

THE COMPLIMENTARY ASPECTS OF SHORT-TERM MISSIONS AND LONG-TERM MISSIONS: CASE STUDIES FOR A WIN-WIN SITUATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

In his recently published dissertation, George Robinson opens by stating the current status of STM and asking a key question. He writes:

Much harsh criticism has been dealt towards short-term missions (STM) recently, some justified and some not. Missiologists and long-term missionaries (LTM) have struggled with this paradigm shift. It seems the move to incorporating STM into missions strategy has not been taken seriously. Can anything be learned from the army of amateurs that are now dispersing annually around the world?

Ralph Winter, in the editorial of January 2000 issue of *Mission Frontiers* stated well:

The burgeoning short-term phenomenon highlighted in this issue is a blessed, booming reality, but it does little more than educate the sending churches about churches overseas. It does little to expose the need of precisely the unreached peoples where there are no believers or churches to visit.

He was absolutely correct about short-term missions (STM) being a “booming reality.” The number of participants in short-term missions has increased from 97,272 in 1998 to an incredible 346,270 in 2001! (Dotsey, 2004). But he sees very limited value in them. Is this the case? Is it possible that short-term missions can actually complement the work of long-term missions in reaching the unreached and planting new churches in new fields? Can we learn anything from this “army of amateurs” that has become a major force in missions today? We believe it is possible for STM to benefit LTM and that the two models can exist in harmony rather than tension.

1.1 Purpose of the Paper

STM and LTM, if they are to co-exist and support each other need to focus on the aspects of their ministry that compliment their particular purposes and constructively address the aspects that have a negative impact. Our purpose in this paper is to gather information from a limited sample of individuals on the complimentary features between STM and LTM. In order to have a variety of perspectives on this issue, we have selected individuals from the following categories: sending, going and receiving agencies, representing both STM and LTM practitioners.

We acknowledge there are negative aspects of the STM/LTM relationship also, but we have chosen to delimit this study to the positive side only; let the critics of STM pursue their goal elsewhere.

1.2 Definition of Key-Term

For the sake of clarity, definitions for key-term are proposed as follows:

- “Complimentary aspects of STM and LTM”
“A positive way of looking at STM and LTM as helpful to one another; instead of viewing them being two irreconcilable, antagonistic and hurtful approaches in pursuing the mission of God.”
- “Mission” and “Missions”
“Mission” is “the *missio dei* (God’s mission) i.e. the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations” whereas “missions” is “the ways and means of accomplishing the mission”
- “Case Study”

- “An exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context.”¹
- “Emic and Etic Perspectives”
“Emic (insider’s) perspective is in contrast to etic (outsider’s) perspective” in social science research.² In this study, the perspective of sending and receiving entities are “etic” in contra-distinction from that of the STM/LTM practitioners whose view is “emic” in nature.
 - “STM” and “LTM”
“STM” is “intentionally limited, organized cross-cultural mission efforts for a pre-determined length of time without its participants making a residency-based commitment of less than two years (i.e. field presence could range anywhere from few days to several months)” whereas “LTM” is “any missions work that is residency-based, minimum of a two-year term or more with elements of language acquisition and cultural emersion/adjustment.”
 - “Participants of STM” is inclusive of individuals in the sending and receiving entities, as well as “STM” (those who are going on STM trips; in contrast to “LTM” – long-term-missionary).

Elaboration on the term and concept of “short-term missions (STM)” is in order. In this paper, the term STM is used to describe intentional, cross-cultural mission work of a limited (short-term) duration. This is generally accepted as a contrast to LTM of an extended period of time. The length for STM vary from days to year(s). Some authors, such as Thomas Hale in *On Being a Missionary*, understand STM to be three months to five years. This is problematic because it ignores a large segment of STM workers going out for two weeks or less. On the upper end of the spectrum, the periods of one to three years seem to be arbitrary as there is little to quantify what changes for the missionary at that point. There are lingering questions such as: Do they enter their second term? Have they successfully gone through the process of culture-shock? Have they cultivated cultural sensitivity or acquired language proficiency? Robert and Joseph Priest have discovered in their research that as much as two-thirds of STM trips are for two weeks or less. (Priest, 2007)

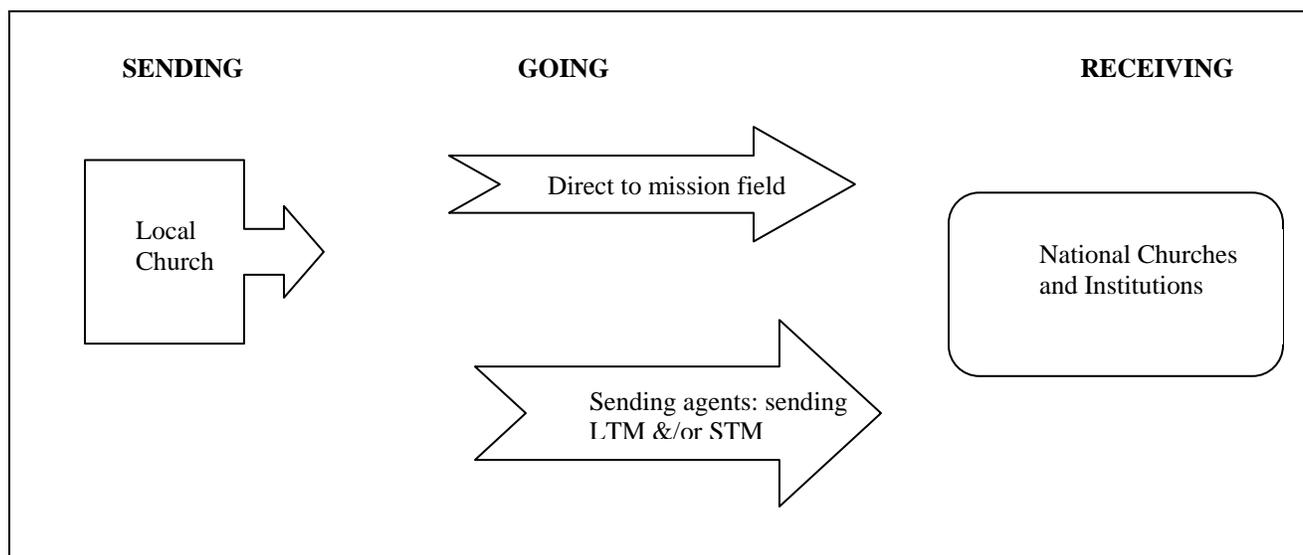
1.3 Methodology

We are both STM practitioners, theological educators and missiologists who have an interest in both research and application of findings of this research. We share the

¹ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1998, 61. See also Bromley 1990, pp. 299-307

² Creswell, 1998, p. 60. See also Pike 1967; Harre 1980, pp. 135-137

methodological assumption that there is difference between emic and etic perspectives on STM therefore informants of both categories are being included. To gather pertinent information, we have relied on our various contacts among the missions community and have interviewed people in person or by telephone/e-mail; not random sampling as in the case of quantitative research. Our scope is limited as our intent is not to do an exhaustive study; but a survey that identifies complimentary aspects as expressed by participants of STM themselves with the hope to stimulate others to engage in extensive research on STM in the broader field of missions. This is a qualitative study providing description of participants in both STM and LTM.



also, such as Asia, Latin America and Europe.

II. SENDING ENTITY

2.1 North America

In an editorial written for Christianity Today (November 11, 1996), Miriam Adeney, missions professor at Regents College and Seattle Pacific University, identified several ways STM compliment LTM through her experiences at her own church, University Presbyterian in Seattle. She stated:

STM members can bring Christ to “restricted access” regions where missionaries are not allowed to settle nor extension of national church. They can provide a vast pool of resources for huge events, like evangelism at the Olympics. STM members may encourage nationals in their own witness.

She identified many problem areas for STM in her article along with some areas STM can compliment LTM, e.g. extending a LTM's ministry, providing a resource pool for large events and encouragement are all themes echoed by others.

Jacksonville Chapel in Lincoln Park, New Jersey, has a large mission program. They support 35 long-term missionaries in 15 countries as well as sending numerous short-term teams out every year. The church contributes 18% of their budget to missions which amounts to over \$5 million annually. They have leadership assigned to both the long-term and the short-term aspects of missions in their church.

Walt Windish is the chairman of their missions committee. He has personally participated in STM as well as overseeing the long-term commitments at Jacksonville Chapel. He identified the following as specific ways he has observed STM complimenting the work of the LTM efforts.

- STM has been a source of long-term missionaries for Jacksonville Chapel. Their missions policy gives priority to LTM missionaries that go out from the body.
- STM have been a source of support to the LTM. They have provided evangelistic support and medical care as well as delivering resources to the LTM.
- STM have provided training to national pastors in the field who have minimal preparation for ministry.
- STM have led to identifying national pastors to support.

Another church with a large missions program involving both STM and LTM is Village Baptist in Beaverton, Oregon. They have 50 years experience in missions work and currently support 47 LTM families from Village living abroad. John Jordan, their missions pastor, explained how they have restructured their program over the last decade to take advantage of the benefits STM brings to LTM work.

They have discovered that many of their STM participants go on to LTM work. Jordan said, "16% of the people who go on a short-term trip from Village will go on to a long-term position." For Village this equates to about four families per year being sent out each year in partnership with LTM agencies, with as many as twenty constantly in preparations for sending.

Their philosophy is to identify gateway countries (such as Lebanon and India), assess the local church's or LTM's needs and try to match that up with the skills available in Village's members. This results in three to four teams going out annually to conduct theological, medical or practical training.

Jordan shared a few examples of how STM has directly benefited the work of LTM. In India, a series of pastor's conferences conducted by a STM team led to greatly improved inter-denominational unity in the state they were working. They also extended the reach of the community health training being conducted by Operation Mobilization among the Dalits. These STM teams have directly led to five families from Village now working for OM in India. One church member who traveled to India three times on STM teams from Village eventually left her marketing career in the U.S. to take a LTM position as assistant to the National Director of O.M. in India.

Another area STM has benefited LTM work has been through education. Training conducted by STM teams from Village in the Philippines and Lebanon has increased the theological competency of local pastors. In one case, a Korean couple from Village after participating on a STM trip to Lebanon is now in process of moving permanently to teach at a seminary there. For Village Baptist, STM is not only a benefit but an integral part of their LTM program.

First Filipino Alliance Church of Edmonton, Canada has a short history of about twenty five years. The founding pastor, Rev. Joy Tira, has motivated church members and mobilized the entire congregation for church planting within Canada and STM/LTM abroad and that is what he named it to be a "Glocal" phenomenon (Tira 2002). FFAC has been instrumental in the founding of fraternal association (CFAM) of Filipino Alliance churches in Canada and through partnership with several entities to eventually form a global network of FIN (Filipino International Network, Tira 2004). He described their experience this way:

For two decades, FFAC sends short-term workers in collaborations with Christian organizations like Operation Mobilization, Campus Crusade for Christ, Youth With A Mission, and Samaritan Purse. In recent years we sent members of our congregation to conduct evangelism and discipleship training with the Filipino International Network in places like Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, HongKong, Jordan, Israel, Cyprus, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and the homeland --- the Philippines. All these "short-term workers" are now engage in missions serving as lay leaders of FFAC, pastors of C&MA congregations in Canada, and serving as C&MA missionaries in North Africa, Arabian Gulf, and South Asia.

FFAC also sends out Medical and Dental Teams to the Philippines the past six years. Our holistic ministries in the homeland have encouraged more workers to engage in compassionate and justice ministries right here in the inner city of Edmonton.

Short-term missions, therefore, have impacted the long-term missions involvement of FFAC in very positive way.

Below are observations by Joy Tira regarding the complimentary features of STM and LTM:

- STM benefited the congregation of FFAC in several ways. The positive results and encouraging reports of participants of STM created a sense of excitement for missions, an adventure spirit to travel abroad for the Gospel and a passion for the lost.
- We plan our STM well in advance and in line with ministry goals of LTM on the field in terms of location and formation of team focus (e.g. medical team, charity mission, community development, etc.).
- Our STM seeks to partner with other para-church organizations (e.g. Campus Crusade), local missions (e.g. OMF) to have strategic assistance to LTM.
- Many of our STM participants are now serving in LTM in the Middle East, Asia and Europe.
Thus STM is a way of recruiting and training of personnel for LTM.
- Those came out of our church serving in LTM are most helpful in planning for STM, advising and coordinating STM activities that would compliment LTM goals.

III. GOING ENTITY

3.1 Asia

Edmond Mok is a Bible translator working in Hong Kong with Wycliffe. He described their involvement with STM:

In our organization, STM usually means a 1-2 year commitment which they can use their expertise to serve as assistants in different allocations. As far as I know, in the past we had STM sent out from HK serving in both Asia & Africa as librarian, secretary, accountant, personnel officer, bi-lingual education assistant, home school teacher, etc. A couple of them have stayed in the organization for a longer term.

We also have many shorter eye-opening programs of various lengths, from a week to 2 months, but not many such programs are designed for ministry purposes. We do have some going for a particular ministry depending on the needs in the field. Recently a team of 4 went to Philippines to visit a HK family & they helped sell the translated scripture portions in the market, set up a booth & run some games in a local fun fair to help promote the scriptures. Yet in most cases, people go to see what translation is all about & have a taste of living in another cultural.

Asia Vision: Short-Term Missions Project began as a ministry preparing and sending missionaries to South Asia, especially from the Philippines. They have expanded to Central Asia, serving in Krygyzstan and Tajikistan. Geri Abordo-Ramos was the former Chairperson of the Central Committee of AVSTM. He shared

We provide pre-field training for all STM and sufficient information for their field assignment. The training they receive builds them up to become future leaders of their churches/denominations in mobilization for missions.

All short-term missionaries that have gone out under AVSTM have gone back to their churches and denominations carrying with them the experiences they were allowed. Some of them have in fact started their own mobilization by forming groups and forming networks in the field so they can also send from their own churches/denominations. This has been one of the thrusts of AVSTM, so that the task of missions mobilization does not remain a monopoly of just one organization, but one that is shared by all believers, as it should be.

David Tan is the Director of recruiting and training for OC in Singapore. He described his role in the STM process:

We work in creative Access Countries of East Asia, providing long-term support to our long-term workers on the field. They design the types of short-term teams they need on the field, I "match make" and "head hunt" to recruit teams for these needs. We have returned to the same location for the past 4-5 years with: ESL, Basketball and Volleyball clinics. Further requests are for Radiographer to train doctors in major region hospital at the prefecture capital, ESL teacher for a university, ESL teachers & coach for High School.

David explained how STM contribute to his ministry's goals:

Part of long-term recruitment is meaningful exposure to reality on the field. People and churches are changed by their participation on short-term teams. Each year, we have seen one or two persons on short-term teams deciding or moving into preparation mode for long-term service on the field. Some of these people have ended up as workers with the organization. While others have joined agencies which fit them better. This helps the organization accomplish the goal of placing new workers in Un-reached People Groups

One of the key issues in CAN is visas for long-term ministry. Our short-term teams had also helped generate these visas as local governments invite new workers to help meet their needs. Long-term workers gain creditability as they help creative access countries with real needs.

Many helpful relationships are built with long-term workers, my family and myself as we lead teams. Participants experience the challenges of working cross-culturally. They get to see how we live out our faith on the field. Interactions with our children allow them to value and invest in long-term relationships with them. The benefits are mutual children on the field make new life long friends while team participants enjoy a cross cultural perspective to live and living.

Field workers are always considered an extension of church ministry. Short-term teams provide a visible expression of this concept.

David recognized many ways the STM benefited the participant as well as the LTM:

I have worked with churches who are actively mobilizing and raising the next generation of workers. Short-term trips have help the churches pick out those with the calling. After the trips, many will join a regular group to process and grow this calling. It becomes a visible means of assessing and evaluating those called for long-term cross cultural ministry.

Teams & leadership development: Pre-trip preparation & post-trip debriefing. We demand a 10 weeks preparation time before teams arrive on the field. The preparation includes daily devotions for 4 weeks before & 2 weeks after trips, team meetings, team training, team prayer time and other necessary preparation like basket, volleyball practices. ESL team meetings. All these require a good amount of leaders. Trip leaders, sub-group leaders in finance and logistical support provide good training ground for leadership. One leader was found to be suitable for eldership in the church and was elected the following year

During the trip: There are daily devotions, prayer and worship time with field workers and leaders. There is a great amount of spiritual growth during a 2 week trip.

The focus of the trip is spiritual growth and development of participants. Helping long-term workers and participants find their calling in life are side benefits.

3.2 Central & South America

There are a handful of Chinese churches in the Panama City and one in Colon. A key person in Christian missions in Panama is Rev. Philip Ngo, a Filipino Chinese sent by the Hong Kong C&MA missions association. He has planted several churches in Panama City and currently is the senior pastor of a significant Protestant congregation in the country giving birth to daughter churches in various places. As the academic dean of the Alliance Bible School of Central and South America and the key coordinator in the training, mobilizing and sending of a dozen or more Christians annually to do STM through out Central and South America in countries such as Surinam, Brazil, Peru, Mexico, etc.

He recalled fondly of his years of administrative service in the mission association in Hong Kong where he mobilized and trained many to participate in STM throughout Asia. He transferred and improved the experience and expertise from Hong Kong to become even more productive in STM ministries throughout Central and South Americas. The following is the

summary of his comments on how STM and LTM can be complimentary in the Great Commission.

- STM participants should receive orientation and coaching from those of LTM with extensive knowledge of the culture, people and the country.
- The work and activities of STM team should be carefully planned ahead to line up with LTM ministry goals.
- The selection of members of STM teams is to be careful and methodic to match the needs and expectation of nationals; but the process can be aided by LTM participants.
- STM people are to enter into partnership with national and not to be domineering; though many STM people come with money, influence and ethnocentric pride.
- If there be any tension or conflict between personnel of LTM and nationals, STM participants are usually caught in the middle of cross fire and their experience will be negative. STM people should avoid entering into a situation that they may become a liability and victim of circumstances.
- If STM trips are well planned and coordinated by leaders of LTM and national churches, their ministry will become fruitful and productive to the field of LTM and the network of national churches. That way, the complimentary nature between STM and LTM/national will be clearly demonstrated. Those who joint in STM will have positive experience leading them towards the path of LTM commitment and eventual life-time involvement.
- Gratiified STM participants will become good promotion for LTM and the causes of national churches. Member of STM will become financial contributor, future STM leaders and recruiters for LTM.

3.3 North America

Rick Calenberg is the Regional Director for SIM (Serving in Mission). He has served as a LTM missionary in Nigeria but currently serves SIM with recruitment, church mobilization and retiree oversight in the Northwest region of the United States. He has led STM teams for over 25 years to various countries. His insights are unique in that he has experienced both aspects of missions – LTM and STM. One story from a STM experience illustrates this complimentary aspect of STM to LTM.

In 2004 my wife and I led a team to do ESL in China. On that team was a wife and mom whose husband had received a strong call to serve in China but the wife was a bit apprehensive and uncertain. This STM trip gave her an opportunity to experience the culture and minister in the context. She adjusted well and was effective in making relationships and ministry. As a result she became convinced of the fact that LTM in this country was really her calling as well. They proceeded through the application process and have recently arrived in Asia and will be moving to the very city where the STM ministry was located!

Her experience allowed her to not only prepare herself, but when she returned to prepare her family and especially her two teenage daughters. Her enthusiasm helped them gain confidence and overcome some of their apprehension of leaving friends and the culture they knew. She was also miles ahead in preparing for life on the field.

In this story we can see the value in STM of serving as a conduit for LTM recruiting. The STM practitioner was able to ‘test the waters’ of her future mission field, affirm her calling and prepare the entire family adequately for a major transition. Rick shared another story that further illustrates this complimentary aspect of STM to LTM.

Another benefit to LTM is the change in world view that results from those who experience an STM. A pastor and wife, with no cross-cultural experience, went with a team to Nigeria and had a very rich experience ministering through teaching. They were embraced by the SIM team there which aided their adjustment. The wife’s teaching gifts and ministry were rekindled and the pastor discovered how effective he could be in a cross-cultural setting. Since their return they seriously have considered career service and still are, planning to return when the wife retires from her current employment. But the impact on their church has been dramatic. Though a little church, they have caught a vision for this country and for the ministry where their pastor and wife served. This has motivated them to get involved and sizeable gifts have been given to SIM approved projects at the school and ministry site where the pastor and his wife taught. Opportunity for recruitment and ongoing education of the congregation has ensued.

There are many complimentary points in this story. One is the ability for a STM to change one’s attitude toward missions. An interesting and all too common reality is that a local church’s pastor may have very little or no exposure to global missions. This near-sightedness has an effect on their church’s involvement in global missions. In this case, the pastor’s cross-cultural experience has affected the entire church and drawn it into LTM missions.

Mike Jorgensen is a vice president with e3 Ministry Partners, a STM organization focused on mobilizing teams from the U.S.A. into partnerships with churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America. When asked how his organization relates to the LTM entity he responded with the following:

We serve the nationals. The Body of Christ in a country is the primary tool God is going to use to take that country for Christ. So we must serve them in their vision and strategy to reach their country. Having said that, we also realize that at times no one in a country has a vision or strategy for reaching the entire country.

So sometimes we “carry the vision virus” with us when we arrive. But that vision must become theirs.

When asked about how his organization specifically supports the mission of the local church, Mike answered:

...by equipping their people to do the work of ministry. Our campaigns are designed to be on-the-job training in evangelism, discipleship and church planting. The focus of our teams is not to do the work of ministry so the North Americans have a great experience, but to have the North Americans model a simple / Biblical / transferable method of multiplying churches using laymen. We also provide simple / Biblical / transferable tools to do this ministry: EvangeCubes, First Steps training manuals, discipleship materials, etc.

As an example of their efforts he offered this example.

We have been working in Bolivia for 4 years. Up to this year, we have not found any church, denomination, ministry or individual that had a vision or plan for saturating the country with new churches. So we did First Steps leadership conferences and brought teams of North Americans. We constantly cast vision for church planting and modeled a simple church planting process and equipped local believers to use simple tools.

Recently, the national director of Campus Crusade invited us to partner with them in planting 1600 new churches over the next 5 years. When we asked what their plan was, we were delighted to hear that it essentially was the church planting process we have modeled there, with the added components of Jesus Film mass evangelism, ongoing leadership development, and discipleship through audio New Testament listening groups.

After serving with Wycliffe in Africa as a practitioner of LTM for 14 years, Richard Gardner now is based in the US northwest and makes about half dozen trips to Nigeria annually. Having done both STM and LTM in Africa, he comes with the wealth of on the field experience as traditional LTM but in the last 2 years have been successfully mobilizing American churches and organizing/coordinating STM teams to West Africa. He described the complementary relationship between STM and LTM in the following summary fashion:

- Both STM and LTM participants are to see the big picture and work towards the share goals if they are to be complementary.
- STM visits can bring in resources (personnel, fiancé, expertise, etc.) to aid the national and LTMers by regular and repeated visits to the same place working with the same national entity.

- There are many types of ministry that STM people can help, e.g. showing the Jesus film, doing medical outreach, conducting children ministries, etc.
- I usually provide country-specific orientation to member of STM six to eight weeks prior to their departure. I coordinate and match the needs of the national with the expertise of STM group members. I serve as their team leaders, translate for them, supervise them and be a liaison with the national Christians and churches. Effective outcomes and satisfactory STM can accomplish when there is a good fit of LTM goals and STM participants' expertise and expectation. As the coordinator, I always follow the goals and objectives of LTM planning then form STM team and recruit members accordingly.
- There are more and more local congregations catching the vision for missions and taking action to participate in STM in the Pacific Northwest. Therefore, though I am now stationed in Portland, I can continue my ministries in Africa through STM format. I utilize my expertise and African network to plan and coordinate STM teams effectively by coinciding with the broader goals of LTM for the particular field.

To illustrate this point, Richard explained how during his recent STM trips of two weeks to Nigeria, he was able to bring along key individuals with him to assist with the initial planning with the Luis Palau Association for a major event - training 15,000 evangelists in Nigeria from Sept. 10 – 14 then a public rally Sept. 15-16th . He knows the country and the people. He has an extensive network developed through out a long period of time of LTM service thus can get substantial amount of preparatory work done even going as a practitioner of STM this time. Richard summed his statements up with, “STM can be an effective way to compliment LTM.”

Paul Lee works with Partners International sending US based teams to East Asia. He described their role as a sending agency.

As a STM practitioner, I think one of our most important roles in relation to the LTM/receiving entity is to build and maintain a close and healthy relationship physically and spiritually.

Actually in some STM trips I have played another role, which is the coordinator. This is a mediator between the two parties - STM teams and the LTM / Receiving side. The coordinator is very important to the relationship of the two.

He listed the following as specific ways they support the LTM.

- Supplying/bringing the necessary materials they need for their ministry such as food, teaching materials, transportation, and medicines to them
- Providing additional biblical/theological/practical trainings for them
- Prayers

Aaron Palmatier is the Director of Third World Economic Development and Ministry Director of Asia and Native Americans for Missions Door. He has worked with STM teams in Mexico and Cambodia. He identified three ways that STM have helped their organization achieve their goals. STM have:

- Attracted new people to the church
- Advanced construction projects, and
- Encouraged the local church

He identified a key ingredient for success for them, “STM works well in our organization because we insist that the receiving national church association set the agenda 100% and control how the money is spent.”

IV. RECEIVING ENTITY

4.1 Asia

On the complimentary relationship of STM and LTM in the Asian context, let us now listen to the words of James Lai who is the Christian Nationals' Evangelism Commission South East Asia Director/CEO.

We in this year received 20-30 STM teams in Myanmar, Thailand, Kalimantan, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos and China. Members from STM teams came to help in the areas of teaching English, technical support, micro-enterprise projects, Bible teaching, children’s ministry and youth camps. They became encouragement to the national churches and leaders and later provided funding for various local ministries after their STM trips.

Members of LTM and mission executives also contributed to the STM participant’s development by providing opportunity for professionals to use their expertise to contribute to the mission field. We educate the STM teams to know more about missions prior to their departure. We even conduct classes for the teams on missions while they are in the field. We bring vision, challenges and opportunity to STM members to help them understand God's calling for their lives for the particular countries that they are contemplating to go.

James Lai also described the positive working relationship between STM and LTM in the points listed below:

- The best way to educate the church members in missions is to send them to the mission field.
- The best way to raise fund meaningfully is to bring the sponsors into the field to see for themselves.
- The best way to involve professionals in missions is to give them opportunity for them to use their expertise in the mission field.
- The STM will contribute in funds and human resources if the missions organization would be willing to take them to the field, educate them and give them opportunity to contribute to the field.
- STM is a resource itself both to the mission organizations and the mission fields.

James added one final point in relation to the benefits of STM:

Concerning the STM , it is a way in which the church can satisfy and mobilize the postmodernists. The postmodernist congregation does not like just to be told about missions but to be hands on themselves. They always crave for experiences and thus STM is a way which appeals and can help the postmodernists to know missions through their own experiences.

Paul and Diana Mayhugh are a seasoned missionary couple from the U.S. serving as the field chairman of WorldVenture in Hong Kong. They have mastered the language and earned the respect of the nationals. Paul is pursuing a Ph.D. at the China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong though he is stationed in Macau. Paul and Diana received STM members annually and had a positive perspective on STM. Paul recognized that STM team had contributed to the goals of LTM. In his own word, he said,

STM is primarily about experiencing missions first hand. Generally speaking, any person that is able to leave their home church and culture to experience life and ministry in a dissimilar culture will benefit. WorldVenture Macau is generally about building God's Kingdom and particularly about helping build the church in Chinese world. Every believer (no matter what country) that comes to Macau for a STM is being enriched in Christ and helping to either build the Chinese church or become a more impassioned and knowledgeable advocate for the Chinese church.

Paul also noted that as a career missionary, his LTM ministry contributed to the STM participant's development in the following way:

From my 21 years of experience, receiving 100-200 STMers a year here, STM are largely 80% what they receive from the experience and about 20% of what the hosting ministry receives. Most of the participants' lives are eternally changed because of their coming to Macau. Macau ministries are not necessarily extra-normal but God seems to use this small place in a big way in many people's lives. One Taiwanese church sends two STM

teams a year to work with us. It is their strategy that by doing this regularly, the majority of their church members will have gone on a mission trip. In addition their church has had over 15 young people make the decision to go into "full time" ministry because of their Macau STM experience. Many church pastors comment that their church members come back from Macau changed. They are more aggressive in evangelism. They are more hungry in Bible study and more eager to go on mission trips or support missions in their local church.

In conclusion, Paul made a simple and strong statement: "STM are a win-win ministry experience from our perspective."

Another American missionary serving in Kazakhstan, preferred to remain anonymous of his identity and his mission organization. He compliments that STM team had contributed to his ministry as a career missionary. In this own word below, he provided explanation:

They did evangelism among college students through providing conversational English practice. Advantage: valuable, direct ministry takes place without dependence on translators. Many Kazakh students have come to Christ through short-term teams in this way. In the 90's my team also received medical STM (very helpful when well organized), prayer teams (good if they are well-led by seasoned prayer ministry workers), teams that did VBS for MK's (good results) and teams that came to do street evangelism (not good, because every pair of foreigners needed a local guide/translator).

He commented that his ministry had also contributed to the STM participant's development in the following way:

They learn cross-cultural adaptation, and are able to assess their own suitability for long-term service in Kazakhstan, Central Asia or elsewhere. Many have returned on additional short-term teams, and five participants have returned to Central Asia for longer term service.

To conclude his remarks with additional comments on the positive working relationship between STM team and his mission:

Most of our STM have been recruited by our mission organization. In the past I have received STM from other organizations. This sometimes results in clashes of expectations and goals, so there must be clear communication about these things beforehand. This is sometimes difficult by email, and things work better if there is a face-to-face meeting.

Jim Latzko is a missionary with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism in the Philippines. He shared that STM teams have been a positive experience for them. Musical teams have joined them to assist with public outreaches and several pastoral teams have conducted seminars and visited local pastors that brought encouragement and training.

Speaking of the STM participant's experience Latzko stated:

We provide both pre-field briefings and debriefings. We try to provide a mix of both ministry, personal enrichment, cultural training, and relaxation. Many participants were greatly encouraged to see the growth of the Body of Christ in the world. One of our STM participants is now in full-time missionary ministry, while another is in preparation for full-time missionary ministry.

Rev. Jorge de Ramos is a Missions Mobilizer for the Conservative Baptist Association of the Philippines. He works with STM teams deployed to China, Pakistan, Cambodia, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Asked how STM teams have contributed to his ministry he replied:

They were able to accomplish certain objectives related to raising awareness of the field, discovering God's calling for cross-cultural missions, being able to explore new platforms for presence in the host countries. In the long run these accomplishments through the short-term teams will contribute to the purposes and aims of our organization.

STM, especially when they have had positive experiences in the field, will prove to be effective "mouthpiece" for your organization and what it represents. They draw more involvement and resources to the task.

He also identified some benefits that assist with the development of the STM participants:

General orientation to cross-cultural missions, vocational counseling - the participants generally begin to have a broader perspective for their personal ministry and calling. The experience of having contributed to the needs of the field gives them a deeper sense of fulfillment. STM also gives them a deeper understanding of the missionary life.

Christ Community Alliance Church in SW China has received 3 teams over the last several years. Rev. Alfred Tai shared that they have assisted with teaching English at the primary/high school level and bringing medical services. He said:

STM bring a sense of real participation to missions, rather than just giving money (not that offering to the missions fund is not important.) STM have changed the lives of everyone who has been on the field positively to be a little more mature Christian.

4.2 Africa

Rev. Hilary Gbotoe, Jr. is the Bishop of Kingdom Harvest Ministries in Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa. This network of churches and ministries throughout the capital area has received many STM teams in the past. He is responsible for leadership development, project planning and implementation of their strategy to plant churches in the country. The following were some of his observations about STM:

My observation is that short-term missions always bring focus to the long-term mission of the work. It is often easy to lose track of the long-term mission and get distracted. Here is an example of how short-term missions compliment long-term missions by bringing focus to the group.

The Kingdom Harvest Ministries was primarily established to plant churches throughout Liberia. About two years ago, the leadership in Liberia got distracted over the allocation of resources to the already established churches instead of using the resources to plant more churches. When I took a short-term missions team to Liberia, the team had a series of outreaches to win more people to the Lord. The meetings were so fruitful that the leadership in Liberia repented and decided to keep using every resource provided to plant churches instead of trying to build huge buildings (although there is nothing wrong with building decent buildings for worship).

As we can see here, the STM team was able to re-energize the national church planting ministry and to refocus them on their own stated goal. It is important to note that the STM team was led by a national and was in harmony with the aspiration and agenda of local churches.

Mark Dunker, the BA Program Director at International Christian Ministries (ICM) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania serves as a LTM educator. He administrates the BA program at the Bible College and coordinates STM teams sent from the states to assist them. They regularly host visiting teachers and work teams at the school. Mark commented, “Teaching at the seminary and doing building projects have been clear fits. As an educational mission, we have practitioners and teachers who bring their years of experience. This very positively impacts our ability to train our pastors.”

Another area that STM have complimented is the financial aspect. Mark recognized, “Having teams come minister along side us has been beneficial financially, we’ve been able to do some ministry that otherwise wouldn’t have happened.” He also observed that one STM teacher to the school had become a donor to the ministry through their teaching experience. Mark also saw the importance of building donor relations. Both, the LTM practitioners in the field and

the national staff members, benefit from the connection that can happen when STM teams come to encourage LTM staff.

Amos Magezi is the Director of the Uganda Bible Institute in Uganda. He described his STM experience.

We have been receiving short-term teams in Uganda from USA, Canada, New Zealand, and UK. Some of these help us doing bible studies, construction, youth evangelism, sports ministry, VBS and teaching some classes at UBI. The short-term teams are very effective if the schedule is drawn very well. It also works well if the relevant people with relevant skills come for specific ministries. Or else the time is wasted.

In Ethiopia, Ayasu Malfamo is the country coordinator for Bible Training Centre for Pastors. He has worked with numerous STM teams working serving local denominations and Ethiopian churches. These teams have conducted evangelistic outreaches and supplied teachers to assist with the training BTCPC conducts. Malfamo noted the STM participants often return encouraged by both the success of evangelistic outreaches and the level of participation by the national believers.

Sammy and Winny Ndumu serve with AIC Kisima Ministry Fellowship in Kenya. They described their relationship with the STM teams that have visited them and projected some of the ways STM could help their ministry:

We make the plans for STM teams to visit us. We have health services to HIV/AIDS victims where nurses and doctors can visit and minister with us. We have teaching opportunities in which teachers can come for short-term teaching engagements. We have HIV/AIDS orphans and widow/widowers who need emotional support, counseling and financial support. We have Sunday school kids who need teaching materials and equipment for teaching them.

The Ndumu's final comment on STM was "There is so much you can partner with us!"

Seth Anyomi with African Christian Mission shared they had hosted STM for over twenty years supporting their ministry in Ghana. He noted the teams had, "Given time, skills and money to areas of ministry where they served." He stated they arranged lodging and created the setting for their ministry involvement. "Such partnerships have been cordial and some of the teams have repeated their visits many times following."

Fullstature Missions International of Nigeria both trains and sends out long-term missionaries to Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Togo and Nigeria, and also receives STM teams to work with these LTM. Isaiah Lawon is their International Director. He described the role the STM teams play in helping them reach un-reached people groups:

The STM serve in several capacities: in medical mission, in teaching and equipping, in assistance to farmers with input, in evangelism, building and missions awareness, Bible distribution and material and financial supply.

He added:

The working relationship between STM team and our organization have produced profound changes reinforcing the desire to see the ends of the world evangelized. This has brought the team to see the situation differently and then become challenged to do more for the fields. Some of these have become missionaries because of the trips.

4.3 Central & South America

American missionary Marcos Vance is the field missionary area coordinator with CrossWorld in northern Brazil. He recognized that STM teams contributed to the goal of his career ministry through the following:

- Increasing involvement with our home churches;
- Providing opportunities to connect with our other ministries here in Brazil;
- When we accompany teams;
- Meeting of physical needs in the ministries;
- Through translation, helping with proclamation and testimony.

When asked how the experience contributes to the STM participant Marcos stated, “We see it as an opportunity to disciple participants and move them ahead a few steps in their walk with the Lord and especially in their mission’s involvement.” He commented additionally on the positive working relationship between STM team and his missions: “Some good long-term intercultural relationships develop this way.”

Don and Zoe Peffer serve with CrossWorld in Cuiaba, Brazil. They responded to our research on STM with the following:

They have encouraged supporting churches to be actively involved in our ministries and they have encourage the national brethren with their presence and willingness to serve the Lord. They have helped physically with the building of cabins for our camp, buildings and repairs for churches in town, and even some missionary home improvements. Teams have also have been a great blessing to our family.

4.4 North America

Working among Native Americans in Oregon and Washington with Christian Hope Indian Eskimo Fellowship, David Hopkins has worked with STM teams on several reservations. They conducted building projects in the morning and then visited people in the afternoons in their homes. David contributed that, “The summer projects on the Warmsprings Reservation

helped to open the doors for our teaching ministry with CHIEF called ‘The School Without Walls.’”

4.5 Middle East

An un-named field director for a missions agency in the Middle East told us that they easily blend STM teams into their LTM work as many of the LTM personnel are in tent-making jobs. Some of the activities the STM have been involved with were:

- Prayer walking
- Friendship evangelism
- Teaching English at the language institute
- Administrative support
- Hospitality
- Conference support
- Evangelism at public events that the LTM’s weren’t able to do

V. CONCLUSION

In this paper we have interviewed numerous STM/LTM practitioners regarding the complimentary aspect of STM/LTM. We have relied on our personal contacts among the missions community, interviewing them by telephone or e-mail. The data we have collected represents both emic and etic perspectives from a global perspective. These case studies have demonstrated to us that STM and LTM can be a win-win situation, complimenting each other and bringing benefits to both elements of missions work.

Listed below are the un-duplicated benefits identified by the interviewees. Our desire is that those who have had a low opinion of STM will begin to see its value to LTM, and that more research might be done on the STM phenomena.

Complimentary aspects of STM to LTM:

- Source of recruiting and training LT missionaries
- Source of financial support
- Ability to deliver resources to field
- Provide training to national pastors
- Identification of national pastors to support
- Extending a LTM’s reach
- Resource pool for large scale events
- Access to areas restricted to missionaries
- Encourage national believers
- Educate sending churches about overseas churches

- Conducting pastor's conferences
- Provide pastoral training
- Improve inter-denominational unity
- Create excitement for missions in the home church
- Provide strategic assistance
- Increased involvement with missions
- Congregational education
- Cast vision for church planting
- Re-energize the national church planting ministry
- Provide encouragement to the LTM staff
- Create opportunity for professionals to use their expertise in the mission field (medical, dental, agriculture, etc.)
- Promotion of the LTM at home
- Support for MK's
- Meeting physical needs
- Musical help with public outreaches
- Providing teachers
- Create interest in educational programs
- Prayer walking
- Administrative support
- Hospitality
- Evangelism at public events closed to missionaries
- Formation of new groups and sending networks

Complimentary aspects of LTM to STM:

- Change in worldview through experience
- Change in attitude toward missions
- Catch vision for church planting
- Develop relationship with the LTM
- A positive experience moving them toward LTM commitment
- Increased involvement in evangelism
- Increased interest in Bible study
- Assessment of suitability for LTM
- Encouragement
- Encourage engagement in compassion and justice ministries at home
- Better understanding of God's calling in their lives
- Deeper understanding of the LTM's life and challenges
- Desire to see the ends of the world reached

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