

STMs: Preparing to Go

Some insights into planning and organizing these efforts to advance the Kingdom

BY VINCE VETRO



There is nothing short term about Short-Term Missions (STMs).

The primary objectives of the short-term mission movement include a desire to raise the next generation of missionaries, create opportunities for more involvement of the local church, and raise more financial and prayer support. As time and culture have evolved, so has the short-term mission movement.

... all short-term missions, no matter what they involve, are about advancing the Kingdom

The first step in organizing and planning any short-term mission is for the leader or leaders to ask some basic questions of themselves



KEY FACTORS

Three key factors that should be part of all STM excursions:

- I will respect the customs/practices of my host culture
- I will respect the leadership of the host culture
- I will not judge that which I do not understand

on behalf of their team and the field they will be visiting.

One of these is, “Does anyone get to go?” Some enthusiasts would argue that spiritual commitment or spiritual maturity are not grounds for qualification, while others would argue their importance.

Other questions include: “What is it that we most want to accomplish?” “What type of changes do we want to see in the team upon their return home?” “In light of the type of mission, how do we want to prepare and train?” “How can we best partner with our International Workers and the national church to make our mission successful?” “What does a successful mission look like?”

There is a plethora of books and information on the internet that exists today on the ‘how’ and thankfully, more recently, books are being written on the ‘why.’ Materials can be found that deal with practicality, how to cost your short-term mission and how to lay out the day-to-day plans.

For those more inclined, there is also material that deals with the more theological and culturally sensitive side to the mission and finally, there exists an abundance of articles that deal with the spiritual transformation impact that happens as a result of the mission.

One of the most important works I would suggest a leader use to prepare is titled *Serving with Eyes Wide Open*. In this book, David Livermore deals

with the huge issue of CQ—Cultural Intelligence.

“Cultural Intelligence, or CQ, is an individual’s capability to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures. Rather

PREPARING TO GO RESOURCES

(Listed according to author’s view of usefulness)

Serving with Eyes Wide Open

by David Livermore

Round Trip

by Chris Blumhofer

(Book and video material)

Glocalization

by Bob Roberts Jr.

Missions Is a Contact Sport

by Richard Reichert

Prayer Walking

by Steve Hawthorne & Graham Kendrick

Successful Mission Teams

by Martha VanCise

Catch the Wave

by Kevin Johnson

Guide to Short Term Missions

by J. Mack & Leeann Stiles

Operation World

by Werner Mischke with Steve Hawthorne (Book and video material)

Go Prepared

by Pamela Biddle, Mary Ement, Marie Kuck (Book and video)

The Essential Guide to the Short Term Mission Trip

by David C. Forward

Launching the Great Go-Mission

by Lincoln Murdoch

Vacations with a Purpose

by Chris Eaton and Kim Hurst

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SOURCES

Before going on an STM trip, check out the following:

<http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/check.htm>

<http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/short.htm>

www.embassiesabroad.com

Travel and health:

www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx

www.who.int/ith/en

www.ihm.ca/links

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/travel/clinic-eng.php

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/index-eng.php

A web search of 'short-term mission training material' provides endless amounts of resources

than expecting individuals to master all the norms of the various cultures encountered, Cultural Intelligence helps an individual develop an overall repertoire and perspective that results in more effective leadership.

"Cultural Intelligence is both an ability and an overall model for thinking about cross-cultural leadership. It's rooted in the research on multiple intelligences and includes four dimensions—Motivational CQ, Cognitive CQ, Metacognitive CQ, and Behavioral CQ. These dimensions can be thought of as a 4-step cycle you walk through when faced with any cross-cultural situation (CQ Drive, Knowledge, Strategy, and Action)."

For many, a short-term mission may be a fun opportunity to serve. This is great! We are seeing more families give up vacation time to do missions together. Again, this is wonderful! One caution we do need to be aware of, is that all short-term missions, no matter what they involve, are about advancing the Kingdom.

When we become active about Kingdom advancement, we enter the realm of spiritual battle or spiritual warfare. Every team, no matter what their mission or age, should understand the essence of the battle and how to be prepared. ☪

Vince Vetro is District Missions Consultant, Central Canadian District. The District website offers STM Leader Training at <http://cmaccd.com/globalmissions24.php>


**Commit to
being a part of
World Relief Sunday 2009**

CULTIVATING HOPE, GROWING COMMUNITIES

Join hundreds of churches across Canada
and be an active part of
**Cultivating Hope and Growing Communities
for the poor.**

Sign up your church today!

Call World Relief Canada toll-free at 1-800-567-8190
and ask for Desiree Frost,
our Church Relations Coordinator
or email her at dfrost@wrcanada.org

 **WORLD RELIEF
CANADA**
www.wrcanada.org