

INTERVARSITY
URBANA15

Global Partnership:

Towards More Effective Kingdom Impact Across Cultures

Femi Adeleye (World Vision)

Nikki Toyama-Szeto (International Justice Mission)

#urbana15

Problems with partnership

- Common misconceptions about partnership
- What partnership is not

Why do partnership?

- God is already at work
- God is already at work....
 - Before Philip got to the Ethiopian Eunuch God was already at work with him (Acts 8: 26-40)
 - And before Peter got to Cornelius God was already at work in his household and community (Acts 10)

One body, many parts

- In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul describes the body of Christ as one body with many parts, working together (vs. 12-14)
- There are significant lessons from this passage for effective partnership

One body, many parts

1 Corinthians 12

True Partnership...

- Recognizes that the body of Christ is diverse
- Appreciates that as unique as we may be in our identity we belong to a bigger and diverse family
- Understands that no part has monopoly of what it takes for the body to work effectively [No cultural or geographical context should have monopoly]

One body, many parts

1 Corinthians 12

True Partnership

- Appreciates that each part needs the other, including those that may be perceived as weak or insignificant
- Recognizes that we have as much to learn from other parts of the body as we have to contribute to it
- Understands that God calls us to unity in diversity

Partnership takes practice

- Practice interdependency
- Listen and learn
- All parts are equal; each part plays their role
- Practice giving and receiving from others
- Practice paying attention to the effects of power on communication, decisions, and resources
- Cultivate the practice of being a partner in yourself
- Practice identification with others in their world and realities

Partnership takes practice

Partnership is...

Listening to and *learning* from all that God is doing globally; identifying with the body of Christ and situations of needs and enrichment in God's world; and working with like-minded people to effectively match resources with needs for maximum Kingdom Impact.

Partnership takes practice

- The *listening* and *learning* process needs to be mutual. In other words, it is not only those in situations of need that must listen and learn.
- Those in well resourced situations also need to listen and learn from those in (or those perceived to be in) situations of need.
- It is in the listening process that we together learn values, community and dependence on God, among other things.

Partnership takes practice

- The process of listening, learning and sharing with one another should impact God's world with compassion, justice, advocacy and other aspects of Kingdom values.
- Those in affluent contexts have much more to listen to and learn from those in supposedly poor contexts of the world.

Suggestions for practicing

- Do some research
- If your project idea is supposed to help a group of people, consider inviting someone from the “target” group
- Spend some time with prospective partners
- Be curious, ask questions, keep a learning posture

Suggestions for practicing

Shared Resources ...

- ...are *not just* monetary or financial but include:
- Prayer
- Fellowship
- Skills
- Expertise
- Companionship
- As well as the material or financial

Conclusion

- **This may involve...**
 - Giving up my affluence, power, privileges (e.g., the privilege of choice.)
 - Being open to explore new territories of engagement and involvement in God's purposes
 - Identification with others in their world and realities

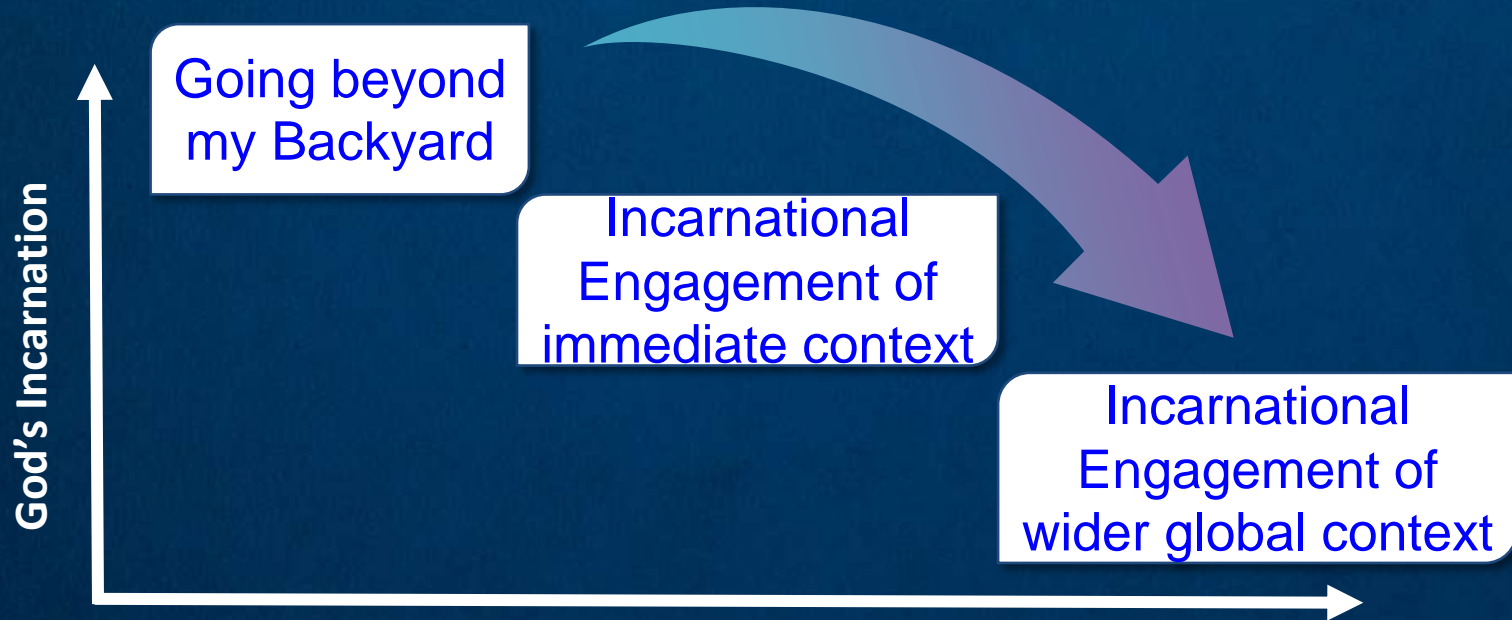
Conclusion

- Power undermines partnership
- The ultimate goal is to enrich the body of Christ based on the principle of Ephesians 4:16

“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (NIV)

Conclusion

- Partnership is...



Reflection Questions

1. How have you experienced partnership? Can you give an example of a partnership done badly and one done well?
2. In what ways does the image of a body with many parts (1 Cor 12) help you understand what partnership should look like?
3. What are one or two practices you or your group can work on in order to grow to be better partners?