CHURCHES AND MISSION AGENCIES: A PROJECT PROPOSAL

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Looking for advice from church and mission leaders.
Category: Observations

A fair bit has been written about the relationship between churches and mission agencies over the years - indeed I have spent a fair bit of my time on this blog looking at the issue. However, much of the material that is available is either out of date or hidden away in blogs and websites.

My thoughts are to address this by writing a book which I would self-publish unless I can find someone willing to publish it for me. The aim would be to produce something which has a good biblical background, but which is rooted in current experience and which aims to give some practical suggestions as to a way forward.

Part of the reason for the book comes from my experience in working with both agencies and churches. Almost without exception, agency leaders say that they value their partnerships with churches and find them mutually enriching. However, also almost without exception, church leaders express frustration with mission agencies about the way in which they treat them.

The book would consist of three parts, each with a number of chapters.

Part One would give an overview of the theology, history and contemporary situation of mission agencies.

Part Two would explore lived experience and would consist of three chapters:

- A chapter based on interviews with mission agency leaders regarding their partnerships and relationships with churches.
- Another based on interviews with church leaders about the same thing.
- A third chapter (which I'd love to title "Stuck in the Middle With You") would be based on interviews with missionaries about their experiences of life between agencies and churches.

Part Three would consist of suggestions for ways forward and an elaboration of best practice. Without doing the research for the second section, I'm not entirely sure what the issues are that would need to be addressed here, though I have an inkling.

I'm putting this out here on Kouyanet (rather than just getting on and writing the thing) because I'd like a bit of feedback. Please feel free to respond in the comments section, on Twitter or on Facebook to the first three questions.

- Do you think there is a need for a book of this sort?
- Does the approach that I am suggesting make sense?
- Are you a publisher or do you have any friends in publishing who might be interested?

I'd also like to know if anyone who fits in the various categories that I outlined would like to be interviewed. I'd like to capture a range of people from those who have very strong opinions on the subject, to those who are less bothered by it. I also want to cover a range of agencies and churchmanship. If you would be interested, please get in touch via the contact form which you can find here.