

Partnership, Focus and Evolution

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Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision.
Draft Resolutions	8/1. The Council receives the report 8/2. The Council approves the strategy for expressing One Mission through global relationships as contained in the report 8/3. The Council appoints the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee as shown in the report.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To present a strategy for expressing One Mission through our global relationships.
Main Points	To be a distinctive and highly effective global participant in mission, by means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • true Partnership with sister Churches around the world; • a Focus on the places and programmes where our participation can make a real difference locally and globally; • Evolution that encourages new initiatives while maintaining the best of what has gone before. <p>The report considers how partner relationships should be defined, the setting of priorities and the translation of those into programmes. It reviews the financial implications and sets out a possible scenario for planning purposes. Finally, it proposes the creation of a Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee to oversee the implementation of the strategy and its future evolution.</p>
Background Documents	MC/15/44
Consultations	A workshop was held at the 2015 Conference. The Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) and a small group of SRC members who guided the writing of the final version. The strategy was approved by SRC at its meeting on 25 November 2015.

Summary of Impact

Standing Orders	No direct impact
Financial	No impact in short term; medium-term implications will be reflected in future budget rounds.

Partnership, Focus and Evolution

A strategy for expressing One Mission through our global relationships

1. The place of mission in the Church

1.1 “In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Through the Church, the Body of Christ, within which the Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place, God seeks to reconcile the world itself into a unity in Christ. In this mission ... the vocation of the Church is to be sign a sign, witness, foretaste and instrument of the Kingdom of God.” (SO 1000 (1))

1.2 In 2013 the Methodist Conference fully integrated the 200-year-old Methodist Missionary Society (MMS) into the core work of the Methodist Church in Britain (MCB). It recognised that there is no essential difference in the mission of God wherever it is exercised, for God’s mission is one and that mission is both local and global.

“The Methodist Church is committed actively and intentionally to work towards a world transformed by the love of God, sharing the love of God and celebrating its place within a worldwide family.” (SO 1000 (2))

1.3 The One Mission statement challenges the whole Connexion to identify alternative strategies to ensure that, while a separate missionary society no longer exists, members of the Methodist Church do not lose their enthusiasm and continue to be well-equipped for mission both in Britain and overseas. By changing people’s mindset about mission, through innovative programmes and by regular sharing of mission experiences, MCB will play its part in rediscovering and redefining partnerships in mission for the twenty-first century.

“Every member of the Methodist Church is expected actively to engage in this mission which lies at the heart of the nature, identity and self understanding of the Church.” (SO 1000 (3))

1.4 “The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. The Church exists to:

- increase awareness of God’s presence and to celebrate God’s love
- help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care
- be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice
- make more followers of Jesus Christ.”

(Our Calling, Methodist Conference 2000)

1.5 The Methodist Church does this through worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism. The Priorities (Methodist Conference, 2004) challenge the Church to work “in partnership with others wherever possible” and to be confident and active in supporting community development and actions for justice, standing alongside the poor and encouraging fresh ways of being Church.

1.6 Therefore, this strategy draws on both the One Mission Statement and Our Calling, seeking to enable the Church to relate to its global partners now and in the future, and to be a significant player in the global mission scene. It will allow new, flexible, proactive and innovative ways of working and cooperating with others and gives consideration to what can be done differently, given up or taken up. The One Mission Forum provides an opportunity to explore and communicate this work alongside fresh expressions of Church, evangelism, chaplaincy and

local community services. The strategy also calls for the global story of One Mission to be told more effectively at all levels in the Connexion.

- 1.7 It is the role of the Connexional Team to serve, support and equip Methodists in these islands to engage in this mission in partnership with our sisters and brothers across the globe. In doing this it will work closely with the Methodist Church in Ireland (MCI).
- 1.8 One of the ways in which partnership between MCB and overseas Churches and organisations is expressed is through the effective use of the World Mission Fund (WMF). SO 362(2) defines the Fund's purposes as follows:
 - to promote and encourage Christian mission overseas,
 - to encourage the establishment of churches overseas which will themselves undertake that mission within and beyond their own borders,
 - to engage in relationships of mutual help and enrichment with churches and ecumenical bodies overseas,
 - to foster and take part in ecumenical relationships in the field of world mission, including the work of the World Council of Churches,
 - in furtherance of these purposes to engage in education, advocacy, recruitment and fund-raising.

The Fund enables MCB to show solidarity with those Church partners most in need of support and, through the building of capacity in Partner Churches (including by means of theological education) to equip them to serve and reach out to the vulnerable and marginalised in their communities. The strategy aims to deliver a framework for grant-making and other programmes based on agreed priorities and the effective monitoring of results.

- 1.9 MCB affirms its place in the wider world community of Methodists, Uniting/United Churches and ecumenical partners. Being a part of that community implies building a fuller understanding of partnership and exploring new ways of giving life and meaning to these relationships beyond the distribution of grants. That means both increasing the face to face engagement of British Methodists with Churches around the world and exploring with partners the most effective route for their intentional mission support of MCB.
- 1.10 The strategy also offers a chance to work constructively with and nurture key organisations such as the World Methodist Council (WMC), World Council of Churches (WCC), European Methodist Council (EMC), Conference of European Churches (CEC), United Methodist Church (UMC) and its General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM), All We Can (AWC) and Christian Aid (CA). These relationships must contribute towards the delivery of the strategy to enable MCB to be certain that the work it is undertaking does not duplicate the work of others. These enhanced partnerships should lead to new forms of cooperation and collaboration for greater unity in mission across all partners. World Mission has always been a deep concern for Methodists. This needs to be encouraged and built on for the future.

2. Strategic vision for global relationships

- 2.1 Our vision is that MCB will be a distinctive and highly effective global participant in mission, by means of true **Partnership** with sister Churches around the world, a **Focus** on the places and

programmes where our participation can make a real difference locally and globally, and **Evolution** that encourages new initiatives while maintaining the best of what has gone before.

2.2 This strategy will be expressed by:

- embodying the deep sense of shared history, culture and purpose that binds together the people called Methodists across the world, whilst maintaining and strengthening the relationship of MCB with both traditional and newer partners of the Methodist and Wesleyan traditions;
- providing a mechanism for the engagement of districts, circuits, local churches and individuals within MCB with the continuing mission of the Church beyond these shores, fostering two-way encounters between people, direct engagement in mission and opportunities for deepening understanding and fellowship between individuals of different cultures and contexts;
- sharing experiences, insights and best practice of mission, and organising consultations, with partners to enable reciprocal learning about mission, evangelism, social concerns and advocacy issues;
- sharing financial and other resources with overseas Partner Churches in line with agreed priorities and the capacity of the World Mission Fund;
- delivering relevant, flexible and sustainable programmes, rooted in true partnerships, which are mutually beneficial for all those involved, and support the mission of Partner Churches and related organisations to build the capacity, leadership and long-term sustainability for mission of these partners;
- retaining flexibility to respond to new opportunities in mission with global partners and exploring innovative ways of working in the future.

It is proposed that a Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee be established as a sub-committee of the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) to oversee the implementation and monitoring of this strategy and its future evolution. (See section 8 below.)

3. Defining Partner Relationships

3.1 “The Conference has declared its commitment to the engagement of the Methodist Church in Britain with Churches across the world in a spirit of partnership, collaboration and mutuality through the sharing of resources of all kinds including the interchange of personnel.” (SO 1002(1))

Being in partnership with MCB does not in itself imply that we will provide grant funding, which is only one way in which the relationship can be expressed. There are many other ways that the Church can build on these partnerships. Methodists in these islands must be aware of the challenges faced by our partners and the work they do in mission. Over time, our relationship with partners may evolve and those who were formerly reliant on us for funds may become self-sufficient, as is already the case in many countries.

3.2 Partner Churches are defined as:

- those which hold membership of an international body comprising churches of the Wesleyan tradition and of which MCB is itself a member, eg WMC, EMC
- any additional Methodist, United or Uniting Church that has developed as the constitutional successor of a former Overseas District
- any other overseas Church that may be specified from time to time by the Methodist Council
- any emerging overseas Methodist fellowship as ratified by the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee.

3.3 Partner organisations are defined as:

- any organisation that itself is fully under the ownership and authority of a Partner Church (eg a Methodist theological college; the women's synod of the Church of Pakistan)
- specified organisations which are not a Partner Church but hold a close relationship with a Partner Church and are used by a Partner Church to further their mission and ministry (eg an independent ecumenical theological college)
- under exceptional circumstances overseas organisations that work in areas of social justice and human rights where our Partner Churches are unable to take this up. These will need to be approved by the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee.

3.4 A list of most Methodist, Uniting and United Churches and organisations with which MCB currently has partnerships can be found in the Minutes of the Annual Conference and Directory (page 451 in 2015 edition). This is not an approved list of partners. It will be the responsibility of the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee to work with the current lists and definitions contained in Standing Orders to present a formal list of Partner Churches and organisations to the Council for ratification (see Appendix 1).

4. Reviewing Partner Relationships and Setting Priorities

4.1 A Partner Relationship Review (PRR) is being carried out to assign a priority to each Partner Church or organisation. The PRR uses a matrix of both quantitative and qualitative information to place a country or Church into one of a number of categories and to assign an overall priority score. The PRR approach and matrix have been developed in consultation with a subgroup including a member from the Connexional Grants Committee (CGC) and another from the SRC. New partners will be added as required and approved by the Methodist Council, and the PRR for existing partners will be reviewed regularly.

4.2 The outputs of the PRR will help MCB examine the different ways it can relate to a Partner Church overseas. Methodists must be prepared to listen, to learn and grow in their understanding of the global Church and explore how partners can influence the witness, worship and theology in these islands. Partnerships must be about more than funding and should lead to respectful, intentional mission relationships across the world.

4.3 The PRR will also assist the grant-funding process by identifying which partners are given priority for funding through the CGC. It is expected that the PRR process will significantly reduce the number of partners currently funded through grants. The CGC will develop its own framework for grant applications ensuring that our strategic priorities are clearly communicated to partners. Grants are a means to an end and seen as just one of the ways which enable MCB to be in mission and partnership with its Partner Churches.

4.4 Priority in granting funds will be given to the mission work of Partner Churches and will cover the following:

- building the capacity, leadership, and long term stability of Partner Churches

- encouraging evangelism, outreach and engagement with the wider society (including interfaith and peace initiatives)
- supporting partners who have a special emphasis on issues of justice, inclusion, education, health and empowerment, and support for those who have been marginalised because of their identity, faith, ethnicity, gender or economic status
- assisting Partner Churches in responding to emergencies, natural disasters and where there has been human violence or ethnic conflict
- supporting partner organisations which have close relationships with Partner Churches overseas and are used by them for the ministry and mission of that Church.

In the case of grant requests from partner organisations applications should, wherever possible, be routed through the head of the local Partner Church and considered alongside any Partner Church grant application.

- 4.5 It is recognised that long-term support may be needed for some partners. It will however be a priority of MCB to assist partners to become self sustaining over time wherever possible.

5. Programmes

- 5.1 Wherever possible, MCB works jointly with MCI in programmes and activities. The strategy affirms the continuing importance of current programmes (eg sending mission partners overseas and making grants to Partner Churches) but seeks to encourage the addition of new and innovative activities with the view of different ways of working in the future. Given the limitations of resources and the desire possibly to take on new activities with this strategy, the annual budget and planning process will be a way of setting out what should continue, what should be done differently and what should be decreased or given up. All activities will therefore be kept under review. The strategy is to allow appropriate freedom and flexibility to introduce new programmes and different ways of working in collaboration with others. Thus the nature and funding of existing programmes may change with the implementation of the strategy and the resources available.
- 5.2 *Developing people to people programmes.* The existing mission partner programme has served the Church well for many years and it is not proposed to discontinue it; however it is important that the future size and shape of the programme reflects the strategy and priorities. The Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee will therefore oversee a review of the existing mission partner programme, enabling it to be developed in line with the strategic needs of MCB and Partner Churches. Leading on from the mission partner programme, new programmes will be developed for short-term reciprocal engagement between MCB and Partner Churches. The 'Encounter Worldwide' and 'Special Skills' volunteer programmes are now being trialled. Possible new programmes to support ministerial development and training, along with ideas for short-term ministerial placements in the UK for overseas presbyters, are currently under discussion and development.
- 5.3 *Consultations.* To help remain in effective working partnerships with overseas Churches it is important to hold regular consultations with partners. Changes will be made to the existing style and timing of consultations to allow new forms of dialogue and sharing that are designed to give greater feedback into MCB and MCI. Forthcoming consultations may be more thematic or regionally based, offering greater depth of engagement.
- 5.4 *Mission education.* Our heritage of engaging with others from around the world has inspired Methodists across the centuries to respond to the call to serve, give and pray for the overseas work. New methods of engagement are required to reinvigorate the MCB of today to enable it to play its full role as part of the global Methodist fellowship. There is a need to build

commitment through high quality, appropriate resources that 'tell the story' and once again enthuse people to give and encourage vocation. They should educate and inform people in our Church and make the case for generous giving.

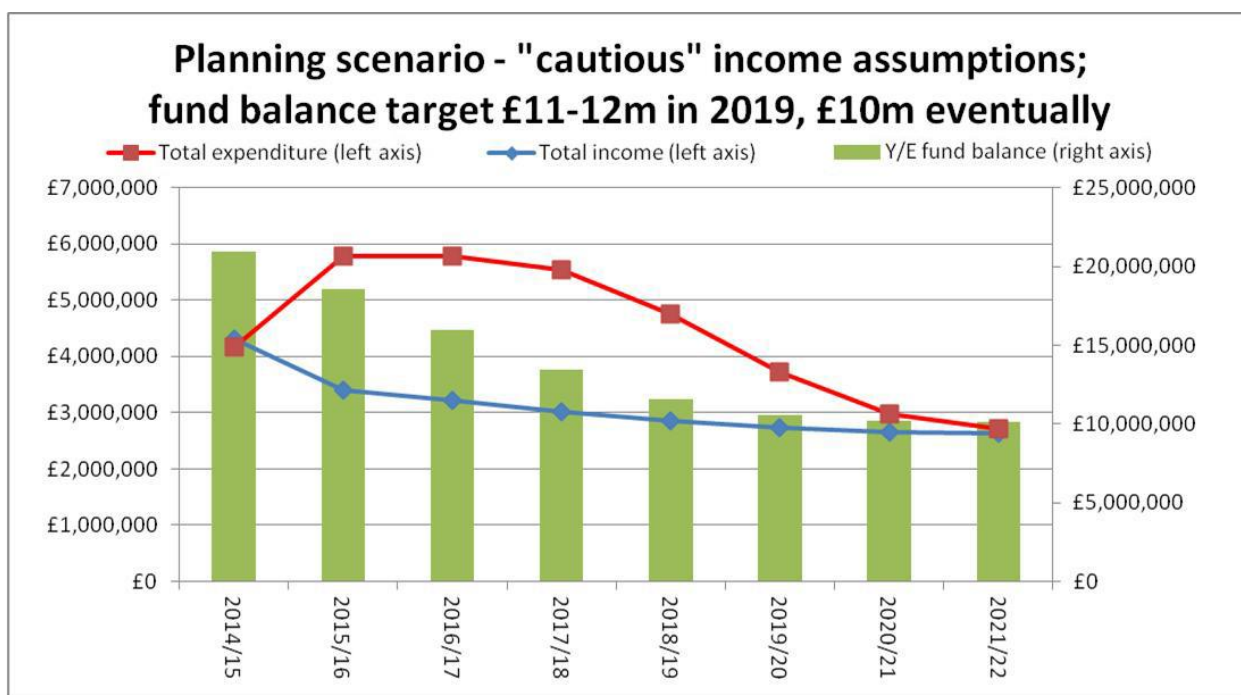
- 5.5 *Grants.* Funding mission work overseas has been part of Methodist DNA for the past 230 years. In today's world this is expressed through the making of grants. Additional work, alongside this strategy, is being carried out by the World Church Relationships Team, the Grants Team and CGC to ensure that the mechanisms and processes of grant making are fit for purpose, effective, transparent, accountable and properly monitored and evaluated. A process will be put in place that all grants are followed up for MELD (Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Dissemination). Grants are one expression of support for Partner Churches and a desire to equip them in their own mission while strengthening their capacity and systems.

6. Financial Implications and Reserves Policy

- 6.1 The total income of the World Mission Fund (WMF) was approximately £4.3m in 2014/2015, a figure made up of donations, legacies, investment and other income. Donations have declined steadily from £3.7m in 2000/2001 to £1.7m last year. Legacies were sharply up in the past year but these are impossible to forecast reliably. A cautious view should also be taken of investment returns. Projecting forward on a prudent basis, total income may be around £3.4m in 2015/2016 and is expected to continue to decline slowly.
- 6.2 Total expenditure from the WMF varies with the timing of grants but is running at an average of around £5.8m per annum. The figure includes the cost of mission partners, grants, management and other charges. The existing indicative budget for the next two years shows expenditure remaining at broadly the same level. This has been taken as the starting point for modelling the future financial implications.
- 6.3 Comparison of income and expenditure therefore shows a likely deficit of between £1.5m and £2.4m per annum. The reserve balance on the WMF at the end last year was £20.9m, which makes it possible to sustain that deficit (ie to keep programme expenditure at current levels) for the next two-three years during which the historic balance on the fund will decline.
- 6.4 At the present time, no target reserve level has been agreed for the WMF, although a figure of twice annual expenditure has been proposed in previous work. The chart below shows a scenario in which reserves are targeted to reach circa £10m (approximately twice current expenditure) after five years and then to be held at that level. To achieve this, and to avoid a "cliff edge" in expenditure, spending will need to be reduced progressively from 2017/2018. By 2021/2022 both income and expenditure are projected to be around £2.65m (less than half current expenditure levels).
- 6.5 While this model is proposed for planning purposes, it is highly likely to vary. In particular:
- Every effort will be made to improve and develop fundraising. A new legacy pack is currently being piloted and new innovative methods of fundraising (akin to crowd-funding) are under discussion.
 - There are many uncertain factors in the model, including investment returns as well as donations and legacies.

The strategy will therefore be to set budgets for income and expenditure based on this planning scenario. In keeping with the Council's policy the SRC will undertake regular review of reserve levels, income and expenditure patterns so as to make adjustments as required in

future years. The challenge then is to consider what the expenditure will cover given the changes and new direction and ways of working that this strategy suggests. This budgeting and review process will be overseen by the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee.



7. Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee

7.1 It is proposed a new SRC sub-committee (the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee) be established to oversee the implementation and monitoring of this strategy and its future evolution. Responsibility for policy and overall strategy will remain with the Methodist Council, exercised through the SRC, but the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee will provide more detailed scrutiny and monitoring of the execution of the strategy and act in line with the outline terms of reference below.

7.2 Terms of Reference

The task of the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee is to advise and support the Connexional Secretary and the Connexional Team to oversee the implementation, development and monitoring of the strategy, particularly through the annual planning, budget and review process of the Church.

The Sub-Committee will be responsible for:

- development of new programmes and the balance between these and existing work;
- planning and monitoring of activities, budgets and programmes covered in relation to the aims set out in the strategy;
- overseeing the list of Partner Churches and organisations with which the Methodist Church works and supporting the regular refreshing of Partner Relationship Reviews;

- evaluating the implications of continuing dialogue with AWC and other worldwide ecumenical partners (as specified in section 1 above) and developing how the Methodist Church relates to and works with these bodies now and in the future.

The Sub-Committee (of up to six members suggested by the Connexional Secretary in consultation with others) will be appointed by the Council. It is recommended that a Connexional Treasurer and at least one other SRC member be members of this Sub-Committee.

***RESOLUTIONS

8/1. The Council receives the report.

8/2. The Council approves the strategy for expressing One Mission through our global relationships as contained in the report.

8/3. The Council appoints the Global Relationships Strategic Oversight Sub-Committee, as follows:

Dr Daleep Mukarji	Chair
The Revd Timothy A Swindell	Connexional Treasurer
Simeon Mitchell	All We Can
The Revd Dr Andrew D Wood	SRC Member
<i>Two others, to be confirmed</i>	

Ex officio (participant observers)

Connexional Ecumenical Officer, World Church Relationships Team Leader, members of the Senior Leadership Group of the Connexional Team members as relevant, World Methodist Committee (Britain) Chair

Appendix 1

Autonomous Conferences (as defined by Deed of Union 1(xxiv) and SO 002 (2))

Eglise Protestante Méthodiste du Bénin

Methodist Church in Brazil

Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas

Eglise Méthodiste Unie de Côte d'Ivoire

Methodist Church in Fiji

Eglises Méthodistes de France

Methodist Church The Gambia

Methodist Church Ghana

The Methodist Church, Hong Kong

Methodist Church Kenya

The Korean Methodist Church

The Methodist Church, Upper Myanmar

The Methodist Church of New Zealand

Methodist Church Nigeria

Igreja Evangelica Metodista Portuguesa

Methodist Church in Samoa

Methodist Church Sierra Leone

Methodist Church of Southern Africa

The Methodist Church, Sri Lanka

Eglise Méthodiste du Togo

Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga

United Methodist Church

Iglesia Metodista del Uruguay

Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

Other Churches

Iglesia Evangelica Metodista Argentina

The Uniting Church in Australia

The Church of Bangladesh

Eglise Protestante Unie de Belgique

Verenigde Protestantse Kerk in België

Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en Bolivia

United Church of Canada

Presbyterian Church in Cameroon

Iglesia Metodista de Chile

China Christian Council

Iglesia Metodista de Colombia

Iglesia Metodista en Cuba

Iglesia Evangelica Dominicana

Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Unida del Ecuador

Iglesia Metodista de Guinea Ecuatorial

Iglesia Evangélica Metodista en El Salvador
Eglise Réformée de France
Iglesia Evangelica Nacional Metodista de Guatemala
Church of North India
Church of South India
Gereja Methodist Indonesia
Methodist Church in Ireland
Methodist Church, Italy
Waldensian Church, Italy
The United Church of Christ in Japan
The Methodist Church in Malaysia
Iglesia Metodista de Mexico
Igreja Wesleyana Metodista de Moçambique
United Mission to Nepal
Iglesia Evangelica Metodista de Nicaragua
Church of Pakistan
Iglesia Evangelica Metodista de Panama
United Church in Papua New Guinea
Iglesia Metodista de Puerto Rico
Iglesia Metodista del Perú
The Methodist Church in Singapore
The United Church in the Solomon Islands
Iglesia Evangelica Española
Methodist Church of Tanzania
Methodist Church Uganda
Methodist Christian Community of Venezuela
United Church of Zambia