

The Short-Term Mission Commitment to Best Practice Standards

The Global Connections standards are shown in bold. The regular text then explains how Church Mission Society meets these commitments.

Section 1: Aims and Objectives

To ensure:

- **A biblically-based, long-term vision for all partners**
- **A purposeful project that has measurable goals**
 - a. **All short-term mission programmes have clear aims and objectives. These are realistic, measurable and reflect the long-term objectives of all the partners.**

Short-term mission opportunities with CMS are created through established relationships with locally led NGOs who (where possible) are part of the recruitment process. All of our short-term programmes aim to support the ongoing work of our strategic partners in the field. The aim of our short-term mission programmes is two-fold. Firstly, to encourage young people to experience the global church and to grow in their faith and secondly; for those sensing a call to longer overseas mission service to be able to test that call.

- b. **The aims of all projects clearly reflect that this is distinctive Christian mission.**

All short-term mission opportunities will overtly express CMS' values of being pioneering, evangelistic, relational and faithful.

- c. **The benefits to and responsibilities of all the partners are clearly identified and stated in the programme outlines / summaries.**

All of our advertising will highlight that whilst the short-term programme will assist in the ongoing work in location, the primary benefit will be the discipleship of the participant which occurs through people living and experiencing a different culture and worldview; building mutual and respectful relationships with their hosts and through experiencing the global church gaining an understanding of our Global God, thus deepening and challenging the participant's faith.

- d. There is clear evidence of consultation between the senders and hosts in establishing the aims and objectives of all short-term programmes.**

Our mission managers in-region ensure that there is clear and regular communication between CMS Britain and our strategic partners.

- e. Projects will be sensitive to, and developed around, the context and environment into which participants will be received.**

Our programme and our training (which is a pre-requisite for all of our short-term programmes) and debriefing reflects this vision. CMS believes in contextual mission, working respectfully with our partners and training participants in these areas.

- f. The participant is developed and disciplined throughout their experience.**
g. Where a short-term mission programme is organised by a sender that is not the participant's home church, appropriate support from the participant's local Christian community is sought.

Personal development and discipleship are key features of CMS' short term mission programmes. The candidate is encouraged to reflect on their own spiritual and emotional journey throughout both the selection process and the placement itself. A debrief on return is also compulsory. The candidate will be asked on the application form and during interview on support of their home church for their application. This response will be evidenced in a reference provided by the home church.

Section 2: Publicity & Selection

To ensure:

- **Clear communication of aims and objectives**
 - **Appropriate matching of people to projects**
 - **Adequate briefing and equipping of all partners**
- a. Publicity materials accurately describe the programmes without omission of what might be considered the 'harsh reality' of circumstances with the host, and are targeted appropriately, and used with integrity.**

CMS advertises its short-term programmes on its website, social media and other platforms such as OSCAR and Global Connections. These adverts include a short description of what the role requires. If the placement is in a country where some

local language knowledge is required, then this is clearly communicated in the advertisement.

Further details on each placement are discussed with the candidate at the enquiry stage where the details of accommodation/food etc are provided.

b. All forms of communication with participants will clearly represent the ethos and vision of the sender, and will define the purpose of the programme in terms of service, discipleship and vocation.

Candidates will be shown CMS's Ethos Statement and will be asked during their initial interview whether they agree with that statement.

CMS's selection process will assess the candidates' understanding of global mission, in addition to their attitude towards mission, this is done through our enquiry form and during interviews.

c. The application process is clearly communicated to the participant, and includes full disclosure of timescales, financial responsibilities and time commitments.

Information on our recruitment process for all of our short-term programmes is available on our website in addition to being sent to enquirers via email. This highlights the stages of the application, costs, health checks and safer recruitment processes which need to take place.

d. The selection process is based on clearly defined selection criteria and all screening is transparent and reflects the nature of the programme being applied for.

CMS aims to recruit individuals/families for short term mission programmes where they have demonstrated:

- a personal commitment of faith
- ongoing discipleship and commitment to personal development
- a humble and learning posture towards cross cultural mission

e. Placement decisions are clear and transparent, will be made with integrity, and will be communicated to all involved (including when changes are made).

Enquirers will usually approach CMS with a specific placement in mind. If, during the selection process, there are changes to this (for example, due to a crisis in country such as natural disaster or war) then any changes will be discussed with the candidate as soon as possible and alternative placements offered.

- f. Those not selected, are given clear feedback on why their application was not approved and will be offered short-term pastoral support if needed.**

If a candidate, for any reason, is not selected then they will be informed as soon as possible, initially with a phone call and then an email clearly explaining the reasons for the decision and outlining our complaints policy should the applicant feel that they were treated unfairly.

- g. The home church is involved in the selection process (as appropriate).**

Part of the application process is three references, an employer/tutor reference (covering five years of employment history, and any employer misconduct for five years, as part of the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme) a clergy/church leader reference as well as a personal reference. The church leader reference will be expected to come from the candidate's sending church and additional questions are asked on our enquiry form regarding the candidate's support from both their home church and their family.

- h. There is clear evidence that all relevant preparatory information (between selection and formal orientation) is provided to the participant as early as possible.**

As part of the interview process the candidate will meet (via zoom) with a representative from the programme and/or the mission manager in region, who will explain the expectations of the role, the environment that they will be living in and it is an opportunity for the candidate to ask any questions that they may have.

If a placement is in a sensitive location the specific location will not be named in the advertising of the placement but will be explained in person to the candidate at the earliest possible opportunity.

The candidate will have a well-being assessment with an independent counsellor as part of the selection process. If the candidate is not selected then a further session with this counsellor will be offered to the candidate, as a form of debrief.

Section 3: Orientation and Placements

To ensure:

- **Adequate briefing and equipping of all partners**
 - a. Orientation prior to the project and induction at the start of the project is given to all participants. This should include all procedures outlined**

in 5(e); for example: - Project brief, location and tasks - Structures and lines of accountability - Biblical mandate - Job descriptions - Child and vulnerable adult safeguarding measures - Health and safety, security and issues arising from the risk assessment - Team dynamics and conflict resolution - Finances, legal liability and insurance - Cultural considerations - Guidelines on behaviour and relationships - Communication policy with home - Expectations regarding debriefing

Wherever CMS works, we work in partnership. We are part of a number of networks including the dynamic and collaborative CMS Mission Network (incl. CMS-Africa, Asia CMS).

CMS provide a 12-day training package called forMission which is a prerequisite for being sent. This includes information regarding security, safeguarding, cross-cultural working, spirituality etc. Additional in-context training may be provided by the strategic partner and this will be explained to the applicant during the placement interview with the candidate.

The CMS Code of conduct will be explained to the participant, together with cultural considerations specific to the context.

The participant is required to sign a short-term mission agreement in which they agree to attending a debrief at the end of their placement.

b. When a team is being placed, there are clear processes for the selection, screening, training, responsibilities and support for team leaders. This takes account of both the nature of the team and the type and location of the placement.

CMS does not currently send teams to placements.

c. Responsibilities of all partners regarding practicalities, job descriptions and supervision are made clear and agreed prior to placement.

We have partnership agreements in place for all partners that we send participants to. Partners set the timetable & take on local line management of participants. Thus, the host is fully in charge of the day to day running of any project.

Alternatively, the placement is with a “local partner” (CMS people in mission from the region they are serving in) or a long-term mission partner (CMS people in mission from a UK context serving overseas for a minimum of five years). Both are very aware of contextualisation and the sensitivities around their particular context.

All placements are planned via a mission manager and the overseas partner. The Mission Manager has extensive in region experience or is based in region. No participant is sent without local placement leader's agreement – they get to see the CV and description of candidates and have the right to refuse candidates.

Section 4: Legal Issues

To ensure:

- **Diligent handling of all legal issues relating to short-term programmes**
 - a. **Where participants are working with vulnerable groups including children, 'fit person' checks are made: Enhanced DBS checks or other regional equivalent.**

Safeguarding checks form a key part of the selection process and relevant criminal record checks are requested and obtained prior to departure. This is explained to the candidate throughout the selection process and our safeguarding policy is available on our website. CMS use ThirtyOne:Eight to process our DBS checks. This ensures that the correct level of check is obtained for the candidate, reflective of the role that they will be doing on the field.

Our local partner organisations receive regular safeguarding training and have entered into a safeguarding agreement with CMS which is monitored regularly.

- b. **Any participant under 18 years of age, is required to provide documented parental consent.**

Applicants can apply if they are 17 and will be turning 18 prior to departure. In this instance consent forms are required from a parent/guardian. Applicants must be over 18 at the time of departure.

- c. **Senders clearly define their lower age limit and who is responsible for underage participants. Specialist legal advice and insurance cover is sought for groups including participants under 18 years old.**

Advertisements for our GAP programmes clearly state that the minimum age requirement is 18 years of age.

- d. **Waivers and disclaimers are not used, unless on the explicit direction of legal advice (details provided where applicable).**

CMS does not use waivers or disclaimers.

- e. Compliance with the Package Travel Regulations, including promotional material, use of contracts booking conditions and appropriate insurance cover is clearly demonstrated (if applicable).**

Participants are required to purchase their own flights and appropriate insurance cover. CMS ensures that the participant has obtained the correct level of insurance and retains copies of this for the duration of their placement.

- f. Requirements of the ATOL regulations are implemented, if organising flights.**

CMS is not subject to ATOL regulations as participants arrange their own travel.

Section 5: Field Management and Pastoral Care

To ensure

- **Aims and objectives are met for all partners**
- **Care and development of the participant is provided for**
 - a. **Systems and processes are in place to review task aims and objectives with participants, and to emphasise the ongoing responsibilities and expectations.**

Candidates will be required to read and sign a code of conduct and job description prior to departure and will be monitored and supervised in context, on the basis of those documents.

- b. **Suitably skilled and experienced supervisors are in place to support participants and maintain clear lines of authority, supervision, communication, responsibility and accountability.**

Placement staff are responsible for supervision during the placement and will encourage opportunities for reflection. There is also ongoing pastoral care provided from the UK by our regional personnel leads. Should there be misconduct/discipline issues these will, initially be dealt with by the placement staff with support from the relevant Regional Personnel Lead.

We encourage the sending church to regularly contact the participant with a particular focus on discipleship, both in terms of checking with them as well as offering prayer support and spiritual insight from people who have known the participant for longer than we have.

c. Pastoral care and support structures are established and implemented.

Applicants will also be required to undertake a 'well-being assessment' as part of the selection process which is an additional opportunity for the candidate to reflect on their personal experiences and how they anticipate dealing with stress/conflict in another environment. The aim of this assessment is to equip the candidate with the necessary 'tools' for their emotional/spiritual and physical wellbeing during the placement and beyond. This may involve additional sessions with a trained counsellor through their placement. Each participant will have a Regional Personnel Lead assigned to their care who will be in contact with them regularly throughout their placement.

d. Opportunities for personal and spiritual development of the participant are provided.

Discipleship happens throughout the programme, particularly through reflection on experiences. There are also practical tools we suggest/ use: Participants are asked to reflect on their faith journey to date at application/ interview stage which many comment is a helpful practice for their own faith reflection.

During the training we send participants a reading list for their stay overseas which we encourage participants to work through.

Throughout the duration of the placement, we encourage participants to worship with local Christians. Most placements hold regular prayer/ devotional/ worship times with their staff and volunteers.

During training we facilitate Bible study, worship and prayer. We share different mission spirituality practices with participants that we encourage participants to reflect on and adopt for their own faith development. During training and throughout the length of their placement, participants worship with Christians from other backgrounds and denominations which enriches and grows their own faith. Prayer takes place in groups and helps participants to start to pray for the region, with other Christians.

e. Appropriate policies and procedures are established, communicated and implemented. These would include:

- **Healthcare, medical contingencies, security and evacuation**
- **Identifying and managing risks**
- **Stress management and conflict resolution**
- **Misconduct, discipline and grievances**

CMS ensures, during the placement development stage, that the placement has robust safeguarding policies and procedures. Risk assessments are formed in

agreement with the participant, the regional personnel lead and a placement representative.

Section 6: Post-assignment Support, Evaluation and Programme Development

To ensure:

- **Participants are supported post-assignment**
- **Systems are in place to allow all partners to give feedback**
- **Feedback received is assessed without prejudice and used proactively to enhance future programmes**
- a. Debriefing and support for the participant is seen as an integral part of the short-term programme and the process involves all partners.**

CMS values evaluation and reflection as a key part of our short-term programmes. It is clearly communicated to the participant, both in writing and verbally, that they are expected to attend a debrief, provided by CMS on return from the placement. The candidate will sign a Mission Agreement in which they consent to this.

- b. Post-assignment preparation, including placement appraisal, begins before the end of the project.**

Participants are offered a mid-placement and end of placement review form to complete, in order that we can continue to evaluate, monitor and improve our own processes.

- c. Debriefing and support of team leaders is seen as an integral part of the short-term programme.**

CMS does not send teams.

- d. Senders assist participants through post-assignment readjustment.**

Participants are welcomed to CMS House on their return for advice on re-adjusting as well as being welcomed to attend our next People in Mission Conference (which are held twice a year) wherein there are many opportunities for reflection and counselling is also available.

- e. **Advice and guidance are offered to participants to find the next step in their Christian life following the programme. Where appropriate, this is done in liaison with the participant's home church.**

See d.

- f. **An evaluation of aims, responsibilities and procedures is undertaken, inviting comment from all partners. Culturally appropriate ways of providing feedback are sought from the host.**

CMS has strong relationships with our strategic partners and we have regular communication with them. We review our processes with our strategic partners, asking for their feedback and reviewing our own procedures in light of this feedback.

- g. **The results of evaluations are communicated to relevant managers, for the improvement of future projects.**

Participant evaluations are shared with the relevant mission manager and personnel lead.

Section 7: Responding to the Challenges of Short-Term Mission in Today's Culture and Climate Change

To ensure:

- **The church or agency adopts a considered and responsible approach to climate change**
- **Participants are encouraged to consider UK based programme**
- **Overseas programmes focus on 'listening and learning', over and above 'showing and doing'**
- a. **The reason(s) for continuing to run overseas / international short-term mission programmes are clearly communicated in all promotional material.**

CMS believes that short term mission programmes are still valuable as long as we do them the right way! With CMS, individuals are placed with a local strategic partner and they will be supporting the on-going work in that location. A humble learning attitude to mission is essential and this will be assessed throughout the selection process. A short-term mission programme is also a great way to explore a call to longer term cross-cultural mission.

This information is available in our GAP and short-term mission information packs which are available for download on our website.

b. The sender can demonstrate balance in their short-term programmes between overseas and UK based. If UK based programmes are not currently offered, the sender is able to articulate why.

CMS does not offer mission placements in the UK. Rather, we offer UK churches a resource (Pioneering Parishes) and individuals with training (Pioneer mission training) to help them be missional where they are. These materials and training are available on our website and advertised on our social media channels.

c. Where applicable, the sender is able to demonstrate an awareness of carbon off-setting, and can evidence the steps taken to offset international travel required as part of their programmes.

The CMS Creation Care group meets quarterly to check we are working to make a positive difference in CMS as an organisation to our global environment. CMS conducts a carbon audit every year with Climate Stewards and we offset our carbon with their certified sustainable projects.

CMS sends individuals, rather than teams on short term programmes. Short-term participants will be supervised by our strategic partners on the field. Any pastoral or counselling support from the UK is done via phone/zoom, therefore the carbon footprint for our participants is limited to their individual seat on a scheduled flight.

d. The sender can practically demonstrate that their programmes focus on 'listening and learning', over and above 'showing and doing'.

CMS believes that there is still value in sending people on short-term mission. For CMS these participants will only ever be supporting the long-term work that is locally led in context. Our local partners have invited short term participants to join their programmes, also recognising the value in doing this.

CMS clearly communicates the value of short-term mission programmes in our literature and on our website. CMS believes that the primary beneficiary of short-term mission will be the participant themselves in both their spiritual and emotional development. However, they will also be contributing to the ongoing work in location as well as gaining new skills (for instance, a foreign language).

We believe that there is value in an individual seeing and experiencing the global church and that, in stepping out of their comfort zone, they can anticipate to grow in their faith and self-awareness. Throughout the selection process we will

gently explore the reasons why the candidate is exploring short term mission overseas and their own justifications for doing so.

Short term mission is also valuable as a way of testing a longer-term call to serve in mission overseas and we would encourage those who sense a longer-term call to mission to serve in a short-term capacity first.

ENDS