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# THE PERTH REPORT

The Bylaws Revision Committee met in Perth on 29/30 January 1986. This report is intended to share with you the general sense of the committee's thinking so far. The committee plans to meet again on April 3/4 at which time it hopes to do detailed work to clarify the general intentions which are set out below:

The committee considered the staff work and the many inputs and reactions to the green papers. We were dismayed that a representative of World Vision US was not present. We were frustrated in attempts to think through what might be a US position on an issue, and unanimously felt the committee's work would have been greatly enhanced by a US presence. We consider it essential that a US representative attend the next meeting.

Recognizing its role in affirming the spirit of the original internationalisation process, and seeking to move that spirit forward into the 1990s, the committee moved to the following propositions:

1. The partnership is the relationship between the support and field entities.<sup>1</sup> This is the committee's understanding from a historical perspective, and we re-affirm this understanding.
2. The fullest expression of the partnership is the council, comprising:
  - Board members of support offices;
  - A non-staff (Board) representative of each field office;
  - A non-staff (Board) representative of each developing support entity;
  - Chief executives of support offices;
  - All field directors;
  - Chief executives of developing support entities;
  - Members-at-large;
  - The President of World Vision International,as partners.
3. The role of the council is:
  - to elect the World Vision International board;
  - as a body of strategic review;
  - to review the objectives and results of the partnership's activities;
  - to elect such officers as are needed;
  - to amend the Bylaws.
4. The World Vision International board is elected by and accountable to the Council. The board appoints the staff. It also establishes policy, preserves the assets of World Vision International, and evaluates the performance of the staff it appoints. The board also elects a chairman and other officers as needed. The Chairman of the Board is automatically, the Moderator of the Council.
5. The international office staff are appointed by the Board, or, in practice, by the delegated authority of the Board given to the President and Vice Presidents.

The responsibilities of the international staff are:

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<sup>1</sup>The partnership is a coming together, with integrity and accountability, on a complementary basis, of **field** and **support** entities, sharing different but equal roles in the one ministry of Christ to the poor, for the purpose of enhancing the quality and cost-effectiveness of this ministry.

- (a) to cultivate the culture (communicate, impart, share, explain, teach ... the vision);
- (b) to manage the field ministry;
- (c) to enhance and develop the ability of the members of the partnership to contribute fully to the partnership's ministry.

There is an important refocussing of international office activity implied by the above. It is that management of ministry is the responsibility of the 'partners', viz., the support offices and the field offices. The international office role is focused on facilitating, communicating, developing, rather than controlling, organising and leading.

The committee recognises that considerable work remains to be done to clarify the detail of these statements of general direction. However, the following first steps have been made:

## FIELD OFFICE

A definition is required.

It is an entity which has been in existence for 3 years. Because of the position the field office now takes within the partnership, the decision to open a field office must be made by the Board, rather than as a decision of management alone.

Field offices are represented on the Council by the Field Director and one non-staff member. The non-staff member may be defined as follows:

Any field office that has been operating for at least 3 years shall select a member to attend the council. The person shall:

- (1) not be a paid member of any World Vision organization;
- (2) be knowledgeable of World Vision's work in the field country;
- (3) be appointed by the field office board, or, there being no board, by the field director.

This presumes a new role for field offices. It is the committee's view that we shall not achieve more genuine partnership until we begin treating our field partners as partners. Not treating them 'as if they were' partners - but treating them as partners, because that is what they are.

In most of the countries in which World Vision works, the church with whom we work has become thoroughly indigenised, and is, for the most part, doing a better job than it did when western leadership remained in control. It ought to be our aim to emulate this commitment to the koinonia of the Body of Christ.

The committee's view is that this is a radical belief shift for the existing partnership, yet is consistent with the set of beliefs from which the original partnership structures were defined. It is a fundamental adjustment to our present corporate culture. Among other things, it implies a change in our National Boards policy.

## MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

The members-at-large category is to be retained, except that its purpose is no longer to 'represent the field', but rather to provide a mechanism for involving Christians of significant value to the partnership (eg., Pawlik, Archbishop of Canterbury, etc) who might otherwise not be involved.

## SUPPORT OFFICES

Again, a full and detailed definition is required.

There will probably be two categories of support offices:

- (1) larger, or more significant, support offices identified according to some criterion, either a criterion similar to the existing '2% of the international budget', or a new efficiency criterion (eg., dollars raised per capita, or dollars raised per average per capita earnings);
- (2) smaller, or less significant, support offices which do not fit the above criterion.

In addition, the committee proposes that support offices be defined as follows:

- (1) single entity, single board, where the entity size may not be smaller than a single nation;
- (2) having been in existence for 3 years;
- (3) having a local board;
- (4) subscribing to the Constitution, Bylaws, Statement of Faith and ministry objectives of World Vision International;
- (5) having an identifiable fundraising function on staff;
- (6) having not less than 10% of local revenue (including funding from World Vision International) from local donors, of which no more than 50% is from a single donor;
- (7) sending at least 70% of gross collected funds through WVI;
- (8) demonstrating continuing viability and an ability to expand.

The basic thrust of this new provision is to find a mechanism to recognise all viable support offices as partners.

## THE BOARD

While the committee favours a board elected from the Council, it does not reject partial election together with partial appointment from existing support office boards. This would provide a mechanism for ensuring historical continuity appropriate at this stage in our journey as an international partnership. The committee's sensing is that a minimum of 4 (perhaps 6) positions would be by appointment (say 1 per existing support office), with a further 10 elected from Council.

The committee also noted with approval the intention of the board to seek a composition which provided for certain specialities and specific portfolio responsibilities among its members. The committee's view is that election from the Council enhances the partnership's ability to provide for a more competent balance of abilities on the Board.

### Submitted on behalf of:

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