

PRACTICAL PREPARATION FOR AN OUTREACH

Every mission outreach can be a great and wonderful experience. It can mean a lot to many of the people that we come into contact with, as well as to ourselves. However, this does not happen automatically. We have to prepare ourselves!

Reading

Read the Bible to learn about God's caring heart for the nations and how the church has been instructed by Jesus to take the gospel to all men throughout the world. Beginning with the Acts of the Apostles and using a concordance, you will soon understand the Biblical mandate we have, and know God's desire for missions. Other books such as *Operation World*, missionary biographies, as well as books on prayer and spiritual warfare, or publications from mission organisations, will be helpful. Your local Christian bookshop will be able to assist you in recommending literature. We encourage you to read the other articles on the website as well.

Intercession

Prayer and intercession are an essential part of both the preparation and the actual outreach. The whole programme should be steeped in prayer and we need to intercede for the people we are going to help as well as for our team and our hosts. We should pray for God's anointing and wisdom as we relate to people of another culture. It would be good to arrange some special prayer meetings in your congregation, on behalf of the people you are going to serve.

Language Preparation and Cultural Adaptation

When we intend to take the Gospel to people who are of a different culture and language, it becomes advisable to get to know theirs, as far as possible. If time is limited some greetings and basic social customs should be learnt. Your local library may have books on the areas and peoples you are going to visit. Try and find someone to teach you a few phrases in the language of that area. Probably the best way to prepare yourself for language learning would be to attend a BREWSTER course (info: linkserv-at-inserv.org.za).

Specialist Knowledge

Sometimes specialist knowledge will be needed when we reach out to certain groups of people, for example the Muslims and the Hindus. There are some excellent books on these topics available at Christian bookshops, for example Sadhu Sundar Singh's book on Hindus, Bilquis Sheikh's *I dared to call Him Father* and Gulshan Ester's *The Torn Veil* about Muslims.

General Information

Useful information on the practical side of missionary work can be obtained by attending mission camps and conferences

Medical Preparation

Good health is a prerequisite for joining a mission outreach. You should not be exhausted before you start! It may be necessary to have vaccinations, or take medication such as anti-malarial tablets.

Other preparation

A passport should be obtained well in advance. Consult your nearest office of the Department of the Interior. A travel agent, or a consulate of the country concerned, will assist you in applying for visas for countries where they are required.

For further details on prayer and outreaches, the following material is recommended:

- ☐ *The Short-term Mission Handbook* (Berry Publishing Services);
- ☐ *Operation World* (Patrick Johnstone);
- ☐ *Mobilise to evangelise!* – A practical manual (Charles Haupt);
- ☐ *Move Out* (Stewart Dinnen); and
- ☐ *Youth Outreach* – World Mission Centre (video)