

WHAT DO AMERICAN DONORS WANT?

If a national church is “financially sustainable” does that mean that it does not “partner” with churches and people from outside to support its ministries?

- The issue is “dependence,” not whether or not we receive gifts from outside entities. i.e. can essential ministry continue if outside funding were removed?
- Partnerships enable ministry to happen that neither partner could accomplish alone – interdependence (vs. independence or dependence)
- “Financially sustainable” = a) Ministry structures are locally appropriate (e.g. salaries, travel options, etc.); b) Local support reflects actual ability

Principle: American donors give to people and they know and trust.

KNOW:

1. Wide appeals to “Wesleyans” are not very productive.
2. Focus on strengthening relationship to those who know you – have them introduce you to others.
3. Build relationship before asking for support. e.g. Lingala proverb – “To ask is a good thing.” To Americans asking is a sign of weakness.
4. Communication is critical – answer emails, send newsletters consistently

TRUST:

(Americans don’t want to be tricked or cheated – very cautious.)

1. “Put your money where your mouth is.” - our investment proves the importance of the project.
2. Make your ask modest – don’t ask for more than you really need. Detailed budgets to show that the ask is valid.
3. Make sure funds are used as designated – clearly request permission if you desire to do otherwise.
4. Prompt completion of our side of the partnership – they want to see the building, students, etc.
5. Open disclosure of financial details, including other donors, all expenditures
6. Expressions of gratitude
7. Large donors usually start as small donors
8. Communicate the importance of the project as it relates to kingdom values
9. Beware of the “bottomless pit” Projects should have a clear end point.