

How Short-Term Missions Partner with Local Churches for Long Term Impact

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God has believers in every people group. Our goal is to equip them to reach out to their own people and to others.

Objectives:

1. How to identify churches that are ready for partnership for medical missions.
2. Steps involved in partnering with the churches.

Introduction:

Can a church in a poor and vulnerable community run a sustainable (healthcare) ministry in her community after a short-term team leaves?

Yes, if the church and short-term medical team are well prepared for ministry. Here are the steps we have done in several countries to enable local churches to run sustainable healthcare ministries as result of short-term medical teams.

1. Envision the local church that God can use her to share the gospel, disciple and demonstrate the love of God in her community. Most churches in poor and vulnerable communities have an inward-looking mentality because of their overwhelming needs. They are used to short term teams coming in to do things for them instead of being empowered to continue ministry after the teams leave.
2. Train the church in wholistic ministry: We encourage pastors to select four other members of their churches to undergo a 5 -10-day training in wholistic ministry. During this training they learn how to practically share the gospel, demonstrate the love of God, use simple project management skills to plan and reach out. This training is critical in helping churches in poor and vulnerable communities to learn that under the Lordship of Jesus God can use them. We require the churches to provide the volunteers to be trained provide a venue, get transport to the venue. Our team provides the trainers, manuals and lunch.
3. Partner with a short-term team to come in and train the lay workers in ministry (e.g., lay medical and lay dental ministry, starting early childhood, income generating activities, discipleship, inner healing ministry etc). They do not come to do the work alone but to train the lay workers to continue after they have left. We have partnered with several ministries (e.g., mPower Foundation Inc, I-TEC, Literacy and Evangelism, Thoroughly Equipped, SECC teams) and have trained the lay workers in various ministries

4. The pastor and the four other TOTs select the lay workers to be trained using a criterion agreed with the short-term team. They must know English/French as the language of communication. The training takes about 5 days. Our team and the churches get a suitable venue and contribute towards the tools and equipment needed for ministry. The short term/medical team has skills to pass on.
5. The pastor and church members mobilize the community. For example, if it is a short-term medical team - They make arrangements for when and where the treatment will be and how much the patients will pay.
6. Our team prepares letters asking for permission to the local government, social welfare department and medical department. Write the letter to show that you want to provide a community clinic for their people.
7. Logistics: teach the lay workers how to get regular supplies of medicine and equipment locally for their outreach. Nurture an attitude of prayer and loving care among the lay workers. Appoint one of them to supervise the team and prepare reports. The fees they collect cover the costs of medicine and supplies.
8. Prepare to pull out and let the lay workers continue the clinic under a local board (inclusive) of the pastor. You should always tell the team that you will leave. This helps them to prepare psychologically and take seriously any training and coaching being offered to them.
9. Establish a support network – a standby nurse to assist, referral to hospital. This helps the lay workers to have the necessary person to get in contact with quickly.
10. Examples of ministries run by churches after training and the short-term team leaves:
 - Community health clinics – Ghana and Kenya (in partnership with hospitals)
 - Early childhood schools - Ghana

- Discipleship – Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Burkina Faso
- Leadership training – Malawi,
- Bible school - Kenya
- Small businesses - Ghana
- Inner healing (emotional healing and freedom) – Kenya

