

Communication

It is basic for any communication not only to share experiences, but to encounter on the same level as brothers and sisters, not depending on our respective positions in our churches, and to speak frankly and to be open to critic, in order to enable ecumenical learning.

New media should not be a substitute to face to face communication or letters.

As many partnerships suffer from lack of information, the IPC reminds them to the UEM principles to the importance of reports. All people responsible for partnerships have to be able to communicate.

Problems (P) and Solutions (S): Partners are differently equipped, not only between the regions, even within a region (i.e. Papua – Hong Kong): some are Internet reliable, some not. Connections are often not stable. Everything is possible, but not everything works.

S: All partnerships should make an agreement on their own ways of communication. All kind of received messages (letters, mails ...) have to be confirmed immediately.

P: data protection: some documents are sensitive and confidential.

S: Trainings about software programmes, data security and internet for people who handle computers should be offered.

P: underuse of new media

S: to maximize and improve the use of media: update/creation of websites (every partner church should have a website, at least one static page, and send the address to the UEM-administrator for linkage; linkage of partners' websites; use of social networks for news, announcements, activities, prayer alerts, sharing of photos and video clips (i.e. an interactive UEM webpage). For this we can use for ex. Asian competence or ex-volunteers as resource persons.

P: poor communication – that's why some projects fail

S: Partners jointly set up a communication plan describing frequency, means and content of communication and the parties involved. This plan can be an appendix to the partnership agreement.

P: We are in danger to have second class partnerships: those who do not have access to Internet and those who have.

S: We should not leave some partners behind. The communication plan should include multi-channel communication, not only new media.

Action Plan:

<i>What is to be done?</i>	<i>Why?</i>	<i>Who should be involved?</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
creation of a website resp. update of the existing	improve communication infrastructure	partnership groups	1 year
linkage of websites (UEM, churches)	improve communication infrastructure	UEM public relation, churches, partnership groups	1 year
IT-training (easiest modules)	to maximize the use of new media	churches should involve partnerships groups in their IT-	1 year

		training	
advanced IT-training	to maximize the use of new media	churches should involve partnerships groups in their IT-training	3 years
communication plan for each partnership	to improve communication	partnership groups and churches	3 years
collect examples	for best practice of communication and new ideas	partnership officers	3 years
use video conferences (i.e. Skype)	to maintain communication, save money, to protect the environment	partnership groups	3 years
evaluation every year (with the annual report)	to notice the evolution of the action plan	partnership groups, partnership officers	5 years

In Addition

Each partnership should reflect how to implement these ideas. There are resource persons on every level and all around the world. UEM PR department could hand out a list of them and their competences. Volunteers and senior volunteers should be involved.

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