Birmingham Bible Institute

M.A. Mission –

Part Two: Dissertation

Subject

An Assessment of Short-Term Missions

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Summary of the dissertation

This dissertation will deal with short-term missions in other countries. Since the early 1960’s there has been an enormous and rapid growth of short-term overseas mission work worldwide. The quality and value of this type of mission work varies considerably.

This work is mainly organised by para-church organisations, but there is also a significant amount of short-term missions work conducted independently by individuals and local churches. The relative aspects of each type will be examined.

In making an assessment of both the quality and value of the work I shall examine the following:

1) Biblical examples of short-term missions
2) Its history and growth.
3) The various tasks undertaken on short-term missions.
4) The relationship with long-term mission work.
5) The relationship with the host churches.
6) The benefit and disadvantages that the short-term missions are to long-term missions and their hosts.
7) The training and cultural orientation of the participants
8) Examples of best practice.
9) The financial aspects of missions
10) The benefits of short-term missions to the participants and their churches.

This movement is relatively new in the history of missions and few books have been written on the subject. Such books as there are, tend to concentrate on providing information for individuals contemplating participation. Very little study has been made of the value or quality of the work. Given the shortage of study material, I shall include both case studies and material obtained from interviews. I shall also make use of any literature published by mission organisations promoting their short-term mission work or the policies and philosophy of the organisation. The interviews will be conducted with representatives of various aspects of this study. These will include:

1) Participants in the mission work past and present.
2) Leaders of organisations involved in short-term missions
3) Leaders and pastors on the mission field who host short-term missions.
4) Church leaders whose members have participated.
5) Long-term missionaries that partner with short-term mission work.
1. Introduction

In making an assessment of Short-term Missions, it is first necessary to determine the criteria with which they should be judged. Are they beneficial to the overall mission work of the church? This question is too large to be tackled in one bite; we must break it down into smaller considerations. The answers to many of the questions about Short-Term Missions will inevitably be highly subjective and often reflect the experience of the person giving the opinion. At this stage I must declare an interest. I am Chief Executive Officer of a mission agency, approximately half of whose activity revolves around Short-Term Missions. Nevertheless, this dissertation will seek to explore both sides of the debate. The criteria listed below are far from exhaustive. These particular ones have been chosen because they represent most of the areas of criticism made of Short-Term Missions.

The main areas to be assessed will be:

1) What are valid aims for short-term Missions?
2) How successfully are the aims carried to conclusion?
3) Is the experience beneficial to the mission participant?
4) Are there benefits to the sending agency?
5) Are there lasting benefits to the hosts of the mission trip?
6) Are there benefits to the home churches of participants?
7) Is the preparation and training adequate?
8) Are adequate measures taken to avoid dangers or poor practice?
9) Are the tasks undertaken by participants appropriate?

Short-Term Missions can be divided into two categories. Those that are organised by para-church or denominational agencies, and those organised by local churches for their own members and through their own contacts abroad. The second category are virtually impossible to assess comprehensively because no one documents or records their activities outside their own church.¹ Assessment of these is largely anecdotal in nature.

A further division of categories concerns the participants. Those that participate as an individual, or with one or two others. Secondly - and this is overwhelmingly the majority - those that are part of a team numbering on average 6 to 12 members. Participants can also be divided into those who have skills and training to offer to the mission trip and those who are without a skill but willing to try anything that they are put to.²

2. Phenomenal Growth

There are currently fewer long-term missionaries going out from western nations than at any time in the twentieth century.³ For example the number of long-term missionaries in Pakistan has declined 30% in the past four years.⁴ (This may partly be explained by the increasing militancy of some Muslim clerics in Pakistan). Since the early 1960’s there has been an enormous and rapid growth of short-term overseas mission work worldwide. Accurate figures are difficult to obtain, but it has been estimated that from the USA alone, numbers of participants in short-term mission grew from 6,000 in 1975 to 60,000 in 1975, a tenfold increase. The Southern Baptists of the United States alone sent out 75,000 short-term team members and 81,000 other volunteers in 1996.⁵

Student researcher, Thomas Chandler calculated that only 540 individuals from North America went on Short Term Missions in 1965.⁶ John Kyle, Vice President of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association estimates the current figure at an incredible 450,000.⁷

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⁷ Ibid.
The two organisations leading the way have been Youth With A Mission (YWAM) and Operation Mobilisation (O.M.). Neither organisation have kept good statistical records but YWAM now have 20,000 applicants each year working short-term, from 400 bases in 103 countries. In the United States a study in 1992 showed over 350 agencies offering short-term service. In Britain the 1999 edition of the Short-Term Missions Directory contains 110 organisations offering 13,000 places, the majority abroad. One of the most well known is Tear Fund, who in the summer of 2000 have 215 short-term mission places filled. Students who have the longer summer vacation have dominated the make-up of British short-term teams. John Witt who participated in three summer teams to Africa in three years at Liverpool University estimates that 50% of the Christian Union - and up to 80% of the active (those that joined in C.U. programmes and activities) members participated in a short-term mission programme during their time at university.

The YWAM statistical and information publication 'The Go manual', has the following table showing growth over the past 20 years.

Table 1. The growth of YWAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of nations</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>135</td>
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<td>Number of mission locations</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>224</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Full-time staff</td>
<td>2473</td>
<td>5102</td>
<td>6401</td>
<td>10,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students</td>
<td>3128</td>
<td>7191</td>
<td>7481</td>
<td>13,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of short-termers (including students)</td>
<td>12,706</td>
<td>17,525</td>
<td>32,152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Judd Richard. *Do Short-Term Programmes Achieve The Purposes For Which They Were Established?* Dissertation for degree course at London Bible College 1996. p1
9 Published by Christian Vocations based in Upper Gornal, West Midlands.
10 Interview with David Hart, Short-term missions coordinator for Tear Fund. 19 January 2000
11 Interview with John Witt, formerly a computer studies student, now a computer programmer in Manchester. 15 January 2000.
2.1 Reasons for the Growth

Patrick Johnson's research notes a decline in traditional missionary activity dating from the late 1950s. He attributes this to a drift to a more liberal theology in many western churches. The traditional soteriological emphasis being replaced by a more socio-political agenda. Indicative of this trend was the integration of the International Missionary Council into the World Council of Churches in 1961, as a result of liberal-led thinking in the late 1950s. Many theological seminaries began to question the validity of missiology as a subject worthy of inclusion in the theological curriculum. The 1950s also saw a rise in the establishment and growing independence of national churches in traditional missionary locations. This was evidence for the liberal contention that traditional missionary work was no longer required. Throughout the first half of the century there had been a decline of Christianity in Europe, coupled with - and perhaps as a result of - the trend towards liberalism. Robinson describes this change as 'From mission base to mission field.'

This was certainly the background or the context in which Loren Cunningham and George Verwer undertook their first short-term mission trips into Mexico in the late 1950s. There is no indication from their writings that this decline in soteriological emphasis in missions was at the forefront of their minds as a motivation. Rather they saw the vastness of the need to evangelise and were impatient to get on with the work by every means at their disposal and the means for them were college students in their summer vacation. In Verwer's case, the decline of Christianity in Europe presented a challenge to be addressed, and led to his early departure from the U.S.A. to set up bases in Britain and Belgium in 1961.

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14 Ibid. p59.
One of the main practical reasons that has facilitated the growth in short-term mission has been the reduced cost of travel, particularly by air. The air fare to southern Africa from the United Kingdom is now the equivalent of one week’s average salary and takes only ten hours.

Sociologists tell us that the post-war generations of 'Boomers' and 'Busters' are less willing to commit themselves. That 'Boomers' want personal fulfilment and 'Busters' are motivated by a desire to care for their group. Short-term experience gives those who are reluctant to commit themselves a chance to try-it-and-see-first, and certainly gives ample opportunity for the self-fulfilment for 'Busters' and the experiences and relationships that motivate 'Boomers' into action. The team environment is ideal.

Increased leisure time has also led to a culture of activism. An experience-it-for-yourself attitude. Adventure activities and holidays and a pursuance of new leisure activities have increased enormously. All this adds up to the opportunity and the motivation to experience short-term missions and has led to the growth that we have seen.

3. Definitions

How long is a short-term mission? There is no real definition. In a discussion at the recent consultation of Global Connections for monitoring compliance with the 'Code of Best Practice for Short-Term Missions', it was generally agreed that two years was a significant transition point from short to longer term - or as American agencies tend to term it - 'career missionaries'. REAP International Ministries is one mission that has actually published its own definition. Mission longer than two years is defined as long-term. However,

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18 Boomers generation were born between 1946 and the mid 1960's
Buster generation were born between the mid 1960's and the late 1970's
there is a big difference between two years and two weeks! So a sub-division of the short-term mission is further defined. Up to two months is short-term and between two months and two years is defined as medium-term.\textsuperscript{21} These are the definitions that will be accepted for this dissertation.

Without over-complicating the issue, it should be mentioned that there is also a considerable difference in experience and the training required for a 6-8 week mission than there is for the typical American two-week mission. What we might call the very short-term mission.

4. History

In the summer of 1954 at the age of 18, Lauren Cunningham\textsuperscript{22} joined a group of Christians on a short-term mission trip to Mexico. It was on this trip that he decided to enrol in the Central Bible Institute of the Assemblies of God, in Springfield, Missouri, that Autumn.\textsuperscript{23} In December 1960 after Bible school and completing a masters degree at the University of Southern California, he decided to start a mission aimed at sending large numbers of young people on short and longer term missions, and to call it Youth With a Mission.\textsuperscript{24}

George Verwer\textsuperscript{25} made a similar visit to Mexico in 1957 while a student at Maryville College, New Jersey. Verwer transferred to Moody Bible Institute and the following year founded \textit{Send The Light Inc.}\textsuperscript{26} Verwer took a team to Spain in 1960, and began regular summer missions called \textit{Operation Mobilisation} – a name that was later adopted for the whole organisation. He moved to London as a base for sending teams to mainland Europe in 1961. In the summer of 1962, fifty, mostly young people participated in the European summer programme. In the summer of 1963, the numbers rose to 300. In the

\textsuperscript{22} Hanks Geoffrey. \textit{60 Great Founders}. Christian Focus Publications Ltd. Fearn, Scotland 1995. p167
\textsuperscript{24} Cunningham Loren. \textit{Is that Really You God?} YWAM Publishing, Seattle. 1984 p.38
\textsuperscript{25} Hanks Geoffrey. \textit{60 Great Founders}. Christian Focus Publications Ltd. Fearn, Scotland 1995. p123
\textsuperscript{26} Hicks David, \textit{Globalising Missions}. Masters degree dissertation for Columbia Bible Seminary, South Carolina. 1992. p22
same year, the first team went overland to India.\textsuperscript{27} Today O.M. works in 80 countries and their summer programme takes up to 4,000 participants.\textsuperscript{28} In the intervening forty years, hundreds of organisations have been formed to operate short and medium term missions. Operation Mobilisation required a minimum term of two years for workers going to India because of the distance and cost of travel. In Britain, many of the 110 mission organisations offering short-term opportunities in the ‘Short-term Service Directory’ are long established missions that have traditionally sent out long-term missionaries.\textsuperscript{29} The long-established missions that have begun to include short-term activities must see advantages in this or they would not have done so. Issues such as using short-term missions to raise future support or long-term recruitment will be discussed in the section on ‘Mission-centred aims’.

5. Biblical Examples of Short-Term Missions

One of the obvious criticisms that might be made of Short Term missions is that not much can be accomplished in the allotted time. This criticism would naturally be in the minds of those engaged in long-term missions, as the short-term opportunities first began to emerge in the early 1960s. This criticism lacks credibility when the pattern of missions in the book of Acts is considered.

The spread of the Christian Gospel in the very early days of the church, owed much to pressurised or enforced migration of the early believers because of persecution (Acts 8:1 & 4). Then Peter is pressed by God Himself into communicating the gospel to Gentiles in Acts 10. The first voluntary travelling for mission that we have recorded is Paul’s first missionary journey, beginning in Acts 13. In most of the places that Paul and his team visited, he appears to have accomplished much in a short time. Throughout his missionary career, Paul only seems to have spent more than a few weeks in Ephesus (2 years)

\textsuperscript{27} Hicks David, \textit{Globalising Missions}. Masters degree dissertation for Columbia Bible Seminary, South Carolina. 1992. p23.
\textsuperscript{28} Peter Conlan, (International Projects Director, O.M. Ships). Interview on 19 January 2000.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{The Short-Term Service Directory}. Christian Vocations, Upper Gornal, West Midlands. 1999 edition
And Corinth (18 months) before periods of imprisonment. All of his work would be considered as short or medium-term missions today.

Roland Allen, in his own study of Paul’s missionary methods - written a hundred years ago - argues that a lot can be accomplished in a short time, using local converts to overcome the language and cultural barriers. One may use this argument in support of modern short-term missions, but Allen was not contemplating a short-term commitment by the missionaries themselves. Rather he was saying that the long-term missionary could achieve a lot in this way and move on to other places in their particular field. In today’s world, communication via a translator is a well accepted practice. It can also be argued that we are increasingly faced with a similar language and cultural situation to Paul. English is rapidly becoming a universal language, spoken by large numbers of people in many countries, especially the higher educated.

It can be argued that in the first century covered by the New Testament writers, the church that faced persecution had little time to develop a long-term mission strategy. It is interesting to note that Philip, after his encounter with the Ethiopian in the desert, preaches in several places before arriving in Caesarea (Acts 8:40). He is recorded as still being there 20 years later (Acts 21:8). Even if Philip’s experience was more common in the early church than indicated by Acts, it does not take away from the fact that effective missionary work was accomplished in relatively short visits.

It can be argued that the modern long-term missionary strategy is more akin to the ‘evangelisation by migration’ experience of the early Christians who were persecuted. Those that Peter addresses as ‘The pilgrims of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.’ (1 Peter 1:1. N.K.J.V)

6. Aims and Activities of Short and Medium-Term Mission

6.1 The Danger of Pre-Conceived Plans

One of the mistakes that can be made by short-term missions organisers, is to go to a mission situation with a pre-conceived idea of what they will do there, rather than go with an open and enquiring mind to listen to the local people and research the real needs. Often the host will go along with the visitors' plan out of politeness, or out of a desire not to alienate what they see as potentially for them a very advantageous and helpful relationship, regardless of how appropriate the activity is. This was certainly true in Romania and Hungary 1991 onwards. The Romanian Information service based at Southampton published in their newsletter the amazing fact in 1997, that over 500 charities (unnamed) had been set up in Britain since 1991, for the sole purpose of working in Romania, had ceased to function and millions of pounds were tied up in the frozen accounts of these charities.

The choice of activity may be solely based on the visitors’ own limited knowledge of what is needed in the situation. An example of this are the many teams of young American Christians who every summer go south across the Mexican border for two weeks and invade small towns and villages to show the ‘Jesus Film’ and give out food and clothing. They usually do this nominally in association with the local church. The non-Christian residents of these places are well used to the routine of turning up at these events, responding to the evangelistic appeal, and collecting the food and clothing

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and sometimes money to relieve what they carefully explain to their 'new friends' is their abject poverty!

The young people go back to their churches and parents with glowing testimonies, and video evidence of the 'great things that God did through them' and the near revival that they caused\(^\text{34}\). The young people are happy, so are their church and their parents, the people who received the food and clothing are happy, perhaps even the local church who may also have received help are happy. Everyone is happy, but it is not effective evangelism nor is it effective use of resources.

If the aim of the mission trip is to implement a pre-planned agenda which suits the sending agency or church, this not a desirable aim. At worst is can be little more than a glorified adventure or tourism trip for which the supposed missionary aim is used to justify the raising of the costs from other Christians or trusts.

If on the other hand, the aim is to genuinely serve the host church or mission in tasks that they hold as valuable and helpful to their long-term aims, the mission trip is transformed into a highly valuable event for both the host and the sending agency. The lasting effects on the participants are much more likely to be positive.

6.2 Effective Research

One of the most important factors in achieving effectiveness for short-term missions is thorough research. Potential venues for short-term missions need to be visited by a research worker, ideally between 6-9 months before the mission to give the local church time to prepare for the visit. The researcher needs to be a competent officer of the mission agency or a trusted associate of the agency - this may be a long-term missionary in the area. There are situations when a personal visit may not be necessary and correspondence is sufficient. For example, the host is already a long-term missionary from the sending agency and is well versed on the requirements and capabilities of the short-term workers or the host has successfully received short-term workers on more than two occasions before and are likewise familiar with their requirements, capabilities and limitations.

Below is a list of requirements published by REAP International Ministries as guidelines for their research workers when visiting a potential venue for a short-term building team. Some answers to the questions will be factual, and some will be the subjective opinion of the researcher. Therefore the experience of the researcher and the confidence the sending agency has in their judgement is very important.

1. Does the local host leadership seem reliable and honest?
2. Is the proposed project appropriate to the aims of the sending mission?
3. Is the project within the reasonable capabilities of the team?
4. If the project is not completed, are the hosts capable of completing it?
5. Are the building materials available locally?
6. Do the plans have local planning permission?
7. Are there local builders to assist the team?
8. What contribution will the host church/mission make?

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36 Guidelines for Research Workers. REAP International Ministries 1996.
9. Is there suitable accommodation for the team?
10. Are there adequate toilet and washing facilities?
11. Where will the team’s clothes be washed?
12. What is the local medical provision?
13. Where will the team cook and eat?
14. Where will the team get clean water?
15. Is their situation hygienic enough?
16. What is the best evacuation route?
17. What is the local security situation?

The above set of criteria are designed for a building team. If the team had a
different activity the criteria researched would need to reflect that. For
example, if the aim was evangelism, the following questions may need to be
researched.

1. Has the local church requested the team?
2. Has the local church stated the type of evangelism they would like the team
to do?
3. Will the local Christians be working with the team?
4. Will the team be under local leadership?
5. What evangelism had been done in the area before, either by the local
   Christians or by visiting teams?
6. Was there any effective follow-up to previous work?
7. How effective was previous evangelism?
8. Does the local church have experienced translators?
9. Will local leaders be available to brief the team?
10. What is the attitude of the local authorities to visiting teams?

It is an essential part of good research, to approach the host church or
mission with an open mind, asking what are the needs, and in what way can

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38 Bush Luis. The Long and short of Mission Terms. An article for the magazine 'Mission
Frontiers. Published by USCWM 3/2/00. (faxed from USA with no page reference)
the team best serve the host in their work. Then a plan for the team’s activity can be negotiated according to the team’s abilities, experience and resources.\textsuperscript{39}

There is no doubt that some short-term workers are sent on missions without adequate research. Unfortunately the results of such mission are not documented or published if anything goes wrong. People only want to tell the successful stories. Hence the accounts of failure and inadequacy are almost always anecdotal. Lack of effective research can result in frustration and disappointment all round and a waste of time and money. The longer-term negative emotional and psychological effects on the worker can be very serious.\textsuperscript{40} When a project is well researched and well planned, the results can be very beneficial to all parties. Good research will frequently be the main difference between the trip being a success or a failure. In 1992 REAP International Ministries were offered a large amount of aid for Romanian churches. The transport on a large truck was already arranged and paid for. All REAP had to do was name the places for it to be delivered to. It seemed like a wonderful opportunity. REAP asked the donors to wait a few weeks for the results of a research trip the REAP was undertaking with their co-workers in Romania. The research worker asked all the contacts that he was visiting if they wanted some of the offered aid. The answer from them all was negative. One of the main reasons given was that aid already delivered had caused so much argument and jealousy, they did not want more. The truck of aid was reluctantly declined. In this example, research uncovered a situation that most agencies were ignorant of, at a time when it was broadly assumed that Romanian churches wanted lots of practical aid of this type.

\textsuperscript{39} Interview: Forward David. Author of \textit{Essential guide to the Short-Term Mission Trip} and Co-ordinator of short-term missions for Faith Presbyterian Church, Stokes, New Jersey.

\textsuperscript{40} Fawsett Graham. \textit{Ad-mission, The Briefing and Debriefing of Teams of Missionaries and Aid Workers}. YWAM Harpenden 1999. p108-120
6.3 Evangelism

Many short-term mission trips are aimed purely at evangelism. This was and is certainly true of large evangelism-based organisations such as Operation Mobilisation, Youth With a Mission, Campus Crusade, Youth For Christ and Scripture Union. This aim often has two main purposes. One is the actual conversions resulting from the evangelism and the other is the training and discipling affect on the participants. George Verwer in the early years of Operation Mobilisation (1960-1970) would often state publicly that O.M. was a training organisation. O.M. certainly regards this still as a major aim, but clearly in their policy publications, world evangelism is at the head of their lists of aims and values.  

With this aim, short-term missions are at their most vulnerable to criticism. It is in the area of cross-cultural evangelistic mission, which is traditionally the main thrust of mission, that the short-term programme can be most severely criticised. Most vulnerable of all are the very short two-week long missions so common among North American churches and agencies. This dissertation makes no attempt to defend the two-week cross-cultural evangelistic mission using virtually untrained high school students. Their main redeeming features are some discipling and educational benefits for the young participants.

6.4 Disadvantages of the short-term foreign evangelistic mission.

1. Usually little or no knowledge of the local language.
2. No understanding of local culture and customs.
3. Cultures with a strong hospitality culture and natural respect of foreigners will respond to visitors out of politeness and respect rather than genuine interest in the message.
4. Responses may be for alternative reasons such as wanting a foreign friend or the possibility of financial gain.

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5. Response may be out of a desire to learn English.
6. Relationships cannot be pursued easily after the end of the trip.
7. Mistakes made by the visitors can have serious negative repercussions for the local host after the mission is over.
8. As visitors, they just do not know often what is a genuine response and what is not.

Martin Goldsmith challenges those considering short-term work to ask whether God may be calling them long-term. He sees the barriers of language and ignorance of local culture as serious obstacles to short-term missionaries ever being effective communicators of the Gospel. He concedes that specialist workers such as builders, disaster recovery workers and medical staff, especially to cover the long-term workers who are going on furlough, have a role to play.

Goldsmith believes that in most situations 'The tasks of evangelism and teaching God's church, must largely be fulfilled by full-time missionaries with their specialist training and knowledge of the culture and language. They alone have the time and freedom of movement which are needed for this work.' He emphasises that this is particularly true in the Islamic world, where it is necessary to build a relationship of trust with local people to whom the missionary is witnessing his faith. It is doubtful that Verwer and Cunningham would disagree with Goldsmith's assessment. This is evidenced by the fact that in both their organisations there has been a long-standing policy of working with and in support of the career missionary or local church. They have recruited their own long-term missionaries via their short programmes and these have worked as church-planting workers.

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43 Ibid p110
44 Ibid p111
46 Interviews with Peter Conlan and George Verwer.
Martin Goldsmith highlights the difficulty of understanding the customs and cultures that are so radically different to those they are familiar with. The short-term and non-professional missionary are at a serious disadvantage trying to overcome the cultural barriers.\textsuperscript{47} Griffiths points out that in some eastern cultures such as Japan, there is a strong attachment to ‘Your teacher’ almost a \textit{guru} attitude to the missionary that led you to conversion. This does not easily transfer to a new person. Many converts fall away if their missionary is replaced.\textsuperscript{48} This has serious implications for short-term evangelism in these cultures.

6.5 Advantages of the short-term foreign evangelistic mission

1. Manpower; the number of workers that a local church or mission may want for a short period for an evangelistic event or special purpose can often be supplied by an incoming group. Large-scale literature distribution is an example of this.

2. The enthusiasm of the short-term workers can be an encouragement and an example to the local Christians.

3. The \textit{‘novelty effect’} of western young people visiting, will often draw in local people out of curiosity and thus bring them within reach of the message that the local church are promoting. Radstock Ministries working with churches in Ukraine, in the ten years that they have had freedom to do this, have used teams of westerners to take advantage of this fact.\textsuperscript{49}

O.M. and YWAM quickly realised that the more effective method was to engage teams in support of longer-term teams, long-term missionaries or local churches, whose aims were church planting\textsuperscript{50}. So that virtually all O.M.

\textsuperscript{47} Goldsmith Martin. \textit{Don’t Just Stand There}. Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester 1976103-115
\textsuperscript{49} Interview with Jill Kingston, Ukraine coordinator for Radstock ministries. 1995
\textsuperscript{50} Interview with Peter Conlan. International Projects Director, O.M. Ships. 19 January 2000.
evangelism is now conducted in this way.\textsuperscript{51} Greg Livingstone makes a strong point that it is typical for O.M. to put a large team of 20 members working alongside a career missionary for a summer. "This team would usually find more interested people than the missionary would ferret out in five years. The missionary could then give all his time to following up those interested in the gospel."\textsuperscript{52}

Lack of planning and preparation may have led to poor and ineffective presentation of the message. Training in how to speak to groups or tell their own experience one-to-one will significantly increase the effectiveness of the participants.\textsuperscript{53} Unfortunately, this type of preparation is sometimes lacking.

David Forward has found that \textit{Vacation Bible Schools} have been the most effective form of evangelism for the teams he has led.\textsuperscript{54} The nature of this activity gives a much longer contact between the team members and the people they are seeking to evangelise. This enables friendships to form and a much fuller and considered explanation of the Christian message to be communicated.

Campus Crusade (known as Agape in Europe) benefit in their evangelism from the novelty effect, the desire to learn English and the desire to befriend a westerner in their one-to-one evangelism in universities and colleges in many parts of the world. In this work the apparent \textit{disadvantages} of not knowing the local language, or culture, and attracting listeners for the wrong motives, have often been turned to an \textit{advantage}.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{51} Interview with George Verwer, International co-ordinator of O.M. January 2000.
\textsuperscript{54} Interview: Forward David. Author of 'Essential guide to the Short-Term Mission Trip' and Co-ordinator of short-term missions for Faith Presbyterian Church, Stokes, New Jersey.
\textsuperscript{55} Hawthorne Stephen. 'Maximum Short-Term Mission' a chapter in \textit{Stepping Out} YWAM Publishing, Seattle. 1992P.86
Specialist teams such as music, mime and drama teams have been able to attract audiences with the additional aim of sharing the Christian message either with a group or individuals. Again, if this is done under the supervision of the long-term local ministry, it can be an effective means of reaching listeners that is not usually open to the local church or mission. This gives opportunity for people with such skills that they might be using regularly at home, to be effective in a mission situation. Douglas Millham encourages those thinking of short-term missions, in making their initial investigations into where they might serve, to first consider what skills they have to offer.56

There is a danger that short-term evangelism can be to the detriment of the local church and its relationships with the local community in countries that are predominately of another religion such as Islam or Hinduism. Some such countries are effectively closed to such mission work, but there are other countries, such as Pakistan and India, that will tolerate a Christian presence, but the local Christians need to be sensitive and often walk a tightrope in their local relationships.57 A legacy of resentment and damage to relationships that have been carefully built up over years can be left behind by the team. Only by working at the request of the local church and under their guidance and leadership can this be avoided. Michael Nazir Ali58 makes a plea for short-term mission agencies working in places like Pakistan, to first to establish a relationship with the national church before engaging in evangelism. Such independent work is often carried out in an unwise manner to the detriment of the established church. He deplores agencies that have a 'lets do it and get thrown out' attitude. At the same time he applauds short-term agencies that have partnered with the local church and given them encouragement.59

On the positive side, many churches in these difficult situations consider the visit of such a team as positive support for them from outside. It shows that

56 Millham Douglas. 'A Call for Ordinary People' a chapter in Stepping Out YWAM Publishing. Seattle. 1992 P.19
58 Former Provost of Lahore Cathedral and later Bishop of Raiwind, Pakistan.
they are not as isolated as the local (often hostile) community may think. They sometimes consider the team's visit as a 'litmus test' of their own commitment, by being prepared to stand with the team and openly evangelise, not letting fear of the consequences stop them from being bold. Short-term missions have also had an important role in some countries in pushing open previously closed doors, such as Russia.\(^{60}\) Getting the balance right between these two approaches is difficult and complicated. All one can say is that such evangelistic work must only ever be undertaken after careful research and consideration of all the relevant factors.

Ralph Winter shows that there are still over 2 billion people in the world who will not hear the gospel unless someone crosses the cultural and language gap to reach them.\(^{61}\) Should we abandon the less effective mission work just to leave the most effective in place? The question is, will the task ever be accomplished without the vast manpower that short-term missions represent? The answer must be that the church should use all means at its disposal. To put the best possible training in place for the short-term evangelistic mission worker and to use those workers in support of and under the control of the long-term missionary or local church.

One may argue that the best people to evangelise are the local people. After all they know the language and the culture far better than the missionaries. This is certainly a major development in countries such as South Korea, Brazil and Nigeria, where the church has grown rapidly in recent years. Some would say that the foreign missionary's work is done in many places. Wagner strongly opposes this view. He finds it an anomaly that missionaries regard themselves as better than the local church at doing just about everything else, except evangelism.\(^ {62}\) There is still a call and a need for the church-planting missionary. Wagner's enthusiasm for mission by every means stands in contrast to Griffiths and Goldsmith's reservation about short-term work.

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Wagner cites the work of city evangelists such as Carlos Annacodia and Omar Cabrera in Argentina as good examples of effective short-term evangelism.

### 6.6 Practical and Humanitarian Assistance

If the aim of the short-term mission trip is a practical project, a team can be highly effective. This is particularly true if the team contains skilled specialists or tradesmen. The practical work is rarely the sole activity of the team. It will occupy most of the day, but in the evenings and weekends the team will engage in other ministry and fellowship with the local church members, thus building the relationships and adding to the overall experience of the team and their hosts.

The two-week teams from North America to Latin America often engage in practical work, but the shortness of the trip limits the amount of useful work that can be done. This length of mission might even be considered by many to be a gesture of friendship to the local host and has value in that. The short two-week trip does seem to dominate the north American culture. This is because annual holidays in North America are usually only two or three weeks as opposed to the longer holidays in Europe.

University students do have more time in their summer vacation, and the whole short-term mission idea has developed on the back of the student summer availability. In North America the desire to participate in summer missions has always battled with the need for many students to work and earn money during the vacation. This problem is increasingly so in Britain too since the financial support for students from the government has been reducing dramatically over recent years. In Britain this may well lead to a serious reduction in the number of candidates coming forward.

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65 Interview with Matthew Spina, youth pastor, Ashland Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Vorhees, New Jersey, USA. November 1999
Practical teams of 2-3 weeks can be very effective if there is a high skill content in the team.\(^6\) This was demonstrated by the many teams of skilled workers that went to eastern European countries in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the various Communist regimes there. The appalling conditions in the orphanages, hospitals and mental institutions in these countries motivated many efforts to help the situation. If enough funds and equipment could be raised, a team of 6-10 skilled workers highly motivated, demonstrated that they could transform the kitchens, toilets, showers, plumbing and electrical supply of many of these sad institutions.

The majority of the early teams to eastern Europe were from ordinary churches. For most it was a short-term response to the situation and within three years the number of teams travelling east reduced to a fraction of what it was to start with. At the Easter 1991 services at the Crestin Dupa Evanghelie church in Craiova, Romania, there were about 10 foreign visitors. In 1994 at Easter there was only one visiting speaker. Titi Vieru, the church secretary commented on how the amount of visitors had dropped in four years. The publicity given to the conditions in Romania and Albania on television was the key factor in motivating the efforts to help. The sad fact is that once a situation is no longer on the television in the West, the Christian response reduces dramatically! This raises questions about where the Western church is receiving its motivation from. Those who continue to work in Romania today are made up mainly of three types of organisation.

1) Longer established missions, who in response to the need have added this type of practical ministry to their activities. Example: The Romanian Missionary Society and the European Christian Mission.

2) A relatively small number of churches who have kept up their links and the practical help that they offer. This is particularly true if that church sent out missionaries to those countries on a longer-term basis. Example: Knowle

Parish Church, West Midlands, still raising money and sending teams and equipment eight years after their first involvement.

3) New organisations that began as an initial response but then developed into a long-term ministry, registering their own charities and raising funds for the work. Examples of this are 'Romania Link' and 'Blythswood'

More effective in using the less skilled volunteers are the teams that go for 5-8 weeks. This type of team is popular with British mission organisations. Many long-established British missions have added this type of practical team work to their activities. The teams are most effective if they have at least one skilled member, usually a builder, who can supervise the rest of the volunteers. These teams will either do a project on their own, or more commonly work in partnership with some of the local church members. These teams can put up a simple structure for a church building, school classroom or orphanage accommodation in 5-8 weeks. Often the building does not get completed by the team, but is far enough advanced to be easily completed by the local partners.

There are many other types of practical help that are offered by mission agencies. To examine them all adequately and assess their effectiveness would require a separate study. Below is a list of the main areas of practical work carried out by short or medium-term mission participants overseas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Art/craft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food distribution</td>
<td>Mechanical work</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Horticulture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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67 See appendix 2, British missions offering practical short-term mission opportunities.
6.7 Assessment of Practical and Humanitarian Assistance.

It is hard to be critical of the practical aims and activities. It is an ideal activity for a short or medium-term team or individuals. This is with the proviso that the activity has been well researched and the team properly prepared. Many Christians want to make more than a financial contribution to helping the overwhelming problems of poverty and disaster relief. They regard it as a fundamental Christian duty to do so. A missionary in The Republic of Congo once said ‘An empty stomach has no ears’. Short-term practical missions give ordinary Christians the opportunity to respond personally to this call. To become what some have called ‘A world Christian’. 

Michael Griffiths, in some of his more recent writing, comes out in favour of Christians with professional skills, using the skills to enter restricted countries in what he calls ‘creative access’. He also supports the ‘Short-term visitor’ to support long-term mission locations with particular expertise.

Accomplishing practical projects in a short time, with highly motivated voluntary personnel, is a strength of the western culture, which we can employ to serve in other cultures that are more family and hospitality based. The short-term teams usually bring with them all or part of the necessary finance to accomplish the practical task. This provides the host with buildings and facilities that are very valuable to them, which they otherwise would not have. The satisfaction level of the visiting volunteers is high because they know that their work will be useful and appreciated long after they have gone home. Further support for the hosts is often generated by the team members and their churches after their return home, what might be described as ‘secondary giving’. Sometimes long-lasting relationships are formed as a result of the trip, to the benefit of both parties.

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72 Ibid. p23.
One criticism sometimes made of the mission trip with practical aims is that the activity is taking away jobs from local people. This assumes that the practical work would be done by local workmen, employed by the hosts, if the team didn’t come. Whilst this may be valid in a small number of situations, it is not so in the vast majority. The work is only made possible by the activity and funds raised by the team. An example of this is Bethel Church, Ndola, Zambia. They purchased a plot of land for a new building and were unable to do anything with it for several years until a short-term team from REAP International Ministries came and constructed the building. The team raised the money and completed most of the building in 1996. The church then completed it after the team departed. It is sometimes said that the missions should just send the equivalent amount of money for the hosts to accomplish the task. This assumes that the money would be available to the mission even if the team was not recruited and sent. This however, is not the real situation. The team members only raise the money because they are going personally on the mission trip. To assume that you could ask individuals to raise the money and donate it instead of going is idealistic in the extreme, it just would not happen.

A more relevant criticism is that the short-term mission activity creates or perpetuates dependency in the minds of the hosts. This is a danger faced by all mission activity and not just by the short or medium-term work.

A further criticism that could be made is that the short-term fund-raising activities are diverting finances away from long-term mission work. This criticism carries with it the assumption that long-term mission work is always more valid than short-term mission and therefore should take priority.

It is not a universal view that skilled specialists can be an effective aid to local churches and permanent missionary work. Michael Griffiths believes that the

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value of non-professional missionaries has been greatly exaggerated. The problem of trying to do two jobs is immense.\(^7\) The doctor working in a third world situation will have great demands on his time and energy, with little left over for church planting. They are often limited to practical witness and some personal contact. Many consider this as a valid activity in its own right.

The one area in which Griffiths concedes that the 'non-professional' missionary has a role to play is in countries not open to the professional missionary, such as Islamic countries.\(^6\) Griffiths points out that the scriptural examples of Christ and the early church show a compelling mandate for mission activity to include social action and economic development.\(^7\) Goldsmith agrees with this view. Whilst believing that the career missionary is the best way for mission to be effective, he concedes that it is legitimate for skilled Christians such as doctors and engineers to work in countries that restrict Christian work. Showing the love of Christ in a practical way is a useful alternative to the career missionary.\(^8\)

Shepherd, somewhat controversially questions the whole concept of a humanitarian witness, that evangelising and social action are not one and the same thing. Evangelisation is the primary activity of mission and that social action is very much a secondary activity.\(^9\) He cites Beyerhaus in support of his view, 'Mission occurs when - and only when - it is directed towards putting man's existence, through a conscious decision of faith…..The planting and growth of the church as the body of Christ in the world remains the primary goal of mission.'\(^10\)

The need for social action in response to the urbanisation of vast populations who live in squalor in vast shanty towns on the edges of large third world

\(^6\) ibid. P118
\(^7\) Griffiths Michael. *Shaking the Sleeping Beauty*. Inter-Varsity Press. Leicester, 1980 p78-84
\(^10\) Ibid p31.
cities, is well beyond the scope of existing mission agencies.\textsuperscript{81} The need for armies of short-term workers, preferably with practical skills is hard to dismiss.

6.8 Preaching and Teaching

Vacation Bible schools, which might be included under this heading have already been mentioned under evangelism. It needs to be noted that the vacation Bible school is also a means of teaching the Christians.

The short-term preaching/teaching trip is as old as Christianity itself. When is an itinerant preaching tour a short-term mission? It is worth noting though, that many modern-day short-term mission trips come about as a result of a leader or pastor going first to preach. The preaching trip takes on a secondary role as a research trip that initiates a visit by others, usually ordinary church members. The relatively small cost of air fares in today's western economy has facilitated a great increase in the number of such trips.

Preachers are well received in most mission situations. The early missionary and colonial legacies have created a myth that the white man is automatically a good preacher worth listening to. Even young people who are relatively new and untutored in the Christian faith are given a platform to share the little they have. Claire Wright went to work in Mozambique in her capacity as a physiotherapist in 1993. In her first letter back to the agency director who sent her there she wrote, 'I came here as a physiotherapist, but today I preached to a thousand people!'\textsuperscript{82} This is often a benefit to the young person, but not automatically of value to the congregation. This uncritical attitude has opened the door to poor teaching and the spread of cults.

This whole situation perpetuates cultural arrogance on the part of westerners.\textsuperscript{83} The idea that we are superior in most of what we do and in our culture, is deeply ingrained into the psyche of westerners. \textit{From-the-west-to-}

\textsuperscript{82} Letter to the director of REAP International ministries.
\textsuperscript{83} STEM Ministries. Team Training Manual. STEM Ministries, Minneapolis, 1997. p16
the-rest is seen as the natural order of things. This distortion of relationship is usually encouraged by many host locations who often accept this situation as normal.  

There are still too few mission agencies or churches that will invest in bringing good preaching and teaching ministry to the home churches from abroad. In eastern Europe, the churches have produced some excellent teachers such as Josif Tson who tours extensively in Britain and America, and a whole generation of Christians who persevered in their faith under repressive Communist regimes. The speed with which large numbers of preachers rushed into eastern Europe when the doors opened with the attitude that they were there to teach rather than learn, shows the extent of the cultural arrogance that we in the west often suffer from.

The missionary effort of the west is currently being eclipsed by the churches of former missionary locations. Examples of these are South Korea, Brazil, Philippines and Argentina. These will soon be added to by other nations from Africa and South America. The churches of eastern Europe are taking the Christian message to places like Siberia. Oradea Bible College, in Romania, regularly sends out short-term mission teams of students each summer to Siberia.

It has always been a feature of mission work that the sending church, which may be a single congregation, or a denominational mission, expects their missionaries to plant churches in their own doctrinal and structural image. As Newbigin puts it 'Their business is to impose on younger churches the ethical standards laid down by the sending churches as an essential part of their work.' The desire of some churches or denominations to reproduce only in

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86 Newbigin Lesslie The Open Secret. Erdmans, Grand Rapids, 1978. p146
their own image is self-gratifying and takes no account of cultural or ethnic consideration.

Inviting participants of short-term mission teams to preach is often an act of hospitality by the hosts. A mark of respect for the visitor more than a belief that their preaching is more profound or relevant to the needs of the congregation. The more experienced preacher, such as a pastor or recognised Bible teacher from the west, does have a valuable teaching role. However, he or she needs cultural briefing before embarking on such trips.

6.9 Prayer

Perhaps surprisingly, 26 agencies in the Short-Term Service Directory list prayer among their short-term activities. One would think that all Christian short-term workers would engage in prayer for the location that they were working in. One could also presume that the agency would wish that these workers would pray for the location long-term.

Only an examination of the agency's literature reveals what is meant by this entry in the Short-Term Service Directory. Some agencies organise trips into countries where open Christian work is not permitted, purely so that the team can pray in the situation. Others list prayer as an activity included with other activities. This is rather confusing because as already mentioned, presumably all short-term teams pray.

As an example, YWAM lists 'Prayer Treks' in northern China. Agencies such as Arab World Ministries will organise this type of trip to North African countries such as Morocco and Tunisia. It is seen as valuable that the prayer takes place in the country that is the subject of the prayer. Is there particular value in praying in the country as opposed to praying for that country from

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88 YWAM publicity Global Outreach 2000.
89 Arab World Ministries publicity Go Grow 2000
Is the prayer more powerful or effective because of the physical location of the supplicant? No doubt the educational, and inspirational aspects of being in the location are helpful when praying. Also, after returning from the location, the participants are more likely to continue to pray for the people and places that they have first hand knowledge of. They also become a source of information to others in their churches who might then pray.

The question of whether the prayers are more effective just because they are prayed on location is a more difficult question. It is difficult to make a case from the scriptures for location prayers being more effective. The whole emphasis of prayer in the scriptures is that you can affect situations at a distance. The Apostle Paul several times writes to distant churches saying that he is praying for them.

Peter Wagner since 1990 has given great emphasis to spiritual warfare and combating ‘Territorial spirits’. He has devoted a whole book to the subject. It can be argued that if demonic spirits control certain areas, then it is more effective to confront them by prayer in the location, given that demons from the evidence in scripture are neither omnipresent or omniscient. Whether the young participants that tend to make up prayer teams have the spiritual maturity and experience to engage in this type of activity is another area of doubt.

Prayers are made more effective by the supplicants personal spirituality and a discerned knowledge of God’s will to fuel the prayer. The mission organisers might make an argument from experience. It is a great assistance to

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motivation for prayer if the pray-ers are actually in the country experiencing the situation that they are praying for. Concentrated prayer based on first-hand knowledge is easier to motivate in this way, compared with trying to motivate the same people to pray back home if they never went. So as a means of generating prayer and knowledge of the target country, this type of mission achieves its aim.

7. Agency-Centred Aims

Whether agency-centred or agency-beneficial aims are legitimate reasons for employing short-term mission programmes, is a very subjective and perhaps even emotive discussion. The list of priorities and aims of each agency or church would will differ with the general aims and history of the agency or church. The early organisations such as YWAM and OM clearly had evangelism as the major emphasis or aim. However, the Christian training or discipleship aspects of the activity had clear benefits for the participants. YWAM's most popular programme is called a Discipleship Training School (DTS) which is three months of training followed by two or three months of field evangelism. The training is not just for the immediate evangelism, but emphasises a lifetime of commitment to world evangelism.

The early short-term mission programmes organised by these agencies and others that followed their example, were often criticised as shallow, inept and sometimes counterproductive. Goldsmith was one missionary educator who spoke out against the short-term idea. Michael Griffiths was among the more prominent educators who renewed the call to traditional full-time career missionary work. Lack of the language and knowledge of the culture were

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96 Judd Richard. *Do Short-Term Programmes Achieve The Purposes For Which They Were Established?* Dissertation for degree course at London Bible College 1996, P.19
100 Singlehurst Laurence. *Advance.* YWAM magazine 27 January 2000. p.3
101 Goldsmith Martin. *Don’t Just Stand There.* Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester 1976. p111
cited - sometimes legitimately - as reasons why the short-term agencies should leave the job to the 'professionals' in the form of career missionaries.

By the mid 1970's it was clear that short-term was here to stay, it was growing and in fact was achieving some remarkable success in terms of church planting and new converts. ¹⁰³

The next major development was the converging of two developing trends. First the short-term mission agencies began to establish long-term activities that were in turn supported by the short-term activities of the same agencies. ¹⁰⁴

An early example of this was O.M. establishing a long-term team in France in 1967, which has always been one of their major short-term targets. Places like India and the Middle East needed long-term teams in place because of the distance from the home bases.

Second it is possible that observing this trend was influential in the decision of the traditional long-term agencies to join the 'band-wagon' and begin offering short-term opportunities to serve, usually alongside and in support of their long-term workers. However, this convergence of method, did not and still does not mean a convergence of a priority of aims. An influencing factor may have been the fact that many of the early short-term mission participants were now coming through into long-term service with traditional agencies and were increasingly in a position to influence mission policy. Some even established their own agencies. ¹⁰⁵ Examples are Greg Livingstone establishing Frontiers, Ron George - People International and George Miley, the Antioch Network. ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Peter Conlan 19 January 2000. Peter Conlan is International Projects Coordinator for O.M. He has been working with O.M. since 1966.
¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p30-32
Richard Judd (a missions lecturer at London Bible College) conducted an interesting survey of reasons why some mission agencies established their short-term programmes.\textsuperscript{107}

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING SHORT-TERM MISSIONS</th>
<th>Number of agencies (max. 15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To allow people to experience cross-cultural mission in order to engender some form of future commitment.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To allow people to make a contribution to the task of world evangelism.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a recruitment tool.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People want experience.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise the profile of the agency with Christians</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To allow those who do not want to go long-term to assist in world evangelism.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the sample in Judd’s study is small, it is very representative and therefore valuable. He shows that the three main stated motivations of the agencies are:

1) To engender future financial and prayer support
2) To allow people to make a contribution to the task of world evangelism
3) To recruit long-term workers.

In this section, aims 1 and 3 will be considered. Aim 2 will be dealt with under 'Participant-centred aims'.

Taken as a whole, the survey shows a dominance of mission-centred motives. The surprising omission from the list is the discipleship and personal growth

\textsuperscript{107} Judd Richard. \textit{Do Short-Term Programmes Achieve The Purposes For Which They Were Established?} Dissertation for degree course at London Bible College 1996. p.19
factors that predominate in the motives of the participants. Judd's research shows the remarkable differences between the participants' motives (see table 5) and those of the agencies (see table 2).

Interest-raising, long-term recruitment and funds-generating motives are obviously legitimate reasons in the eyes of the missions themselves for having short-term programmes. Short-term programmes are being used in the interests of the agencies. Few would argue that raising informed and enthusiastic supporters is an undesirable thing. The participant has been and seen the work first-hand and knows how their financial support will be used. They can also become useful advocates for that particular agency. The STEM research shows that short-term missions are more successful at raising future local representatives of the agency than future missionaries.

Agencies offering short-term programmes can be categorised under three headings:

1) Long-standing traditional agencies that have added short-term programmes to their long-term work, often in the same locations as the long-term workers. (see appendix 3 for a list of examples)

2) Newer agencies (established since 1980) that have built in short-term programmes from the beginning.

3) Agencies that were established as short-term agencies, even though they have retained a core of long-term workers that facilitate the short-term programmes.

It may have been that the obvious and growing success of early short-term mission agencies like YWAM, OM, Agape, Latin Link and International Teams, has been an important factor in both the long-established mission agencies adding short-term opportunities, and the establishment of so many newer agencies that have majored on short-term programmes or agencies that have them built in as an integral part of their operating philosophy.


Some of the long-established U.K. based mission agencies that have added short-term opportunities to their programmes

(Source - The Short-Term Service Directory. 2000)

Africa Inland Mission
Agape (Campus Crusade in USA) Arab World Ministries
Baptist Missionary Society
The Church Army
Church's Ministry Among Jewish People
Christian Literature Crusade
European Christian Mission
Habitat for Humanity
International Nepal Fellowship
Interserve
London City Mission
Mid-Africa Ministry
Nepal Leprosy Trust
New Tribes Mission
OMF International
Open Air Campaigners
Pocket Testament League
Red Sea Mission Team
Scripture Union
SIM UK
South American Mission Society
Tearfund
United Beach Missions
USPG
The Methodist Church
WEC International
World Vision
Wycliffe Bible Translators
Youth For Christ


7.1 Mission Finances

Almost all mission agencies in North America and Britain report an aging donor base that is not being replaced by younger supporters, and a drop in real terms in financial contributions to long-term missionaries.\textsuperscript{110} This trend can be cited by both sides of the debate. Some might argue that the growth of the short-term missions has drawn money away from career missionaries. Others would argue that the trend – which pre-dates 1960 – highlights the need to interest the younger generation in missions and that the short-term mission is a helpful tool towards this goal.

The STEM research among former short-term participants, (see table 3 below) indicates a raised level of giving to mission work after the person has returned from a mission trip. REAP International Ministries found that all of their highest individual donors have first been on one of their short-term mission trips.\textsuperscript{111}

STEM Ministries in the United States conducted a survey of past team members in 1989 to determine changes in their giving to missions. (See table 3). They received 366 replies.\textsuperscript{112}

Table 3. Changes in Financial Giving Per Month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before short-term mission</th>
<th>After short-term mission</th>
<th>Percentage Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number and % of 294</td>
<td>% of 279</td>
<td>Percentage Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>87 - 29.6</td>
<td>21 - 7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1-10</td>
<td>73 - 24.8</td>
<td>44 - 15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11-25</td>
<td>60 - 20.4</td>
<td>52 - 18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$26-50</td>
<td>31 - 10.5</td>
<td>64 - 22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$51-100</td>
<td>17 - 5.8</td>
<td>54 - 19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100 +</td>
<td>26 - 8.8</td>
<td>44 - 15.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(the different numbers are because not all respondents answered all the questions)


\textsuperscript{111} Wheeler Matthew, Financial Administrator for REAP International Ministries.

Table 3 shows a significant increase in the amount of giving to mission after the respondents had experienced going to the mission location and participating first-hand.

The argument that short-term missions draw away financial support for long-term missions is difficult to sustain. The argument assumes that there is a limited amount of money available for missions. What Greg Livingstone calls the 'Limited-pie theory'. Very few participants raise the money largely from church central funds. The usual pattern is for the church to give a nominal amount, typically £1-200 to a participant. Most of the fees for a short-term mission outside of Europe range from £1,000-1,500 for a 4-8 week programme. Most of the money is raised from other sources. There seems to be no limit to the ingenuity of people raising funds for short term missions. All kinds of sponsored events from mountain climbing to haircuts and from parachute drops to busking. Below are some of the more popular sources of funding for short-term missions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family and friends</th>
<th>Personal contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored events</td>
<td>Central church funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant making trusts</td>
<td>School and college bursaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional associations</td>
<td>Loans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The evidence strongly points to the conclusion that the vast majority of funds for short-term missions comes from other sources than the traditional long-term mission support. This means that the overall amount of money raised for missions has been substantially increased by the growth of short-term missions.

In the past 30 years the number of mission agencies in the west has increased enormously. Accurate figures are not available, but an increase of

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500% is not an exaggeration. Even with the increased prosperity of western economies, this means that more and more agencies are chasing the available financial support. It is inevitable that new and ever more imaginative means of fund raising will be attempted, especially in America. Some traditional agencies such as W.E.C. forbid their workers to appeal publicly or privately for money. This philosophy is now very rare. At the other extreme 'Open Doors' in America use the secular system of telephone canvassing. Loren Cunningham has a very balanced view on fundraising. He gives YWAM workers sound practical as well as faith-based advice on raising their finances.\textsuperscript{115} In his book 'Daring to live on the edge' he gives advice on having faith (pages 27-46), giving (pages 115-130) how to ask for money (pages 145-154) and how to assess western affluence (pages 155-162).

### 7.2 Recruitment of long-term staff.

Undoubtedly the greatest area of success in finding long-term workers via short-term programmes has been the short-term mission agencies \textit{themselves}, in retaining their own workers long-term. The vast majority of long-term staff working with agencies like YWAM and O.M., began their association with a short-term intention and then just stayed on, or returned after a period back home to raise long-term support. An example of this is Peter Conlan,\textsuperscript{116} who after completing Bible College joined O.M. in 1966, with the intention of serving with O.M. for one year. He is still serving with O.M. 34 years later.\textsuperscript{117} This is far longer than the typical career missionary serves who started out intending to be long-term. O.M. has many other long-termers of this type. O.M. currently has about 1200 workers that have been serving for 5 years or more.\textsuperscript{118}


\textsuperscript{116} International Projects Director for O.M. ships. (O.M. has 2 ships, the M.V. Logos II and M.V. Doulos.

\textsuperscript{117} Interview with Peter Conlan, 19 January 2000.

\textsuperscript{118} Interview with Peter Conlan, 19 January 2000
In ‘Ditch’ Townsend’s survey of selected (232 out of 926 participants) former Tear Fund short-term participants, there is a significant increase in the amount of time spent overseas on mission work after the participants’ first mission experience from the mid 1980’s onward. This research supports the widespread anecdotal evidence that there is an increasing trend for people considering long-term mission work, to first seek to experience short-term working in overseas missions, often in their intended long-term location. Townsend had 105 replies(232 mailed). Answers to the survey showed a positive attitude by the participants to short-term mission, with more than half of them actually returning to the field, but with two thirds attempting to do so (including failed applications).

This trend could well be explained by the fact that, the long-term mission agencies have joined in the practice of offering short-term opportunities. This may have drawn the participant into work with that particular agency or gives people who were already considering that agency an opportunity to ‘test the water’ both with the agency and the location.

Short-term service also has a benefit to long-term mission work in that it does help some to see that they are not suited to overseas work or the stress of living in an alien culture. Before the days of modern short-term missions, one of the problems of missionary societies was the missionary whose first visit to a the field was the start of what was intended as a career, only to find that they were not suited and returned home permanently at the first opportunity, which was usually at the end of their first five-year term. They were known in mission circles as the ‘one-termers’. Matthew Spina (from New Jersey USA) went on a short-term mission to Mozambique in 1994, with an open mind about long-term mission service. He says that the experience changed his life for the better, but convinced him that his place of Christian

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120 Ibid p.4  
service was to be in the USA. He is now the youth pastor for his church and organises annual short-term mission trips for the young people of his church.\textsuperscript{122}

Former O.M. participants are present as long-term missionaries in dozens of countries around the world. The longevity record is probably owned by Ron Penny, who went with the first O.M. team to India in 1962 and is still there today, having worked for other organisations in India after O.M. Approximately 50\% of the career missionaries in Italy, first went there with Operation Mobilisation.\textsuperscript{123}

O.M. have a remarkable record in training mission leaders. Apart from their excellent record in retaining their own short-termers as long-term leaders, an impressive list of ex-O.M’ers now head other missions, many founded by them. The late Al Hatch at the IFMA/EFMA Latin America mission consultation in May 1988 referred to 'A veritable missions Mafia of former O.M’ers' in the leadership of a number of new Latin American agencies.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{122} Interview with Matthew Spina, New Jersey. November 1999.
### Table 4. Mission Founders Influenced by O.M.\(^{125}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AGENCY FORMED/AREA</th>
<th>O.M. EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virgil Amos</td>
<td>Ambassadors Fellowship (Europe, Africa)</td>
<td>Iran, India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Ascot &amp; John Ferwerda</td>
<td>Middle East media</td>
<td>Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federico Bertuzzi</td>
<td>Misiones Mundiales</td>
<td>Europe, M.V. Dulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pablo Carrillo</td>
<td>Project Magreb (North Africa)</td>
<td>Mexico, Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Choi</td>
<td>Korea Harbour Evangelism</td>
<td>Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron George</td>
<td>People International</td>
<td>India, Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Gonzalez</td>
<td>Alturas-Cursas Biblios</td>
<td>Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.P. Yohannan</td>
<td>Gospel for Asia</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Livingstone</td>
<td>Frontiers (Muslim world)</td>
<td>Austria, Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Miles</td>
<td>REAP Int. Ministries (Africa, Eastern Europe)</td>
<td>Europe, India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Miley</td>
<td>Antioch Network</td>
<td>India, ships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Moyle</td>
<td>Central European Mission Fellowship</td>
<td>M.V. Logos, Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doug Nichols</td>
<td>Action International Ministries (Philippines)</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Samuel</td>
<td>Quiet Corner (India)</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heinz Strupler</td>
<td>New Life (Switzerland)</td>
<td>Europe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even if it is conceded that some of the long-term mission workers would have become so, even if they had not participated in a short-term mission, the evidence is overwhelming that many long-term workers and leaders in the mission field will affirm that their first experience on a short-term programme was either formative or very influential. Some observers outside of the short-term field have concluded that the main value of short-term missions are as a recruitment ‘drag net’ to find long-term staff. This view of short-term missions is very narrow, but nevertheless, they do recognise this valuable outcome of the short-term mission phenomenon.

\(^{125}\) Hicks David. Globalising Missions, a case study of Operation Mobilisation. Editorial Unilit, Miami 1994. p32
### 7.3 Publicity and aims

A list of agencies whose published literature promoting their 2000 short-term programmes was obtained and reviewed for this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Publicity Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab World Ministries</td>
<td>Go Grow 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa Inland mission</td>
<td>Reaching &amp; Serving Africans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist missionary Society</td>
<td>BMS Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Vocations</td>
<td>The Short-Term Service Directory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Encounter 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soulsista</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where Is God?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frontiers</td>
<td>Short-Term Opportunities 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Needs</td>
<td>Changing Lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Teams</td>
<td>S-T-R-E-T-C-H 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interserve</td>
<td>On Track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin Link</td>
<td>STEP 2000 Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMF</td>
<td>Asia Interactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English Teachers For China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation Mobilisation</td>
<td>Teen Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Love Programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People International</td>
<td>2000 Short-Term Opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REAP International Ministries</td>
<td>Summer Challenge 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Quest 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Sea Team International</td>
<td>Serving Short-Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIM</td>
<td>Where On Earth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virtual Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PACE Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWAM</td>
<td>Global Outreach 2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even if one might have a positive view of the agencies aims for their short-term programmes, one thing is clear, it is obvious from reviewing the publicity materials that some agencies do not publicise their main motives. This may be considered a little deceptive. The focus of the publicity is the participant-centred benefits. The publicity usually takes on the form of glossy advertising, thus emphasising the competitive nature of the recruitment process.

Reviewing the subject matter of the short-term mission publicity shows the following content:126

126 See appendix 5 for a list of published literature promoting 2000 short-term programmes.
1) Details of the programmes on offer. This will give their locations and the length of the trip.
2) Emphasis the need for the work.
3) Declare the past success record of the agency.127
4) Inform potential candidates of the training they can expect.
5) Give brief human-interest stories of past successes.
6) Briefly give some operational philosophy of the agency.
7) An application form is often an integral part of the publication.
8) Frequently the costs are stated.

The British branch of YWAM, in their short-term programme publicity for 2000 give details of 18 programmes in 10 countries.128 (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Uganda, Brazil, China, Vietnam, Tibet, Thailand and the U.K.). Activities include children’s work, construction, evangelism, community development and ‘prayer trekking’. The duration of the projects are from two to six weeks.

The most significant British development in the area of publicity has been the ‘Short-Term Service Directory’ published by Christian Vocations. Over recent years, this has become the standard reference publication that many people interested in short-term missions will consult. For example, ‘African Quest’ (page 22 of the 1999 edition) obtain 80% of their recruits via this directory.

8. Participant-Centred Aims

In surveying the motives and aims of short-term mission participants, Richard Judd demonstrates in table 5 that they have very different motives to the agencies.\(^{129}\) (compare table 2).

**Table 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation for choosing a short-term programme</th>
<th>Number of workers (Max. 77)</th>
<th>Number of workers as a %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opportunity for personal and spiritual growth</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Definite calling to short-term work</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Desired the challenge of an overseas 'adventure'.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Wanted to get a better understanding of mission work and support it more effectively.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wanted to give some time to make a contribution to the task of world mission.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Had 'free time' to use up.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this survey are overwhelmingly participant-centred. To become a long-term supporter of the mission they go with, or considering it as a stepping-stone to being a career missionary is not uppermost in their minds. The printed publicity for the short-term missions reflects the aims in table 5. To a large degree, telling the potential recruits what they want to hear - that there are substantial personal and spiritual benefits to be gained by participating in a short-term mission that they are organising. Judd's list of participant's aims are worth examination. However, it is important to note that the survey reveals that for most of the people surveyed, there are a combination of two or more aims. Below each of the stated aims is examined to see how successfully they are achieved.

\(^{129}\) Judd Richard. *Do Short-Term Programmes Achieve The Purposes For Which They Were Established?* Dissertation for degree course at London Bible College 1996. p16
8.1 Spiritual Growth

Traditional evangelical teaching from classic evangelical authors such as A.W. Tozer,\textsuperscript{130} Oswald Chambers\textsuperscript{131} and Watchman Nee,\textsuperscript{132} is that spiritual growth occurs as a result of \textit{God-centred} initiatives to which Christians respond in obedience and humility. God offers salvation and we respond. The church is there, so we attend. We have the Bible, so we read it. God has told us to share our faith, so we tell others about it. If difficulties arise, we (hopefully) bear them with grace and assume that God is allowing us to be tested and we grow as a result. If we go to the mission field, it is because God has called us and we \textit{obey}. Spiritual growth is \textit{responsive}, a result of following and obeying, and an absence of growth is a result of not following or obeying.

Dr. Nick Isbister and Dr. Martin Robinson’s fascinating book, ‘\textit{Who Do You Think You Are?}’ and in particular the chapter ‘More about who you are’\textsuperscript{133} tells us that it is a now a feature of our western culture, that a more pro-active approach is being pursued. We must search out things that will make us grow or become more effective. Spiritual growth is looked at more as an \textit{achievement} that we can aim at and employ means to attain it. A key method in this is to psychologically examine our personalities and our ‘passions’ and to then direct ourselves into ‘suitable areas’ of service, where we are more likely to achieve success. This approach is much more man-centred than the traditional teaching. The underlying assumption being that God must be calling us to do the things we are best suited to.

So with this aim and the encouragement of mission agency publicity literature, candidates sign up for short-term missions as a means of achieving growth.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Tozer A W. \textit{The Best of A.W. Tozer}. Crossway Books, Nottingham U.K. 1993. p105-110
  \item Chambers Oswald, \textit{If Thou Wilt Be Perfect}. Marshall Morgan and Scott London. 1962 p52-61 & 104-112
\end{itemize}
The evidence from surveys as well as anecdotal evidence is that the short-term mission is very effective in enhancing spiritual growth. The survey results in the STEM study all indicate enhanced commitment to church, prayer and missions.\textsuperscript{134} The debriefing results often reveal that the participants experience was one of being challenged to live a less materialistic life by the simple lifestyles that they observed in the countries they visited. Most people who go on short-term missions will testify to changes that took place in them. Luis Lotz comment sums it up for us, ‘I didn’t change Africa much, but Africa changed me.’\textsuperscript{135}

8.2 A short-term calling

Some participants know that they will return again and again to short-term missions. This is particularly true of more mature participants, who often have taken early retirement and have the time and resources to fund themselves, with skills and experience that are valuable in the mission location. An example of this are Tim and Anne Marsden. Both retired in their early fifties. Anne was a solicitor and in her spare time a trained Christian counsellor. Tim was a structural engineer. At the time of writing, they have made three short-term mission trips and intend to continue to make one or two trips every year for the foreseeable future. They find that their areas of experience and skill are constantly called upon when they go. For example, Anne Marsden has drawn up a Charitable Trust document for a Christian ministry in Soroti, Uganda, in 1999, and advised Kaniki Bible College, Ndola, Zambia, on legal matters in May 2000. Tim Marsden has conducted a structural survey of two buildings in Zambia that were under consideration for purchase by mission organisations in 1999 and May 2000. Having this type of expertise available from reliable professional people at no cost to the mission, is a very useful contribution to their work.

\textsuperscript{134} Peterson T. & Peterson R. Is Short-Term Mission Really Worth the Time and Money? STEM ministries. Minneapolis, 1993

\textsuperscript{135} Lotz Luis. Small changes in Africa. Reformed Church Herald (USA) June 1991 p44-45
In looking at the aims and motives of the mission agencies and the participants, we must not lose sight of the fact that many people whatever their age, regard a short-term mission as a valuable opportunity to serve in its own right. That it is not necessary to find some other benefit such as future support for agencies or long-term recruitment to justify the programme. They are joined in this opinion by the agencies such as O.M. and YWAM that were created specifically for short-term mission.

### 8.3 Wanting the Challenge of adventure.

It is tempting to associate this aim with just young people, but many more mature participants are motivated by adventure. This can often be because in their lives they haven’t had much opportunity for travel and to experience adventure and perhaps feel that life has passed them by. Here is the chance to do what they would like to have done earlier if they had had the opportunity.

God created humans with the capacity for adventure. In history this has been catered for by having to hunt for food or go to battle. Sport has largely taken the place of these things for many. Young people will often get into petty crime and drugs trying to satisfy the urge for adventure. Some agencies may want a more 'spiritual' reason for their candidates. Others recognise that adventure may be the ‘hook’ on which to catch the fish. All the other benefits to the various parties can then follow on.

If this is the main motivation of the candidates, they are unlikely to be disappointed. The challenge of the unfamiliar culture and work that will stretch them, the new places and faces, will all add up to an adventure whatever else they achieve.

### 8.4 Wanted to get a better understanding of mission work and support it more effectively.

This is the sort of category that any participant is likely to tick if presented with it. Whether they would have volunteered this unprompted as an aim is difficult to determine. Far more clear is the fact that having been on a short-term
mission, participants will have a much better understanding of how the mission or host church works and will have seen first-hand what their work entails. With this better knowledge comes the ability to be more effective in supporting the ministry. The overwhelming evidence both anecdotal and by survey show that involvement in short-term missions motivates people to longer-term support of many kinds. Table 3\(^{136}\) indicates an increase in financial giving. An increase in long-term support in a much wider range of activities is indicated by another section of the STEM research.\(^{137}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6</th>
<th>Mission Related Activities</th>
<th>(366 respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before short-</td>
<td>After short-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term mission</td>
<td>Term mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund raising for missions</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing missionaries</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing to missionaries</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Evangelism</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church mission committee</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking about missions</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading mission bible study</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach to internationals</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mission activity</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 may look as though it should appear in the section on mission-centred aims (above). This is because in this particular aim the motives of both the participant and mission agency coincide. Tables 3 and 6 together are a strong indication of success in increasing participants help with mission work after they return home. This gives a substantial value-added factor to the mission trip.

8.5 Wanted to give some time to make a contribution to the task of world mission.

The surprising thing about this aim is that it is number five in the list in Table 5. Had short-term missions been widely available before the second world war, a survey of participants would probably have put this as the number one


\(^{137}\) Ibid p.15
aim. Again it is the whole idea of service and obedience as opposed to achieving and personal development. Judd's research on the generational differences is very relevant to this question and are supported by his results indicated in table 6. The STEM research shows the predominance of this age group in Table 7.

Table 7 Short-term mission participants by age group

![Percentage of short-term participants by age grouping](chart)

Perhaps Judd's third generation called 'Busters' (born between the mid 1960's and the late 1970's) Needs to be sub-divided. Even within this grouping and their timescale, motivation seems to have shifted. There is little doubt from the writings of people like Loren Cunningham (YWAM) and George Verwer (O.M.) that their overwhelming priority in the beginning was to get the job done. Verwer wrote in 1972 'We must yield possessions, comforts, food and sleep: we must live on the bare essentials that Christ's cause might be furthered.'

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138 Judd Richard. *Do Short-Term Programmes Achieve The Purposes For Which They Were Established?* Dissertation for degree course at London Bible College 1996. p5-10
The propagations of faith we hold as supreme."¹³⁹ This philosophy was summarised as early as 1961 in 'The manifesto for world evangelism' written by Verwer and others that were with him at that time.¹⁴⁰ The task was world evangelism and if you joined them and grew spiritually in the process, this was a bonus. Cunningham, recalling the characteristic of his early teams wrote 'We'd send them on short periods of missionary service - a couple of months or a year. Everyone would know he was there for work, not sightseeing'.¹⁴¹ Aim 5 shows that this motivation has not disappeared, nor is it likely to, it has just been superseded by a more participant-centred aim of achievement and personal development.

8.6 Had free time to use up

In terms of making it possible for people to participate in short-term missions, this aim (to use up spare time) ranks second behind only the lowering of the cost of travel. The increase of leisure time and the summer vacation times for students have given the time to go away on short-term missions. Students at college have filled the majority of places on the short-term programmes. In the U.K. it has become an annual routine for agencies to send local representatives to the universities to recruit students for their programmes. In the USA the early programmes of YWAM were aimed at college age young people.¹⁴²

Balanced against this trend is the recently imposed reductions on student financial support from the U.K. government. The need to earn money in the vacations is putting a constraint on the applications. This has always been a factor in the U.S.A. but there, the short-term missions are generally shorter than those offered in the U.K. In fact many of the American missions are only two weeks long. Even the early opportunities offered by O.M. were only a month. This allowed students to still work enough in the other two months of

¹⁴⁰ Ibid p14-16
¹⁴² Ibid. p62.
their summer to get by financially. Overall numbers are not growing with the increased opportunities being offered. Some agencies report a shortage of applicants and some report continued interest at the same level.\textsuperscript{143}

Taking a 'year out' (usually an academic year of 9 months) has grown in popularity over the last 15 years. A 'year out' can be taken before or after university in the U.K. In the American system, a year out can be taken any time without effecting your eligibility for continued education. The 'year out' opportunity has seen a response from the mission agencies. Many offer opportunities both for summer programmes and for a year out.

Is having the time to go a good enough reason to do so? On its own, probably not. However, we must put it within the context of the other motives. What is sure is that having the time to go is an important and vital feature in providing the opportunity. Candidate suitability and training must be added to the opportunity to ensure that the aims of the mission project are achieved.

\section*{9. Care of the Workers}

It is worth dealing with this topic in a little more depth because this is the area where some agencies - particularly in their early days - lacked experience or good practice and the overwhelming motivation was 'to get the job done'. This led to some workers being stressed and even traumatised by their experiences.\textsuperscript{144} This is an area where lack of care and experience can tip the scales of the short-term mission debate decidedly against the idea if things go wrong. The potential for stress and trauma is considerable.

Untrained and inexperienced workers are being sent into an unfamiliar and sometimes hostile environment. They may see poverty and suffering on a

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{143} Interview with Paul Linsey, Director of Christian Vocations which publishes the Short-Term Service Directory.
\textsuperscript{144} Fawsett Graham. \textit{Ad-mission, The Briefing and Debriefing of Teams of Missionaries and Aid Workers}. YWAM Harpenden 1999. p107-120
\end{flushright}
scale previously only seen on television. There is little time to vet and train the candidates. The possibilities of following them up after they return are very limited and largely depend on the co-operation of the local church\textsuperscript{145} which may itself be ignorant of the issues involved.

With the two great driving forces of 'Agency-centred aims' and 'Participant-centred aims', the danger is that care for the participants takes a back seat in everyone's priorities. British law recognises that there is a 'duty of care' responsibility on mission organisers.\textsuperscript{146} There is also a moral duty for a 'pastoral duty of care'. Yet this is the area that has the potential for the longer-lasting effects of the whole enterprise, and there is the danger that these can be very negative effects. Much more emphasis needs to be given to the 'duty of care' that agencies have for their recruits. In the U.K., case law since the Lyme Bay tragedy in which several untrained school children were drowned while crossing Lyme Bay in unsuitable canoes, has moved in the direction of American law, to a much more litigation orientated society. Signed disclaimers will no longer protect any organisation from what the courts may judge as poor practice, failure in 'duty of care' or inadequate briefing or safety measures.

### 9.1 Recruitment

Hardly any U.K.-based agency regards the typical American two-week mission as worthwhile unless it is a U.K. location. The cost of long-haul flights still demand a four to eight week commitment. This does reduce the pool of potential participants. As previously mentioned, the 'student army' of workers is coming under increasing financial pressure. The growth of recruitment of retired workers will only partially compensate for this.

\textsuperscript{146} Ng Belinda. \textit{Some Reflections on Pastoral Care}. An article for \textit{Too Valuable To Loose}. Ed. Taylor William D. William Carey Library, Pasadena 1997. p277-286
Once an agency has a short-term programme, there is a pressure to fill the places and make the whole project a 'success'. This raises the danger of recruiting unsuitable candidates. These may be candidates that are too immature in their attitudes to others that will cause problems in the intense experience of living and working with a team 24 hours a day for four to eight weeks. In other cases, their mental or physical health may be suspect.

9.2 Briefing

Short-term workers often need to live in less comfortable circumstances than long-term workers. This is often because the situation they are going to does not normally need to cope with the numbers of people on a team. It is perhaps surprising just how tolerant workers can be to difficult situations - if they are expecting them. Preparation and accurate briefing are the key to the well-being of workers in less than comfortable situations doing demanding and unfamiliar work. In practice very few workers leave prematurely.\(^\text{147}\)

9.3 Health

It cannot be stressed too much, how important health issues are to all mission workers in inclement and unaccustomed climates. A short-term programme can be well researched, the workers well prepared and have excellent local hosts, but it is all in vain if the participants are plagued by continual ill health during their trip.\(^\text{148}\)

The core problem is that people unaccustomed to tropical climates have little natural resistance to tropical diseases. If we add to this the physical stress of the new environment and often unaccustomed manual work, the potential for

\(^{147}\) Fawsett Graham. Ad-mission, The Briefing and Debriefing of Teams of Missionaries and Aid Workers. YWAM Harpenden 1999. p17

ill health is serious. Measures need to be taken to reduce the instances of illness before, during and after the trip. If adequate measures and briefing are organised by the agency, many of the potential health problems can be avoided.

As part of the training and preparation before departure, the agency has a duty to ensure that practical advice in written and verbal form is given to the participants. This advice is best given in a condensed form. There are several good books available, but most of them are too long to expect short-term mission participants to read them through. This is particularly true for university students who are studying for exams in the months leading up to their summer vacation. The advice needs to cover the period before departure with all the injections and malaria preventions that need to be obtained.

Many participants are dangerously ignorant of the power and debilitating effect of the sun in tropical climates. Often they see it as a good opportunity to get a sun tan, instead of it being a serious health hazard.\textsuperscript{149}

Malaria is increasing at an alarming rate in Africa where many short-term workers go, and is a more serious threat to short-term workers than to long-term workers. This is because they do not know the symptoms and initially the symptoms are much like 'flu.\textsuperscript{150} Briefing on the symptoms and the remedial action to be taken is essential.

During the trip, health precautions need to become a way of life and the sending agency has a duty to oversee the care.\textsuperscript{151} Clean water and food are at the heart of the precautions. The agency needs to provide a comprehensive medical kit for the team. The workers must have adequate medical insurance and emergency rescue and repatriation insurance. The workers must know how to access this help and also be aware of what local medical help, if any, is available and what is the best evacuation route.

\textsuperscript{149} Lankester Dr. Ted. \textit{Good Health Good Travel}. Hodder and Stoughton, London 1995. p102

\textsuperscript{150} Dawood Dr. Richard. \textit{Traveller's Health}. Oxford University Press 1992. p103-113

After returning to the home country, the workers need to be aware of any unusual symptoms, and briefed not to ignore them. Some tropical diseases such as Bilharzia only become apparent after the return home, sometimes months after. Interhealth offer an excellent service of examination for returned workers at reasonable cost.

9.4 Culture Shock

Culture shock is a much misunderstood phenomenon. Workers going on a short-term mission or visit of less than two months are unlikely to experience real culture shock.

The reaction that is often mistaken for real culture shock is what we might call the ‘wow factor’. This is an initial reaction on arriving in the new culture. It is the wide-eyed amazement at just how different everything is. It is essential for agencies to know the difference between the two phenomena and brief their workers accordingly. Unfortunately many agencies and particularly local churches who send out workers, often fail in this area, sometimes with unfortunate and avoidable results.

The ‘wow factor’ is a confusing reaction that can range from delight to panic. Delight at the warm welcome or the open, smiling reaction of ordinary people to a foreign guest in their country. Fascination at the noise, customs, architecture, food and even the dress of people in their new surroundings.

154 Fawsett Graham. Ad-mission, The Briefing and Debriefing of Teams of Missionaries and Aid Workers. YWAM Harpenden 1999. p82-83
Panic at the unaccustomed heat, the flies, or participants' reaction to the first time they have to use a 'long-drop' pit latrine, or even worse a 'short-drop' one!

Real culture shock is a more serious problem. It usually comes on after about six to eight months in the location, and lasts three to six months. During that time the worker may hate the location and everything to do with it. Some things that were novel, interesting and even fun to the short-term worker when they first arrived, can for the medium or long-term worker after six months become a serious source of irritation and contributes to an overall negative attitude. They will crave anything that was remotely to do with their own culture. Food will be near the top of the list. Fawcett points out that the problem may well be the sense of loss of one's own cultural comforts more than an adverse reaction to the one being currently experienced.\(^{157}\) This is an interesting observation. It is certainly true that a longing for aspects of the home culture is one of the main symptoms of culture shock. Other symptoms of culture shock: homesickness, loss of interest, irritation, loss of appetite, poor concentration, tiredness, a feeling of guilt, anger, disturbed sleep, a breakdown in good relationships.

After some months most workers will come out of it. The best way to cope with culture shock is to recognise it for what it is and realise that it will soon pass, because it usually does. In the rare cases of persistent culture shock, the best course is for the worker to return home. Nothing is worse than realising that it is going to continue. The problem is far more serious if it comes as an unexpected and misunderstood reaction. Adequate briefing and preparation by the sending agency,\(^{158}\) coupled with care on the field, can reduce considerably the effects of culture shock.

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Generally short and medium-term agencies have a good record in preparing workers. The work of Graham Fawcett for YWAM probably represents some of the best practice among such agencies. YWAM and O.M. have learned much by their experience gained in their early years. The greatest positive factor helping agencies is the high motivation of their candidates. A quote from Verwer illustrates this in it stronger terms. 'We have no rights! Every petty personal desire must be subordinated to the supreme task of reaching the world for Christ.'

Table 8 shows the typical culture shock experience of workers entering and staying in a different culture. Their initial reaction in the first weeks can often be what I have called the 'Wow factor'. This is indicated in the table as 'happy', followed by the negative experience 'unhappy' as the novelty of the new culture wears off and they begin a kind of mourning for their own familiar culture. This often translates into negative attitudes to the new culture. This in turn wears off as they focus on the task in hand. Failure to overcome this period of culture shock accounts for the attrition of some workers who return home prematurely or in the case of long-term workers do not return to the field after their first term.

Culture shock to some degree or other will effect most mission workers who are in a foreign culture. Its effects are lessened if the worker is a seasoned traveller and has an adventurous outlook on life.

The effect is lessened even more if the worker is situated in a 'cultural bubble' which may be a mission location with western standards of accommodation and fellow westerners around and able to still use their own language and style of worship.
9.5 Reverse culture shock

This sometimes occurs after workers return home and is potentially a much more serious problem than culture shock while abroad. Generally the longer the worker has been away, the more serious this effect can be. It can begin very soon after returning home and can continue for up to a year and in some rare cases last years. The negative effects of this phenomena can last a lifetime. Michael Griffiths warns of the danger of not paying attention to the issues facing the returning missionary.\(^\text{161}\)

In its most extreme form it can lead to depression, post traumatic stress and serious mental illness, affecting not only the individual, but also their family. This is particularly so if it is affecting the father of a family. It is often the case that the longer you have been away, the more difficult the adjustment.\(^\text{162}\)

**The symptoms of reverse culture shock**

Initially it can just be a feeling of being out of place, that the returned worker doesn't belong in the place *where they belong!* This is soon accompanied by a feeling of isolation from the very people who were once so close.\(^\text{163}\) Anne Townsend graphically illustrates just how much out of place a returning missionary can feel when they are back in their 'own culture'.\(^\text{164}\) Their values may have changed to the point where they are disgusted with the worldliness and materialism of our wasteful western consumer society. They may find it a frustration that their own friends, family or church just can't see the emptiness of it all.\(^\text{165}\)


\(^{163}\) Fawsett Graham. *Ad-mission, The Briefing and Debriefing of Teams of Missionaries and Aid Workers*. YWAM Harpenden 1999. p42


\(^{165}\) Jordan Peter. *Re-Entry, Making The Transition From Missions To Life At Home*. YWAM Publishing, Seattle, p53
Whilst away their attitudes to many things and their interests may have radically changed.\textsuperscript{166} So the friends and colleagues that they had so much in common with before they went, are now less interesting to be with. The friends may see the change in the worker and feel uneasy with them. That precious camaraderie that they once enjoyed - \textit{and have been so looking forward to renewing} - has gone and the disappointment can be very depressing.\textsuperscript{167} There is a sense of loss, disappointment and even grief. The great homecoming that they had anticipated so much, is a disappointment and a frustration.

The worker may experience a great frustration at their own inability to communicate just how poor are the good people they have been with, compared to the affluence of lifestyle of the home surroundings. Their whole society, including family and friends may now seem very devalued in their eyes. The country and culture that they were once proud of, seem to have lost much of their value. They may begin to feel guilty about having come home at all! Questions arise such as ‘what am I doing here, when there is such need over there?’, or ‘have I completely missed God’s guidance?’

So many people that they meet are not interested, or not interested enough, in what they have been doing or the people they have been with while they were away. People smile and greet them and ask ‘did you had a good time?’ while away. Yet when the returned worker tries to explain even the most superficial details of their experience, the listener immediately loses interest, and they realise that they were only making ‘small talk’ and are not really interested in the ‘mega-experience’ that the worker has had and its profound effect on their life. The result of this lack of understanding or interest, is that the returned worker goes into a private world of resentment and stops trying


\textsuperscript{167} Fawsett Graham. \textit{Ad-mission, The Briefing and Debriefing of Teams of Missionaries and Aid Workers}. YWAM Harpenden 1999. p41-46
to talk to anyone about it. The more they bottle it up, the more the resentment and disappointment grows.

Then the big question that faces some, is what to do now? It is difficult to find any value in the things they might do, compared with what you have been doing. There is a reluctance to get involved in a job that is of so little value in their estimation. The medium-term worker has often given up their former employment to take the opportunity to go, and now needs a job. Consequently returned workers start to devalue themselves, because they cannot do anything that seems a valuable - given their new set of values - thing to do.

Any of the above difficulties will be exaggerated if the worker comes back with an illness. The sickness can affect them emotionally and spiritually. ‘Where is God in all this? I have done my best to serve Him and here I am, suffering as a consequence!’

9.6 Remedies for reverse culture shock.

One of the unfortunate things about reverse culture shock is that some of the most important remedies are not in the hands of the returned workers themselves, but in the hands of other people. It is very important, spiritually, emotionally and psychologically, that the agency, family, friends and the church, of returning workers, show a proper interest in what they have been doing. Talking through all the experiences, difficulties and emotions that they have experienced while away, with people they love and respect is of supreme importance. The opportunity to share with, and answer questions from genuinely interested people is the best therapy of all.

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169 Fawsett Graham. Ad-mission, The Briefing and Debriefing of Teams of Missionaries and Aid Workers. YWAM Harpenden 1999. p45
The sending agency or the sending church has a particular responsibility here. The agency needs to provide an appropriate debriefing. The church leader that will not allow a returning worker to share with the church their experiences, may unwittingly be causing great harm to someone that they should be proud of. The use of slides, photos and videos should be encouraged. Writing an article for the church magazine is another outlet. The church that is so locked into their pattern of meeting/service that they can’t find time for this can unwittingly be the cause of serious problems for the returned worker.

The home church has a great responsibility of care for returning workers. Enlightened and educated pastoral care should await them. In a few cases they may be very wounded by bad experiences while abroad. This can sometimes result from lack of care by the home church or a failure by the home church to assist the agency in its selection procedure. It may have been discovered too late that a participant was not suitable, when the causes of the problems were well known to the home church, but they never communicated this to the agency. The agency has a duty of care for the worker that includes trying to ensure that the home church also does their important part. Each church should have a debriefing plan for returning workers, it is a serious responsibility.

The debriefing process deployed by the sending agency and/or church, if it is done well, has benefits all round. The workers are helped to put their experience in context and adjust to life back in their home culture. The agency should take the opportunity to learn as much as possible about the trip and the hosts. This will enable them to assess their project and the preparations that they made and the briefing of the workers, leading to improvements where needed.

172 Ibid p102.
Table 9

Care for mission workers

A suggested division of responsibilities of involvement between the agency and the participant's home church.

Communications between the home church and the agency is essential if proper care for the participants in any mission work is to be effective. This is often neglected by some short-term agencies. This is one advantage of short-term missions organised by a home church for their members, - they can fill both roles. The Global Connections ‘Code of Best Practice For Short-term Missions’ is attempting to highlight this need.  

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9.7 The Importance of Cultural Awareness

Lack of cross-cultural sensitivity and ignorance of important cultural norms, is an area where short-term missions have come under criticism from Goldsmith\textsuperscript{176} and Griffiths, who insist that short-term participants just do not have the time to learn and adapt enough to foreign culture unless they are career missionaries.\textsuperscript{177} The participants need to be briefed on the culture that they are intending to visit, otherwise there is the potential for causing misunderstanding and offence. A similar problem exists as with the medical briefing. Just how much reading and preparation can be expected of someone going on mission for just a few weeks? There are lots of academic books on most of the world’s cultures, but it is unlikely that the short-term candidates will read them. The answer is once again a condensed publication, brief but containing all the important aspects of the culture being visited. REAP International Ministries have produced their own cross-cultural training manual for workers going to Africa.\textsuperscript{178} The great advantage of this manual is that it contains most of the cultural aspects of sub-Saharan Africa in only 45 pages. This is short enough for workers going only for a few weeks to be motivated to read. It has a general section on culture, world view and looking at ourselves as others see us. It goes on to deal with all the main aspects of African culture, how it differs from ours and how to behave in various situations. This includes sections on tradition, family, the spirit world, food, gender relationships and differing moral codes. The final part of the publication deals with culture shock and re-entry into our own culture.

No one can escape their own culture completely. It is indelibly printed in our psyche and will inevitably surface in response to ‘triggering’ circumstances. Likewise people can never fully adapt to another culture, but they can be careful to avoid misunderstandings, attitudes, words or actions that cause offence. The major aspects of a culture can be learned. If the work is specific

\textsuperscript{176} Goldsmith Martin. \textit{Don’t Just Stand There}. Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester 1976, p103-115
\textsuperscript{177} Griffiths Michael. \textit{Give Up Your Small Ambitions}. Inter Varsity Press 1978, p116-119
to a particular area, it is the responsibility of the agency to brief participants about the local culture, and how they should behave in it.

Almost all short-term mission programmes include some kind of cultural briefing. Judging by anecdotal evidence, many of them are inadequate. Some such as Latin Link will use role play and set up things like a mock arrivals procedure at a South American airport etc. This type of preparation has two benefits. It educates about the country of destination and also prepares the participant for the impact of the culture on them. The disadvantage of this activity is that it is time consuming in a briefing programme where time is always short. A good way to overcome this problem is to back up the training with literature specifically for the culture that the participants are entering.

Cultural briefing should fall into two categories. First the general aspect of culture that are common to all. This covers things like 'What is culture?', 'World view', 'How others see us' and 'Cultural arrogance'.

The second part of the briefing should cover the specific cultural practices and norms of the culture being visited and include the following.\(^{179}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The importance of tradition</th>
<th>The role of the family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender issues</td>
<td>The hospitality culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How guests should behave</td>
<td>Types of food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs surrounding food</td>
<td>Attitudes to alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of humour</td>
<td>Dress codes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customs for greeting</td>
<td>Moral standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of worship</td>
<td>Political climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribery</td>
<td>Body language</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10. Host-Centered Aims

The low prominence that Host-Centred Aims have in tables 2 and 5 is surprising, perhaps even shocking. It is not unreasonable to wonder why the aims of the hosts are not at or near the top of the priority list for everyone engaged in short-term missions. It is the host - who may be a local church, or a long-term mission situation - that makes the trip possible. It is the host's work that the trip is designed to assist, and it is in the locality of the host that this particular attempt to evangelise, feed the hungry, educate the uneducated, house the homeless or care for the orphaned and widowed, is taking place. It is the host that best knows the local people, their culture and language, the needs of the locality, and the needs of the host ministry best.

One of the dilemmas that mission agencies face is that their aims and the aims of the host do not always agree. This is a complicated issue. Even though the agency in the form of its researchers and long-term workers may have a basically good relationship with the host, the agency will often 'live with' or tolerate aims that they know the host has, that they do not agree with. The agency may even have the aim of educating the host into having 'better', aims - in other words, the agency's aims; which are in the agency's opinion, more worthy.

Mission and aid agencies constantly have to guard against the possibility that their hard-won finances are put into things that they consider corrupt and aimed at personal financial gain of people in the host community. Corruption in poor communities has always been a problem for missions. Even some people's motivation for conversion to Christianity has been suspect. This is a complicated cultural and moral issue outside of the scope of this study, but we have to note that it is an issue frequently on the minds of mission workers. It is not just large-scale corruption of aid that is an issue. At the other end of the spectrum is the poor third world pastor who wants help for the very modest
school fees for his children, or a motor cycle to visit his rural churches that normally take him a day to walk to. This can be viewed as personal gain, or as a good investment in the life and ministry of that pastor.

A third-world host in the form of a local church and the pastor, will welcome short-term teams and individual workers for many reasons, usually good reasons. First is the genuine hospitality culture of most third-world cultures, that will give a warm welcome to Christians visiting from the west. There are a number of perceived benefits that the host can derive from such visits:

1) Substantial status is gained by the host church and the pastor because they have foreign friends who will visit them and help in the ministry. This gaining of status can have greater significance if the host church is in a country where the church is restricted or persecuted. It is a well-documented fact that in the communist days in Eastern Europe, authorities were often more careful how they treated churches or Christian prisoners, if they knew that they had contacts and lines of communication to the West. Example: Klaus Wagner was sentenced to ten years imprisonment for distributing Bibles in Romania. He was released after ten months because thousands of protest letters were sent to Romania from supporters in America and Europe.

2) The visiting team usually bring financial help of some sort. This may be cash gifts and/or finances for building materials.

3) The extra manpower coupled with the western ‘can-do’ culture will accomplish things like the construction of buildings (often church buildings) remarkably quickly.

4) The possibility of an invitation and sponsorship for a reciprocal visit by the host pastor and other church members, to the home church of the team.

5) There is a real curiosity in many of the host churches about people from the West. Contact and friendships are eagerly sought after in many places. This
was, and to a lesser extent, still is particularly true in the ex-Communist countries that opened up to Western visitors. The youth of these countries, are fascinated to meet the youth of the West and often regard them as a role-model in things like behaviour, fashion and music.

10.1 Disadvantages of some host-centered aims.

There are some disadvantages to virtually all the perceived advantages that the host has. Whether they out-weigh the advantages is all a matter of perspective and lies at the heart of the dilemma facing mission agencies, mentioned in paragraph two of this section. In making our judgements on these issues we need to beware of cultural arrogance - the deeply-held belief in Western minds that we always know what is best for everyone.

What Western agencies may see as creating a 'dependency culture' in third world situations may from the host's perspective be seen as meeting desperate and pressing needs. In short: one man's dependency is another man's answer to prayer! Below are some disadvantages to each of the 'host's perceived benefits as listed above:

1. The status that host churches gain from their foreign visitors can go too far. It can begin to separate the church from the community it is trying to reach.

Example: A large Rhema church in Harare, Zimbabwe, is linked to an American charismatic denomination. Its pastor is American, the services are very American in style. The church appears not to have much in common with the local people or their culture.

2 and 3. Poor third-world church members really have to sacrifice to give financially to their churches. If it is realised that relatively large amounts of money are regularly coming in from foreigners, there is no motivation for the

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local Christians to give, thus losing the commitment, sense of ownership and spiritual growth that comes from sacrificial giving.\textsuperscript{181}

Example: A church in Chililabomwe, Zambia, asked a British agency (REAP International Ministries) to send a short-term team to build them a church building. The agency was unable to meet the request. Four years later, the church building is three quarters completed from the church members own resources. It has taken longer, but the sense of achievement and ownership for the congregation is more than compensation.

4. Many third-world pastors who have been sponsored to study in the West have moved away from their culture and identification with their local community. Upon return to their homes they have raised economic expectations. This is particularly true if they came from a rural home setting. They often do not want to return to the rural situation but gravitate to the cities.

5 and 6. Curiosity towards Western culture among young people from poorer economies leads to them wanting to emulate our culture. Materialism and unrealistic expectations then set in. Older church leaders in their culture become antagonistic to their own young people and the Christian representatives of the culture that they see as responsible for corrupting their young people.

11. \textbf{Benefits to the Sending Churches}

There are three main ways that Western churches become involved in short-term mission.

1) Hosting an evangelistic mission in their locality.
2) Supporting one or more of their members participating in a mission.
3) Organising their own church team.

The third one of these is the one that has the potential for the greatest impact on the life of the church simply because it involves more of the members. From the inception of the project through to the debriefing and report-back of the team, it is a unifying influence on the church. A sense of working together to achieve a valuable mission aim. This is often followed up by an ongoing relationship with the foreign host church and sometimes return visits by the church members and leadership.

The priority and profile of missions in general will be improved as the church becomes involved itself in hands-on involvement. This translates the idea of mission from ‘something-they-do-out-there’ to ‘something-we-do-ourselves’. This type of personal involvement by ordinary Christians can be a powerful new element in the life of the church. David Forward reports that prior to the first short-term mission in his church, there was no missions committee and very little interest in missions. Since they started the programme in 1984, four committees have been formed to oversee various mission activities in the church and overall giving to all types of mission activities by the church has increased dramatically.¹⁸² Forward makes the valid point that ‘Many Christians find it easier to share their faith in a distant mission site than to do so at home’.¹⁸³

Contact of ordinary church members with Christians who have little or nothing materially, but are very hospitable to visitors can be a challenge to Western Christians to live a less materialistic lifestyle and to give more to missions and poverty relief. An increased appreciation of the universality of the body of Christ is an inevitable result of visiting the mission location.

The mission involvement can provide new opportunities to serve, not only for those that go, but for those who support them. People who can’t go

¹⁸² Interview: Forward David. Author of ‘Essential guide to the Short-Term Mission Trip’ and Co-ordinator of short-term missions for Faith Presbyterian Church, Stokes, New Jersey, USA.
themselves can often be found collecting and packing items to be sent in a van or a sea container. People with particular skills such as computer skills, building, mechanical or administrative, can employ their skills in mission work.

Church members who may be considering a career in mission or development work have the chance to ‘Test their call’. A medium-term project is obviously much better than the short-term mission. It gives them time to experience culture shock and also to see if their health will stand up to other climates.

Short and medium-term missions are an ideal training ground for future leaders. Church structures in the West often do not accommodate emerging leaders in their need to gain leadership experience. A young Christian who shows potential can be given leadership experience for a limited time.

12. Conclusion

The apostle Paul did not embark on his missionary journeys with the aim of developing the preaching skill or the geographical and cultural education of himself or his team. His aim was not to publicise his church in Antioch or to raise money for it. His aim really was just to get the job done. That job was to make Christ known to those who didn't know Him.

Much of the research in this dissertation has highlighted motives and aims other than those pursued by the great apostle in the church’s early days. The Western agencies involved would insist that they ultimately have the same aims as the apostle Paul. The questions revolve round the various methods employed to achieve the goals of world evangelism and expressing the love of God in relief of the appalling poverty that afflicts much of this world today.

Short-term missions are seen as both a means of achieving the goals and as a means of raising money or support for other, longer-term programmes to achieve their aims. To this somewhat convoluted set of aims we must add the
undoubted benefits to the participants and consequently their home churches through the spiritual growth and education of their members.

In my introduction, I declared a personal interest in short-term missions as part of my job. This meant that I approached my research with an existing conviction that short-term missions are a valuable tool in the overall task of world evangelism. I have to confess that my studies have dented my conviction without altogether eradicating it. It has been a sobering experience to look at all the issues in this paper and observe the many mistakes and pitfalls exhibited by some agencies and churches in the short-term mission sphere. The reservations expressed by Griffiths and Goldsmith demand an answer. Their views have moderated over recent years as short-term missions have adapted to and directed their efforts in support of long-term mission work. Nevertheless, their basic reservation in the areas of language and culture still stand.

To the question 'do short-term missions achieve the various aims and objectives of the participants, missions, and hosts?' We can answer that they do most of the time. Whether all those aims are appropriate or laudable is very subjective and depends much on individual perspectives.

The pastor of an economically poor church in rural Mozambique who has just had a brick church building constructed for him, would definitely say that the aims had been achieved. He would take exception to the academic missionary educator in the West who says that the young, culturally inexperienced students, not speaking the local language, who financed and built his church building should not be involved in missions work. He would explain to the educator that his church will now grow fast because they have the status of a good building. They no longer have to meet under a tree and dodge the rain in the rainy season. An academic missionary educator might say that the short-term team has created a 'dependency culture' in that pastor
and his church. The pastor might say 'This building is your dependency theory, but it is my answer to prayer and fasting'.

There is no real evidence that short-term missions damage long-term missions or their finances. In fact the opposite is true. Evidenced by the fact that many long-term mission agencies are now offering short-term opportunities. They are hardly going to engage in activities that damage their traditional work!

What is clear is that short-term missions are at their most effective when they are done well. This is a rather obvious conclusion, but so often short-term mission work is undertaken without adequate research or effective training of the participants. Poor practice in one area leads to bad results in other areas. A poorly researched project and an inadequately trained team leads to poor health on the trip and a bad experience for the team members or individuals who have had such high expectations of their trip. This in turn can lead to traumatic reaction to the trip. This is particularly true if the team members have been in an emergency or hunger relief situation. Poor practice can have a 'chain reaction' of difficult experiences for everyone involved.

This does not stop with the participants. In countries where the Christian gospel is not welcome and Christians are persecuted, a badly briefed team can cause residual problems for the local Christians once the team has departed. In the Communist era in eastern Europe, some local Christians were oppressed, fined and persecuted as a result of a visit by inadequately trained workers.

The astonishing volume of short-term missioners, (particularly from America) that is indicated by the statistics at the start of this dissertation, show that what has been called 'The short idea', is a phenomenon that is unlikely to diminish in the near future. They outnumber long-term missioners many times

over. Some long-term missions have come to depend on their input. There is little doubt that the short-term mission can be a great servant of the long-term mission, and is at its best when organised as a service to the long-term mission.

In the U.K. Global Connections have taken an important initiative in publishing their 'Code of best practice for short-term missions'. Late in the day, this is an attempt to raise the standards of short-term mission. Missions that sign up to the code are required to attend twice yearly consultations. The only weakness of this is that the consultations are conversations among the organisers of short-term mission. The organisers of long-term mission need to be in on the conversations. In Canada, the code is also being promoted. The great omission is the lack of a code in the United States where the majority of participants come from.

The weak-link in short-term missions are the ones that are organised by local churches in the West. Many are limited to their own resources and they often neglect to take outside advice from people who have experience. They are a law unto themselves and little can be done about it. There is often an arrogance that believes that they know what is best for themselves and their hosts. Sometimes, financial help is offered with 'strings attached'. Groups with a particular doctrinal emphasis will seek to 'recreate in their own image' using their economic strength and often the lack of awareness of the hosts to accomplish their aims. This is the 'unacceptable face' of short-term missions. Perhaps if the agencies of both short and long-term missions adopted a unified set of aims and standards and published and promoted them relentlessly, it would have some effect on the mission mavericks' from local churches.

It is safe to conclude that the overwhelming majority of short-term mission work is now carried out in support of, and under the direction of long-term mission agencies or local pastors. We are approaching a convergence of

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Interview with Jorn Pederson, vice Principal of Kaniki Bible College, Ndola, Zambia.
aims, with the short-term missions supporting long-term work and long-term missions adopting short-term activities. For the army of short-term workers this is both their strength and their safety and represents a major contribution to completing what Michael Griffiths justifiably calls 'A Task Unfinished.'

John Miles
July 2000
Appendix 1

Activities offered by short and medium-term mission agencies in the U.K.

Administration/Finance
Art/craft
Camps
Church-based work
Cultural awareness
Drama/dance
Encouragement
Evangelism (U.K.)
Healthcare/education
Houseparents
Literacy
Media
Music
Maintenance
Research
Social care/concern
Teaching (TEFL)

Agriculture
Building
Children's work
Church planting
Development/aid
Drug/alcohol concern
Evangelism (abroad)
Gardening
Housekeeping/catering
Linguistics
Literature/distribution
Mission training
Politics
Prayer
Schools work
Specialist/professional
Youth work
### Appendix 2

**U.K. based mission agencies offering practical activities.**

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<tr>
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<th>Latin Link</th>
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<td>Action Partners Ministries</td>
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<td>Middle East Christian Outreach</td>
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<td>Emmanuel International</td>
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<td>Fellowship Afloat Trust</td>
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<td>Frontiers</td>
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<td>L'Arche</td>
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<td>Global Outreach 2000</td>
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