



# **The Development Process**

Effective Short Term  
Opportunities

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This Pamphlet is part of the 'The Development Process' range of publications produced by Global Focus and whilst it can be used on its own is most effectively used as part of the wider Global Focus Process.

Other pamphlets in the range include:-

*The Global Outreach Plan*  
*Changing the Structures*  
*Investing in Prayer*  
*Communicating God's Heart*  
*The global Impact Celebration*  
*The Faith Commitment Offering*  
*Strategic Ministry Partnerships*

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This document has been developed to help churches to involve many members of the congregation in effective short term projects both locally and globally.

There are many well planned and worth while short term opportunities available from various experienced organisations. When such opportunities line up with the churches strategic outreach plan it is wise to take advantage of the experience and planning done by these organisations. However, to be truly effective, short term projects need not only to achieve strategic ends in and off themselves, but also need to contribute to achieving the church's strategic Global Outreach Plan. (See '*The Global Outreach Plan*' in this range of Pamphlets)

For example if you have decided as a church that part of your strategic plan is to train your young people in ministry to street kids then there would be a number of organisations that could provide excellent opportunities. However, if your plan was more specific in that you wanted to train your young people in ministry to children of a specific tribal group or even to socially deprived children from a local estate, then although help and advice might be available, it could well be that you would have to develop your own opportunities.

Even when you do partner with other organisations (especially those who would be willing to work with you to tailor make a specific short term opportunity) it is important that as a church you make the most of the opportunity by effective planning, training and communication before, during and after the event.



## **Suggestions and Guiding Principles For A Local Church when Planning Effective Short Term Outreach Opportunities.**

1. Be clear on the objectives of the short term team
2. See this opportunity as a whole church activity and not just an event for those who join the team
3. Ensure that the goals of the team fit into, and further the church's Global Outreach Plan
4. Try to provide a variety of short term opportunities linked with the church's Global Outreach Plan that give both local and global opportunities and provide opportunities for different gifting, skills and ages
5. Do good preparation before the event
6. Either select you team to best meet the objectives or...
7. Train the team before the event to best meet the objectives
8. Where possible (especially for global events) familiarise yourself with the target location, accommodation, transport logistics, climate etc
9. Multiply the impact of the short term team by each team member either recruiting or being allocated up to 10 prayer supporters for the event
10. Build a good relationship with the host church, organisation etc so that expectations are clear
11. Have good leadership and support for the team during the event
12. Have an agreed liaison person with the host group
13. Maximise the long term impact by good follow up, evaluation and church wide communication after the event
14. Where possible partner with an existing agency that has experience in organising short term team events, especially one that is willing to design a programme with you
15. Consider a financial strategy that allows for both church contribution to the costs and individual support raising by the participants and their support team

## A. Effective Short Term Outreach Opportunities - Before the event

**Introduction:** The key to an effective short term experience both for the individuals and the church as a whole is good preparation. If the expectations, training, orientation and logistical details are not planned well then you can expect things to go wrong. Even with all the preparation things may still go wrong so let's try to minimise the possibility. Although intended to be a planning aid for both local and global outreaches, this document will focus more on the global application.

- A1. Strategic decision making.** Before any planning begins you need to look at the church's Global Outreach Plan (See '*The Global Outreach Plan*' in this range of Pamphlets) and decide which specific target areas are most likely to benefit from a short term involvement. Try to plan at least two opportunities, one in you local ministry area and one overseas as a start. Think of the skills, experience, age and gifting that you have available in the congregation and plan accordingly. Consider the time of the year where most people will be available, other events in the church calendar and check what the best time for the host group is. Estimate the likely costs and prepare a draft budget.

Research other organisations that plan and run Short Term Programmes in the locations that you will be working and decide if it is possible to use one of their ready made programmes. If not, consider the possibility of working together to tailor make a programme or decide to run one independently. (NB If you decide to partner at this stage look at the pamphlet '*Strategic Ministry Partnerships*' in this Development Process range of pamphlets). Having made the bigger strategic decisions move onto the next stage:

- A2. Setting the team's objectives together with the target ministry.** Contact the target ministry leaders and wherever possible arrange to visit. This is obviously more easily done with a local ministry than with an overseas ministry, however, if anything, it is even more important to do this with an overseas visit than the local one. If using a ready made programme with another organisation this is less important if you can obtain the information from the organisation. However, any other option requires this stage if the programme is to be both successful and effective. Discover the goals of the target ministry and discuss how a short term team from the church can help to further those goals. Identify the limitations of the team (e.g. language, cultural understanding etc) and discuss coping/overcoming strategies with the target field leadership. Agree time off; site seeing opportunities; transport logistics; accommodation; communication with the home church and plan a sample daily programme. Discuss leadership liaison between the two parties; prayer and communication times; pastoral and health care; diet; cultural orientation and debriefing times. Try to identify as many possible problem scenarios as you can and if the target field has hosted similar groups before, learn as much as you can from their previous experiences. Do all that you can to agree outcome expectations together and dream a little what a follow up of this

team's visit would look like. When you get back home write up your visit report and send back to the field for their confirmation of your findings. Once received you are ready to go to the next stage.

**A3. Team selection and preparation.** Having understood more of the needs of the programme you are now in a position to advertise the opportunity clearly stating the objectives, skills, experience etc. needed by the team. Alternatively you might like to approach certain people in the congregation that fit the needed criteria and select a core of the team in this way. Selection of the team leader is crucial and ideally this person should have been selected previously and have been part of the small group that visited the target field as in paragraph A2 above. Try to include an experienced pastoral care person in the team.

Plan regular meetings with your team to orient and train as well as pray and build your relationships as a team. The training should be divided into four main areas; first and second are orientation to the culture and ministry that you will be working with and the third is the skill training needed to reach your goals. The final area is that of helping the team to maximise the personal benefits of this experience. Encourage everyone, in addition to any other specific role, to be ready to give their testimony and a short devotional message or Bible study. Prepare them to be flexible and be ready to respond to both changes in both circumstances and plans at the drop of a hat. Encourage everyone to start a personal journal of the experience including setting out their goals for personal growth as a result of this experience. Start the journal now not just when the programme begins.

Discuss the plans for recruiting a support team for everyone (See paragraph A5 below) and help the participants to know how to communicate to this team. Cover areas such as finance, travel, accommodation, and set dates for future meetings including a commissioning service at a main church meeting. If possible create a group email address so that you can regularly keep the team up to date as the planning progresses and also for prayer needs.

Plan to meet together two weeks after the return of the team so that they put these dates into their diaries. This two week period gives time to begin processing the experience but is not long enough to have been totally sucked into normal life routines. This will begin the re-orientation and consolidation meetings covered in more detail in section C2 below.

**A4. Logistics & Admin.** At soon as possible recruit an administrator who will be an integral team member but will not travel with the team. This is the person who will plan all the communication, arrange travel; help with visa requirements; meeting logistics; plan accommodation; CRB checks for local children's ministry; advise on health requirement; travel insurance etc. etc. There will be a myriad of details which will emerge over time that need someone to take the responsibility of either sorting them out or making sure that someone else does. This person needs to stay at home as a key contact during the programme for both ongoing communication with the church and to



sort out problems that may arise on the field that need someone at home to handle.

In the event of a joint partnership with an existing agency this is the person who will be the key contact between the church and the agency and many of the above items will be done by the agency. This is a vital role!!

The church must produce a team budget and decide on the financial strategy adopted to raise the necessary support. A lot will depend upon how the team members are chosen but we would encourage the church to commit to at least a percentage of the overall cost so that the wider body does see this short term opportunity as part of the church's Global Outreach Plan. This will also give church members who are unable to be part of the team doing the ministry an opportunity to commit to the ministry in other ways. In addition each team member (plus support team?) can take responsibility to raise their personal costs and even a percentage of the overall cost.

- A5. Widening the circle of involvement.** An effective, well planned short term team opportunity not only impacts the ministry and the team members but should also have a significant impact of the whole church. When planned as part of the church's Global Outreach Strategy, then the whole church sees this opportunity as part of their larger ministry and hence owns the opportunity in a much greater way than if it was just one or more people from the church going off to do their thing. To help this process of ownership however, we need to involve as many as possible in the ministry and not just limit involvement to those who are able to go as part of the short term team. We need to widen the team to include those who pray, who give and who help in other ways.

A very effective way to do this is to link each team member with a larger support team. This can be done in a number of ways, e.g. link team members with church small groups; ask church members willing to be part of support teams to sign up or get team members to recruit their own support team. Decide the limits of responsibility of these support teams and provide a handout for all involved. Decide if you want the support team to help raise the finance needed for their team member.

- A6. Communication and Prayer Strategy.** As well as keeping those immediately involved up to date it is equally important to keep the whole congregation informed and aware of the bigger picture. Plan your communication strategy to raise understanding and awareness of the team's objectives, membership, ministry and prayer needs before the programme. Plan regular corporate prayer times and focus on a church commissioning event prior to the team's departure or beginning of ministry in the case of a local focus.

## B. Effective Short Term Outreach Opportunities - During the event

**Introduction:** The key thing to mention here is to encourage an expectation of God working in ways that will surprise you. Go with the plans that you have, but don't be surprised if God has other plans for you as a team!

**B1. On arrival.** Establish the team in its accommodation as soon as you can and give time for adjustment to time, temperature, travel fatigue etc. depending on the length of the journey. In the case of a local ministry outreach, then try to arrange a team event that will mark the beginning of the programme and don't just drift into it.

Start the orientation meetings as agreed with the local ministry host. This should be orientation to the culture and ministry as well as to the programme, people and responsibilities.

This will be a time of adjustment and confusion so be patient and try to be as clear as possible what each person will be doing the next day. If there are areas of uncertainty try to sort these out as soon as you can. At the same time keep stressing to the team that things will change, will not happen as planned, etc. and there is a need for maximum flexibility, patience and trust that the Lord has it all in His hands.

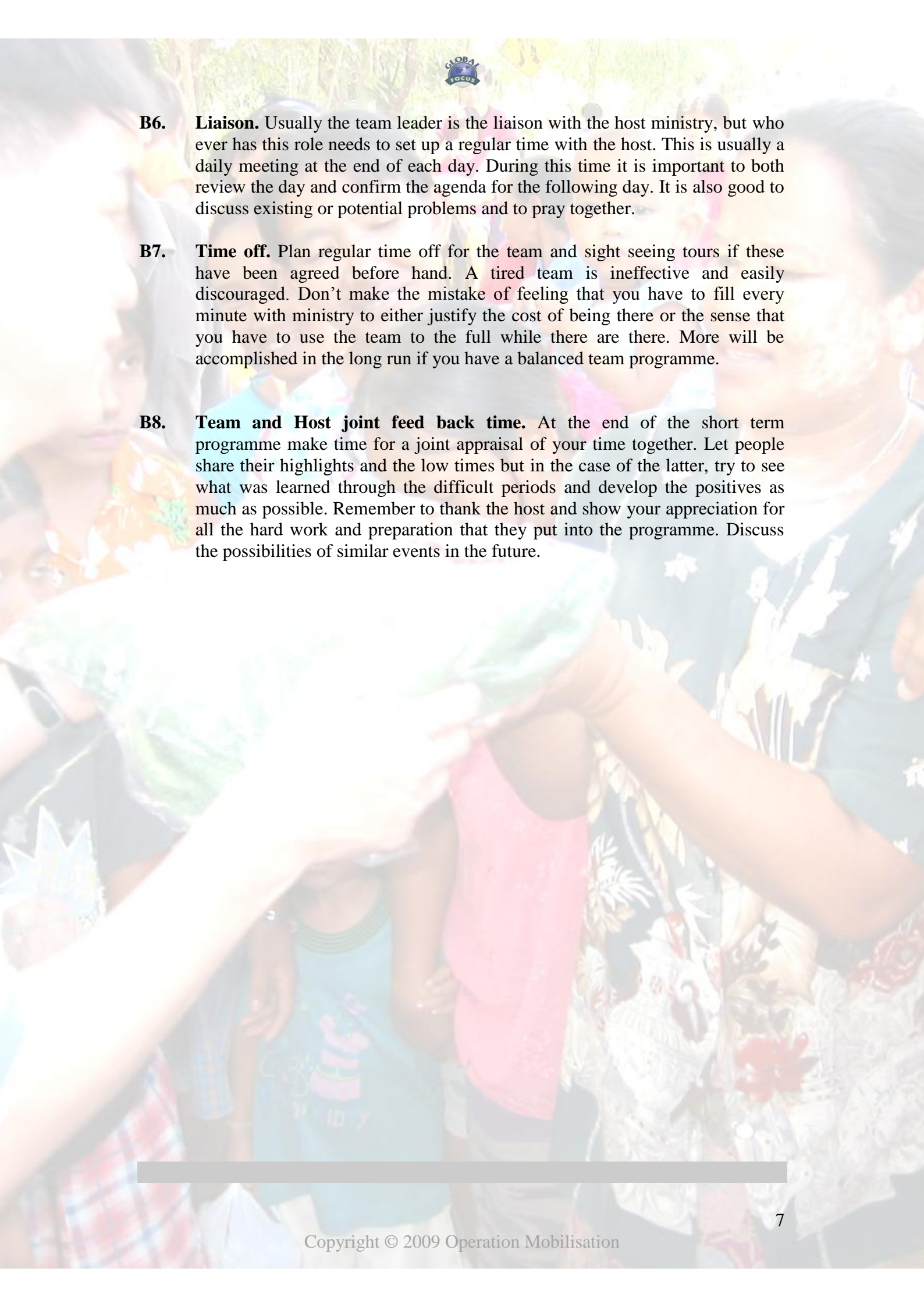
Encourage the team to avoid comparison with your own cultural norms and priorities. For example attitude to time and appointments may be very different and it will be easy to criticise. Don't be surprised if all the orientation that you have given on this subject is forgotten when faced with the reality. Your way of doing things may be best for your culture but perhaps not for where you are. Avoid cultural superiority. Your culture is not better, just different. You will learn so much if you are willing to watch and listen.

**B2. Prayer.** Make this a focal point for the whole of the programme. Consider including as part of the team, individuals who are dedicated to prayer during the event. Learn to set aside key prayer times; pray for your hosts, the local believers, the ministry and especially for each other. Include testimony times and opportunities for praise. Be willing to pray spontaneously as needs and opportunities arise. If you leave nothing else behind, leave an example of prayer. What you start in prayer at this point will remain with you after the return home.

Meanwhile back at the home church plan times of prayer for the support groups and for the larger church. Have regular updates on the church website or notice board. While the short term programme is in progress, include in every meeting from 'Mums and toddlers' groups to the main worship services a short up date and prayer opportunity.

- B3. Daily Programme.** In certain situations the daily programme may well be very different each day as far as ministry is concerned. However, even when this is the case build a regularity into the daily programme with group devotions; feedback; personal and ministry sharing; prayer and opportunities for questions and suggestions. Have some time during the day when you are on your own as a team and other times when you include your host and other local people. Make sure that you leave some space in your daily programmes for rest, personal reflection and correspondence etc.
- B4. Flexibility.** However well you plan things will go wrong. Not only go wrong, but you will discover that changes will be made without satisfactory explanation; lack of communication will cause frustration; things will not happen as you had expected and opportunities will be presented that you knew nothing about. Don't despair, be flexible. Your response to all these apparent frustrations will make all the difference both to the value you get from the experience and the testimony that you leave behind. In addition you may well find out that it is in the frustrations that God does the most work. No matter how much you have prepared the team for these difficulties, they will still catch you out when they happen. Learn to encourage and remind each other as problems happen that God is sovereign. Learn to talk about them as a team and with individuals. Keep a look out for people who are struggling.
- B5. A positive learning experience.** Through out this pamphlet we have hinted at a multitude of goals for this short term programme. For example, serving and encouraging the host ministry; achieving the church's global outreach goals; giving the participants a bigger world view; encouraging wider ownership of mission by the congregation; seeing people saved etc. etc. All of these are valid and it may well be that to a greater or lesser degree you will achieve many of them. However, one thing is clear. If the team members have a bad experience it is unlikely that you will achieve very much. A primary goal therefore must be to impact the life of each team member in such a positive way that the change and growth in them will be evident to all when they return home.

We cannot emphasis enough therefore how good leadership and pastoral care are crucial to the success of this short term programme. Let everyone know that this will be a learning and growth experience for all involved. Further more, the extents to which they are willing to put themselves out of their comfort zone will often determine their potential for personal growth. Continually be asking the question, 'What is God teaching through this experience?' Daily encourage individuals to keep a personal journal and to share in the team both what they want God to do, (for prayer) and what He has done (in praise). Times of prayer and testimony are crucial for all the team as mentioned in paragraph B2 above.

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- The background of the page is a faded photograph of a group of people, likely a community or church group, gathered together. Some individuals are wearing colorful, patterned clothing. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be clearly visible over it.
- B6. Liaison.** Usually the team leader is the liaison with the host ministry, but whoever has this role needs to set up a regular time with the host. This is usually a daily meeting at the end of each day. During this time it is important to both review the day and confirm the agenda for the following day. It is also good to discuss existing or potential problems and to pray together.
- B7. Time off.** Plan regular time off for the team and sight seeing tours if these have been agreed before hand. A tired team is ineffective and easily discouraged. Don't make the mistake of feeling that you have to fill every minute with ministry to either justify the cost of being there or the sense that you have to use the team to the full while there are there. More will be accomplished in the long run if you have a balanced team programme.
- B8. Team and Host joint feed back time.** At the end of the short term programme make time for a joint appraisal of your time together. Let people share their highlights and the low times but in the case of the latter, try to see what was learned through the difficult periods and develop the positives as much as possible. Remember to thank the host and show your appreciation for all the hard work and preparation that they put into the programme. Discuss the possibilities of similar events in the future.

## C. Effective Short Term Outreach Opportunities - After the event

**Introduction:** The work done after the event is all about consolidation. While it would naturally be expected that the host ministry will follow up on all the work done by the team, the follow up needed to be done by the sending church is often omitted. The benefits of the programme can be best consolidated immediately after the return of the team. This is both in the personal growth of the team members, and the ministry growth in the life of the church.

**C1. On returning.** Have a church celebration event as soon as possible after the return of the team. This is a time for hearing what God did and for the whole church to vicariously be part of the event. Have food, testimonies, praise and let the excitement of the returning team members infect the rest of the church. Get testimonies from the wider support team members as well as those who went on the short term team.

Don't let them just drift back home as if we had never realised that they had been away. A five minute slot in the next Sunday morning service, whilst reaching people who couldn't come to the celebration, isn't enough on its own, and communicates that the short term programme wasn't really that important to us as a church.

During the celebration times present the next short term opportunity for others to get involved and let them know you are considering going back to this location in the coming year. Communicate that even if they cannot personally go on the next team they can get involved through being part of the support team for individuals who can. Consider having someone who was on the team being available to speak to other ministries at the church and even think about the opportunities to involve the local press.

**C2. Re-orientation.** When the team returns to the home church there will be reverse culture shock issues that individuals will need help to work through. These could include issues of guilt, lifestyle and criticism of home church or focus ministry etc. Others will have been challenged about their future life direction and still others about issues of theology, ecclesiology and so on. All need help to address these issues and to grow through the experience.

Giving time to the team members at this point helps them to work through the lessons learned and build these into their lives. The team meeting planned for two weeks after their return will help to begin the process of addressing these issues. It could be useful at this point to use an evaluation questionnaire (See sample at the end of this pamphlet) to help the team members to process their short term experience and to think through the long term life changing impact that may well result from it.

The team could even consider continuing to meet together for another six months as an accountability group to help each other to apply the lessons learned. This shared experience of the team could provide relationships of trust and understanding that would be impossible to create artificially.

It is also helpful for the church leadership to go through a similar appraisal process at this point to help them garner the fruit of the experience as a church. Lessons learned now can be extremely helpful in both planning future short term opportunities and also in the ongoing evaluation of the church's 'Global Outreach Plan'. In addition, this gives a good opportunity to appraise the partnership experience and relationship when the short term opportunity had been a joint programme with another organisation.

- C3. Health Issues.** Dependent upon where the team has been working it may well be that some come back with upset stomachs etc. Whilst this is not unusual it is always best to get any illnesses checked out by a local Doctor as soon as possible. Remind the team members to mention where they have been so that the medical staff have the full picture. Follow up on team members to make sure that they have no health problems up to three months after their return. Remind the team members of the importance of continuing any anti Malarial courses to completion and not be tempted to stop now they are back in their home country.
- C4. Feed back to and from the ministry focus / field.** About a month after returning home, contact the leader of the host ministry to send a summary of the team feedback to them for their information and encouragement. At the same time, ask for a written evaluation of the team visit from the host's perspective. Also ask them to let you know what has happened since the team came home. Give them the opportunity to make suggestions as to how to modify any future programmes to learn from this experience and also suggested dates and programme for next years short term opportunity. This will not only provide valuable information but also provide continued encouragement and reinforce the links for prayer and future ministry.
- C5. Planning the next short term opportunity.** This should begin as soon as you get back to the home church!





# DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Effective Short Term Opportunities

## Check list of action points to cover on the field preparation visit

**Short Term Opportunity Name:**

<b>ISSUES TO COVER</b>	
Name and contact details of host	
Dates of the visit	
Size of the team	
Description of the ministry	
Long term ministry goals	
How will the team be used to impact the long term goals?	
Identify the short comings of the team and discuss coping strategies	
Programme content in the light of the above	
Programme outline	
Skills needed	
Daily programme outline including team meetings	
Liaison meeting schedule and timing of final debriefing meeting	
Time off / sight seeing opportunities	

Local transport including travel from arrival point (airport)	
Opportunities for families with children and couples	
Health issues	
Communication facilities	
Team accommodation	
Toilet and washing facilities	
Food for the team	
Finance, i.e. costs; fund transfer arrangements; handling of daily expenses; personal, team and ministry expenses; etc	
Cultural issues to help prepare the team	
Preparation materials available e.g. DVDs; literature; audio material etc.	
Expected outcomes	
Potential for future programmes	
Clarify next steps after return to home church	
Notes on other issues discussed	



# DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Effective Short Term Opportunities

## Check list of action points for Team Administrator

Short Term Opportunity Name:

<i>TEAM MEMBERS</i>	<i>CONFIRMED</i>	<i>TEAM ROLE</i>	<i>TRAVEL CONFIRMED</i>	<i>FINANCE RECEIVED</i>	<i>VISA OBTAINED</i>	<i>INOCULATIONS COMPLETED</i>	<i>TRAVEL INSURANCE</i>	<i>ORIENTATION MEETINGS</i>
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# Outreach Review Form and Personal Evaluation Questionnaire

This form is in two sections. The first part we would appreciate you filling in and returning as it will help us to improve in the planning of future teams.

The second half is personal for your own reflective use and should not be returned with the previous section.

## Your Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: Start: \_\_\_\_\_ Finish \_\_\_\_\_

## The Administration

Was the Outreach good value for money?

Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor

How effective was the Preparation?

Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor

How were the travel arrangements?

Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor

How was the communication prior to the outreach?

Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor

Did you have an effective support group? Yes / No

Was there anything we did not inform you about that could have helped you in your preparations or packing?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Can you suggest ways of improving the administration?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Team Logistics

Were you met at the airport? N/A Yes / No

How was the accommodation? N/A

Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor

Was there adequate time for relaxation? Yes / No

Were the local travel arrangements okay? Yes / No

Was the food adequate? Yes / No

Did you feel well informed? Yes / No

Was there anything that you feel could have been improved?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## The Return

How well do you feel that the church welcomed you back?

Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor

Were you asked to speak at any meetings etc.? Yes / No

Has the reorientation process been helpful? Yes / No

Will you continue to meet as a group? Yes / No

Do you hope to go on another team? Yes / No

Have you had any health problems? Yes / No

Is there anything that you feel we could have done better to help with your return to the church?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# *Outreach Review Form and Personal Evaluation Questionnaire*

This second half is personal for your own reflective use and should not be returned with the previous section. Whilst answering these questions, review your personal journal begun during the team orientation sessions.

## **Expectations**

What were my expectations of God working before I went on this trip?

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In what ways did God meet these expectations?

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## **Relationships**

What do you feel that you contributed to building good team relationships?

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What did you learn about the part that you play in a team?

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## **The Work**

What were the areas of the team's work that gave you the most sense of fulfilment?

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What did you find the most difficult?

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What are the areas of gifting that you feel God might be confirming in you?

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**Lessons Learned**

What are the issues in your life that you feel God has been speaking to you about?

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What is the most significant lesson that you learned?

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**The Future**

What are the steps that with God's help you feel that you need to take to build these lessons into your life?

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**Personal Prayer**

Take a few moments to think through and then write down what you want God to do through you as a result of this experience

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