



Partnership Guidelines

We are one in Christ

We are members of the One Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12). As part of God's people worldwide, linked together by partnership relations, we demonstrate this unity by our faith and our lives. United by the Spirit and in obedience to God, we bind ourselves to carry out God's mandate to share and proclaim the Gospel. Therefore, we submit the following guidelines to all UEM members.

1. Partnerships are integral parts of the UEM

- a. Partnerships are a concrete expression of the UEM at the grassroots.
- b. Their objectives and activities are compatible with the UEM constitution, principles, goals and structures as well as its mission statement. "In a world torn apart, they commit themselves to remain members of the One Body of Christ, and therefore
 - grow together into a worshipping, learning and serving community
 - share gifts, insights and responsibilities
 - "bear witness to the Kingdom of God in striving for justice, peace and the integrity of creation." (UEM Constitution, § 2).

2. Partnerships promote co-operation in God's mission

- a. In the UEM, God's mission is understood as holistic and integral salvation. As sisters and brothers, we are called to proclaim the Good News for individuals and the whole of creation.
- b. Joined in God's mission, partners strengthen and serve each other in their mission activities in an interdependent way.

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c. Aware of the various understandings of the word “partnership” in different contexts, cultures and historical situations, partnership groups need to clarify and establish a shared understanding – for themselves, with their partners and within the partner-churches – of what is meant by “partnership” in their respective contexts.

d. Because of diversity, partnership groups need to live in tolerance and develop intercultural learning (Global Learning in Ecumenical Perspective GLEP).

e. Partnership is a way of repentance and reconciliation in the context of historical and current injustices, paternalism, racism, discrimination and current day oppression. Therefore, we are actively engaged in actions towards achieving justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

f. Partnership seeks to build just relationships between people with different abilities, ethnic groups, women and men, young and old, people of different beliefs and diverse themes in safe spaces. The ability to reconcile is rooted in God’s reconciliation in Jesus Christ.

g. Partners support each other in prayer and action on behalf of each other. This includes political/social awareness raising and solidarity in networking and lobbying in co-operation with the respective partner and the UEM.

3. Mutuality, participation and spirituality are central to partnership relations.

a. Partners co-operate in drawing up an agreement on the structures, objectives, goals, programmes and projects of their partnership within the committees, churches and the UEM office.

b. Agreements should be reviewed regularly by partnership groups in consultation with the church leadership. The intervals shall be based on mutual consent.

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c. Partnership committees organise and shape the work of the partnership on behalf of their churches, districts/circuits and institutions by delegation. These committees shall provide equal and inclusive participation and benefit for women and men, young and older people, full-time and voluntary workers and other forms of diversity. In the selection of the chairperson, the committees shall ensure continuity.

d. Partnership committees are responsible for communicating and sharing information in different ways (International Zoom Meetings, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, etc.) at regular intervals with the grassroots, church bodies, their partners and the UEM offices.

e. Member churches are encouraged to appoint a contact person to co-ordinate partnership relations.

f. Visits are vital for partnerships and should be made regularly. Sharing spiritual life is at the core of these visits. Themes, programmes and criteria for the selection of delegates shall be agreed upon in advance. Considering the impact of flights on the environment, partners shall regulate the number of travellers and the frequency of trips. Partners are invited to discuss ways of minimising the environmental damage caused by these trips.

g. Partnership Sunday is an important part of spiritual life in the partnership. It has to be celebrated once per year, if possible on the same Sunday.

h. Partners shall gather in seminars, conferences and consultations at international level.

i. Partnership relations use expertise and capacity within the whole UEM, particularly with respect to personnel exchange and the volunteer programme.

4. Partners are jointly accountable

a. Partnerships shall adhere to the UEM Code of Conduct for Transparency and against Corruption, the Code of Conduct against Discrimination and Racism, and the Code of Conduct against Sexual Harassment.

b. Partners are jointly sharing spiritual life.

c. Sound and participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects is essential. The implementation of such projects and programmes shall be preceded by a consulting process, in which, in addition to the two partners, the church bodies and the responsible UEM desks are involved. External audits are advised and encouraged. For sustainability purposes, capacity building and income-generating projects shall be given priority over investment in immovable assets.

d. Partnership requires regular encounters and opportunities to talk frankly about problems and conflicts in an attitude of mutual respect. The creation of safe spaces should be encouraged, in which sensitive and burning issues can be discussed.

e. Solidarity, and not charity, is the impetus for the sharing of funds and other material resources. Conscious of this, partners shall adopt responsible procedures to request, transfer and account for the use of these resources.

5. Future emphasis

a. Multilateral partnerships are encouraged.

b. Partnerships between Africa and Asia and within the regions in the three continents are encouraged.

c. Partnerships shall be involved in networking with other organisations for the common good of the communities.

d. Partnerships are encouraged to explore the value of visiting each other's projects

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and programmes, during which the partners can express their observations and, where required, challenge approaches to encourage their counterparts to embrace a more credible and effective witness.

e. Participatory, flexible structures and systems in partnership relations shall be strengthened.

f. Efforts should be made to improve networking in partnership work, especially with respect to working areas, in which member churches have a common interest.

g. Institutional partnerships are encouraged (e.g. hospitals, universities, colleges, schools, businesses etc.).

h. Avoid top-down decisions in the churches and promote more grassroots participation.

i. Certification by the UEM after evaluation of these guidelines is strongly recommended.