

## FROM PATERNALISM TO PARTNERSHIP The Sensitive Handover of Missions Work to Indigenous Leaders

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### Abstract

This article seeks to address the handover process of missions work from pioneer missionaries to indigenous leaders. It posits that this can only be done in a biblical way if paternalism yields to partnership. The article justifies paternalism in the commencement of missions work, but argues that there is a point beyond which paternalism becomes unjustifiable and crippling to the work of God's kingdom. Instead of simply condemning the crippling paternalism, the author goes on to point to the way in which true partnership can be birthed. It is through mutual respect and admiration between the missionaries and the indigenous leaders. The author uses the Bible to show that church planting missions work should go through at least three phases of development. He then ends his article by showing how mutual respect and admiration between missionaries and indigenous leaders enhances the handover process. In the light of the difficulties experienced at this juncture of missions work, and in view of the shift of the future of missions from the Western world to the Majority World, this article addresses a very pertinent subject.