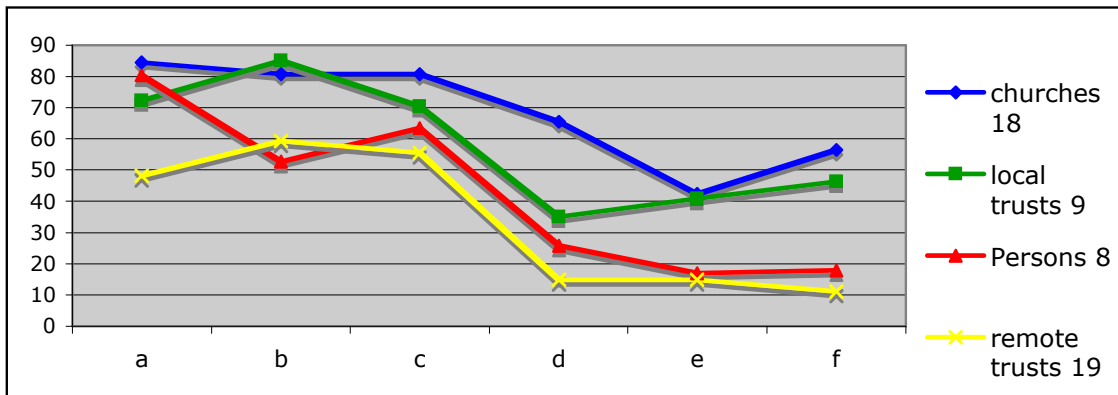
Summary This chapter reports on the many benefits that the congregations in Scotland have received from having a partnership with a church or community overseas. It also discussed the benefits to the overseas partner.

10.1 Benefit of the partnership and links to the churches

The table and diagram set out in section 6.7 derived from the questionnaire to all congregations gave the numbers of responses to the question about the value of partnerships and links to the local churches. When the figures are expressed as a percentage of the sample size, we get the following table and chart.

	no answer	a	b	c	d	e	f	sample size
Churches	18	85	81	81	65	42	56	78
Local trusts	9	72	85	70	35	41	46	54
Persons	8	80	53	63	26	17	18	112
Remote trusts	19	48	59	56	15	15	11	27

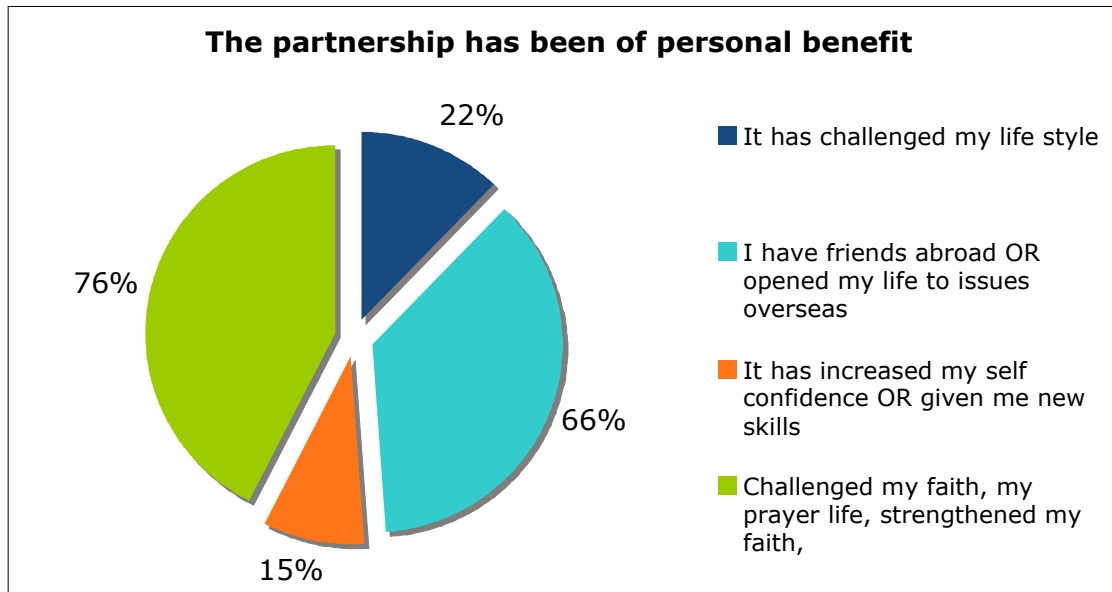
- a We have learned more about the world, and the church's work in the world
- b We have benefited by being able to help others
- c It has lifted our eyes from local problems and put these in a larger context
- d We have seen other models of church operation and worship
- e The congregation has been brought closer together
- f The faith of some of our congregations has been strengthened.



This shows that with only one exception (a), the partnerships with churches and with local trusts are seen to give a greater benefit to the local congregations than do links to mission partners and links to remote trusts, and that in nearly every case the partnership with a church provides a greater benefit to the local church than do any other form of link or partnership. Thus one of the report recommendations is that partnerships with churches and local trusts are a significant way of providing benefit to local congregations and should be encouraged.

10.2 The Questionnaires and quotations

The pie charts in this and the following chapter derive from the 530 questionnaires completed by congregations that had a partnership with a church or local trust overseas. 73% of those who responded to the questionnaires said that they had gained benefit from the partnership, and 85% said that their church of community had gained benefit. The percentages in the following pie charts are the percentages of those who so replied. The quotations arise from the meetings held with the partnerships and from reports and letters.



10.3 It challenged my faith, my prayer life, my life style, it strengthened my faith,

The words of a mother whose son had been on a visit overseas:

“The partnership has enabled me to encourage my family to appreciate and value the life and luxuries that they have. In supporting my son, I have strengthened my friendships within the congregation. Participating in the valuable work undertaken both at home in preparation and in travelling has given my son valuable life skills, including teamwork, motivation, leadership, tolerance. He has brought great joy to his family in sharing his experience.”

The re-assessment of values and of personal growth comes clearly across:

“Meeting them challenged me, made me question my values, and value what I have.”

“I have found my experience of working with the Zambians a very humbling one and I have reaped many benefits”

“It has been a life-changing experience for me. It has been a joy to watch people grow through this”.

This personal growth has not been easy. A young man from Dunblane makes the point:

“Some of us young people who went on a trip to Malawi were strongly affected, the poverty was hard to deal with, made us feel awkward and upset, and it was hard coming back to ‘normal’ life in Dunblane, the routine of school was necessary to normalise things.

Sometimes being challenged felt uncomfortable;

“The Malawians speak about their faith a lot, even to the extent that our young folk here feel uncomfortably harangued by them, as do some of us adults. For example, they had messages on their T shirts and caps like ‘God is my Father’. We would not do that here”.

However, in spite of the unease, some young people came up to the challenge:

“I am R. I am 15 yrs. I had an amazing time, but the most important was that my relationship with God has greatly strengthened both during and after this experience. My faith has become stronger and I have become proud and more open about being a Christian, although it is made fun of by my friends and family. I realised that being a Christian should be celebrated, I realised how amazing is God’s love.”

For some, these benefits amounted to an increased awareness of themselves:

“Going there as a group, and seeing how little they had and what they could do with so little, has helped to establish a sense of community here; we could do so much more with what we do have, and now we are finding that we can do a lot; we can fund raise, we can do things, things that we did not imagine we could do.”

“And that applies to us as individuals too. I am doing things in the church which I would never have dreamed I was capable of.”

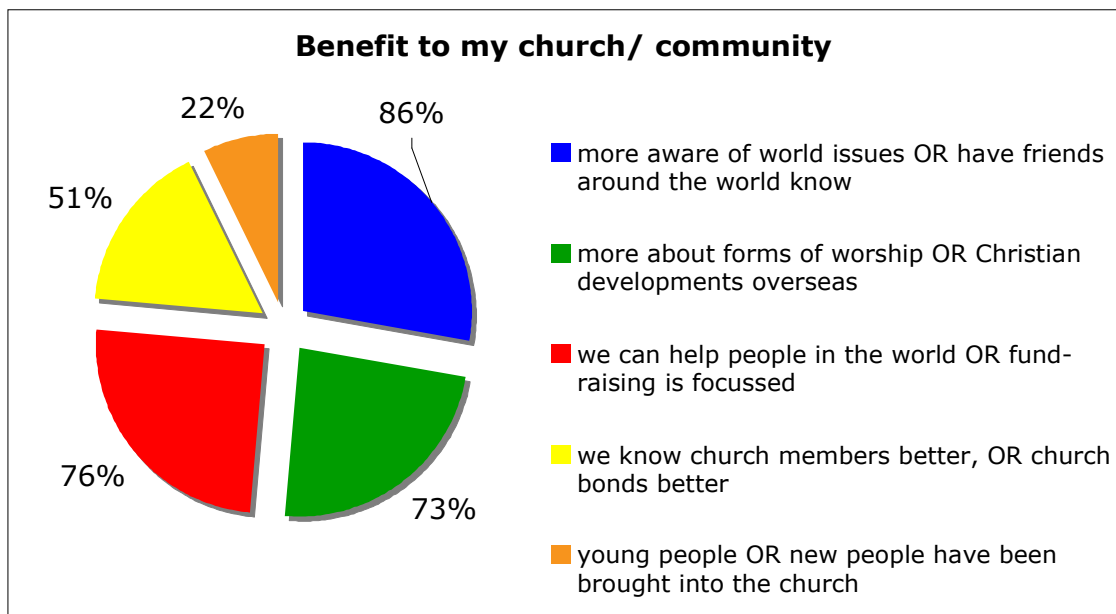
“There is a need, we are needed.”

“The young people who have been on trips have increased self confidence”.

10.4 Friends abroad

“We have gained a personal insight into people from another country, we are being educated through the project.”

“They [the Orlovians] changed from being visitors to being friends and part of our family, and so they remain.”



10.5 Awareness of Christianity in a different context

Friendships brought inevitable exchanges of ideas and information about Christian life.

“We learnt about how they do things there. Every half year their Guild celebrates a common birthday for all those whose birthday falls in that half year. We now do the same”.

“The impact on our worship has been huge. The atmosphere has changed through the experience of the folk who went there. Their attitude to children and young people and to strangers in the church has changed. For example, five years ago a missionary would be given 1½ minutes to tell their story, now it is different. The church now welcomes the young and young families. Children are allowed to be present and not permanently shushed into silence or excluded. We use African-style story telling more in our worship “

Friendships flourish from the recognition of the equality of both partners

“The Kenyans are in a bleak situation, yet they have dignity, they come out of a background of squalor yet they present themselves clean and respectable”.

“The visit made me want to bring the Kenyans back to Barrhead so that others from our church could meet them. It made us want to contribute to them helping themselves. “

“We were struck by the faith they exhibited; they have a tangible sense of faith. Despite their hardship, they trust God, they face disaster with hope”.

"We were blown away by their sense of God's presence and by their worship".

"They are selfless, despite their difficult situation they want strengthened and helped so that they can help others".

Some congregations reported a sense of union,

"In the joint worship on our visit we reaffirmed what it means to find unity in the body of Christ. We have gained in understanding of faith, strength and fellowship with each other"

"It led to an awareness of the joy in experiencing our unity as part of the world wide church".

10.6 Improved awareness of congregation and community

Many reported that they got to know members of their congregation or their community better.

"It allows people in the congregation to work together, to volunteer, to work for the project, to host visitors, and to come together in work. " One of the reasons for entering into a partnership with a church overseas was the recognised need for the church in Barrhead which comprises four congregations, to look outward, to provide a focus on Mission, to appreciate that the difficulties we face as a Barrhead church and community"

"It created opportunities for the parish to meet together and to get to know each other in social events". "Our visit there brought together all four of the Church of Scotland churches".

10.7 It provides links with the community

It allows congregations to stretch out and meet people within the community, including people not otherwise associated with the church.

"It has provided opportunities for organisations here to work for and link to our partner overseas, eg the local school has bought goats for Malawi, others have undertaken fund raising"

"Primary schools are involved in the partnership; the children have learnt African songs, have done artwork, and have raised funds through. "Sponsor us to learn Chitumbuka!"

"The presence of black Africans here in our company has helped with racial tensions. Some time ago a Chinese family was chased out of the community and we were afraid of the reaction at a number of black faces here; but they were well received and a number of tough local youths were very much affected by these young Africans playing football in bare feet with skill and speed, and reacted very generously."

"Our school now has links with their school."

10.8 It gives an opportunity to talk about our work and faith

"The partnership provides opportunities for outreach into the parish and the community; the link with Malawi, and the projects we are undertaking with them give us a chance to talk to people about what we do and why we are doing it. It gives us great access to the schools"

"In our visitation work in the parish here, the work of our church in Trinidad gives us an easy talking point to start the conversation about the work of the church."

"Outside people without a current involvement with the church take an interest."

"The external community will recognise the value of the church's contribution to the community."

"This partnership will provide an impetus for witness in the present community."

"The project has provided a good talking point with people at work, showing that the work of the church is spread out beyond the local community."

10.9 Youth

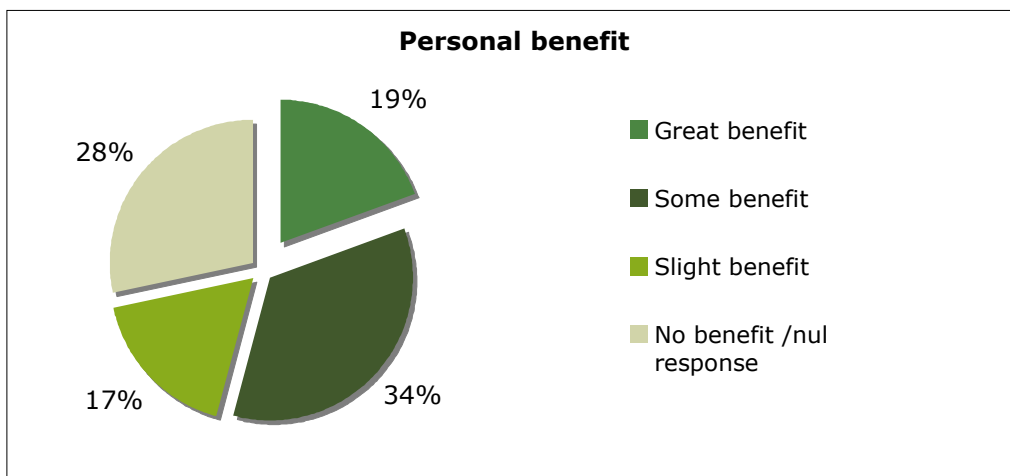
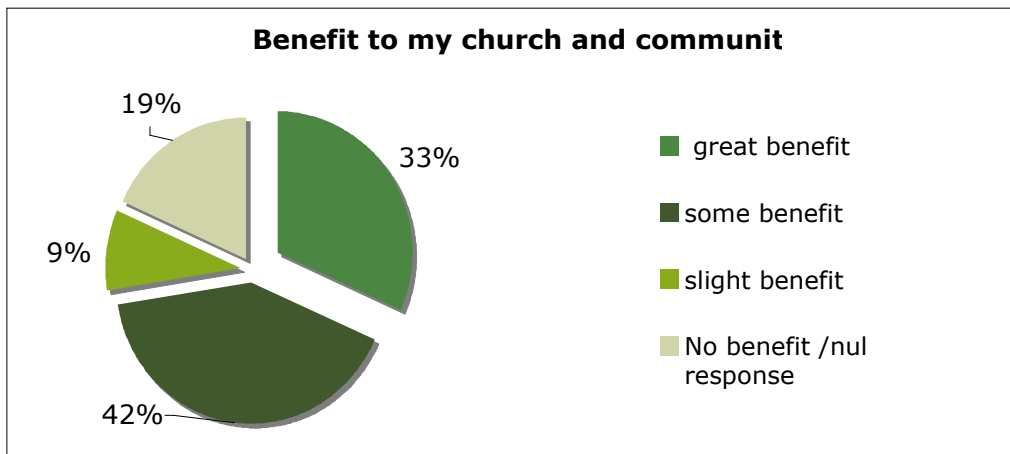
For some of the partnerships the involvement of young people has been an intentional and successful feature

“The church decided to place young people at the heart of the decision making process. Groups of young people researched three projects in sub-Saharan Africa, evaluated them against set criteria then pitched the projects to a committee, who made the final selection of a community partnership in Malawi.”

The young people of the town continue to be a driving force for the vision as well as the practical aspects of the partnership. Their initial enthusiasm in helping establish the link with Likhubula has not waned. They continue to grow in maturity and to contribute to the partnership in creative and imaginative ways.

“The visits have always included young people, and they have benefited from the visit. The practical contribution that the project makes to Chipembi has attracted young people to the enterprise. The life in the school, especially the attitude of the girl students/pupils in the school, has made a large impact on our young people. The girls there are seen as being respectful: they work hard: and take a lot of responsibility. Our pupils at our local school have now taken the school assembly, and the school has established its own link with Chipembi”.

10.10 General benefit



The view that the community benefited to a greater extent than they individually did, may be due to a generous view of their colleagues, or it may be that the communal benefits, such as the community working together better were recognised but not seen as also of personal benefit.

10.11 Benefits to the Overseas Community

Many of the benefits described above in terms of friendship, the sense of sharing, common worship, learning from one another, etc are common to both parties of the partnership. However, hear what some of the African leaders said about the partnerships

"I believe the best and most helpful thing that has happened to the church in its entire mission history to Africa is the introduction of partnerships i.e. twinning congregations between the developed and the developing countries. While numerically churches in developing countries are growing and those in the developed countries are dwindling, we can learn much from each other. What is it that makes some churches keep on growing while others are closing down? I think poverty has to some extent a part to play. Twinning congregations provides an opportunity for people on a small scale, to focus on the joy and agony of each other and address the issues close to their heart"

"I saw a church [in Glasgow] participating in community change and retaining its relevance to society, that was something that I learnt" I also learnt of the idea of a church without walls and want to see how I can carry that insight forward to the benefit of my own community.

"Coming to our twinning with the church of Scotland, this one wonderful thing has happened in the life of Lubuto congregation. The purpose of our twinning was to enrich, support each other, share in our faith, and trust in Jesus Christ.

"Zambia can see very clear benefits of the partnership particularly the practical projects assistance with the improvement of the water system, development of the school, starting work on improving the electrical supply situation."

"There is the prospect of the provision being lifted by the provision of better education."

"At Lubuto, twinning has had an impact on the church and the community as whole regarding our faith in Christ, provision of clean water and education."

"The interchange of visits between the Crown Church [CC] and the North Street Jamaica church has given both parties a clearer understanding, to their mutual benefit, of how each undertakes mission in their community. We were impressed with what CC was doing and hope that CC were impressed with what we are doing with what we have"

The church in Seoul saw a parallel between the current decline in their church membership and the experience of Scotland and hope to learn about how the Church of Scotland has faced this issue. Some members from an overseas partners explained how they saw the role of Scots visiting them.

"Our spiritual tradition is Scots: it is like as if our parents have come for a visit to see how we are progressing."

11 Communication and Links

Summary *Communication between partners is the lifeblood of any partnership. Without it there can be no conversations, no sharing, no friendship, and no partnership. Visits provide the essential face to face interaction, they were highly valued, but they are also expensive, and need to be planned and have clear aims. The main form of communication was email (11.1). The partnerships have been instrumental in developing important links between the church and the community, and in developing links between community groups (eg schools) in the two partner's communities, thus spreading to the entire community, the idea of cooperation, and of learning about and from others (11.3).*

11.1 Communication between the partners

a) Visits

Visits are one of the most important ways of preserving the links of friendship and partnership. They are expensive of time, money, and effort and need to be used well. A leader from Jamaica described the needs for visits succinctly

"We very much want to improve the links between Crown Church and ourselves. The personal physical contact is vital, without the personal contact correspondence can lapse, the personal contact is important. However visits are expensive, so what we need to do is to strengthen our links in other ways in anticipation of the next visit.

"What we want to do is to develop the link between our school and the local school in Inverness, to get the children writing to each other, and talking to each other on mobile phones. We want soon to have a webcam link so that the children can talk to each other. With Skype, this should not be difficult. And maybe chats of mobile phones.

"We want to get our prayer group linked with the prayer group in CC, so that there can be sharing of prayer. We should like to select a Sunday where we could share a service using a web link so that we could have a common liturgy for part of the service and so share our worship to God.

"We very much look forward to a visit from the Scots. As I said this physical personal contact is crucial for the health of this partnership"

The Crown Church felt the same way

"Members who had visited Jamaica spoke of their enjoyment and excitement at the May 2008 visit by the delegation from Jamaica, at the huge impact these lively people had brought to the worship, at the ease with which they spoke about their relationship with God, and of the pleasure in hosting some of them in their homes".

One partnership when asked how they kept the partnership alive said: - *"Poor or difficult communication between partners can shipwreck a partnership".* Their solution said partly in jest and wholly in earnest, was *"We send Jenni to Likhubula every yea. At the start, the partnership was struggling to be established, until it was decided that someone from Dunblane should just go and visit them; this worked."*

Another partnership used the same solution. *"There are communication difficulties - Margaret is going to go and stay there for a while."*

For visits to be effective, they need to be planned, not just in terms of logistics but also in terms of what they are intended to achieve. One church described their approach:

"The specific intention of the visit had been to establish a partnership, for the churches to get to know each other and to become friends and partners in the world wide church. The visit had achieved a sense of equality between the two churches'.

b) Functions of a visit

What then are the functions of visits? We found that visits could have various purposes.

- Getting to know you, getting to know the country, the church context, the environment, and the people.
- Tourist. Seeing the sights and sounds of the country. Typically this is what the hosts wanted to offer, they are proud of their country and are determined that the visitors should have a good time. This featured strongly in reports on visits
- Sharing in worship, in prayer, and in the work of the community.
- Gaining agreement of particular projects, eg the formal partnership agreement and material projects in the community.

c) Arranging a good visit

For a visit to be worth while, there needs to be agreement between the two partners on the purpose of the visit, and the visitors need to be briefed on the purpose and on the context and background of the partner organisation. We found visits that had been well organised and planned. One partnership reported

“The visits enabled the participants to

- *continue the dialogue with our partners about present and future priorities*
- *review the progress made on the various projects and developments*
- *improve our understanding of what it is like for individuals and families*
- *develop our understanding of the nature of the partnership in the village communities*
- *improve the links between our Sunday schools and our Guilds*
- *develop links between the school and pupils*
- *develop our understanding of the church and to forge pastoral links*
- *improve the mechanism for financial accountability”*

We found tales of misadventure

“A meticulously planned visit had been prepared, but it had not been discussed with us, the visitors, and there was some uncertainty as to the purpose of the visit. The visit provided only limited opportunities to explore issues of church operation etc

The members of the visiting team need to be chosen in line with the agreed aim and they need to be in tune with that. They need to be briefed, about the context, the visit, the community, and the country. We found that the size of visits and their purpose differed widely. Whereas attention tends to focus on the church-based or community-based large representative visiting teams, we found that visits by one or two persons were quite common; they were carefully focussed visits with a limited purpose, to re-establish a lagging friendship, to solve a problem, to view a prospective site for a project, or to take materials.

d) Chatting and Talking

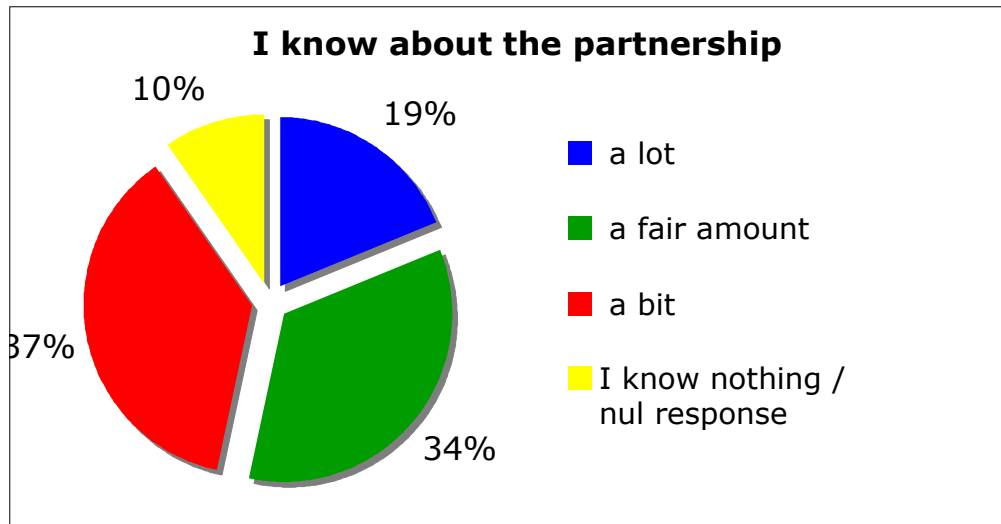
The idea behind partnership is friendship and for friendship to develop and extend there must be communication. Communication includes visits, information like prayer letters, formal communication like plans eg for a visit or project, and above all informal chat and talk.

The most common means of communication in our society, especially among young people are: Text messages, Mobile phones, Social networks such as Facebook, Emails, Blogs, and Letters. In the partnerships we studied, the most common forms of communication with the overseas partnership was by Emails. Telephones were used by many partnerships but in some cases hardly at all.

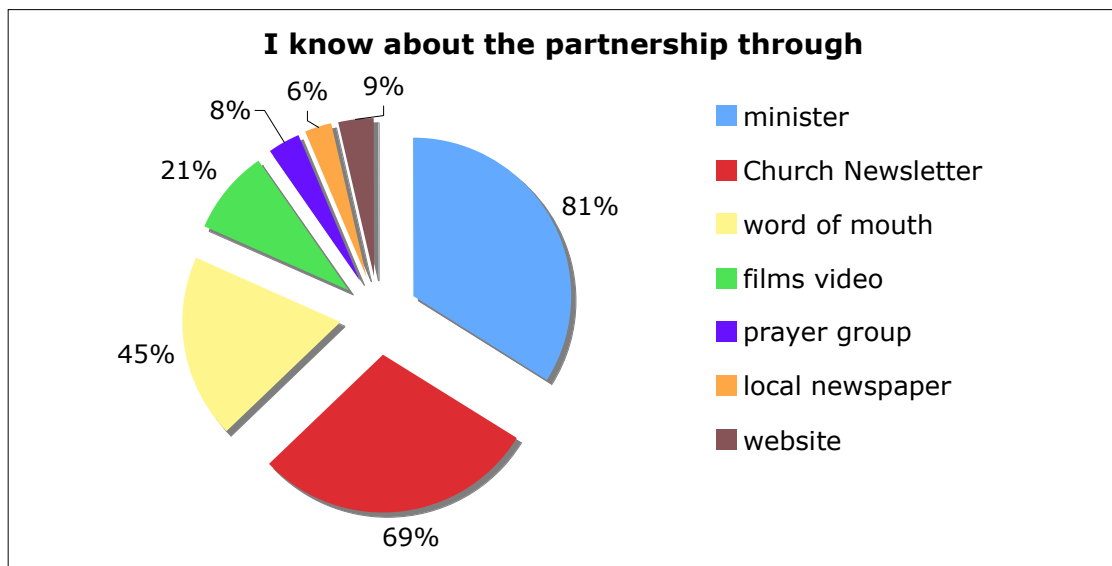
11.2 Communication within the church or community

The pie charts in this chapter derive from the 530 questionnaires completed by congregations. The full details of the questionnaire responses are set out in the appendix. The quotations arise from the meetings held with the partnerships and from reports and letters...

a) I know about the partnership

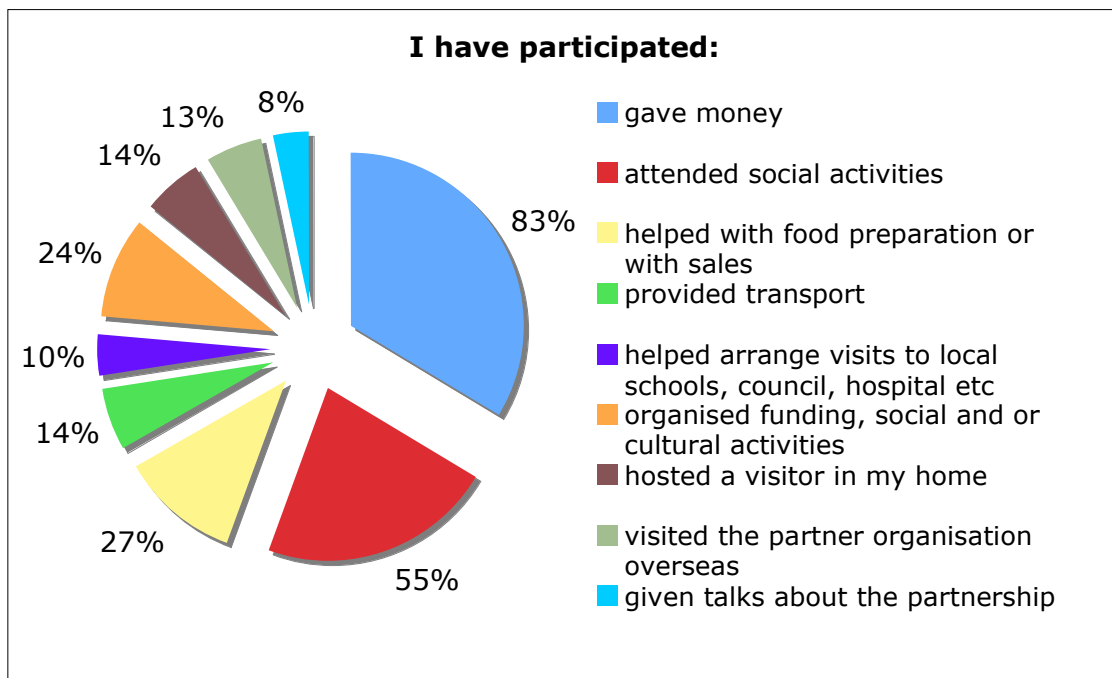


The above pie-chart shows the overall position of all the partnerships for which we have data. Additionally, the detailed responses show, as might be expected, that generally, the congregations of the more mature churches knew more than the congregations of the younger partnerships, but there were exceptions.

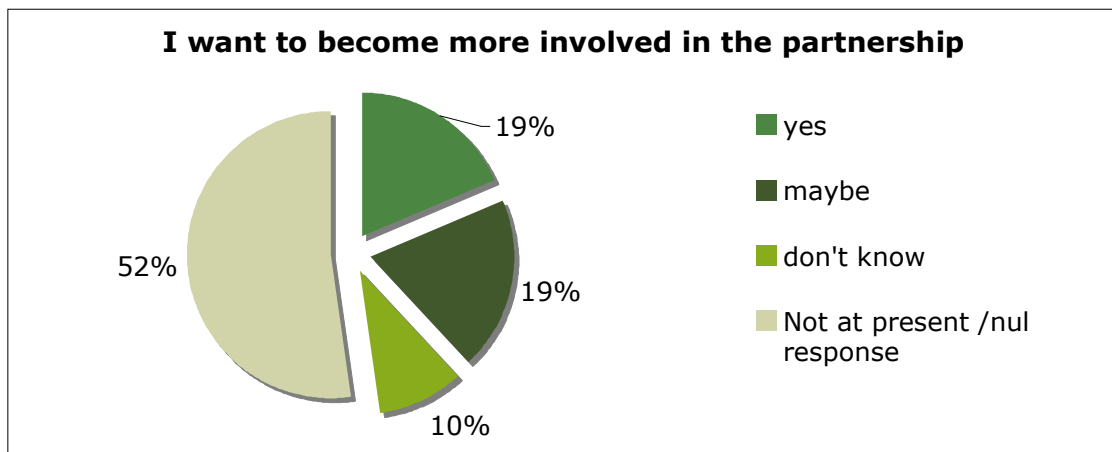


The above pie chart shows the primary sources of information about the partnership. A live video link and the website were sources of information for relatively few people, but for the churches which used them they proved significant sources of information. It is likely that for people outside the church the web site is a major way of keeping people informed.

c) I have participated



Participation was high, across all the partnerships. How did people participate? Hosting visitors in my home scored 14%, and in our discussions, the partnerships pointed out to us the blessing they had received in having people from overseas in their homes. Overseas visits scored a remarkably high 13% overall (NB this is not 13% of the respondents but 13% of the respondents who said that they did participate). This high figure is strongly affected by one well established partnership which has had a history of regular visits. That same partnership tops the scores for perceived benefit to the church and community, and for personal benefit.



11.3 Links with the Community

Informing the community

Many partnerships have established effective mechanism to keep the community informed of their activities. South Leith reported

“There is a good web page, and also a blog detailing the experiences of people who have visited the school. In addition, there are over 12 films on the World without Walls website <http://www.worldwithoutwalls.net> detailing specific aspects of the partnership.”

The reputation of Chipembi and of the good work that has been undertaken there and the successful outcomes, means that it is relatively easy to elicit funds for something at Chipembi. There is a well-developed flier about Chipembi, issued for fund raising, and this is revised every year or so.

The Likhubula-Dunblane partnership has an extensive web page <http://www.dunblanelikhubulalink> that it uses for providing information to church members, to the community, the public and to its partner in Malawi. Organisations without web sites or blogs are rendered invisible to the outside world, and to their partners overseas.

Developing partnership with the community at large

Numerous links have been established to involve the community in the work of the partnership, including sales to raise funds, donations collections, and talks given to various public bodies about the partnerships. Opportunities are generally taken when there are visitors from overseas to show them the sights and to visit local organisation which might be of interest to them such as the football stadium, the hospital or the local school.

Some partnerships have established more formal links with the community. Indeed three partnerships originating in churches have moved to having the community as a member of the partnership rather than as an adherent. Dunblane and South Leith reported that

“The Dunblane Community Council, Dunblane Council of Churches and the local Rotary group have expressed a desire to be associated with the project. Dunblane, Newton, and St Mary’s Primary schools have children writing to pen pals in Likhubula. Dunblane Community Children’s Partnership is kept informed, Dunblane High School has adopted this Malawi project as a school venture, and designated two staff as lead teachers”

“South Leith Parish Church has developed a successful collaboration with a number of organisations within their community. For example, we have taken non-church members who had specific skills to share as well as our own members to Zambia. The involvement with the local school has been highly effective. We have helped initiate four visits from Chipembi to Scotland all of which involved teachers and two involved pupils. The purpose of these visits has been educational as well as deepening bonds of friendship and cross-cultural awareness. Every person who has travelled has appreciated these visits and has recommended others to take future trips”.

12 The Birth and death of partnerships

Summary *this chapter deals with how a partnership starts (12.1), how the overseas partner might be found (12.2), the role of the partnership agreement (12.3), the end of a partnership (12.4) and the reasons for the decline of a partnership (12.5)*

12.1 The Birth

Partnerships can be initiated for many reasons. A congregation or its minister can take the view that a partnership with an overseas church can help achieve something that is needed in the church. For example

- A need to engage the young people from within and outwith the church
- A need for the church to raise its sight from our their local difficulties to see their broader mission responsibility

A church can come to the view that it must participate in Christian mission. There are also other reasons

- A sense of excitement and of curiosity to find out about and to share with a church in a foreign or exotic location

In practice, it is likely to be a mixture of all of these.

For the initiation of the partnership, an intermediary can be very helpful, and many churches have found invaluable the advice and support from the Local Development Office of the World Mission Council which holds details of many overseas churches that would like a Scottish church as a partner. Their staff have experience in brokering links and on travelling overseas. This office can also provide support for partnerships through the Faithshare visitors' programme funding.

There is a strong case for broadening the basis of advice and support available to local congregations. In the church throughout Scotland there are numerous people with experience of living in Rwanda, of developing mission in the Himalayas, of organising a business in Glasgow, of setting up a charitable trust to work in Kenya, of using Skype, of nursing in the Congo, of working with street children in Iquitos, of working with churches throughout the world, etc. They are willing to help, and often would be flattered to be asked, and can form a network of people experienced and able to help other churches in the establishment and development of partnerships. This would give the local church a greater role in the development of partnerships.

12.2 How is the overseas partner chosen?

This is something for the church to decide, after taking advice from all sources. The views of any funder must naturally be taken into consideration, but the partnership is a partnership of the church or community with another church or community, and it is theirs to initiate and to develop. . It is suggested that the criteria for providing funding support should be the quality and advance planning of the proposal and not be affected by the country or organisation to which the partnership is intended

A partnership needs two partners, and the overseas church must be desirous of the partnership. We encountered instances where the church or a designated group of people in the church, sometimes the young people, studied the options and short listed possible candidates. There is often a link between someone in the church with a particular country which provides a start. Some churches identified a place with a resemblance to their own (eg old coal-mining area),

There is at present a danger that many congregations see the central Council of the Church of Scotland as being 'in charge of' partnerships or twinnings, this is unfortunate and disempowering; see chapter 14 for a fuller discussion of this

12.3 The agreement

Does a partnership need a formal agreement? Many of the partnerships we had studied did not, or did not yet, have a partnership agreement or a covenant, but most expected that in time they would. The reasons for having the partnership documented were;-

- to confirm formalise the relationship, would
- to establish the mutual responsibilities of each party.
- to provide guidance and a reminder of what the intentions were
- its very preparation would clarify the thinking and the aims of the partnership

12.4 The end of the partnership

We had hoped to study some partnerships that had finished, on the grounds that this would help us better understand the entire life-cycle of a partnership and also perhaps that there is more to learn from failure than success. We found one, and this in brief is its story

Many years previously a member of one of the churches we studied had taken up a ministry in a church in another country; this led to a close but informal partnership between the churches. He retired from that post, for a while the Scottish church provided a locum to the overseas church and for some years there were regular visits between the churches. The overseas church then called a new minister, and its energies were engaged in establishing its new perspective, the person in the Scottish church most involved moved to other duties, and the relationship became quiescent. The Scottish church, conscious of the blessing that an overseas partnership could bring, established a new partnership with another church in a different country. However, there are members in the church who still regret that the previous partnership has not been maintained. The overseas church may now wish to re-establish the connection, but the Scottish church is unlikely to be able to do this while fulfilling its commitment to its existing relationships.

What can be learnt from this:

- Partnerships start, grow and sometimes, for quite legitimate reasons, end.
- Churches have priorities and sometimes it may be right that a partnership is terminated
- Churches have a limit to what they can do.
- Partnerships do not necessarily survive changes of leadership

12.5 Reasons for Decline

In our study we found some partnerships that were struggling. The reasons vary and include

- Lack of regular contact and the friendship grows cold
- Lack of leadership and direction (see chapter 16),
- Change of leadership

Any business, organisation, or project can go through bad patches. An effective organisation, business, or project will have a mechanism whereby a 'bad patch' is recognised, is analysed and is sorted, if necessary by closing that activity. Sometimes we found there was no effective mechanism to remedy a recognised weakness. The line of accountability to the Session or to the Presbytery was in place in theory but there was not the capacity, or perhaps the willingness, to exercise the authority.

In other cases there was not a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership either formally or informally, and so there was no way in which the leadership could know if the partnership was going well or not. A number of the partnership had a finite life time built into the agreement, after which continuation was possible, and maybe even expected but was subject to an evaluation. This seemed a sound approach to the matter.

13 Community based Partnerships, and Presbytery-to-presbytery links

Summary Three of the partnerships in the study are community based partnership legally separate from any church. The reasons given for them to seek independent status are set out. The establishment of a partnership as a separate entity or as a charity does not of itself change its aims, and it can have significant benefits (13.1)

The primary purpose of the three presbytery facilitating arrangements was seen to be to facilitate church-to-church partnerships. In one presbytery there was evidence of healthy church to church partnerships, and the contribution made by the presbytery clearly identified, in another case there was as yet little evidence of effective partnerships, and in another case the presbytery seemed to be more of a blockage than a help (13.2).

13.1 Community based partnerships

Three of the partnerships we studied started life as church based partnerships and have migrated to another organisational structure. All three have or have had a church at the centre, but the partnerships are now officially separate entities legally independent of their initiating churches. Two of them are registered as independent charities, the third is not. For many church members the partnership is still 'our partnership' and for the two charities, the two churches nominate some or all of the trustees. However, for those church members more actively involved in the partnership the distinction is clear. The following were reasons given for moving to a separate organisation.

- It makes it easier to gain support from secular organisations such as businesses, the Round Table or Lions.
- For a very active partnership with a lot of travellers, the potential liabilities of the church are large and under OSCR rules, the trustees of the church bear final personal responsibility for any losses. With a limited company, the liabilities are limited.
- It gives the partnership organisation more freedom; it is linked to but not subject to the Kirk Session.
- The measure of independence, the evidence of a separate well functioning organisation, and its compliance with OSCR regulation can make companies and other organisations such as Lions and the Round Table, more willing to support and fund the activities of the partnership.
- It makes it easier to solicit funds and support from secular organisations and businesses.
- It is consistent with the church strategy of becoming more involved in the community, going out to the community and not just trying to bring the community into the church.
- It reflects what we are doing in Africa. There we are working with a community, which, unlike here, is not distinct from the church.
- It is easier to include in the partnership activities, people who are not connected with the church. [This argument has dubious validity since many churches involve the community in their partnership activities by eg establishing links between Scottish schools and overseas schools, and by taking non-churchgoers on visits. Some churches contend that one of the specific benefits of the partnership is to provide a mechanism whereby to involve the members of the community in a church related activity]

The two charities are characterised by a very business-like approach to the work of supporting the overseas partner. This business like approach to the work can be understood as the motivation that has driven the partnerships to adopt charitable status, rather than being a consequence of becoming a charity. One other church based partnership, which is business-oriented in its approach, is also considering the advantages of going independent.

The third community based partnership, which is not a separate charity, had been funded through 'Together for a Change'. Its aims are to

- work alongside people living in poverty in Scotland and in the developing world as part of our Gospel commitment to follow Jesus
- explore the relationship between poverty in Scotland and poverty in the developing world
- increase involvement of people experiencing poverty in Scotland and in the developing world
- raise awareness about poverty and promote positive change in the wider society

The establishment of a partnership as a legal entity distinct from the church does not of itself imply a change of aims or imply that the aims of that organisation are specifically secular, and it can have significant benefits. However, the impetus which led it to become an independent body, might also lead it to shed its Christian connections.

13.2 Presbytery to Presbyteries Links

Amongst the partnerships being studied were three presbytery-to-presbytery links.

The Beneficial role

A minister in Aberdeen expressed his view of the role of his presbytery as supporting the partnership his church had with a church in Malawi

“The presbytery to presbytery relationship is seen to be of benefit to our church to church partnership in the following ways

- *It provides an overall organisational context within which our church to church partnership can operate, it provides the initial contacts ready made*
- *Together with 121, it provides advice, from their experience and support for the development of the church to church partnership. For example we got advice on how to deal with personal begging letters from individuals, on travel health arrangements, on the cultural context, the protocols when meeting people, etc*
- *It allows the resolution of general issues and problems which otherwise would need to be addressed and solved by each individual church in that situation.*

The Rev Enos Pradhan, General Secretary of the Church of North India set out a role for the Synod or presbytery.

“The Synod needs to help you [Scots] to identify the needs of congregations. These areas may not be the areas with which the Scottish churches had a historical missionary link. The challenge is not to break the romantic attachment but to journey with the church in implementing mission in a local situation and to involve the synod as a facilitating mechanism”⁶

One Scottish presbytery has operated a successful regular delivery of material goods to the overseas presbytery by means of a container. The goods were then distributed to the churches according to need as determined by the overseas presbytery.

Difficulties

However, presbyteries do not always act effectively to promote church to church partnerships, and this has given rise to some frustration. One African leader wrote as follows

“The partnership we have is between presbyteries. It is intended to facilitate the twinning of churches. It is not intended to remain a structure for the presbyteries, it is intended to provide and encourage a twinning between churches and between congregations; it should provide for people to get to know each other and learn from each other.

⁶ Enos Das Pradhan, Partnership in Mission Emerging Challenges and Vision for a new Paradigm IN Locally Supported Partnership Consultation, Dec 2008 World Mission Council Edinburgh

“At present this is not happening, the partnership has got stuck. We were supposed to have arrangements for clusters of churches to relate to each other. This has been under discussion since last year, but arrangements are very slow and nothing seems to be happening. Communication is very difficult. I phone up and am told that my email has not arrived,

“Here, we as a presbytery are fully supportive of the partnership, and we can operate very flexibly. In Scotland, it seems that the presbytery is not on board and is not active, and the churches there are bound by the presbytery and cannot operate on their own. We would be prepared to have twinning arrangements between us and separate churches in Scotland. “

Another African leader wrote to say

“When I was general secretary of the Synod I was instrumental in establishing partnerships with some presbyteries. These partnerships may have had some impact at synod level but they had no impact at all on the grass root church. There were a lot of bottlenecks too that made the whole programme difficult to manage. Partnerships between churches help the people on the ground and are easy to manage because the two groups can sit together and discuss”

And a local minister spoke about the partnership that his presbytery had entered

“The partnership at this stage is very much a presbytery level partnership that has not yet impinged on our congregation. Our Kirk Session knows about it through reports from presbytery meetings, but it has not been brought to the attention of the congregation. I understand that it is intended at some stage for the presbytery partnership to move to a church to church linkage, but that has not happened

“The partnership was approved at presbytery level; presbytery is unlikely not to support any ideas where there is a proponent with a vision, but it will be more difficult to persuade churches to establish a link with a church from what is a very foreign country with which we in our church have no link at all. It would be much easier for us to conceive of developing a link eg with a church in Nepal with which our church does have an historical link”

In another local church, there was support for the work of the presbytery but it fell somewhat short of a partnership with a church in the other country.

“The church does not see itself as being in a partnership with a church there, rather it sees itself as responding generously to the need in that country. The church is supportive of the links to there, but this is more charitable contribution than an active involvement in a partnership. It sees itself to have a link with the minister and his wife; our gifts are given directly to them in person.”

The co-ordinating role of the presbytery

Some churches in Scotland have been told that they cannot form partnerships in a particular country other than through the local presbytery and the overseas presbytery. This has not been borne out in discussions and conversations with the leaders in those countries

In some countries particularly in Africa, gifts to individual churches must be handled with great care, transparency, and delicacy. The churches are poor and any gifts received by one church in an individual relationship with a Scottish church, can easily give rise to accusations of partiality. There is a distinct sensitivity about any individual Scottish church having a direct relationship with an African church outside the general framework set by the African presbytery. Some Scottish churches in presbytery partnerships have been told that they must have approval from the African presbytery, sought via the Scottish presbytery, before they can give gifts to their partnership church. In discussion with the African leaders of that presbytery it became clear that what was required was to notify the presbytery, but in a strongly hierarchical system the ‘inform’ can easily migrate into ‘get approval’.

One presbytery maintains transparency by informing the African presbytery of any gifts given to individual churches; knowing this the presbytery can then concentrate more ably on supporting those who have or who get nothing.

The balance of benefit for a presbytery facilitating arrangement

Presbytery to presbytery facilitating arrangements can

- Provides an overall organisational context within which church to church partnerships can operate.
- Provide advice and support on the religious, cultural, and social context of the other country, on arrangements related to travel, and on particular problems that arise.
- Coordinate financial aid and resources targeted to an area rather than to a single community.

But they can also

- Overcomplicate partnership arrangements and block true partnership between churches.
- Disempower and limit each church's initiative to develop its own partnership.
- Limit the communication between the churches.

Presbytery to presbytery facilitating arrangements can be useful (we reserve the term partnership for the church to church or community to community relationship), where

- The presbytery recognises that its function is to facilitate church to church partnerships.
- The presbytery quickly passes responsibility for the church to church partnership to the churches, after establishing a nourishing context.
- The presbytery provides support, along with other supporting organisations such as the WMC office, individuals, Scottish Christians who have travelled or lived abroad, and other churches.

14 Recognised and 'informal' Partnerships & Links

Summary *The survey of all the churches has revealed a widespread misapprehension that the Church of Scotland approves or recognises partnerships, and that partnerships and links not so recognised are not entirely proper, and are seen as 'informal' links. There is also an understanding that the Church of Scotland appoints mission partners to churches. The perception of the position will do little to encourage churches to be entrepreneurial in establishing links and partnerships*

There is a widely held view that the central office of the Church of Scotland recognises or approves partnerships and that anything outside such recognised links is not entirely proper. Many of the comments from the respondents to the survey of all the churches indicated that they saw the questionnaire as being limited to what they understood as Church of Scotland links or partnerships, and therefore not applicable to their situation. Fortunately, many still gave information on what they are doing, but many may have simply ticked the 'No partnership' box.

Here is a selection of comments from the respondents:

- *This is an informal link, not a Church of Scotland one.*
- *We, along with several other churches are supporting the Dodmans in Jamaica. But this has nothing to do with '121'.*
- *This is a 'local partnership' begun when the WMC withdrew its support from Jamaica. It continues what was a church –supported mission.*
- *M W was our prayer partner when she was an ecumenical appointment in Zambia. When this appointment ceased, she moved to a post in Tonga funded by the Methodist Church, I wrote to the WMC to ask whether we could retain this link. I did not receive a reply, the link continues with her, now in Tonga.*
- *The above partnerships are not affiliated to the Church of Scotland.*
- *Our link has stopped with the retirement of , we await a new partner being allocated*
- *We have only recently been formally "allocated" a Mission Partner, Helen Scott in Ekwendeni.*
- *We have completed the necessary form for twinning and await details from '121'.*

The approach of the World Mission Council may unintentionally encourage the view that there are some partnerships that are 'recognised' and other partnerships are not recognised by the Church of Scotland. The Overseas Mission and Local Communities Group define certain partnerships as 'twinning' where

- *"A twinning is a **recognised** relationship between a congregation of the Church of Scotland and a congregation/institution or project of a partner Church The ones we **recognise** have filled in profile forms and have similar from partners overseas".
[emphasis added by editor]*

The World Mission Council provides Faithshare funding to support the development of partnerships. This has been instrumental in ensuring the success of many partnerships. A condition of the funding is that the partnership be from church to a church, and that it be with a national church in community with the Church of Scotland. These restrictions are entirely reasonable from the point of view of 121, but they may not accord with the priorities as seen by the local church. Also the 'twinning' are arranged by 121 and whilst this is an invaluable service, it will necessarily continue to give the impression that 121 has 'recognised' certain partnerships. It is suggested that criteria focussing on the quality of a proposal be established, be published, and be used as the basis for funding.

If churches are to recognise their full potential they need to be given encouragement, and this includes advice and financial encouragement to develop the links that best suit them.

15 Challenges facing Partnerships

Summary *The challenges facing the partnership include the challenge of ownership, of the imbalance of resources, of mutual respect and high expectations, of communication of culture of accountability and of planning*

15.1 The Challenge of Ownership

The response by congregations to the questionnaires shows a high sense of ownership, with 71% of those who responded to the questionnaire saying that they had participated in some activity of the partnership, even if only in giving money. This was especially true in the longer established partnerships. However, sometimes a church found itself part of a partnership of which it did not feel ownership.

Members of a church can find themselves unaffected by the partnership their church has established. The questionnaires got a 55% response, which is good, but it means that 45% were sufficiently uninvolved not to return the questionnaire. Of the questionnaires returned 52% said that they did not want more involvement in the partnership. So, although the participation is high there are still many in the congregations untouched by the partnership.

The extent to which the concept of partnership in mission overseas has been accepted by the Church of Scotland overall will be seen from the second part of the project

15.2 The Imbalance of resources

Kenneth R Ross has eloquently described this

*“This challenge is part of the overall challenge posed by the growing international gap between the rich and the poor in to-day’s world, with the world economy working to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. The wider the gap the more difficult it is to achieve a meaningful partnership. John Hull says, “We in the two-seventh rich world are surrounded by a money curtain that is like a one-way mirror. It is invisible to those of us on the inside, because we can see right through it, but to the poor majority it stands as a glittering barrier through which they cannot pass. We can go to them but they cannot come to us”. As the gap widens it is harder to overcome the recipient – donor model”.*⁷

The experience of one Scottish church was that

“In reality, they perceived their relationship with Malawi to have been rather one-way. They felt that the Malawians had had a perception that here are rich Scots, in an affluent society without problems, able to fund generously what they the Malawians want; and this was accentuated by existence within the country of a donor mentality, ‘donors will solve all our problems’. Time and effort had been needed to establish a more equitable basis for the relationship, and for recognition that funds going to Malawi had to earned in Scotland and needed to fully accounted for in Malawi”.

Notwithstanding this case, the study has consistently shown that there is a sharing and a friendship that far transcends the issue of one way giving of resources.

⁷ Ross, Kenneth R. (2005), Partnership in Mission: Recalling the Past IN ‘Partner Church Consultation Carberry 2005’, Church of Scotland World Mission Council Edinburgh

15.3 The challenge of mutual respect and high expectations

Our partners overseas are in a unique and unassailable position to determine what is of value to them. We cannot do this, we cannot enter their lives enough to know their fundamental needs, and we assail and undermine their humanity if we invade them to the extent of deciding what is good for them from our superior knowledge. Partnership is loving them enough to understand and appreciate their views, to understand their needs, to share our needs with them, and to work with them for our mutual benefit.

Central to this idea of mutual respect is the concept of planning with them. One Scottish church set out in their agreement how they wanted to share the project work with their partner church overseas. It wanted them to identify projects, for the two churches to develop the project and then to work together sharing the work and their responsibility. The situation has been well described in an honest and perceptive analysis by minister in Africa who wrote to say

"The beauty of the partnership between us is that the two groups are able to sit down and decide after discussions the path they would like to pursue in order to maximise the gifts of each other. In other words, they agree on the projects or programmes that would make a lasting impact on the two communities. For instance, St Kenneth and Lusangazi agreed that for some time projects, relating to infrastructure will be concentrated in only one area or village within the congregation and that village would be Lusangazi. In this village, infrastructure such as classroom blocks where the children would comfortably sit and learn in a friendly environment.

"Such good programmes are not without difficulties and challenges. The first is when the two parties misalign their aims and objectives. For instance, when the church in the developing country enters into the partnership with a view to addressing personal poverty problems, and when the demands from the developing church is focused on rapid development in order to be at par with conditions in the church like St. Kenneth that took years to be where it is today"

There is always the danger of relapsing into a position of superiority. Yet, for those who have been to the partner's country there is an awareness of what we have to learn.

"Meeting them challenged me, made me question my values, and value what I have."

"I have found my experience of working with the Zambians a very humbling one and I have reaped many benefits."

15.4 Challenges to communication with the partner overseas

There are many blockages to communications with partners overseas especially to churches and communities in the developing world. The difficulties of communications with the developing world were put to me (in an email),

"This is to acknowledge receipt of your message You indeed tried a few times to reach me by phone but could not get connected properly. I am not sure whether it was network problem or a faulty handset at the time. I had insufficient airtime balance in the phone but at least I should have received the call. For me such problems are not news-worthy for they are synonymous with the "developing world." In the industrialised countries, people take so many things for granted."

For another partnership the communication problems were different

"Limited manpower, unreliable telecommunications, and the centralisation of communication have created a choke point resulting in poor communication between the two presbyteries. Churches here have little intimate contact with churches and congregations there. Contacts made outside of the 'official' channels work better."

Blockages to communication, organisational, technological, and human arose in many of our discussions on communication issues. In the study, we encountered many approaches to communication including the following:

- Use phones to keep a personal contact. It is not very expensive, for example use discounted telephone systems such as Telediscount (see telediscount.com) or Skype (see Skype.com)
- Avoid arrangements where all the telephone or all the correspondence goes through one person
- If it is expensive for them to phone, it is possible to buy them time on their phone.
- If it is expensive for them to write to you, you could buy a pile of local stamps and each time someone writes enclose a stamp for their return – this is useful when children write to children who may not have access to stamps.
- One partnership explained, *“We are patient, if the first five ways of communicating do not work then we try five other ways. If it does not happen in five weeks, then we wait another 15 weeks and try again” “We reckon it takes an hour a day to keep this big partnership running.”*
- In one partnership, communication was mainly by email, but notice of the email was telephoned to the person’s mobile telephone, so that he could cycle to the nearest town to an internet café to read the email.
- Some churches used DVDs or Skype to keep the congregation of the church in contact.
- Communication needs to be made by multiple people at different levels, someone on the Guild writing to someone in their Ladies Fellowship, someone in Youth work writing to their youth elder, the Sunday school writing to their Sunday school children, the local school in correspondence with their school.
- If individual letters from children here to children there go astray you can try to send them in a parcel to the School headmaster for him to distribute.
- If the post office is unreliable, it is possible to use another parcel delivery service.
- If they do not speak English well; one partnership found a Malawi student at the university who translated some letters into Chichewa for a congregation in Malawi.

15.5 The challenge of accountability

Whilst the partnership activities are limited to friendship, sharing and visits, Christian fellowship, prayer and shared worship, there will be a limited awareness of some cultural differences between countries, but when work is undertaken to develop facilities in the other country and to transfer resources more significant differences in the living conditions and in the two cultures become apparent. These can pose challenges to the partnership.

It has often proved difficult to find someone in the African partnerships that can be completely financially accountable and reliable, according to Scottish expectations. There are many reasons. The tradition of personal property and ownership in Africa is not the same as in Western Europe. Also in traditional society the social expectation is that anyone, especially anyone in a position of authority, has a primary responsibility for the care of his family, there is no one else who can take that responsibility, he must care for the family. As one Scottish minister explained,

“When your wife is ill and needs medicine and your child is starving your priorities change even if you are a minister”.

A senior African cleric wrote to say

“Perhaps some want to use the opportunity for personal aggrandisement. Such things slowly but surely kill the partnership principles.”

“Also, lack of transparency on the part of the congregation in the developing country might well stifle the good programme. We know that leadership in a congregation changes from time to time, it is therefore very important that there must be a good understanding between the leaders.”

In practice, churches have introduced a series of measures to ensure appropriate accountability without losing the trust of the community involved. One church claims that the success of its partnership is that the leader of the partnership came to Scotland and studied here. In another, the agreement limits the use of any funds to the church and excludes individuals, in another receipts signed by two office bearers are required. All the community partnerships and some of the church partnerships have encouraged the establishment of a separate bank account in the overseas community. And all money transfers are done electronically, to save time and money.

Chipembi has now well-established procedures for dealing with gifts, it took some years to get these accepted and established. Receipts of all purchases and photographs of everything bought with project funds are required, and this ensures honest and transparent use of the resources.

15.6 Cultural Challenges

There are other cultural challenges that any visitor needs to face. Various groups travelling to Africa have found great difficulty with their first experience of gender and cultural relationships. In rural African society where in some cases

- Information is viewed as a private possession and is not shared.
- Women are seen as junior and inferior to men and are expected to be subservient.
- Position, age, maleness, and committee positions provide huge status and limits juniors in their capacity to participate.
- Men sometimes expect to enjoy sexual licence.

15.7 The Challenge of Planning

Any developments with a partner in a developing country should recognise that

- The proposed activity must be what adds value to lives of the people, as determined by them based on their perception of what they value.
- The planning should be joint,
- Lots of time should be given for the development.
- Planning should be strategic and long term, it should put in place the capacity for further self development.

“We looked strategically at the needs of the community and school and at the resources available to them. They had pupils, staff and land but a shortage of food and few resources. We decided to invest in the land and to develop a viable farming community. Bit by bit land was brought into use, for agriculture, 16 animals were bought to start with, now there are chickens, sheep, over 100 cattle, pigs a fish farm and donkeys in a viable farm that supports the school. It has orange, guava and lemon trees, fields of maize, and various root crops. The school has their own freezer for the cold storage of meat.”

16 Success Factors:

Why are some partnerships successful and others not

Summary *The success of the partnerships seems to depend on trust in God and good management. In particular the following are crucial; good leadership, organisation, volunteer workers, clear objectives and aims, meticulous planning, good communication, and some physical contact.*

We have been surprised at the wide variation in the partnerships we have studied. Some are very young, and buoyed up with hope and enthusiasm; it is not yet clear how they will grow. Of the more mature partnerships, some are vigorous and vibrant and have an impact on people's lives here and overseas, some are ailing, and have limited impact. In our discussions we asked what those involved with the partnership saw as having had most influence on the success of the partnership. The responses were of two kinds,

- Trust in God
- Good management and leadership

Both of these areas are well established. Faith in God is preached in every church in the land. Project management is a simple and well understood discipline, albeit not widely practiced in church organisations. An enterprise, whether or not it involves money, requires proper management. We have found the successful projects to be well managed, and the unsuccessful ones not.

Any project (whether secular or Christian) requires: -

- a leader, in each partner, to provide direction, vision and drive, to provide support and encouragement to those involved in the work to provide coherence and integration to the whole endeavour, and to work in harmony with the partner leader; continuity of leadership, and planned leadership succession is needed
- an organiser, in each partnership; this does not need to be the same person as the leader
- volunteer workers
- objectives (what we are doing); aims (why are we doing it) with measurable targets for the objectives and understandable outcome for the aims; and a mechanism for evaluation.
- meticulous planning, and operated in harmony with the partner, jointly operated
- good communication within the church or community, with the external community and parish, and with the overseas partner; advantage should be taken of technological support that can transform communication,
- some physical contact, essential at the beginning, and if things flag.

When we asked the partnerships why they were successful, we received various answers

"Well, we have a good team leader - Bill, and a good team behind the leader. When you see a good man leading it is because there are ten good women doing the work!"

"Good project management and organisation are essential, we have someone with civil servant style project management skills who keeps us all in order and makes sure things get done to schedule. Good leadership and continuity are essential; you need someone to see the project/partnership through in the long term. The personal enthusiasm and drive of the leader. Good communication throughout and at all levels."

"A dedicated leader to champion the project/partnership. Good organisation and preparedness to work hard (very hard). Culturally responsive and open to learn new ideas and revise old certainties. Ability to show that the money, time and other resources contributed go to something specific, tangible and known, that it does not disappear into the unknown or used for heavy admin; and evidence that the work is successful."

Prayer and faith in God, the prayer must be continued and not occasional.

Appendices

- App 1 Summary Numbers for partnerships and links

- App 2 Geographical Distribution of links and partnerships

- App 3 Questionnaire for the church wide survey (Extent of Mission study)

- App 4 Information sources for the 15 Partnership analysis (Partnership study)

- App 5 The Fifteen Partnerships

Appendix 1 Summary of numbers of partnerships and links

	Questionnaires sent	total responses	churches with NO link	churches with a LINK	persons	churches	local trusts	remote trusts	Totals	responses with a link	
Totals											
No of churches	1471	636	411	225	100	76	50	26	252	40%	
<i>No of links</i>					116	81	54	27			
		43%							252		
1	Edinburgh	87	39	13	26	20	4	6	4	34	87%
2	West Lothian	27	14	9	5	0	5	1	0	6	
3	Lothian	49	22	16	6	0	6	0	0	6	27%
4	Melrose and Peebles	27	10	2	8	0	8	0	0	8	
5	Duns	24	8	7	1	1	0	0	0	1	
6	Jedburgh	18	8	3	5	5	0	0	0	5	
7	Annandale and Eskdale	25	16	14	2	2	0	0	1	3	
8	Dumfries and Kirkcudbright	40	19	13	6	0	4	3	0	7	37%
9	Wigtown and Stranraer	22	9	6	3	3	0	0	0	3	
10	Ayr	52	25	18	7	1	4	1	1	7	28%
11	Irvine and Kilmarnock	30	13	9	4	1	3	0	1	5	
12	Ardrossan	30	15	10	5	5	1	1	0	7	
13	Lanark	25	5	3	2	0	1	1	1	3	
14/15	Greenock & Paisley	58	25	20	5	0	3	1	1	5	20%
16	Glasgow	145	53	30	23	12	3	6	2	23	43%
17	Hamilton	85	26	17	9	7	0	2	0	9	35%
18	Dumbarton	36	18	7	11	6	1	3	2	12	67%
19-21	Argyll	63	28	25	3	2	0	1	0	3	11%
22	Falkirk	38	14	8	6	3	0	1	3	7	50%
23	Stirling	48	19	9	10	3	1	3	3	10	53%
24	Dunfermline	26	11	6	5	1	4	0	0	5	
25	Kirkcaldy	28	11	4	7	5	3	0	1	9	
26	St Andrews	38	20	13	7	4	2	1	2	9	45%
27	Dunkeld and Meigle	23	14	12	2	0	1	0	0	1	

28	Perth	36	20	17	3	1	2	0	0	3	15%
29	Dundee	38	16	11	5	1	2	1	1	5	31%
30	Angus	33	16	9	7	3	2	1	1	7	
31	Aberdeen	38	19	5	14	4	10	3	1	18	95%
32	Kincardine And Deeside	21	7	5	2	1	0	1	0	2	
33	Gordon	30	11	10	1	0	1	1	0	2	
34	Buchan	36	18	14	4	1	0	2	0	3	
35	Moray	31	9	5	4	2	1	2	1	6	
36	Abernethy	12	2	0	2	0	1	1		2	
37	Inverness	26	12	9	3	2	0	1		3	
38	Lochaber	15	8	8	0	0	0	0		0	
39	Ross	22	11	7	4	1	1	3		5	
40	Sutherland	14	8	8	0	0	0	0		0	
41	Caithness	13	5	4	1	1	0	0		1	
42	Lochcarron - Skye	9	1	0	1	0	0	1		1	
43	Uist	8	3	3	0	0	0	0		0	
44	Lewis	10	6	5	1	0	0	1		1	
45	Orkney	22	4	3	1	0	1	0		1	
46	Shetland	13	5	5	0	0	0	0		0	
47	England		4	2	2	2	1	0		3	
48	Europe		1	0	2			1		1	
	invalid returns		7	7							

Appendix 2 Geographical Distribution of links and partnerships

Country	Persons	Churches & trusts	Presbytery
Totals	116	162	0
Europe	1	13	
Bosnia		1	
Czech Rep		3	
Croatia		1	
France	1	1	
Germany		2	
Hungary-		1	1 (Duns)
Latvia		1	
Romania		2	
Ukraine		1	
Africa			
Angola	1		
Burundi	1		
Chad	1		
Gambia		1	
Ghana	2	5	
Kenya	1	24	
Lesotho		1	
Malawi	19	47	5 Melrose
Namibia		4	Annandale
Nigeria	1		Ayr
Rwanda		1	Aberdeen
R South Africa	2	1	Orkney
Swaziland		1	

Tanzania	1	2	
Togo	1		
Uganda		4	
Zambia	13	5	
Zimbabwe		4	1 Greenock & Paisley
unspecified		1	
Middle East	27	9	
Egypt		1	
Israel & Jerusalem	27	7	
Lebanon		1	
Americas	18	6	
Bolivia	1		
Brazil	1		
Cuba			1 Moray
Ecuador	2	1	
Guyana	1		
Honduras		1	
Peru		1	
USA	1		
Jamaica	11	1	
Tonga	1		
Trinidad & Tobago		2	
Asia and Australasia			
Bangladesh	9	4	1 Angus
Cambodia	1		
India	1	21	1 Edinburgh
Japan	3		
Korea			1 Lanark
Laos	1		
Nepal	2	2	1 Lothian
Pakistan	1		
Thailand	5	2	
Sri Lanka	2	1	
New Zealand	1		

Appendix 3 Study on the Extent of Mission Questionnaire

The Panel on Review and Reform wishes to study the extent and nature of partnerships between Church of Scotland congregations and organisations overseas. Please would you complete this questionnaire, it should take less than 8 minutes. Your response is important. **Thank you**



PLEASE COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EACH PARTNERSHIP

Church

Town

Presbytery.....

If you do NOT have a partnership, please tick this box and return the questionnaire

1 My church has an overseas **partnership** (or twinning arrangement or linkage) with:
..... (name of church, organisation or mission partner)
in.....(country)

2 **Our partnership coordinator** (or link partner) in my church is
.....
Email.....(if known) tel
no.....

3 **The two primary purposes of our partnership are**
a).....
b).....

4 **Our partnership**
a) started in.....(date)
b) has / has not (delete one) a written agreement
c) is developing staying steady declining

5 **In the past two years our partnership has:** (select as many as apply)
a) sent(give the number) visitors to our overseas partner organisation
b) received (give the number) visitors from our overseas partners
c) raised funds: below £500 £500 - £2k £2k - £10k above £10k
d) shared: worship music prayer
e) undertaken a funded project with our partner (please specify)

6 Our partnership (select as many as apply)

- Has its own web site
- Someone runs a blog about the partnership
- Has a page on the church website
- Has a presence in a social networking site
- Features regularly in the church magazine
- None of these

7 Our partnership

- Operates within the church company
- Is a charity in its own right
- Is a limited company

8 We have received funding from

- The Church of Scotland (eg Faithshare)
- Other sources (please specify).....

9 Our partnership involves local organisations outwith the church

- (Please specify).....

10 Communication overseas

- a) About(state number) people are in regular (over 3 times/yr) contact with our overseas partner
- b) The contact is generally by email telephone other (specify).....

11 The benefits our partnership brings to the congregation are

- We have learned more about the world, and the church's work in the world
- We have benefited by being able to help others
- It has lifted our eyes from local problems and put these in a larger context
- We have seen other models of church operation and worship
- The congregation has been brought closer together
- The faith of some of our congregation has been strengthened
- Other (please specify)

12 Further comments

Appendix 4 Information Sources for the Study on Partnerships

PART 1 PARTNERSHIPS

A) VISITS

All churches and presbyteries in the sample were visited (except for Birse & Feughside which is at an early stage of development where a telephone interview was conducted) and in process of discussions, the following topics were explored.

- The start of the partnership
- The aim of the partnership
- The operation of the partnership
- Benefits to the Scots, and to the overseas partners
- Communication between the partners
- Communication within the church and presbytery; the flow of information
- Community links
- Problems and analysis; evaluation
- What are the factors essential for success
- Actions for the future

B) TELEPHONE AND EMAIL CONVERSATIONS

1 Additional telephone interviews were conducted or meetings held with ministers from some of the churches involved in the presbytery partnerships

Lanark Presbytery	Forth St Paul's Church Symington	Rev Sarah Ross (tel) Rev Dr Graham Houston (meet)
Greenock & Paisley Presbyt	Erskine Church St Martin's, Port Glasgow	Rev Ian Bell (tel) Rev Archie Speirs (tel)
Aberdeen Presbytery	S Holborn Inverness Peterculter Church	Rev George Cowie (tel) Rev Dr John Ferguson (tel)

2 Also, telephone conversations were conducted with and messages were received from some of the overseas partners linked to presbyteries

Lanark Presbytery	Seoul East Presbytery	Rev Choi Pu-ock (tel + email)
Greenock & Paisley Presbyt.	Presbyt of Zimbabwe	Rev Tinashe Chemvumi (tel)+ I
Aberdeen Presbyt	Presbyt of Blantyre, Malawi	Rev Moyenda Karjewa (tel)

3 Contact was made with a number of the overseas partners linked to Scottish churches

Crown Church, Inverness Barrhead, Glasgow	North St Church Jamaica	Rev Donald Reynolds (tel) Kibera Church [PCEA] Rev Samuel Kariuki (tel +email)
--	-------------------------	--

Contact was made with a number of the overseas partners linked to Scottish churches

Dunscore partnership:	UCZ Lubuto, Zambia	Rev Simon Kasanga (tel)
	UCZ Lubuto, Zambia	Tom Chisanga Mubanga (email)
St Kenneth's, Kennoway	Lusangazi CCAP, Malawi	Rev Overtoun Mazunda (email)

The questions addressed to ministers were along the following lines

- Why did you enter into the partnership?
- What is the key element of the partnership?
- What are the benefits expected or already gained from the partnership by ministers, and by members of the church overseas and by the church in Scotland?

- What are the challenges and difficulties facing the development of this partnership?
- What do you expect to happen in 2009?
- Any other comments to help us to understand the value of the partnership.

In all cases information received from overseas, was shared with the home church. In cases where information was received from a church within a presbytery partnership, that information was shared with the coordinator of the Scottish presbytery.

C) THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires were sent to all the Scottish communities and churches (not the presbyteries) in the survey. The questionnaires addressed eight areas

- 1 I know about the partnership, (one choice from 4)
- 2 I learnt about the partnership through: (multiple choices from 10 answers)
- 3 I have participated in the partnership through: (multiple choices from 11 answers)
- 4 I would like to be more involved in the partnership (one choice from four)
- 5 The partnership has benefited my community/ church (multiple choices from 10)
- 6 The extent of that benefit (one choice from four)
- 7 partnership has benefited me (multiple choices from 10 answers)
- 8 The extent of that benefit (one choice from 4)

Questionnaires were issued to all the church and community partnerships, with a request that they be issued and collected at the same meeting. (The churches involved in presbytery partnerships were a much more disparate group and the information was sought about them through interviews with ministers rather than by questionnaires).

Completed questionnaires have been received from all the churches. One church allowed the church attendees to take the paper home and there was a very low (8%) response, quite out of line with the rest of the sample, so this result was not included for comparison. The data from each church was analysed and that analysis returned to the church for its information.

The community based partnerships had some difficulty with the questionnaires, and only one out of three was returned. One pointed out that the questionnaire was very 'churchy' and not entirely suitable for that partnership. Another partnership passed it on to the church minister for him to decide whether it was appropriate. Another issued it to the church on a Sunday but also issued it to the 20 people (17% of respondents) who comprised the formal partnership group. These results were included.

The questions naturally drew different answers from partnerships with different periods of experience. In particular, the answers to questions 2 (how do you know about the partnership), 3 (how have you participated in the partnership), 5, and 7 (how has the partnership benefited your church/community, and you yourself) showed that the involvement increased with the duration of the partnership. In order for a useful comparison of the ways in which the church attendees learned about the partnership, and of where the benefits were seen, the percentages for these questions were taken in relation to those who did have knowledge and who did see benefit, and not in relation to the total responders as was the case for questions like 1,4,6, & 8. The response rate to the questionnaires was 55%

D) OTHER REPORTS

Use was made of other reports including those provided by the churches and communities we visited. Additionally, Carol Finlay provided reports of visits to and from Scottish churches by recipients of **Faithshare** funding;

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> South Leith visit to Chipembi Zambia | Chipembi visit to South Leith |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Methilhill & Denbeath visit to Trinidad | Lubuto visit to Dunscore |
| <input type="checkbox"/> St Ninian's visit to Orlova Czech Republic | Lanark visit to Seoul |

Appendix 5 The Partnerships studied

The partnerships chosen are set out below, categorised into five distinct groups.

A THREE VERY EARLY CHURCH-TO-CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS

These partnerships were either at the stage of proposals or very new. They allowed an insight into the motivation and aspirations of new partnerships started

2 Birse & Feughside, Kincardine & Deeside	PCEA Icaciri, Gatundu, Kenya	Dec 08
3 Dunscore lw Glencairn & Monaive, Dumfries	UCZ Lubuto, Ndola, Zambia	Mar 08
5 Chalmers Ardler, Dundee	PCEA Kayole, Nairobi, Kenya	May 08

B THREE YOUNG CHURCH-TO-CHURCH PARTNERSHIP

6 Methilhill & Denbeath, Kirkcaldy	Greyfriars St Ann's w Arouca & Sangre Grande, Trinidad	May 07
7 Crown Church, Inverness	North Street Church, Kingston, Jamaica	Sept 07
8 St Kenneth's, Kennoway, Kirkcaldy	CCAP Lusangazi, Mzuzu, Malawi	2007

C THREE MATURE CHURCH-TO-CHURCH PARTNERSHIPS

12 Barrhead Church, Glasgow	PCEA Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya	Jun 06
4 St Ninian's, Dunfermline	Evang. Church of the Czech Brethren, Orlova, Czech Rep	May 06
11 Kemnay, Gordon	The Nat. Evangelical Church of Minyara, N Lebanon	Dec 04

D COMMUNITY-TO-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Three partnerships that had a church origin but which are now formally based on communities rather than the church

10 Ruchazie Baula Partnership c/o Ruchazie Parish Church, Glasgow		2005
with Baula Ruchazie Partnership c/o Baula Full Primary School, Mtwalo, Mzimba, Malawi		
13 Dunblane Likhubula Partnership plc		Mar 05
with Dunblane Steering Committee in Likhubula, Malawi		
14 Projects@Chipembi c/o South Leith Parish Church, Edinburgh		2001
with Chipembi Girls School, Chisamba, Zambia		

E THREE PRESBYTERY TO PRESBYTERY PARTNERSHIPS

1 Lanark Presbytery	East Seoul Presbytery, Korea	2007
9 Greenock & Paisley Presbytery	Presbytery of Zimbabwe, Harare	Nov 04
15 Aberdeen Presbytery	Blantyre City Presbytery, Malawi	2003

The date chosen for the start can be rather arbitrary. Often there is a decision to enter into partnership, but there can be months or even years before the intention results in a meaningful interaction with the church. The date used here is for the first major interaction, usually a meeting or visit, not just correspondence and not necessarily the signing of an agreement