

# **SHORT-TERM MISSIONS**

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## **IMPORTANCE OF SHORT-TERM MISSIONS**

Short-term missions are a subset of the larger missionary effort. The term “missionary” comes from the Latin word *mitto*, which means, “to send”. Christian missionaries are those who have been sent out to share the gospel of Christ, a gospel which declares that creation can be reconciled to its Creator God through the substitutionary and completed work of Christ on the cross.

There is nothing short-term about Christ’s call to mission. His “*missio ecclesiata*” (God’s mission for the church) is that we go into all the world making disciples by living and proclaiming the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20). This mission is the church's contribution to the much broader “*missio dei*” (God’s mission) of reconciling his creation back into a relationship with their Creator. Within the broader call to a life of mission, there are many acts of obedience with a particular purpose and time-frame which, when viewed in isolation, appear “short-term.” The methodology of “short-term” must be connected to the long-term “*missio ecclesiata*” and must be seen within the even broader “*missio dei*.”

Jesus’ model of discipleship included a variety of intentional short-term mission (STM) assignments for his disciples. The pre-trip preparation for these assignments included communicating a clear goal, a clear message, and practical methodology training. The STM was connected to Jesus’ broader mission and was only possible because he had called, trained and sent these disciples.

Short-term mission practitioners today point to the need to get disciples off the beach (or the pew) and onto the water of active ministry. Disciples in churches today have heard sermons about fishing for men, have studied the best techniques of using “nets and boats,” but have never been taught to “fish” through actually fishing. Short-term missions can offer the “hands on” discipleship in mission needed to augment the excellent teaching found in churches and theological classrooms.

## **THE GROWING SHORT-TERM MISSION PHENOMENA FROM THE WEST**

Within the past generation, the Western Protestant church and increasingly the church from the Global South have experienced the explosive growth of STMs. While statistics are not readily available for the growth of STM participants from countries like Korea, China, South Africa and Brazil, the church in Asia, Africa and Latin America is increasingly sending short term teams to support their growing number of long-term workers.

The *Mission Handbook* indicates that the numbers of reported STM workers from North America grew from 97,272 in 1998 to 346,270 in 2001.<sup>1</sup> That figure is an amazing 256% increase in three years. More recent estimates by Dr. Robert Priest, missiology professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, indicate the number of U.S. Christians taking part in trips of a year or less leaped from 540 in 1965 to an estimated 1.5 million annually today (2014), with an estimated \$2 billion spent yearly.<sup>2</sup>

Considerable disposable wealth, inexpensive and efficient air travel, and excellent communication resources have aided short-term missionaries living in the West. In addition to the thousands of churches sending teams, there are now hundreds of specialized STM organizations that facilitate every aspect of the mission experience.

With increasing human and financial resources within the North American church shifting to STM, it is important to understand the impact of these phenomena on the participants who are going. Perhaps of even greater missiological importance is a better understanding of the impact of these many STM teams on the recipient churches and communities. How do we improve the long-term impact of the STM experience for all involved?

### **COMPELLING QUESTIONS FOR SHORT-TERM MISSIONS**

While most acknowledge the STM phenomenon is here to stay, the movement has attracted considerable scrutiny and even concern within the broader missions community. Concerns have been raised about the ethnocentrism, relational shallowness, self-serving impact, and overall cost of STMs.<sup>3</sup> With the groundswell of interest in STMs have come many poorly organized and missionally weak cross-cultural assignments that often do more harm than good. Consequently, questions must be asked such as:

- What is the long-term value of the growing STM phenomenon?
- Does STM experience have a significant and lasting impact on a participant's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours?
- What impact do variables such as length of assignment, level of pre-trip discipleship training, and location of mission assignment have on the degree of positive spiritual change in the lives of STM participants?
- How does the composition and structure of the team impact the participants?
- In what ways are discipleship and the process of growth in spiritual maturity advanced through STMs?
- What influence does previous STM experience have on a participant?
- Do repeated STM experiences increase a participant's interest in serving full-time in missions in the future?
- What effect do STM participants have on the receiving communities, churches and host families?
- Are there principles of best practice in STM from the life and teachings of Jesus?

## **CURRENT SHORT-TERM MISSION CHALLENGES**

Short-term mission for North Americans has described everything from poorly planned local church youth group forays into Mexico for a week, to well-planned programs incorporating hundreds and sometimes thousands of young adults all divided into well trained smaller teams and sent around the world. Perhaps the most serious charge being brought against STMs today is that they feed the already prevalent Western tendency toward ethnocentrism and cultural myopia. Ethnocentrism is the practice of viewing alien customs by applying the concepts and values of one's own culture. Ethnocentrism is viewed by some as an extension of the cultural imperialism and benevolent paternalism of the Western modern missions movement of the past century. The limited time frame and Western need to accomplish something adds further pressure to the meeting of cultures and leads to what some have called the "edifice complex" where buildings and projects become the focus and not people.<sup>4</sup> The recipients of mission, who Slimbach calls "culture brokers," interact with their STM guests in a "staged tourist space" marked by disparities of power and levels of stereotyping that would not exist between neighbors or peers.<sup>5</sup> These recipients of mission can also be treated as unfortunate objects to be rescued, rather than equals to learn from and walk alongside.<sup>6</sup> Unequal relationships like these can lead to "benevolent colonialism,"<sup>7</sup> or even worse, "disabling help" or "malevolent generosity."<sup>8</sup>

Most of these critiques of poor missional practices are coming from current or former STM practitioners who are interested in strengthening the quality and long-term impact of all mission strategies. It is from these critiques that the "Code of Best Practice of Short-Term Mission"<sup>9</sup> and related quality control efforts have been developed as a resource for churches and mission leaders.

## **THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS**

The training and sending of the twelve and the seventy-two disciples in Luke 9 and 10 are frequently cited as examples of STM discipleship training in the life of Jesus. These STM participants were focused, well prepared, empowered and then debriefed on their return. The abundant harvest Jesus describes in Luke 10:2 is engaged by far too few workers. Most would agree that the workers are still few today. Why is that? Has the professionalization of ministry raised the entry requirements beyond the level of most disciples? Perhaps the Anabaptist teaching on the priesthood of all believers can find new expression through the accessibility to ministry afforded by STM opportunities.

Jesus prepares his disciples by teaching them they are being sent out like lambs among wolves (Luke 10:3). This vulnerability and exposure could be a deliberate effort to increase their dependency on faith and prayer. How do self-sufficient Christians grow in their dependency on Jesus? Jesus raises the stakes further by requiring that they take no "purse, or bag or sandals..." (Luke 10:4). This creates a ministry of need not sufficiency, of dependence not power. Can current STM workers leave their technology gadgets, money and educational prowess at home?

Jesus's own interaction with the woman at the well in John 4, in asking for a drink, indicates the disarming effect of approaching relationships from a position of need not sufficiency.

Before their mission trip, Jesus further instructs his disciples that they are to accept hospitality without complaining. As recipients of hospitality we can either compare and complain or consider and compliment. It is our pride or humility that is being exposed. These practical character building opportunities can occur every day in STM assignments when there is intentionality about discipleship training.

Interestingly, the primary ministry focus of the disciples sent on short term assignments by Jesus in Luke 9 and 10 seemed to be on healing sick people and driving out unclean spirits. Their preaching of the Kingdom of God and the gospel of the Kingdom was to be demonstrated by the authority of the King who had sent them. Jesus specifically tells his disciples to proclaim peace to the homes that welcomed them. This ministry of peace in the midst of their vulnerable, dependent and faith filled lifestyle was to also witness to the rule of the Prince of Peace in their lives.

How does the current Western STM building project focus fit into Christ's teachings? In what ways do inequities in wealth between those who are sent and those who receive affect the ability of STM participants to learn and receive in mission assignments?

Jesus debriefs his disciples upon their return from the STM in Luke 10:17-24. The disciples returned excited they had successfully driven out unclean spirits from those they had prayed with. Jesus wisely redirects their attention off of demons to their relationship with the Father. He points to the humility and teach-ability of children as an example of how revelation and growth occur in his Kingdom. Without this kind of careful debrief, STM participants can return as "experts" on ministry, other cultures and even the church. When their perspectives are not appreciated they leave their sending churches frustrated and disillusioned. An extended debrief with the purpose of discerning transferable principles from the STM experience is essential for all participants.

## **SHORT-TERM MISSION RESEARCH STUDY**

In response to the challenges and growth of STMs an extensive research study was conducted on the impact of these factors on the beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of STM participants.<sup>10</sup> While other studies have been done on the impact of STM on host cultures and communities, this research is focused on the participants themselves. The study focused on 116 participants from five different STM programs and four different mission organizations. The participants were measured for twenty four beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in three stages of data collection: before they went on the STM, immediately after they returned, and one year following their return. The purpose of the study was to observe the impact of a number of differences or variables between the programs and the impact of these variables over time on the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of participants. The study included both quantitative and

qualitative data collection methods. Here are some of the outcomes and recommendations from that study.

### **Pre-Trip Training**

Discipleship training before and after a STM is critical to the overall impact of the mission experience on the participant. The pre-trip discipleship training can prepare both the heart and the head of a participant to be teachable throughout the mission experience. A teachable attitude gives participants the grace to work through relational conflict, cross-cultural misunderstandings, assignment difficulties and many other challenges which characterize most STM assignments.

Potential STM participants, parents of potential STM participants, local churches and schools should look for STM programs that do discipleship well. Participants in organizations that did not emphasize pre- and post-trip discipleship training were consistently lower on most positive beliefs, attitudes and behaviours change scores. The anticipation of an STM experience provides a unique teachable window in the life of a participant. To miss this discipleship training window is an irresponsible use of the STM experience.

### **Program Length**

Short-term mission programs, local churches and colleges are encouraged to develop longer programs beyond the several week varieties which are so common today. The longer programs of several months up to a year allow participants to engage more deeply with the host culture, develop deeper team relationships and understand the heart of the local church. Research data indicates that longer assignments (ten months versus six weeks) have a significantly positive impact on participants' experience of teamwork, relationship with the local church and value of social justice. Once they returned home, participants who served on a longer program had a growing interest in global issues.

### **Serving in Teams**

Whenever possible, organize STM assignments in small teams (less than eight) if you are interested in significantly strengthening participants' value of Christian community.

The team provided participants with a place to process their experiences and continue to take positive steps in their walk of discipleship. When these teams were multicultural in composition, the experience of true Christian community was enhanced, despite the obvious challenges of overcoming cultural barriers and communication issues.

### **Family and Church Support**

Cultivating families and home churches that are supportive of STM participants and their experience is important in participants' retention of positive change in their beliefs, attitudes and

behaviours once they return home from their assignments. The family and home church need to be an integral part of the whole STM experience. Their discernment, prayer, support, encouragement and counsel are essential to ongoing positive change in the life of a STM participant.

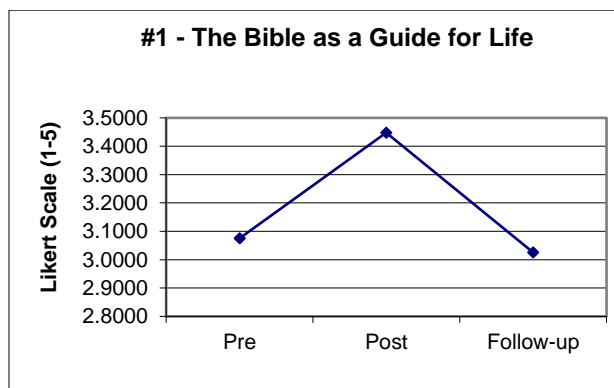
The relational skills that are essential in all cross-cultural mission experiences are learned at home and in a home community. The family and local church have an essential role in nurturing the qualities of a healthy missionary in young adult, long before they consider serving in STMs. This nurturing role is far deeper than communicating missionary vision, but incorporates the qualities of a missionary life.

### **Debrief**

Short-term mission programs, local churches and Christian colleges are not doing enough to debrief and follow-up with STM participants. The significant decline in positive beliefs, attitudes and behaviour-change scores a year following the STM experience is an indication that there is a battle for the hearts of our STM alumni. We are not allocating enough resources to coordinate the discipleship follow through at the local church level after the STM experience is over. The discipleship baton is getting dropped on the track as the local church assumes it is the STM agencies responsibility to follow-up with participants, and the agencies believe it is the responsibility of the local churches.

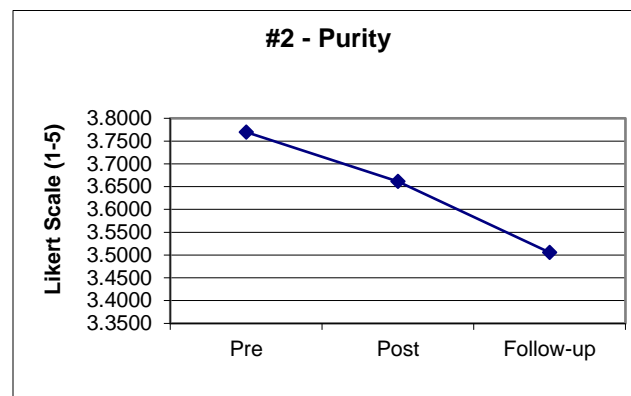
### **Ongoing Spiritual Development**

As graph #1 points out,<sup>11</sup> in the year following the STM experience, there seems to be a spiritual “crash” related to participants’ personal devotional life including prayer and Bible study. The post-trip scores are much higher than pre-trip scores, as participants return on a spiritual “high.” However, one year later these same participants record scores that are lower related to their value of the Bible as a guide for life than before they left for the mission experience! This potential regression in the experience of a relationship with God must be profiled by mission agencies and prepared for by returning STM participants.



## **Battle for Purity**

As graph #2 indicates, the aggregate total of all participants in the STM study actually recorded an overall decline in their practice of purity from the time period before their mission experience through to a year following their return home. Had they just become more sensitive to sin in their lives and more honest in reporting the true nature of their battles for purity? Or do young people who seek to serve God in this generation face increased spiritual attacks and temptation when they set their hearts on living on mission with Him? It seems that STM agencies, local churches and Christian colleges are not engaged enough in the battle for purity in the lives of young adult STM participants. The most spiritually committed and gifted young leaders in the church are struggling with issues of personal purity.



The experience of focusing on mission and service, often within an intense community experience with other spiritually committed young adults, is somehow not helping the battle. Mission organizations and local churches can be more explicit in outlining the nature of the battle for purity and can provide safe places to talk about it and pray together. Additional resources might be needed for those working through significant purity issues.

## **Repeat Assignments**

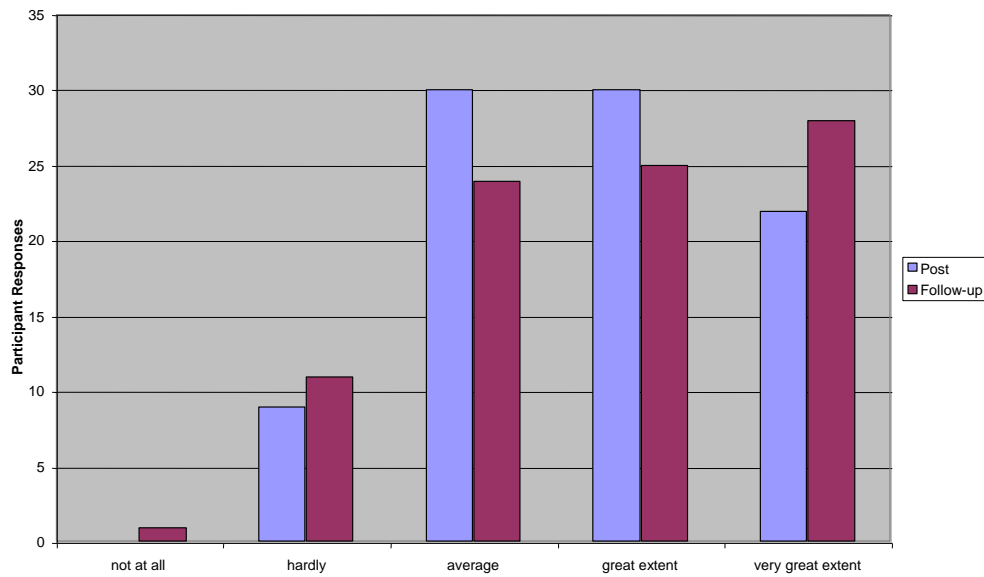
Encourage STM alumni to continue serving in longer assignments and to continue serving with greater responsibility. Repeat STM participants experience positive change in a wider number of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours and retain these positive changes better than first time participants. Repeat participants are also more interested in future full time mission work.

## **Interest in Future Missions Work**

When STM participants were asked about their feelings toward long-term vocational mission work immediately following their STM experience (the “post” data collection period)

and the same question was asked one year after their return from STM (the “follow-up” data collection period), an interesting trend emerged in the data. A year after returning from their mission assignments, half of all STM alumni in the study became more interested in future full time mission work, and half moved away from future mission work as an option for their future. This polarization of responses a year after their return from STMs was a perfect distribution graph with almost equal numbers moving away from an “average” response to either “great extent” or “hardly.”

**#3 - Interest in Future Full-time Mission Work**



**Full Time Missions Work**

Discovering and following up STM alumni who are moving toward deeper interest and involvement in future full time mission work is an essential task for local churches, schools and mission agencies. Staying connected with those alumni whose interest in future full time mission work is growing, is a strategic investment of time toward mobilizing the next generation of full time cross-cultural workers. This connection could be accomplished through effective use of debrief retreats at the end of a STM program where follow-up visits to participants' home communities, alumni parties, and other reconnecting strategies could be planned. Staying connected with alumni in supportive relationships is an obvious and essential way to both support their application of the STM experience into their lives, as well as explore future mission training and service experiences with them.

**The Impact of Short Term Missions on Host Communities**

While much research has been done on the impact of STM on participants who go, what is the impact on communities who receive these participants and teams? Some studies have been



done of the “rice Christians”<sup>12</sup> in Baja California who are impacted by the thousands of STM participants from North America who visit that peninsula each year. STM assignments in the Baja are inexpensive, accessible and marked by exposure to poverty. Many Baja residents are already refugees from other parts of Mexico or Central America who are looking for a new life in the “North.” This orientation - “North” - coupled with significant needs for shelter, church buildings and the sheer number of STM participants who travel to the Baja each year make this a unique mission environment. Given the uniqueness of this STM mission context, Baja STM trips are not a helpful benchmark for STM experiences. Nor should those STM experiences be used to critique the impact of STM on host cultures in general.

As we consider what our MB Mission family (mission agency) has learned about the impact of STM assignments on host communities over the past twenty five years, a number of lessons emerge.

- All of MB Mission’s STM assignments are hosted by long-term workers and national churches in church planting contexts throughout North America and in forty countries around the world. In all these assignments STM teams serve within the long-term mission strategies and goals of local churches. The STM teams provide short term programs and outreaches (planned by the local hosts) which raise the visibility of the gospel and the church in their communities. The long-term local hosts continue the follow up once the short term teams leave. Short term missions is best located in the context of long-term missions.
- All our STM participants serve in teams and are hosted by long-term workers who understand both the recipient culture and the sending culture. Some national pastors who host STM teams don’t feel the freedom to communicate with Westerners, even if these are younger, about cross-cultural sensitivities, lifestyle standards and discipleship outcomes. Having an assignment host who understands and can communicate freely to both the sending and the host cultures is important. Our STM teams function under the authority of this local mentor and assignment host.
- One of the essential outcomes of a good pre-trip training program for STM participants is a teachable attitude and respect for the host culture. Without this humility in learning and service, much damage can be done through insensitivity. Jesus was clear in instructing his disciples before they left on an STM assignment in Luke 10 that they were to eat what was set before them (Luke 10:7-8) and not to move around from house to house looking for better accommodations (Luke 10:7). Receiving hospitality with humility is an essential relationship building quality and communicates respect for the host culture and community.

## **ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A HEALTHY SHORT-TERM MISSION**

After extensive comparative research of the discipleship impact of STM programs on participants and analysis of the effectiveness of STM assignments within the broader context of

long-term mission strategies and outcomes, a number of components of a healthy STM program can be summarized.

- Healthy STM programs have a well-designed pre-trip discipleship training orientation focused on clear outcomes and essential teachings.<sup>13</sup>
- Healthy STM programs have an outreach assignment that is well planned and hosted by churches or communities with a long-term mission strategy.
- Healthy STM assignments are hosted by a local mentor who understands both the sending and host cultures (if they are different) and who is actively engaged in the discipleship and mission outcomes of both the STM program and hosting ministry.
- Healthy STM assignments occur in team (which can include both sending culture participants and host culture participants).
- Healthy STM programs emphasize the essential role of the sending church and the recipient church or community as participants in the STM experience.
- Healthy STM programs practice participant and team debriefs which both process the mission experience and prepare participants (including assignment hosts and sending churches) for ongoing application of what they are learning.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MISSIONS ORGANIZATIONS**

In addition to the general recommendations, the following recommendations are intended to assist organizations involved in hosting STM programs:

- Most of the present resources of STM organizations are invested in planning quality assignments, preparing participants, and ensuring the assignment experience goes well. Relatively few resources are going into debriefing participants and preparing them for re-entry back home. Virtually no resources are going into following up with these participants and their home churches to ensure that the positive changes that participants are reporting translate into ongoing change. It is counter-intuitive to invest discipleship resources on returning STM participants; however, the data indicates that is where the most significant discipleship challenges are found.
- For this ongoing follow-up of STM alumni, there must be a re-thinking of the relationship between STM agencies and sending churches/schools even before participants arrive on the mission program.
- Short-term mission organizations cannot see themselves as the totality of the mission/discipleship effort. They must see themselves as part of a larger discipleship process that includes families, churches and schools.
- Mission agencies must view local churches as essential allies in the discipling process and should build accountability requirements, including obtaining “life-coaches” into their application process to ensure that participants are invested in local church discipleship and mentoring relationships. Mission organizations could suspend acceptance of STM applicants pending the approval of participant’s home church pastor.

- Many mission organizations have established “member care” staff positions who ensure that the spiritual and emotional wellbeing of their long-term missionary staff are being looked after. Short-term mission agencies require the same level of follow-up interest in their mission alumni.
- For “lasting fruit” and limited regression of positive changes in participants’ beliefs, attitudes and behaviours, mission organizations should invest additional resources in the follow-up and coordination of ongoing discipleship of STM alumni. This follow-up coordinator would relate both to participants as well as the pastors, “life coaches” and school staff who have an ongoing relationship with the participant.
- Staying connected with alumni and discerning those who are moving toward deeper interest and involvement in future full time mission work is an essential task.

The data indicates that STM participants are becoming increasingly disconnected from their local churches both during and after the STM experience. Part of this trend could be because the study sample group were all young adults who often move to new communities for further schooling or work opportunities. However, mission organizations can work toward countering this data by intentionally calling STM participants to integrate, serve and participate in the local church.

The investment of resources after the assignment is over is counter-intuitive, but the research data suggests that this is the most critical gap in the present STM strategy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS**

An increasing number of Christian colleges and private high schools are investing in experiential learning through STMs as a way to learn from other cultures, learn service values, disciple students and practice the Great Commission.

- Maximize the potential of pre-trip discipleship training and post-trip discipleship debrief. The ten month academic calendar provides a great opportunity to augment the STM service assignment with lots of campus based discipleship training, pre-trip orientation and post-trip debrief. The challenge of spacing this pre-trip training out is that the cumulative and transformational intensity of a training camp is potentially lost.
- Work closely with sending churches and families from which your students are being supported. They will long outlive your school as an influence in your students’ lives. Look to home churches and families for ongoing discipleship support, life coaching and follow up.
- Look for local service/mission opportunities in your community to both prepare for the cross-cultural mission trip, and as a follow-up service location once your participants return. Mission must be more than a location, it must be way of life!

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL CHURCHES**

In addition to the general recommendations, the following recommendations are intended to assist local churches involved in STMs:

- Local churches need to hear the message from STM agencies that the church is essential to the spiritual health and ongoing discipleship of STM participants.
- Local churches should take leadership in discerning suitable STM participants, assisting these participants in building a support team and offering “life coaches” or mentors to participants who are serious about mission and discipleship once they return.
- Local churches could define the profile of an equipped “life coach” and offer training so that potential STM applicants have trained coaches to draw on.
- Local churches could work with potential STM participants to draw up a “discipleship contract” that defines the relationship and expectations between the participant and the life coach. This discipleship contract could be included in a participants application file so that STM organizations receive a copy and have a contact to follow through.
- Local churches must understand the importance of their role in regards to re-entry and follow-up with participants.

This kind of follow-up of STM participants communicates care. The data indicates that participants are struggling with their relationship with the local church upon their return home. They are also struggling with their devotional lives, personal purity, evangelism and social justice. The period immediately following a participant’s return home is a critical time of re-entry and follow-up.

Some STM strategists are recognizing the critical need for follow-up of returning STM participants. They recommend local churches adopt a participant re-entry strategy that includes both private and public debriefing opportunities, counselling for issues which surfaced on the assignment, career-path and educational counselling, practical service opportunities both within the community as well as one’s home church, mentoring and personal discipleship, and resourcing opportunities for future mission work as well as mission training.<sup>14</sup>

Many returning STM participants commented on how their view of the local church was positively transformed by personal involvement in a local church while serving on their mission assignments. Their expectations rose in terms of community, vision and impact. They now see the local church through new eyes. Will local churches also seize the opportunity to continue developing these emerging young leaders and harness this enthusiasm and passion for the impact of the local church in the world?

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS**

In addition to the general recommendations, the following recommendations are intended to assist STM participants:

- Short-term mission participants require a new understanding of the challenges they face following their return from missions.
- Participants need a new awareness of the challenges of re-entry culture stress, temptation and loss of spiritual vitality.
- Participants need to be prepared for a new level of isolation and lack of accountability once they return home.
- Participants need to see the benefits of a life coach who can help them navigate some of the potential re-entry minefields.
- In an experience driven culture, STMs can become another experience to add to the list. Re-entry means more than washing the laundry and repacking for the next assignment. The body, soul and spirit require restoration after challenging cross-cultural and spiritual experiences. Short-term mission participants must hear this message.

The high regression in positive change scores related to personal spiritual disciplines suggests that participants are taking a holiday from the building blocks of a relationship with God once they return home. Without the accountability and support of a daily schedule and team life, many participants are ignoring personal communication with God and Bible study.

The importance of STM participants re-investing in spiritually accountable and supportive relationships in their local churches and schools seems self-evident. Returning mission alumni can be encouraged to take the initiative in helping their local church understand the impact and outcomes of the STM experience. By getting involved in their local church, they have an opportunity to apply some of what they learning in the mission experience.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> D. Welliver and M. Northcutt, (eds.), *Mission Handbook 2004-2006: US and Canadian Ministries Overseas*, (Wheaton, IL: EMIS, 2004), 13.
- <sup>2</sup> Robert J. Priest, "They See Everything, and Understand Nothing: Short-Term Mission and Service Learning," *Missiology* 36, no. 1 (2008): 54.
- <sup>3</sup> R. Slimbach, "First, Do No Harm," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 36, vol. 10 (2000): 428-441. J. A. Van Engen, "The Cost of Short-Term Missions," *The Other Side* 36 (2000): 20-23. A. Atkins, "Work Teams? No, Taste and See Teams," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (1991): 384-387.
- <sup>4</sup> P. Jeffery, "Short-Term Missions Trips," *Christian Century* 118, no. 34 (2001): 5-7.
- <sup>5</sup> Slimbach, "First, Do No Harm," 431.
- <sup>6</sup> Van Engen, "Cost of Short-Term Missions," 22.
- <sup>7</sup> M. Allen, "International Short-Term Missions: a Divergence From the Great Commission?" *Youthworker Journal* 17 (2001): 44.
- <sup>8</sup> Slimbach, "First, Do No Harm," 431.
- <sup>9</sup> "The Code of Best Practice for Short-term Mission," Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, accessed December 12, 2013, [http://www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/mc/mc\\_southafrica/resources/code\\_of\\_best\\_practice.pdf](http://www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/mc/mc_southafrica/resources/code_of_best_practice.pdf)
- <sup>10</sup> Randy Friesen, "The Long-Term Impact of Short-Term Missions on the Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviors of Young Adults," Th.D. diss. University of South Africa, 2004. Summary accessed December 12, 2013, [http://www.mbmission.org/files/staff/rfriesen/friesen\\_stm\\_thesis\\_summary.pdf](http://www.mbmission.org/files/staff/rfriesen/friesen_stm_thesis_summary.pdf)
- <sup>11</sup> When responding to a Likert questionnaire item, respondents specify their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree scale for a series of statements. Thus, the range captures the intensity of their feelings for a given item. In this graph, higher scores refer to higher experiential agreement.

- <sup>12</sup> Someone who converts to Christianity not out of personal conviction but in order to receive benefits such as food, medical services, education, etc.
- <sup>13</sup> The Global Discipleship Training Alliance is a global alliance of over 200 discipleship in mission training programs that all adhere to agreed upon STM standards. A minimum of one third of the overall program length is spent in pre-trip training and post-trip debrief. Eight essential teachings are covered in the training programs. Assignments occur in teams and are focused on mission outreach alongside long-term ministries. See [www.globaldisciples.org](http://www.globaldisciples.org) and [www.globaldisciples.net/wp-content/.../06/Global-LEAD-Brochure.pdf](http://www.globaldisciples.net/wp-content/.../06/Global-LEAD-Brochure.pdf). The Standards of Excellence in Short-term Mission offer another similar list of seven standardized components of healthy STM programs ([www.soe.org](http://www.soe.org)).
- <sup>14</sup> R. Peterson, G. Aeschliman, and R.W. Sneed, *Maximum Impact Short-Term Mission*, (Minneapolis, MN: STEM Press, 2003), 144-145.

## Recommended Reading

Barnes, Seth. "Ten Emerging Trends in Short-Term Missions." *Mission Frontiers* 1, (2000): 13-15.

Borthwick, Paul. "Short-term youth teams: are they really worth it?" *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 32, (1996): 403-408.

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McDonough, Daniel and Roger P. Peterson. *Is Short-Term Mission Really Worth the Time and Money?* Minneapolis, MN: STEM Ministries, 1991.

Tuttle, K.A. "The Effects of Short-Term Mission Experiences on College Students' Spiritual Growth and Maturity." *Christian Education Journal* 4NS (2000): 123-140.

Zehner, Edwin. "Short-Term Missions: Toward a More Field-Oriented Model." *Missiology* 34, no. 4 (2006): 509-521.

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## Study Questions

1. Think about the reports you have heard about STM: Was the long range impact upon the receivers contemplated?
2. In what ways do inequities in wealth between those who are sent and those who receive affect the ability of STM participants to learn and receive in mission assignments?
3. The author indicates that respect for the local culture is of great importance. How will you know what communicates respect in a different culture?
4. How many people do you know that were drawn into long term missions through STM? Can you discern anything about what kind of STM they had?