

**Background Report on Short-term Missions:
In Consideration of the
Development of a Catholic Relief Services U.S.-Mexico Border Program**

Final Report

by

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Executive Summary

Background. Catholic Relief Services (CRS), through the CRS Southwest Regional Office and the CRS Mexico Country Program, is exploring the development of a U.S.-Mexico border program to enhance CRS program offerings for Catholics in the United States and, specifically, to provide opportunities (including immersion experiences) for youth and adults to build stronger cross-border solidarity relationships in order to understand border issues and advocate on issues such as migration. The program would have all of the elements necessary to promote, build, and foster relationships of solidarity and justice between the persons who visit and the persons who are visited. It would also have the means to assess the transformation, or behavior change, that CRS aims to achieve through solidarity with the poor and vulnerable overseas toward the goal of a world transformed by solidarity.

Principal findings. To support this effort, CRS Southwest in collaboration with CRS Mexico examined short-term mission experiences as background preparation for border program design. The principal findings are that North American short-term mission experiences are increasing in popularity at a very fast rate. The demand on the part of "sending" groups is larger than can be met by current programs and activities, while for the most part, little or no demand is evidenced by the "receiving" groups, according to a review of the literature and survey results. In addition, there are numerous guides for "sending" groups but no guidebooks for "receiving" groups. These findings indicate a flaw in short-term mission design wherein the "receiving" groups are often not sufficiently or purposefully included throughout the experience. Moreover, an analysis of quantitative studies on the lasting behavior change or transformation in individuals who participate in missions found little or no lasting positive change as a result of the experience. An analysis of qualitative studies on the same subject concluded that short-term missions resulted in significant, positive changes in the individual. These contradictory findings, based on different methodologies, raise a critical methodological issue for border program design in particular and CRS in general, namely, how to effectively measure transformation and impact.

Notwithstanding, evidence also suggests that it is only through a structure in which the short-term mission becomes just one element in a strategy, which also includes support and accountability before and especially after, that lasting behavior change can be expected for individuals in the "sending" group. And it is only through a continuing relationship with the "sending" group that lasting change will occur in the "receiving" group or community. Thus, the key questions for border program design are: What structure and strategy are most appropriate and effective? How can a continuing relationship between the "sending" and "receiving" groups be achieved?

Leading individuals to choose solidarity (relationship) with the poor, internalize concern for the common good, and act to transform the world is at the foundation of Catholic social teaching, which refers to the process of formation. The ongoing formation process, by definition, includes the short-term mission experience as an instrument of formation, which reflects today's understanding of mission: "Meeting God already present among the peoples of the earth" (Vatican Council II). Meeting God is at the heart of the mission experience, and how the experience comes about lies in its design—and faith. Research on and direct experience and

expertise with short-term missions demonstrate that the greater the investment (time and resources) in program design and especially in planning and preparation, the better the result.

Conclusions. The design of a short-term mission/border program must be part of an ongoing formation structure and strategy. Necessarily, design must take into account a number of disparate factors, ranging from the study of culture and socio-economic issues, to logistics and meal planning, to globalization and advocacy, to prayer and discernment, in addition to relationship building and maintenance between the "sending" and "receiving" groups. It must also address the measurement of transformation and be able to adequately assess whether or not the challenge to transform the world through solidarity has been met. In sum, the design of a border program must be carefully crafted and thoughtful and examine all possibilities.

Recommendations to CRS. With respect to possibilities for border program design, "sending" and "receiving" group survey respondents made recommendations to CRS in consideration of the development of a U.S.-Mexico border program, which are directed to the "sending" groups, as follows:

- ❖ Focus on building relationships and global solidarity.
- ❖ Focus on getting all involved in setting goals and accomplishing them after the trip.
- ❖ Consult with existing border programs and learn from their experience.
- ❖ Use local agencies/organizations that have programs already in place or that have the potential to develop them.
- ❖ Include ample opportunities for U.S. participants to talk with migrants before, during, or after their journey so that they might come to have a better understanding of the reasons behind the migration and include educational components relating to the process of becoming a legal immigrant and the difficulties in doing so.
- ❖ Continue to focus on what religious organizations are doing and perhaps do some focused outreach to the evangelical Christians and their response to the migration debate.
- ❖ Include both U.S. and Mexican citizens on the staff of the program.
- ❖ Convene a meeting with representatives from all the mission projects in the Southwest.
- ❖ Conduct strong preparation and orientation of the groups prior to the trip.
- ❖ Provide an orientation to the historical, cultural, socio-economic realities in the border area in a way that is easy to understand.
- ❖ Strengthen the theme of the impact and repercussions of the migrant being away from family.
- ❖ Develop exercises to help participants process the experience and anchor these in spirituality and the Bible.
- ❖ Develop post-trip opportunities.
- ❖ Review the Global Solidarity Partnership (GSP) Delegation Orientation manual for some of the readings and use CRS resources already developed, e.g., "Line in the Sand" DVD.

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Foreword

With the establishment of the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Southwest Regional Office, CRS has a unique opportunity to broaden and develop various levels of programming on global issues through a focus on the U.S.-Mexico border, in order to provide opportunities for U.S. Catholics to "change their hearts, minds, and lives so that, on the basis of faith, they actively work to transform the world."

The groundwork leading to the border program initiative was done by Erica Dahl-Bredine, Country Manager for CRS Mexico based in Tucson, Arizona. CRS Southwest welcomes the opportunity to continue to collaborate with CRS Mexico and to work with other prospective partners in the development of a border program.

This report is about relationships, specifically, the relationship between persons who visit and persons visited in the context of short-term mission experiences. The report provides background information on short-term mission experiences, discusses issues such as impact and transformation, and presents effective program characteristics, best practices, and lessons learned, which will be used in the creation of a CRS U.S.-Mexico border program. The border program would be based on the responsibility of upholding the dignity of others, especially the persons visited by U.S.-based sending organizations such as parishes and schools. The Catholic Church's social teaching proclaims the sacredness and fundamental dignity of every human life. We are called to be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in need in the United States and overseas because we are all part of one human family.

We believe that the effective program characteristics, best practices, and lessons learned can be applied to similar programs. In particular, we hope that this report will be useful to persons involved with short-term missions, immersion experiences, medical missions, service learning, and exchange visits with partners through twinning projects.

We are also mindful that we may not be aware of existing models that encompass some or all of the recommended elements for border program design. We would be grateful if the reader could bring these to our attention or otherwise assist, as desired, as we progress in the design process.

Daniel A. Lizárraga
Regional Director
CRS Southwest Regional Office

Introduction

In October 2006, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), through the CRS Southwest Regional Office and the CRS Mexico Country Program, began to discuss the possibility of developing a joint U.S.-Mexico border program to enhance CRS program offerings for Catholics in the United States and, specifically, to provide opportunities (including immersion experiences) for youth and adults to build stronger cross-border solidarity relationships in order to advocate on migration issues. Building stronger cross-border relationships means building partnerships based on mutuality and solidarity, not on charity or obligation. Each partner in the relationship brings its knowledge, skills, and gifts and enters into the relationship willingly as a partner in mission.¹ Advocating on migration issues means working to address the humanitarian and justice issues raised by the migration of undocumented people to the United States.

A CRS U.S.-Mexico border program would have all of the elements necessary to promote, build, and foster relationships of solidarity and justice between the persons who visit and the persons who are visited. The program would also have the means to assess the transformation, or behavior change, that CRS aims to achieve through solidarity with the poor and vulnerable overseas toward the goal that "solidarity will transform the world." It is noted that a formal proposal for a CRS U.S.-Mexico border program will be submitted to the CRS U.S. Operations Division in September 2008.

The purpose of this report is to provide background information on short-term missions to assist in the development of a border program. The report is based on research, using primary and secondary sources, which included a literature review, open-ended survey, and semi-structured interviews. The research effort concentrated on the impact of short-term missions on the persons visited rather than on specific U.S.-Mexico border experiences and programs; however, survey respondents were asked to make recommendations to CRS on the development of a U.S.-Mexico border program.

Section One of the report describes the research methodology. Section Two discusses short-term missions today, including current demand, impact, unintended consequences, costs, and transformation. Section Three outlines the changing nature of mission. Section Four reports on the "before," "during," and "after" phases of the short-term mission experience. Section Five presents effective program characteristics, best practices, and lessons learned. Section Six states summary conclusions. The final section has survey respondents' recommendations to CRS in consideration of the development of a U.S.-Mexico border program, as well as a list of matters pending in border program design.

I. Research Methodology

¹ Nancy Bernhardt-Hsu. "Partnering Relationships for Mission (An Inquiry & Overview of Diocesan and Parish Twinning)." U.S. Catholic Mission Association. Spring 2003, p. 4

Literature review. The literature review was mostly Internet-based, and the research focus was on the impact of short-term missions on the persons visited.² There is a significant gap in the literature on this subject, which was a major impetus for the present research. Time constraints precluded an exhaustive literature review.³

Survey methodology. CRS Southwest administered an open-ended survey questionnaire that centered on the impact of short-term missions on persons visited.⁴ The survey was sent to individuals who are experienced with short-term missions from the point of view of the "sending" organization/group and to individuals who are experienced from the point of view of the "receiving" organization/group. The survey for "sending" organizations/groups asked 12 questions about short-term mission/immersion program design, evaluation, assessment of impact on persons visited, characteristics of effective programs, demand, and recommendations to CRS. The survey for "receiving" organizations/groups asked 15 questions on relationships between program participants and persons visited, activities, what persons visited liked and did not like about programs/participants, and recommendations to CRS. Twenty-four persons (18 "sending" and 6 "receiving") responded to the survey from the United States (14), Latin America and the Caribbean (8) and Africa (1). Fourteen respondents represented a variety of organizations, including dioceses, short-term mission programs, universities, and a cooperative; seven were a combination of CRS domestic and overseas staff. Both surveys were available in English and Spanish.

Interviews. In preparation for research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three key persons who provided background information, advice, and guidance on border programs and contacts and who also reviewed the survey instruments and suggested improvements. An interview and follow-up discussions were also held with the director of a study abroad program, which focused on impact and how to structure a program that promotes and provides for lasting change and its measurement.

Constraints. There were three constraints on research. First, the original timeframe could not be met due to external factors beyond the author's control. Second, after both survey instruments were distributed to the first group of recipients, the instruments were revised and additional questions were added. The revised instruments were sent to other recipients with the result that survey responses to all of the questions were lacking in some cases. Third, probable difficulties in identifying sufficient "receiving" organizations/groups to be surveyed were anticipated, which could not be overcome. Although the "sending" and "receiving" respondent groups were relatively small, especially the latter, both sets of respondents are knowledgeable about and have substantial experience in the field of short-term mission programs; therefore, the views expressed

² In this report, "persons visited" refer not only to an individual host or host organization but also to the individuals and communities with whom the short-term mission program participants come into contact, e.g., the volunteers who staff a migrant center and the migrants themselves.

³ The reader will find a wealth of information in Kurt Ver Beek's Bibliography of Short-term Mission Resources: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/sociology/staff/kurt/>

⁴ The main criterion used to select survey recipients was referral, that is, persons and organizations referred to or known by the author. Referrals were sought and followed up for both surveys during the period, December 2006-early March 2007.

are held to be indicative of the broader universe of short-term mission expertise. The respondents' stated views are supported by the literature review findings and interview data and vice versa.

II. Short-term Missions Today

A. Current Demand

In the United States, short-term mission trips are dramatically on the rise. They encompass immersion experiences, service learning, medical missions, and exchange visits with partners through twinning projects.⁵ According to Robert Wuthnow, Princeton University Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for the Study of Religion, 1.6 million Americans went on short-term mission trips (less than two weeks) in 2005. The popularity of such trips keeps going up, and domestic trips, usually taken in the summer, are even more popular.⁶ Among teenagers, 29 percent of all 13- to 17-year olds in the United States have "gone on a religious mission team or religious service project," with 10 percent having gone on such trips three or more times.⁷ The number of undergraduates who had a formal international experience tripled between 1985 and 2000.⁸ Abram Huyser Honig, a writer and photographer based in Honduras, wrote, "short-term mission trips to foreign countries are the biggest trend to hit the evangelical Christian outreach scene since vacation Bible school: between 1 million and 4 million North American Christians reportedly participated in short-term missions in 2003, and the number keeps rising."⁹ Volunteer vacations or "adventures in service," where people spend their leisure time helping others in poor communities across the globe, are also increasing in number. One of several companies that organize volunteer vacations operates 200 programs that send more than 2,000 volunteer vacationers each year to more than 20 countries on six continents.¹⁰

Likewise, the majority of North American survey respondents reported that the demand for short-term mission experiences is substantial. One university-based respondent reported that the university facilitates four international (and 12 domestic) immersion trips per year; however, two to three times the number of students apply for international trips than can be accommodated. At the university level, demand is also seen in the "hundreds of 'alternative Spring Break' groups that go [overseas] every year." A diocesan Justice & Peace office said they receive dozens of requests for short-term missions. With respect to the U.S.-Mexico border area, one respondent explained that high demand was due to "more Americans who want to see first-hand what

⁵ See United States Catholic Mission Association (USCMA) web site: <http://www.uscatholicmission.org/>

⁶ According to a survey by Robert Wuthnow and quoted in G. Jeffrey MacDonald's USA Today online, article, "On a mission—a short-term mission," 06/18/06. Also see Robert Wuthnow. After the Baby Boomers, How Twenty- and Thirty-Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007

⁷ According to Christian Smith, based on national random survey data, who was quoted in Christianity Today Magazine, July 2005.

⁸ Dennis Gordon. "Jesuit International Education: Current Approaches and Challenges." Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education 23:4

⁹ Abram Huyser Honig. "Study Questions Whether Short-term Missions Make a Difference," Christianity Today Magazine, 2005. <http://christianitytoday.com/ct/2005/125/12.0.html>

¹⁰ Rob Holbert. "Soup for the Soul." Continental.Com/Magazine. March 2007, p. 109

motivates a person to cross the border and come to the United States for work." Demand also arises in part from the exposure of U.S. citizens through media and overseas travel to different peoples and cultures, which results in the desire to experience a different culture "based on faith or wanting to 'do good'." Another respondent wrote, "I don't know if it is supply or demand, but it is clearly growing. It may be supply-driven: teachers and churches in the United States, for example, see the positive effects not only abroad but among their own constituencies and especially young people who participate."

The question of one-sided demand was raised by one respondent who observed, "I see a lot of demand on the U.S. visitor side. Not much demand on the recipient side." In fact, there is little published about or by the "recipient side"—the people who are visited—such as their views on the short-term mission experience. Kurt Alan Ver Beek, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Calvin College and Director of the college's Honduras Program, reported he found it "disturbing that nearly all of the research on short-term missions focuses on the North Americans;" nor was he aware of any guidebooks to prepare communities for receiving short-term missionaries.¹¹ At the same time, Ver Beek noted that many "receiving" groups see short-term mission visitors as a source of funding for projects they would not otherwise be able to do, as well as a potential source for continuing support.¹² Marshall Allen, reporter and seminary student, wrote, "the explosion in short-term mission trips may represent the first mission movement based largely on the needs of the missionary."¹³

Short-term missions, along with international travel generally, take place in the context of globalization and the North/South divide. Robbin Crabtree, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Fairfield University, asks, "How do we ensure that our work doesn't reproduce a history of dependency between the United States and the developing countries where we visit with our students?"¹⁴ Crabtree recounts that there are countless stories about how Jesuit colleges and universities help poor and marginalized people in communities around the world through material and technical assistance, simple friendship, and "our ability to witness." Yet this help "though personally gratifying to most participants, does not necessarily depart from past colonial and neo-colonial ties between 'us' and 'them'."¹⁵ Susan B. Thistlethwaite, President of Chicago Theological Seminary, asserts "the fact of millions of economically privileged people engaging in international travel is not private and personal, a mere private pursuit of pleasure as the dictionary defines tourism. There is a profound relation of this travel to patterns of international trade, debt, investment, treaties, and ultimately, the new forms of colonialism."¹⁶ Thistlethwaite

¹¹ Kurt Alan Ver Beek and Robert Priest. "Mission Trips or Exotic Youth Outings?" Christianity Today Magazine, July 2005

¹² Kurt Alan Ver Beek, Personal communication, March 13, 2008

¹³ Marshall Allen. "Mission Tourism?" Faithworks Archives, October 11, 2006

¹⁴ Robbin D. Crabtree. "Asking Hard Questions about the Impact of International Service Learning," Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education 31, p. 40

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40

¹⁶ Susan B. Thistlethwaite. "Beyond Theological Tourism." in Beyond Theological Tourism: Mentoring as a Grassroots Approach to Theological Education, eds. Susan B. Thistlethwaite and George F. Cairns. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994

proposes that "tourist travel can be considered a means into a theological treatment of globalization."¹⁷

B. Impact

Impact on the "sending" group. Conventional wisdom holds that short-term mission experiences will have a positive, lasting impact on participants.¹⁸ Participants themselves frequently report that as a result of the experience, their lives have changed forever. Crabtree writes that following service learning experiences, generally, and international service learning experiences more intensely, "participants often remark that they have been changed by the experience" and "feel gratitude for what we have with an increased awareness of our privileges as U.S. citizens."¹⁹ However, these feelings may reflect the "sensory and emotional overload so common" to international service learning and other overseas experiences. Jo Ann Van Engen's experience with students who undertake short-term missions to Honduras supports Crabtree's assertion. Van Engen observes that the reported "life-changing experience is often based on an emotional response to a situation they [students] do not really understand."²⁰ Furthermore, too often the students return home "simply counting the blessings they have of being North Americans, having gained little insight into the causes of poverty and what can be done to alleviate them."²¹ Further analysis of the impact of short-term missions on individuals in the "sending" group and their transformation (or not) is presented in Section II.E.

Impact on the "receiving group." Some "sending" group survey respondents perceived positive impacts on the persons visited and their communities. For example, myths and stereotypes are broken down. There is a better and richer understanding of the United States and its people, e.g., negative preconceptions of Americans are dispelled, along with understanding that there are Americans who do not agree with U.S. foreign policy. Concrete projects such as scholarships, housing, water and sanitation, advocacy, and monetary contributions make a positive impact on the community and its members. Global solidarity is given a human face. CRS Global Solidarity Partnerships have impacted persons visited in positive ways: friendships developed and mutual prayers were said; joy, healing, a sense of equality and dignity developed; and the feeling of being loved and accepted was created. One respondent said that the exchange of stories had the most impact on both sides. Another respondent proposed that "some communities take pride in offering hospitality and feel motivated to work more in their own communities."

Other "sending" respondents reported negative impacts such as the fear of turning the community into [an attraction of] "poverty tourism." In some cases, donated funds are not used as intended, tensions arise, favoritisms come to pass, and unhealthy dependencies on outside help and funding are generated. Another respondent found that "the element of performance enters into the visit and, more troubling, a sense of dependence." One respondent stated that it was "hard to

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ It is noted that the survey research did not cover the topic of impact of short-term missions on the "sending" groups.

¹⁹ Crabtree, op. cit., p. 39

²⁰ Jo Ann Van Engen. "The Cost of Short-term Missions" The Other Side, January/February 2000

²¹ Ibid.

claim to speak for the persons visited," and one respondent said that there is no impact on the persons visited.

C. Unintended Consequences

Critics say that short-term mission trips can be counter-productive or worse,²² owing to a variety of reasons, including the "can do, fix it" mentality that is stereotypically North American, lack of preparation, and significantly, lack of understanding that Catholics are called to be in relationship and solidarity with a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable. As Father J. Bryan Hehir said,

"Solidarity...is the conviction that we are born into a fabric of relationships, that our humanity ties us to others, that the Gospel itself consecrates those ties, and that the prophets tell us that those ties are the test by which our very holiness will be judged."

The "fix-it" approach may do more harm than good; the unintended consequences of short-term missions can be very serious and damaging to the persons visited, as well as to long-term missionaries. According to Judd Birdsall, former managing editor of *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, untrained short-term missionaries ("vacationaries") all too often offend indigenous populations and undermine hard-earned relationships cultivated by long-term missionaries over many years.²³ Birdsall sees the short-term mission phenomenon as out of control: "Americans come in with good intentions but they couple zeal with ignorance, and that can be a deadly combination for the folks who are on the ground slogging it out year after year."²⁴ David Livermore, Executive Director of the Global Learning Center at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, argues that groups set out with few foreign-language skills and minimal cross-cultural training, and their inability to understand the local language, culture, and situation can cause problems for the local leadership and community. Livermore asserts that the group's impoverished hosts dare not object because hosting a group is often the means of getting funding to support themselves²⁵ and the activities the host group cares about.

In the decentralized evangelical mission environment, according to Mark Oestreicher, Youth Specialties president, short-term mission groups run the risk of duplicating efforts. "One slum in Tijuana, Mexico, for example, now expects regular visits from mission-driven groups from Southern California," Oestreicher said, "Each of these groups will come in, do a vacation Bible school, and lead the same kids to Christ over and over again."²⁶

²² Christian Smith quoted in USA Today online article, "The New Christian Missionaries, Zealous and Ignorant," July 7, 2006

²³ As quoted in G. Jeffrey MacDonald's USA Today online article, "On a mission—a short-term mission," June 18, 2006.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid. Also see David A. Livermore. Serving with Eyes Wide Open. Doing short-term missions with cultural intelligence. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. April 2007

²⁶ Mark Oestreicher, quoted in USA Today online article, "The New Christian Missionaries, Zealous and Ignorant," July 7, 2006

Dennis R. Gordon, Director of University International Programs at Santa Clara University, cites the negative impact of the tendency among some faculty and staff at both Jesuit and non-Jesuit schools "to 'go where the action is,' be it Haiti, El Salvador, Colombia, Chiapas, or whatever hot spot is currently catching the media's eye."²⁷ However well-intentioned, Gordon argues that this tendency can lead to short-term programs, which extract much from a local community (even exposing members to risk), and then pull out as the immediate crisis dissipates (though its underlying causes remain).²⁸

D. Costs

Van Engen examined the cost of short-term missions in terms of financial, opportunity costs, and the cost of the North American "can do, fix it" mentality.²⁹ In one example, Van Engen described a group of 18 North American students who raised \$25,000 to travel to Honduras for spring break, where they painted an orphanage, cleaned the playground, played with the children, and everyone had a great time. The orphanage's yearly budget was \$45,000, covering staff salaries, building maintenance, and food and clothes for the children. One of the staff commented that the amount of money the group raised for their week in Honduras was more than half the orphanage's working budget and that they could have done so much with the money.³⁰ Van Engen notes that short-term mission trips are extremely expensive, and trip costs could equal per capita income in some countries.³¹ In 2004, per capita income in Honduras was \$1,030.

Moreover, there are opportunity costs associated with short-term missions. For example, Van Engen states that short-term mission groups almost always do work that could be done (and usually done better) by the people of the country they visit.³² The spring break group in the example could have paid two Honduran painters, who desperately needed the work, with enough left over to hire four new teachers, build a new dormitory, and provide each child with new clothes.³³ An observation on the need for and benefits of collaborative work was made with regard to medical missions by Dr. Kirk A. Milhoan, a U.S. Air Force flight surgeon and pediatric cardiologist who undertakes medical missions under the auspices of a non-governmental organization. Dr. Milhoan said that when a medical mission team visits, it can take away from local physicians' income. The lessons he learned are that it is important to build up the level of training of local physicians because this has a lasting effect and to find local physicians and work with them because "if you have a good relationship with local doctors, they are more likely to send patients to you."³⁴

²⁷ Dennis R. Gordon, "Jesuit International Education: Current Approaches and Challenges," Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education. Spring 2003, p. 4

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.10

²⁹ Van Engen, *op. cit.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Kirk A. Milhoan, "How can a pediatric cardiologist be used internationally?" December 4, 2006 lecture at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, TX.

According to Van Engen, another cost of short-term missions has to do with mission participants who only eat the food they bring from home, only talk to each other, stay in the best hotels, spend all of their time together, are willing to serve as long as it is not too uncomfortable, and they often leave the country they are visiting without having spent any meaningful time getting to know the country's people.³⁵ The persons visited would likely be offended that their visitors were not interested in learning about their country. Short-term mission teams may also send the wrong message by wanting to do things their way on their time schedule and not include the persons visited. Mission groups that have a "let-the-North-Americans-do-it" attitude leave persons visited feeling frustrated and unappreciated. One result is that the persons visited and communities have to pick up where the mission team left off but without the sense of continuity and competence they might have had if they had been in charge from the beginning.³⁶ Finally, short-term mission groups require a great deal of time and coordination by their hosts and may not accomplish much in the end. However, the hosts may not complain because the mission team provides funding.³⁷ In short, these are the costs of the "ugly American."

E. Transformation

Transformation is the behavior change that occurs when learning about and understanding the world leads individuals to choose solidarity with the poor and oppressed, "serve faith and promote justice,"³⁸ and embrace and internalize the "concern for the common good that lies at the foundation of all Catholic social teaching."³⁹ Robert N. Bellah, Ford Professor of Sociology and Comparative Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, writes, "A deep concern for justice and the common good as part of one's character is not an add-on that can be attained from a one-shot course in ethics. Rather it is a matter of what has traditionally been called formation."⁴⁰

The issue for short-term missions is how to bring about lasting, positive change in the individual and how to choose solidarity with the poor and oppressed, and "the empowerment of all participants with the knowledge, skills, motivation, empathy, and passion for justice necessary to transform ourselves and our world."⁴¹ The critical methodological issue is how to measure transformation.

Ver Beek conducted two studies, among others, on the impact of short-term missions and assessment of the measurement and analysis of transformation, or behavior change. The first study concerned nearly 200 North Americans who went to Honduras after Hurricane Mitch to build houses. Ver Beek found that while "participants reported that their trip had resulted in significant changes in their lives, including their financial giving, their donation records did not reflect any substantial differences—a fact that calls into question the self-reported positive

³⁵ Van Engen, op. cit.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Gordon, op. cit., p. 6

³⁹ Robert N. Bellah. "Education for Justice and the Common Good," Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education 25, p. 28

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 31

⁴¹ Crabtree, op. cit., p. 42

changes in other areas."⁴² For Ver Beek, this study raised the issue of whether short-term mission, study abroad, and service learning experiences result in the long-lasting change so often assumed.

Ver Beek's second study was a review of quantitative and qualitative research on these three types of experiences (short-term mission, study abroad, service learning), which concluded that "the quantitative literature in short-term missions, service learning, and study abroad which examines the impact of these experiences on the participants is highly mixed at best, and the majority of the studies found little or no lasting positive impact from the experiences."⁴³ On the other hand, every qualitative study concluded that there were "significant positive changes in the participants."⁴⁴ He offers two possible explanations for the different conclusions in the quantitative and qualitative studies: (1) the participants may be significantly changed but the tests used may not be effective in measuring that change and (2) the change is not significant and the participants reflect in the qualitative measures a perception of the resulting change which is exaggerated."⁴⁵

As Ver Beek indicates, the measurement of transformation (behavior change) is difficult. More work on methodologies is needed, including finding common ground among researchers and program designers, implementers, and evaluators. However, his research did show that "the quality of the continuing relationship between the community and the 'helping' organization was the most likely predictor of lasting change in communities" and "the key ingredient in seeking to make lasting change in the [North American] participants is the creation of a structure in which the short-term mission/study abroad/service learning experience becomes just one element in a strategy which also includes support and accountability before and especially after."⁴⁶

If the quality of the continuing relationship between the "receiving" community and the helping organization/short-term mission group is the mostly likely predictor of lasting, positive change in the community, then this relationship and the community itself require more attention. Crabtree writes, "If we foster a sense of responsibility to (rather than guilt about or responsibility for) our partners in the developing world, we may be more likely to develop an advocacy role upon our return....If we respond with hope and action rather than despair or self-satisfaction, we can turn our experiences into capacity. What if we take that empowerment home and reflect, reassess, grow, and advocate? It seems like these outcomes can begin to look like transformation."⁴⁷

Crabtree also advocates for the participatory approach to social and economic development with the "receiving" community, wherein the community is wholly engaged in a project or activity from the outset, because this approach has "proven more sustainable, producing a wide range of positive outcomes beyond project completion, including consciousness-raising, self-reliance, and

⁴² Kurt Alan Ver Beek. "The Impact of Short-term Missions: A Case Study of House Construction in Honduras after Hurricane Mitch."

⁴³ Kurt Alan Ver Beek. "Lessons from the Sapling: Review of Research on Short-term Missions, Study Abroad, and Service Learning" (first draft), January 2006. Permission to quote from this draft was obtained from the author.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19

⁴⁷ Crabtree, *op. cit.*, p. 42

knowledge sharing,"⁴⁸ which promote lasting, positive change in the community. That is, if community members "feel supported, renewed, hopeful, more capable, we might indeed argue that they, too have been transformed," and if "sending" groups respond with hope and action, these are signs of "*mutual empowerment transformation*."⁴⁹

III. The Changing Nature of Mission

The Texas Mission Council (TMC) pursues new and relevant guidelines for the missionary vocation of the Church today through an ongoing dialogue, which has added a new dimension of mission adapted to today's reality. The dialogue covers "the changing nature of mission" and "what is mission about today." The TMC outlines the changing nature of mission, as follows:

The changing nature of mission recognizes that in the past, the understanding of mission was often limited to the idea of "bringing God to the pagans," while in today's understanding it means "meeting God already present among the peoples of the earth" (Vatican Council II).

- From "civilizing savages," we now include "cultural and religious appreciation of the values of other societies."
- From "mission as an exclusive activity of Vowed Religious" to "an obligation for all the baptized."
- Mission has expanded from "territorial/geographic" to "universal/everywhere."
- Mission has developed from "doing for the poor" to include "being with the poor."
- Mission has grown from "doing works of mercy" to include "doing works of justice."⁵⁰

Thus, the changing nature of mission embraces relationship, solidarity, justice—the ties which are "the test by which our very holiness will be judged"—and provides guidance for the short-term mission experience.

Meeting God "already present among the peoples of the earth" is at the heart of the mission experience. In the Gospel of John, Philip tells Nathanael that he thinks he has found the Messiah, Jesus from Nazareth. "Nazareth?" Nathanael replied, "What good can come from Nazareth?" Philip answered, "Come and see." (John 1:45-46) "Come and see," then, suggests the plan or strategy for U.S. short-term mission experiences. How the experience comes about lies in the design of the experience—and faith.

IV. The Short-term Mission Experience

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 41

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 42

⁵⁰ The Texas Mission Council's (TMC) new commitment to mission, expressed in the booklet that the TMC has been developing for the past four years, using Church documents and the works of Catholic Theologians and Theological Schools, has been summarized by one of the Maryknoll Mission Educators, Matt Rousso, of the Maryknoll Mission Education Center of New Orleans, Louisiana.

The short-term mission experience has three distinct phases: before, during, and after. In 2007, the Texas Mission Council devoted its annual conference to the development of guidelines for mission experiences with the facilitation of Julie Lupien, Executive Director of From Mission to Mission.⁵¹ The resulting Guidelines for Mission Experiences are posted on the TMC website.⁵² This section describes the guidelines and sets forth survey respondent recommendations on the short-term mission experience in view of the relationship of U.S. visitors ("sending" group) and the persons visited ("receiving" group).

A. Before

In the TMC guidelines, the "Before" (preparation) phase prepares mission team participants, individually and as a group, to "meet God's people with respect and sensitivity and a serious understanding of who they are." The guidelines for this phase include:

- Mission Project Goals: Identify, study, and define the purpose of this mission experience so as to be able to develop a workable plan of activities during each phase of the experience.
- Relationship with the Receiving Community: Communicate clearly so as to be able to collaborate with hosts to support their projects since U.S. mission groups are guests in their culture.
- Invitation: Invite the faith community to participate in and support the proposed mission experience.
- Discernment: Pray and reflect on how God is calling us to be a part of this mission experience.
- Community Building: Commit to a process, including prayer, reflection, education, and team building during each phase of the experience, which will help the group to develop into an authentic mission team.
- Understanding Mission: Explore and develop a common understanding of the mission experience by learning about evangelization and mission spirituality through sacred scripture, official Church teachings, and other relevant sources.
- Cultural Awareness: Study the culture, history, and present reality of the people the mission group wishes to accompany in this mission experience. Learn as much of the language as time permits.
- Commissioning: Ritualize a blessing to celebrate the sending-forth with the faith community, including family and friends.

"Sending" survey respondents were asked what preparations were made in the United States prior to the overseas visits and what preparations were made overseas prior to the visit. Most responses were preparation in the form of a basic orientation (9); followed by an extensive

⁵¹ See Julie Lupien. What about Short-term Mission? A Guide for Leaders and Participants of Short-term Mission Experiences. Longmont, CO: From Mission to Mission. 2006. Also see Julie Lupien and Michelle Scheidt. Remaining Faithful, How do I keep my experience alive? A manual for reflection, integration, and prayer after a short-term experience in another culture. Longmont, CO: From Mission to Mission, 2005.

⁵² See <http://texasmissioncouncil.org/guidelines.html>

preparation and orientation process of about six weeks, including cultural sensitivity, education about communities to be visited, etc. (4); a semester course and reading (3); communications in advance of the visit (2); and logistics (1). Two responses were that no preparations were made. Overseas, most preparations by the "sending" group were in the category of scheduling, lodging, meals, and transportation (6); followed by planning, including soliciting community feedback (4); and overseas programs were set up and confirmed in-country (2). Two responses indicated that there were no overseas preparations made on the part of the "sending" group.

"Sending" survey respondents made several recommendations with respect to preparation. First, one respondent recommended that short-term mission teams find out whether the people to be visited even want to receive a short-term mission: "People should have a buy-in to the idea of being visited." Another respondent wrote, "In my own experience, short-term missions have been designed exclusively to meet the needs of the visitors—not the other way around."

Second, if a community wants to be visited, a respondent advised that the short-term mission team find out what their expectations are for the visit so they will not be disappointed and make sure that the community's expectations are clear. Furthermore, expectations should be clear on both sides. Persons visited should be asked what they hope to be accomplished by the visit. Short-term mission groups should take into account exactly what the people visited need and want as it is not enough simply to want to "do good" for the people visited. Rather, there should be extensive pre-planning, including a detailed agenda with very specific objectives that are planned and agreed to by both the visitors and the persons visited before the trip begins.

Third, the local community and partners such as host agencies should be involved in program design, including raising up the profile of those in the community who are not typically represented in formal leadership structures, reinforcing and strengthening the sense of community within the area visited by offering a reason to gather, plan, and get organized. This respondent concluded by saying, "It is crucial to take the receiving community and its perspective into account in all aspects of a short-term mission program." Short-term mission participants should understand the purpose of the visit and carry out their own process of reflection about what they would like to accomplish. One respondent recommended that short-term mission/immersion programs should rely on host agencies to design and implement the experience and that the agencies should establish and nurture relationships with the host communities and maintain an ongoing presence with them, so as to best judge the developing community dynamics.

When "sending" respondents were asked how relationships are established in the first place and how persons/organizations visited are chosen, in-country programs/institutions/host agencies had the most responses (9), followed by personal contacts (7), long-standing, historic relations (6), CRS field offices and/or in coordination with CRS headquarters (6), sole decision of U.S. entity, including site visits (2), request from overseas entity to visit (2), and location, accessibility, and logistics issues (1).

B. During

In the TMC guidelines, the "During" (insertion) phase is the actual time spent on mission, living with the people in their own culture and society as was planned for in the preparation phase. The focus here is on building relationships that are mutual, empowering, and collaborative. The guidelines for this phase include:

- On-site Orientation: Look for additional information from knowledgeable local guides who can help the group to enter successfully into this cross-cultural experience.
- Building Relationships: Demonstrate the mission group's understanding of the fact that mission is about building relationships and being present to each other, rather than simply being involved in doing certain projects and tasks.
- Daily prayer, Reflection and Processing: Pray, reflect, analyze, and process as a community daily to support and help each other to understand and deal with what we have experienced in their culture and society.
- Personal and Project Evaluation: Evaluate the entire experience individually and with the group as well as with the "receiving" community to strengthen the commitment of all who are involved and continue to improve the program.
- Closure: Celebrate the end of the experience with prayer, rituals, blessings, and gestures of gratitude while team members prepare for their return or the next phase of the project.

"Sending" group respondents emphasized the necessity of communications with the persons visited during the visit, including orientation. An orientation from local leaders such as a priest or religious to the "receiving" community as to the fact that this is about solidarity, action for justice, and personal and societal transformation, and not fund-raising is very important in order to not raise unrealistic expectations and disappointment on the part of the community. Give the people in the community "plenty of orientation as to why people are passing through their community, what the visitors' commitments are expected to be when they return to the United States, and how the community's telling of their experience and life story is critical to empowering U.S. citizens to recognize the untruths of their own country and government."

Personal contact is crucial to build trust over time, especially when many communities have been hurt by past visitors. One "sending" group survey respondent recommended that "personal meetings should be held with local contacts, which may lead to meetings with people to be visited. The local person/organization for the visit should be acknowledged and respected during the process due to the trust they enjoy from the local community in addition to their knowledge of culture, traditions, customs, language, present life conditions, and so forth." Moreover, the mission team should be aware of the need for sensitivity "to different factions in the community and be willing to spend time listening to people and taking into account what they say, which is necessary to avoid inadvertently favoring one group over another, correcting errors, and falling into multiple traps that can undermine the whole project."

Persons visited should take an active role by providing input to the schedules, planning communal celebrations and discussions, and hosting people in their homes if they wish. Persons visited should take a meaningful role in sharing their stories and learning about the visitors. U.S. visitors should listen to stories and visit people's homes.

"Receiving" group survey respondents were asked what they liked best about visitors to their communities. One respondent replied, "the visitors' disposition to be in solidarity with the community—how it thinks and feels." Other responses included the "the visitors' sincerity and respect toward our culture and our work," "their generosity in spite of the language problem and their sensitivity to our reality," and "their interest and enthusiasm—how everything is new to them."

When asked what "receiving" communities liked least about visitors, one respondent replied, "lack of understanding and follow-up." Similarly, another respondent noted that after the visitors leave and return to their reality, communication is difficult. One response was that visitors still view them like the "bad guys in a Mexican movie." A further observation was that some individuals are not well-suited to visits to a developing country: people need to be comfortable with not having "all the information, all the time," which is a challenge for some given today's technology.

"Receiving" group respondents were also asked what "sending" groups learn during their visits. One response was the groups learn how difficult it is to effect change and the importance of considering all the factors that can have an impact on a project. Another respondent reported that (in the border context), visitors learn that the migrant is a human being who is looking for work and not a delinquent or terrorist, the economic system is unjust, and poverty is also the fruit of the monopoly on resources by a few. A different respondent said visitors learn the concept of poverty is inadequate in view of the extent of the existing misery. What visitors see as priorities for the community—education, health care, housing—community members perceive to be luxuries because the majority [who suffer from food insecurity] are satisfied if they are able to feed their families every day.

C. After

In the TMC guidelines, the "After" (return) phase takes place back at home, where mission team members reflect on the experience to incorporate it into their lives and mission at home. Reflection also encompasses the fact that mission teams must now be mindful of their bonds, as missionaries, to all peoples around the world. The guidelines for this phase include:

- Group Reflection and Processing: Promote follow-up meetings of team members for prayer, reflection, mutual support and sharing the experience with the group as well as with all who will listen.
- Telling the Story: Seek out ways to tell the story (each individual's story as well as the stories of those we met) to families, team members, the sending community, and even to the wider community. Photos and other pictorial information will help.
- Live Mission Here: Identify areas of personal and group formation and determine how to continue to live these experiences here at home in a way that honors the persons met during the mission experience.
- Plan: Plan the future by reviewing evaluations and planning the next mission experience.

In terms of both designing short-term missions and planning for the future, one "sending" group respondent raised the important issues of long-term commitment and sustainability, asking, "Do programs make a long-term commitment to the community? What about sustainability?" Stated otherwise, "Who maintains the confidence and trust of the community? The relationship?"

A "receiving" group respondent reported, "Too often groups come to country X and other needy countries without having a clear plan as to how to offer sustainable support. People visited get their expectations raised by groups of North Americans who arrive on the scene offering all kinds of help, only to leave behind local groups who often have no idea what the point of the visit was in the first place. If the trip is just for fact-finding, be clear about that. If the trip is to be the first of a series, be sure to impart that message."

With regard to the issue of sustainability and relationship "closure," Nancy Bernhardt-Hsu advises that relationship closure pertains to relationship formation. When a partnership is being formed, it is necessary to be realistic about the time period of commitment and the goals of the relationship.⁵³ It is possible at this point to establish a time limit for the relationship. Bernhardt-Hsu notes, however, that a relationship is a commitment, and it is important not to make a time limit too short so that the relationship does not have time to establish itself and flourish.⁵⁴ Accordingly, planning healthy closure means to build in a renewal or review mechanism from the start. Closure should be approached with cultural sensitivity. The termination of the relationship can extend over time. Prayerful reflection upon the mutuality of the partnering experience invites the Holy Spirit to guide both parties.⁵⁵

Follow-up. Follow-up to short-term mission experiences is crucial to building and maintaining relationships of solidarity between the "sending" and "receiving" groups. When "sending" respondents were asked how contacts are developed and maintained, regular communications and networking received the most responses (8), followed by in-country staff and volunteers (4), visits (4), personal contact (3), ongoing relations with local communities (3), diocesan contacts and activities (3), and CRS country program staff (2). One respondent recommended that the host agency should help the U.S. delegation remain in contact with the community, e.g., help with the delivery of letters or sharing e-mails or other forms of communication. Another respondent's organization "maintains constant communication with communities visited and with that input can change how it [the organization] operates."

Evaluation. Assessing the short-term mission experience is necessary in order to determine its impact, the effectiveness of the mission, and transformation (on both sides). One "sending" group survey respondent simply asked the question, "Who evaluates?"

Most evaluations are done by the "sending" group as opposed to the persons visited. Participant evaluation done by both "receiving" and "sending" participants is key. With regard to "receiving" groups, a respondent noted that it is important to be in touch with some person or persons who can break through the cultural sensitivities and give honest feedback in order to get

⁵³ Bernhardt-Hsu, op. cit., p. 17

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.17

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 18

a good, honest evaluation from the receiving communities (other than "thank you for coming, etc.") because they are often so gracious to we-who-come that it is not always easy to get good feedback. It is recommended that what persons visited said at the outset that they hoped to accomplish by the visit be evaluated. One proposed means of assessing the impact of the visit is to trace change (if any) after the visit, i.e., look at some key areas such as better life in the sense of less vulnerability and more basic security, spiritual growth, strengthened community, and ongoing effective civil advocacy and demand for transparency. Another suggestion was to use central and field level persons to evaluate and evolve the programs. A final recommendation on the part of "sending" respondents was to hold a debriefing with the "receiving" community at the conclusion of the visit: "Did they feel listened to and heard, or did they feel like they were being observed and gawked at, and so forth?"

"Receiving" respondents variously identified the benefits of a visit from a "sending" group. Among the benefits named were close links of friendship and solidarity with everyone. One respondent noted that there are many things visitors can share with communities—not just material things—but faith, love, justice, dignity, politics, culture, and society. "We should be united to be agents of help and change in our communities and societies." A different "receiving" respondent stated that the greatest blessings of the visit are ecumenism, friendship without walls, economic support, and solidarity.

V. Effective Program Characteristics, Best Practices, and Lessons Learned

This section presents effective characteristics, best practices, and lessons learned about short-term mission programs as reported by survey respondents. These are found throughout the report in the literature review and survey respondents' observations on various topics. However, when respondents' were specifically asked to identify effective program characteristics, best practices, and lessons learned, their responses were as follows, which are organized according to the three short-term mission phases: before, during, and after. The responses are directed at "sending" groups.

Before:

- Keep it simple.
- Do your homework before arriving in-country.
- Uncover pre-existing thoughts/attitudes about the people being visited and the situation.
- Plan logistics and meals that meet the health needs of all.
- Build some R&R into the trip.
- Have a focused, realistic goal and timeframe, with people who bring skills and knowledge of the situation (to the extent possible).
- Organize a small and manageable visitors group.
- Bring visitors who have more than rudimentary language skills.
- Have clear objectives for follow-up and next steps.
- Personally invite people visited to be in on the planning for the visit.
- Work with an established host agency, specifically, form relationships with host agencies and communities that can sustain over a number of years.

- Visit a specific community each year, developing something of an ongoing relationship that emphasizes accompaniment rather than service.
- Limit visits to one community to one or two a year and avoid repeated or constant delegations in the same community.
- Schedule the international experience at the beginning of the academic year so that participants have time to appropriate the experience, act in light of it, and be supported by their peers as they make sense of it.

During:

- Journal and make time for the group to pray, reflect, and share.
- Have intentional reflection (ideally each day) and include both U.S. citizens and country residents.
- Avoid the tendency to see and learn about too many programs.
- Visit as learners and not volunteers.
- Maintain a positive and open attitude of visitors to see and listen without judging or suggesting changes be made by persons visited.
- Provide the opportunity to dialogue, to engage with the life stories of those visited.
- Remember those from the United States come from a far different world, and sometimes it is hard to transition.
- Challenge the group often.
- Have a leader present who can guide questions in groups when group members cannot construct meaningful questions.
- Take into account the border reality and the real push-pull factors that compel people to leave their homes.
- Visit various points of the migrant journey so as to see the conditions first-hand.
- Talk to mayors and governors in Mexico and hear from them what motivates them.
- Have clarity in what and how to give if that be the case.
- Use buddy system to prevent oddly lost individuals.
- Buy from producers directly.

After:

- Ask the group what actions they will take when they get back.
- Follow-up with the group upon return.
- Provide the opportunity to "unpack" after the visit, which is crucial and requires a skilled and knowledgeable facilitator who can connect the dots with Catholic social teaching.

VI. Summary Conclusions

To be effective and promote lasting, positive change, the design of a short-term mission/border program must be part of an ongoing formation structure and strategy. Necessarily, design must take into account a number of factors of disparate nature, ranging from the study of culture and socio-economic issues, to logistics and meal planning, to globalization and advocacy, to prayer and discernment, in addition to relationship building and maintenance between the "sending" and "receiving" groups. It must also address the measurement of transformation and be able to adequately assess whether or not the challenge to transform the world through solidarity has been

met. In sum, the design of a border program must be carefully crafted and thoughtful and examine all possibilities.

VII. Recommendations to CRS on the Development of a U.S.-Mexico Border Program and Matters Pending

A. Recommendations to CRS from Survey Respondents

Survey respondents were asked to make recommendations to CRS on the development of a U.S.-Mexico border program. Although many recommendations are found throughout the report, the recommendations that follow were specifically directed to CRS.

- ❖ Focus on building relationships and global solidarity.
- ❖ Focus on getting all involved in setting goals and accomplishing them afterward.
- ❖ Consult with BorderLinks, learning from their experience, and with the California province of the Society of Jesus, which is considering establishing a migration center in Nogales, Mexico. Focus on the Nogales area, which is the most active, dynamic, and critical area for migration currently.
- ❖ Use local agencies/organizations that have programs already in place or that have the potential to develop them.
- ❖ Include ample opportunities for U.S. participants to talk with migrants before, during, or after their journey so that they might come to have a better understanding of the reasons behind the migration and include educational components relating to the process of becoming a legal immigrant and the difficulties in doing so.
- ❖ Continue to focus on what religious organizations are doing and perhaps do some focused outreach to the evangelical Christians and their response to the migration debate.
- ❖ Include both U.S. and Mexican citizens on the staff of the program.
- ❖ Convene a meeting with representatives from all the mission projects in the Southwest.
- ❖ Conduct strong preparation and orientation of the groups prior to leaving.
- ❖ Provide an orientation to the historical, cultural, socio-economic realities in the border area in a way that is easy to understand.
- ❖ Develop post-trip action opportunities.
- ❖ Develop exercises to help participants process the experience and anchor these in spirituality and the Bible.

- ❖ Review the Global Solidarity Partnership (GSP) Delegation Orientation manual for some of the readings, e.g., "The Cost of Short-term Missions," and other documents on solidarity, justice, etc. Also use CRS resources already developed like the "Line in the Sand" DVD.
- ❖ Strengthen the theme of the impact and repercussions of the migrant being away from family.
- ❖ A well-planned information campaign is the first step toward creating awareness and recognition around the work of CRS Southwest. With so much "noise" in the media on the migration issue, plus the fact that it is a hot-button, polarizing topic, CRS Southwest needs to make itself heard above the fray and to distinguish itself from other groups working on migration. The suggestion is to talk to parishes, high schools, other church groups, etc., on what CRS Southwest is and does. Also, get people from Country Programs to talk to parishes about the work being done in the field. Bring CRS field staff to the regional offices and set up speaking engagements for them, and let them share with parishioners the needs, hopes, etc., of the poor and disenfranchised in Central and Latin America.

B. Matters Pending

The literature review, survey responses, and advice and guidance received from key person interviews covered many topics. Additional topics arose during the course of research that could not be addressed in this report. The following are matters pending in the development of a CRS U.S.-Mexico border program:

1. Should the program focus on issues such as migration, human trafficking and HIV/AIDS or on CRS Mexico projects such as micro-finance?
2. Should CRS implement the program directly or contract program implementation?
3. Should the border program be implemented year-round or only during peak seasons?
4. Where should program activities take place? Which geographical areas would be best?
5. Should program activities be directed at site visits, e.g., CRS Mexico project sites such as migrant centers or take place in communities?
6. Who should be the priority target group? Youth? Young adults? Adults?
7. How will persons visited on site visits or in communities be included in program design, implementation, follow-up, and evaluation?
8. How will the program mitigate against the hazard of unanticipated (negative) consequences?

9. How will the program measure behavior change (transformation)? What will be the indicators?
10. What follow-up activities are necessary and at what intervals (e.g., 3 months, 6 months, 12 months)? Who should do follow-up? What are the costs (human, technical, and financial resources)?
11. Where should the program be based?
12. What should the strategy be for program outreach?
13. What is the "value-added" of CRS implementing a border program?
14. What should be the duration of the border experience, e.g., one day, 2-3 days, 4-5 days, or longer?
15. What should (if any) be the incentives for local participation on the part of the "receiving" groups and/or communities?
16. If a host agency were to implement the CRS U.S.-Mexico border program, given today's high demand for short-term mission experiences, which existing programs reportedly cannot meet, would the host agency contemplated have the capacity for program expansion? If so, (a) at what point in time would the host agency be prepared to expand to include the CRS border program and (b) under what conditions?

Finally, this report concludes with a challenge. To paraphrase Robert Bellah, "If a CRS U.S.-Mexico border program does not build solidarity and justice in a globalized world, what good will it do?"

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Appendix 2: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/sociology/staff/kurt/Appendix%202%20-%20Individual%20Giving.xls>

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CRS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As the official international Catholic relief and development agency of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Relief Services draws upon a rich tradition of Scripture and Catholic social teaching, which serve as the foundation for CRS' Guiding Principles. Acting as a guide to what a just world might look like, these Principles are shared across religious and cultural boundaries and articulate values that are common among people who seek to promote and work towards true justice and lasting peace.

Sacredness and Dignity of the Human Person: All of humanity has been created in the image of God and possesses a sacredness and dignity that come directly from our creation and not from any action on our own part.

Rights and Responsibilities: Every person has basic rights and responsibilities that flow from our human dignity and that belong to us as human beings regardless of any social or political structures. The rights are numerous and include those things that make life truly human. Corresponding to our rights are duties and responsibilities to respect the rights of others and to work for the common good of all.

Social Nature of Humanity: All of us are social by nature and are called to live in community with others — our full human potential isn't realized in solitude, but in community with others. How we organize our families, societies and communities directly affects human dignity and our ability to achieve our full human potential.

The Common Good: In order for all of us to have an opportunity to grow and develop fully, a certain social fabric must exist within society. This is the common good. Numerous social conditions — economic, political, material and cultural — impact our ability to realize our human dignity and reach our full potential.

Subsidiarity: A higher level of government — or organization — should not perform any function or duty that can be handled more effectively at a lower level by people who are closer to the problem and have a better understanding of the issue.

Solidarity: We are all part of one human family — whatever our national, racial, religious, economic or ideological differences — and in an increasingly interconnected world, loving our neighbor has global dimensions.

Option for the Poor: In every economic, political and social decision, a weighted concern must be given to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. When we do this we strengthen the entire community, because the powerlessness of any member wounds the rest of society.

Stewardship: There is inherent integrity to all of creation and it requires careful stewardship of all our resources, ensuring that we use and distribute them justly and equitably — as well as planning for future generations.