

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY

STUDY OF THE SHORT TERM MISSIONS PROGRAM OF THE  
FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN UNIONS (FOCUS)

BY

CHRISTINE MUTUA

JUNE 2000

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**NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY**

**A STUDY OF THE SHORT TERM MISSIONS PROGRAM OF THE  
FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN UNIONS (FOCUS) KENYA AND ITS  
IMPLICATIONS FOR MISSIONS**

**BY  
CHRISTINE WAMBUI MUTUA**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of  
Theology in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Missions**

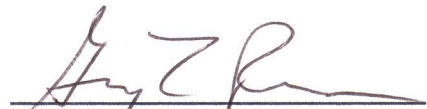
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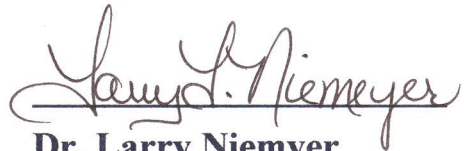
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**STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

**A STUDY OF THE SHORT TERM MISSIONS PROGRAM OF THE  
FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN UNIONS (FOCUS) KENYA AND ITS  
IMPLICATIONS FOR MISSIONS**

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College  
or University for academic credit

The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical  
Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners

Signed: Christine Wambui Mutua

Christine Wambui Mutua

Date: June, 2000

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to investigate in greater detail what constitutes short term missions in the Kenyan context, specifically in the university graduates context. The research was carried out as a case study and data gathered by mailing questionnaires to participants in the STEM program, conducting interviews for the administrators of the program and gathering data from recorded information on the program.

The findings revealed that short term missions in the university graduates context involves a number of pertinent issues that determine their effectiveness. A well-defined strategy is the key to an effective program. This strategy would focus on such key areas as recruitment, training, placement, financial support, supervision and debriefing. The findings also revealed that there is an impact of a changed life in the areas of missions related prayer, financial giving and missions education and activities. Further, the experience resulted in training, spiritual growth and a changed worldview.

Based on these findings, there is need for a well-defined strategy for anyone engaged in short term missions. There is also need for further research into different aspects of short term missions that will throw more light on the concept in the African setting leading to effective programs.

To Mutua, my husband, Hope our daughter and Ciru, my sister

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Alemayehu Mekonnen for his encouragement and support while I studied at NEGST, and for his advisory role for this thesis.

I am grateful to Dr. George Renner, my second reader.

Thanks to Mrs. Lois Shaw for editing this work.

I am thankful to NEGST for giving me a scholarship for my studies.

I am grateful to FOCUS for granting me permission to conduct this study and for their support.

I am sincerely grateful to my very supportive husband Daniel Mutua Muvengi. His love, support and encouragement kept me focused.

Finally, but not least, I am eternally grateful to God for giving me the opportunity to study at NEGST and for faithfully carrying me through.

## TABLES

Table	Page
1. Questionnaire Development.....	30
2. Demographics of the Sample.....	32
3. Duration of STEM.....	37
4. Training.....	38
5. Adequacy and Relevance of Training.....	38
6. Supervision, Debriefing and Placement.....	39
7. Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Short Term Missions Programs.....	45
8. Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Short Term Missions Program (Mean).....	46

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AIC Africa Inland Church

PCEA Presbyterian Church of East Africa

TPC True Pentecostal Church

UCCF Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship

VFCC Victory Faith Christian Center



## CONTENTS

	Page
STUDENT'S DECLARATION.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	viii
CHAPTER I	
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Research Problem.....	2
Purpose of the Study.....	2
Research Questions.....	2
Significance of the Study.....	3
Methodology.....	3
Limitations.....	3
Definition of Terms.....	4
CHAPTER II	
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
Short Term Missions.....	8

History of Short Term Missions.....	9
Biblical Basis of Short Term Missions.....	11
Duration of Short Term Missions.....	14
Possibilities of Short Term Missions.....	15
Pros and Cons in Short Term Missions.....	16
Intended Outcomes in Short Term Missions.....	18
What is Involved in Short Term Missions.....	20
Short Term Missions in the Kenyan Context.....	21
Methodological literature.....	23

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODOLOGY

Research Design.....	26
Permission for Conducting the Study.....	27
Collection of Data.....	27
Preparation of the Questionnaires.....	28
Pilot Testing.....	29
Data Processing.....	30
Study's Weakness.....	31

### CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS.....	32
---------------------------------	----

### CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	51
-------------------------------------	----

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	55
-------------------	----

APPENDIX

1.	QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS.....	60
2.	QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINSTRATORS.....	66
3.	STAFF ORIENTATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM, 1999.....	68

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The Fellowship of Christian Unions (FOCUS) is a student movement that networks Christian Unions (CU's) in universities and colleges in Kenya. FOCUS work was started as a spontaneous work of God in the emerging universities in East Africa in the mid 1950's. It is presently working in 37 university and college campuses. FOCUS is committed to providing moral and spiritual guidance to students and training student leaders through their CU groups, so that they too can train and counsel their fellow students. In seeking to fulfil this commitment, FOCUS has three broad objectives. These are:

- a) To declare the love of Jesus Christ and seek to lead others to a personal faith in him.
- b) To prepare Christian students towards personal growth and maturity in every sphere of life.
- c) To share in the life and service of the Church and the society by encouraging students and graduates towards practical involvement according to their calling, gifting and training (Commission 97 Handbook 1997,5).

It is in the context of this third objective that FOCUS began the Short Term Experience in Ministry (STEM) program, a short-term missions program, eight years ago. FOCUS is committed to ensure that Christian activity does not end with student days but that upon graduation, every college or university graduate seeks God's guidance on areas of practical involvement in the life and service of the Church and in

society. This may be through full-time Christian service in a local church or Christian organization, service through employment in a secular setting, or cross-cultural service as missionaries in a foreign context.

At its inception STEM program's main aim was seen as that of providing an opportunity to graduates who felt God's call to serve but were unsure of when, where, and how to give the service. STEM then would be an opportunity for training as well as for seeking to know God's direction in their lives. It would also be useful to the ministry involved by tapping the resources of these people for missions.

### **Research Problem**

The emphasis of this study was to know what constitutes a desirable short term missions program within a specified context, for example a church or a para-church organization.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research was to investigate in greater detail what constitutes short-term missions in the Kenyan context, specifically in the university graduates' context. It was hoped that this could be a resource for the church as it seeks information and opportunities for involvement in fulfilling the task of world evangelization. It could also help to propose the optimum short-term experience for university graduates.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the goals and objectives of the STEM program?

2. What constitutes a desirable short-term missions program?
3. What are the factors that significantly affect the effectiveness of a short-term missions program in the Kenyan context?
4. What has been the impact of the STEM program?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study will be helpful in guiding policy formulation and strategic planning for FOCUS. It can form a basis for improving the efficiency of the STEM program. Lessons learnt will be useful to similar programs especially for groups working with college students and graduates. Apart from contributing to the literature on short-term missions, this will be a resource for people considering such opportunities specifically in the African context.

### **Methodology**

This research was a case study that took the descriptive mode. Data was gathered by use of questionnaires, interviews and recorded information.

### **Limitations**

This study was limited to the participants of the program and the administrators of the program. Partners like churches and other organizations were not studied although this would have thrown more light on the concept of short-term missions in Kenya. The impact of STEM was studied in the context of the participants only, that is, the impact on their lives.

The impact of STEM on the placements of participants was not studied.

## Definition of Terms

It was important to define the words mission and missions, as they were going to be used in this study. This was because the two words seem to be used interchangeably and sometimes to mean different things.

### a) Mission

Bosch differentiates the terms mission and missions stating that mission has been understood as *missio Dei* by virtually all Christian persuasions. He adds that “Mission”, singular, remains primary; “missions”, in the plural constitutes a derivative (Bosch 1991, 391). Mission then is the mission of God.

Johnstone proposes the following definition; “mission is the loving work of God to bring humankind to himself as the Church. As a secondary outworking of this, mission is the overall ministry of the Church for world evangelization” (Johnstone 1998,12). Both these definitions bring out an important aspect of mission being primarily God’s work. Mission is used in this study to mean the work of God, to bring humankind to himself as the Church.

### b) Missions

Missions is used in this study to mean the Church’s task as given by the Lord Jesus Christ. This involves both proclamation of the gospel as well as involvement in social action. Johnstone sees missions as any activity in which Christians are involved for world evangelization (Johnstone 1998, 12). This can be amplified when we look at what McGavran sees as the biblical definition of mission. Note that although he uses the word mission, I see what he describes as missions. He defines mission as:

Carrying the gospel across cultural boundaries to those who owe no allegiance to Jesus Christ and encouraging them to accept Him as Lord and Savior and to become responsible members of His church, working as the Holy Spirit leads, at

both evangelism and justice, at making God's will done on earth as it is done in heaven (Glasser and McGavran 1983,26).

He adds:

Our definition of mission does not narrowly confine mission to verbal announcement of the gospel. It accepts the practice of the last 150 years that a great variety of activities may be used to communicate the gospel across linguistic and cultural barriers to those who have yet to believe; education, literacy programs, agriculture, medicine, presence, dialogue, proclamation and social action. All these are mission when their purpose is so to witness to Christ that men and women may know Him, love Him, believe Him, be found in Him, become members of His church, and create in the segments of society they control a social order more agreeable to God (Glasser and McGavran 1983,27).

I do not think the cross cultural factor mentioned by McGavran is crucial. What is crucial is whether the activities we are involved in, as Bosch puts it, are authentic insofar as they reflect participation in the mission of God (Bosch 1991, 391).

Missions then is used to refer to Christians' activities for world evangelization.

c) Para-church

This term is used to refer to a Christian organization independent of any local church or denominational structures, involved in world evangelization.

d) Short term missions

This term is used to refer to any activity for world evangelization, by young people, for a period of one to two years, that comprises both learning and service components.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the privileges that every Christian has is to be involved in God's great plan for the world. It is a plan that God has had from eternity, that of reconciling men and women back to himself. Johnstone captures this well when he says:

From beginning to end, the Bible is the story of how God steadily revealed more of that plan to his people. It came to full disclosure when he sent his beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to live, die, rise again, ascend to heaven and pour out his Holy Spirit. Mission is God's mission... God's mission has a purpose for him and for us. His purpose has the wider aspect of rectifying all that Satan's pride distorted and the more focused aspect of ushering in the Kingdom of God by bringing back the King with world evangelization complete. We only find meaning in our faith when we are gripped by this purpose. We then eagerly await the return of Jesus while giving our all to make way for his return (Johnstone 1998, 15).

Involvement in world evangelization is a privilege of every disciple of Jesus Christ. The risen Lord gave this command to his disciples; "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and lo I am with you, to the close of the age"(Matthew 28:18-20). Through this Christ was graciously extending to us the loving work of God to bring humankind to himself as the Church his mission, and to this end we should give ourselves.

One of the ways that God's people have been involved in this mission is through short-term missions. In this phenomenon believers, irrespective of the fact that they are

are not trained like traditional missionaries in formal training, are given an opportunity to serve. Increasingly, these people have been the young. Ignited with the love of Jesus, these people have been willing to be his ambassadors in a lost world. This has been witnessed, for example, after missions' conferences. One example, is Urbana in Illinois, a missions conference is held every three years. Reynolds reports that at the 1996 Urbana, out of 19,300 students gathered for the event, 15,857 students made commitments ranging from yielding to Christ's lordship to full-time mission work (Reynolds 1999,13). It has however been recognized that the process leading to full time missions commitment is not easy. It is in recognition of this fact that FOCUS decided to start STEM to give an opportunity for those who have questions of when, where, and how of mission work to have them addressed. It was designed to give such people an opportunity to "try out" the waters in Christian ministry.

This situation is not unique to FOCUS. Elsewhere in the world, the "bottleneck" has surfaced and people are trying to address it. According to Reynolds, this term "bottleneck" illustrates the difficulty young people have in following through on missions commitment. A study done in the mid 80s, while examining ministry effectiveness and barriers, recognized seven stages of mobilization that a person goes through from the time one is initially exposed to missions to the time one makes a commitment to missions work.

These are:

1. Initial exposure.
2. Growing in biblical and global awareness.
3. Gaining a vision of what can be done.
4. General commitment to do something.
5. Waiting and guidance.
6. Specific commitment to a particular ministry.

7. Active role in completing world evangelization.  
(Reynolds 1999,15).

FOCUS is trying to bridge this gap, or “bottleneck”, by use of the STEM program. One has to admit that some of the stages of this gap may seem difficult than others in different contexts. Analysis of each particular context would help to reveal this and help to know where to lay more emphasis. I think stages three to six are harder and would need more careful attention. In Kenya, there is growing exposure to biblical and global awareness through missions conferences like those organized by FOCUS. Follow up on the same is however another issue, which makes the other stages hard. There is however need to view the gap as a process. The study quoted above was done over a period of years of studying student mobilization efforts by various ministries. It shows the importance of viewing this whole issue as a process from mission calling to missions commitment. It calls for consideration of such factors as the time required for such a process and the provision of suitable opportunities that foster the vision for world mission. It calls for an evaluation of what really constitutes a desirable short term missions program in a given context.

### **Short Term Missions**

Christians all over the world have sought to respond to the Great Commission in various ways. Short term missions are one of those ways.

## History of Short Term Missions

The concept of short term missions is one of the most dramatic breakthroughs in modern missions. According to Griffiths, it is a fairly recent phenomenon arising from faster air travel and relatively cheap airfares. He goes on to explain that the early short term missionary efforts were by the emerging Operation Mobilization and were first to Mexico from the United States-involving three college students with ten thousand Gospels of John, going in an ancient truck in 1957. Later, parties of young people crossed the Channel from the UK to nearer European neighbors (Griffiths 1992, 122).

Since then there has been phenomenal growth in short term missions. As quoted by McDonough and Peterson, a student researcher, Thomas Chandler, says only 540 individuals from North America were involved in short term missions in 1965. Further, they report that by 1989, one estimate put the number at 120,000 and just three years later that number had more than doubled (McDonough and Peterson 1999, 1). This illustrates how the movement has grown over the years.

For some time, the conservative evangelicals, represented by the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association, tried to stop the tide of short-term missions. May be they would look at the pros and cons of short term missions and conclude that the cons outweighed the pros. Inexperience on the part of the short termers could have been seen as a drawback among other reasons. Kane says:

They held out as long as they could but by 1960 they too were forced to come to terms with Short-term Abroad. Why the sudden change.... They had no choice; they were not getting enough career missionaries to maintain their existing work, much less to initiate new work.... Thus it came about that the evangelical conservative boards began accepting short-term workers. One of the earliest to launch its STA program was the Sudan Interior Mission. In January 1962, it issued an appeal for twenty-five college graduates to proceed to Nigeria on a thirty-month program designed to provide qualified teachers for teachers training college (Kane 1982, 372).

Despite the initial resistance like the one cited above and even continuing debate on short-term missions, it seems people are getting used to accepting short-term missions as a valid way of fulfilling the Great Commission. And so this phenomenon of short-term missions has continued to grow over the years. Millharm reports that according to some estimates, the number of short-termers from America alone multiplied ten fold from 6,000 in 1975 to over 60,000 in 1987. More than 350 Christian mission agencies now send short-termers (Millharm 1987, 10). Michael estimated that by the year 2000, short termers would make up over 70% of all overseas personnel (Michael 1994, 1).

Over the years, short-termers have consisted mostly of young people just out of the college. Most of them have been single. Women as well as men volunteer. As Kane explains, there has also been a group sent consisting of people at the other end of the age spectrum. These are retired persons who still have five or ten years ahead of them and want to serve the Lord on the mission field (Kane 1982, 373).

We cannot underestimate the contribution of young people to missions. Over the years, God has used young people tremendously for His work. In her book, "From the Campus to the World", Poynor says:

Throughout the history of the missionary enterprise those men and women (whom God is looking to place over the globe on assignment for him) have repeatedly come from the student world. And there is every reason for that to continue. Today's students have better education, more resources and greater global awareness than at any time in history. Hence they are more crucial than ever to the completion of the Great Commission (Poynor 1986, 10).

The challenge to use this young mission force is there today as it has been over the years. It must however be said that the concept has mostly being associated with people going

from the West to the 'two-thirds' world countries, and the bulk of the short-termers have been from the West to the 'two-thirds' world countries. This can be gleaned even from the literature written on the phenomenon. Much of it is from a Western perspective and for Africa in particular relevance remains an issue.

### Biblical Basis of Short Term Missions

As we engage in missions, it is imperative that we have an adequate grasp of Christian theology, especially as it relates to the worldwide proclamation of the gospel in a rapidly changing world. Our concept of mission determines what missions activities we will be engaged in. This has been an issue in missions over the years. Larson in his comments on Dearborn's book "Beyond Duty- A Passion for Christ, a Heart for Mission" expresses this "There is no better way to address the present identity crisis in the Christian church than to rediscover the who, why, what and how of missions"(Dearborn, 1997). Since Christian mission is rooted in the Holy Scriptures, then, we must endeavor to go back to scriptures to derive our message, our mandate, our motivation and our methodology. Kane says:

In the nineteenth century, all the missionaries held to a conservative interpretation of scripture. This is no longer true. The ancient landmarks are being removed. As a result, we have "new theology" and "new evangelism" both of which threaten to change the force and thrust of Christian mission (Kane 1982, 85).

This calls for a careful examination of what the biblical truths about missions are and then application of these truths faithfully to our lives.

Borthwick helps to bring these out when he alludes that there are at least three dominant themes in the Bible: there is salvation in no one else but Jesus Christ; the basis

30058

of mission is to reveal the glory of God; and God wants to use us (Borthwick 1987, 35). The scriptures clearly bring out the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as savior, for example, in Isaiah 43:11, Isaiah 45:23, John 14: 6 and Philippians 2:10. Borthwick continues to explain that the basis of mission is to reveal the glory of God by saying that scripture teaches us that there is one all-powerful, all-glorious, perfect and Holy God who desires that all of his creation experience his glory (Borthwick 1987, 37). Scripture alludes to this, for example 2 Cor. 4:6 and Isaiah 55:11. Scripture also teaches us that God, not out of compulsion or need, chooses to use us. Jeremiah 29:11, shows how God ultimately has the plan for us. 1 Peter 2:4 -10 explains how God has chosen us, out of his mercy. He chooses to use us despite ourselves. It is this knowledge that moves us to missions.

Our sphere of ministry is then an important consideration. Our mission field is the whole world. Jesus instructed the apostles to go into the whole world. They were to start in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and to the ends of the world. (Acts 1:8). Interpretations as to the meaning of this mandate have been many and so have been our definitions of the mission field. Dearborn brings out the problem that has gripped the church. He says:

Churches often interpret this command as something we must complete sequentially. First we take care of our needs at home, then we move out toward the ends of the earth. Reacting against this, other churches respond to the call to the furthest corners of the world, and skip over their Samaria (Dearborn 1997, 72).

This, I presume has, been the issue as the church has engaged in missions. We must be careful to interpret Jesus' command as it is. I agree with Dearborn when he says that God calls us to witness in all four spheres simultaneously, not sequentially. He divides the spheres as follows: the unavoidable world comprising of our community (Jerusalem) and our country (Judea) and the avoidable world comprising of people of

differing cultural backgrounds than our own that live around us (Samaria) and the ends of the earth (Dearborn 1987, 72). Borthwick brings out this truth but in another way when he alludes to the fact that a commitment to missions does not imply a one-sided view of ministry, but rather the near-sighted/far-sighted balance. He quotes the missionary statesman Oswald J. Smith who said, "The light that shines the farthest shines the brightest close home" (Borthwick 1994, 51). We need to see both far and near in missions.

By God's grace, individuals or churches can be involved in some form of ministry in each of these four spheres. We should constantly evaluate how we are participating in God's ministry in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. This perspective of the whole world as our mission field is vital if we are to avoid the pitfalls made by Christians of earlier centuries who defined the mission field as the third world.

Sjogren, in the "Short-Term Mission Handbook", describes some more examples of short-term missions in the Bible. He cites the sending of the twelve disciples in Matthew 10:1-42. Christ's twelve disciples were given specific instructions on their first short-term venture, for example, where to go and what to do. There is also the sending of the seventy-two disciples in Luke 10:1-24. Finally there is Philip in Acts 8:4-40 (Sjogren 1992, 21). Philip began his short-term project as he was running for his life. He may not have had structured instructions like Jonah or the disciples had, but nevertheless he went. The concept of short-term missions is thus rooted in the Bible.

Even today the concept of short-term missions has been a phenomenon that has been vital in missions. There are many types of short-term missions; some modeled after these biblical examples above. For example STEM Ministries (USA) organized in 1984



to send short term teams to the Caribbean, is modeled after the short term Good News outreach of the twelve and seventy disciples in Luke 9 and 10 (Berry 1992, 190).

McDonough and Peterson explain that in this model Jesus uses an approach that has the following components:

- a) they were sent, commissioned by a godly authority (Lk 9:1-2);
  - b) they were sent out in teams (Mk 6:7);
  - c) they were given pre-field instructions and training (Lk 9:2-5);
  - d) they achieved measurable, Kingdom-expanding results (Mk 6:13);
  - e) they received post-field debriefing and follow up (Lk 9:10).
- (McDonough and Peterson 1999, 32).

Modeling their approach on the Bible, churches or organizations have come up with many types of short-term missions. Short-term opportunities could therefore be seen also in the light of creative responses to mission opportunities. In the “Short Term Mission Handbook” there is a list of short-term opportunities that illustrate this. They range from ministry in the cities, church planting, to ministry to Muslim societies (Berry 1992, 166-167). If the task of world evangelization is to be accelerated, then the concept of short-term missions will be a vital contribution.

#### Duration of Short Term Missions

There are varied views as to the duration of short-term missions. Garrison defines those who go for short-term missions as persons serving abroad as foreign missionary personnel under a recognized mission agency for a single period of from 3-24 months only (Garrison 1990, 160). Millham says that some define short-term missions as any service overseas or cross-culturally from two weeks to two years, or even more (Millham 1987,10). The definition of the duration seems to depend on the sending agency. This is because different agencies are involved in different types of work which call for

differences in the duration of their programs. The definition used in this study for short term missions is any activity for world evangelization by young people, for a period of one to two years, that is comprised of both learning and service components.

### Possibilities of Short Term Missions

Opportunities for short-term missions are many. Berry lists the following, as a sample of the more common trips people would define as “short-term mission” trips. A few are listed here, the complete list can be found in “The Short Term Missions Handbook”, page 14.

- Learning trips- designed to help people learn something about the needs of the world.
- Try us out trips- many agencies offer short term trips for Christians who want to think through God’s call to service close to the missionary in action. Experiencing the dynamics of mission first hand helps to clarify many issues.
- Construction trips- the entire trip is organized around construction. It allows folks to make a practical, physical contribution.
- Academic trips- Christian Colleges and seminaries recognize the value of short term mission trips to enhance classroom learning.
- Discipleship trips- churches find short-term mission trips to be an effective way to jump- start their members’ spiritual walks.
- Unreached people trips- some agencies sponsor research trips to the unreached peoples regions of the world where the gospel has had little impact. The goal is to pinpoint ethnolinguistic groups who have no church within their neighborhoods and to plan long range church planting strategies.
- Justice trips- Christians drawn to the ministry of reconciliation and public justice find short term opportunities in places like South Africa, the West Bank and Guatemala. There, they work with national Christians who are calling their own governments to accountability. (Berry 1992, 14).

It can be seen from this list that the opportunities for short-term missions are many. It calls for creativity in responding to mission opportunities that God places before us. Some of these opportunities listed above may not fit in the definition of short-term

missions used in this study because of variables found in short term missions, for example, time, activity or nature of participants.

### Pros and Cons of Short Term Missions

The short-term phenomenon has advantages as well as disadvantages just like any venture. Three distinct groups of people are affected. These are the sent people (young people), the senders (mission agencies) and the receivers (receiving missionaries). The short-term mission may affect any of these groups positively or negatively.

Reapsome, compiles a good list of the positives as well as the negatives that arise in short term missions:

#### PLUSES

##### **For Youth**

1. Exposure to third world realities
2. Taste of missionary life.
3. Exposure to Third World churches.
4. Spiritual growth and maturity.
5. Ministry experience.
6. Team discipline.
7. Possibility career service.
8. Commitments to missions, wherever,

however.

#### MINUSES

##### **For Youth**

1. Overwhelmed by poverty, disease, etc.
2. Bad experiences with missionaries.
3. Bad experiences with churches.
4. Time wasted due to poor planning.
5. Lack of preparation.
6. Lack of being properly fit for the project
7. High costs.
8. Inoculates against long term service.

**For Mission Agencies**

1. Recruiting pool.
2. Fill personnel gaps.
3. Good public relations.
4. New funding sources.
5. Potential long-life friends and supporters.

**For Mission Agencies**

1. Fail to follow up.
2. Lean too heavily on stopgaps.
3. Bad reporters.
4. Don't get recruits.
5. Long-term supporters never materialize.

**For Receiving Churches and Missionaries**

1. Some work gets done.
2. Boosts for evangelism.
3. Relieves workload.
4. Build links to sending churches.
5. Possible return for career service.

**For Receiving Churches and Missionaries**

1. Time wasted.
2. Cultural mistakes.
3. Drain on time and resources.
4. Distorted, simplistic ideas taken home.
5. Long-term needs not met.

( Reapsome 1996, 407)

It is evident from this list that as we engage in short-term mission there is a need to be careful in our approach not expecting a hundred per cent 'success'. Care must be taken in planning as well as executing short-term missions. The desire should be to maximize the benefits of short-term missions on all involved, the sent, the sender and the receiving persons/church. The history of short-term missions abounds with examples

showing that the venture pays off in the lives of individual Christians. Even in the Bible we find traces of this. For example, in Acts 10, Peter was shown God at work in unexpected ways through his encounter with Cornelius. God used a vision three times to show to Peter that the gospel was also for the Gentiles. In Peter's eyes, God poured the Holy Spirit to Cornelius' household and they began to praise God and worship him in tongues. Although not mentioned here, another important group affected positively or negatively by short term missions are the lost, those whom we seek to bring the Gospel of Christ to. On a positive note, they may get to hear the Good News. Sometimes however, they may be hindered by the cultural mistakes made by those bringing the Gospel to them.

A key strength of short-term missions, especially when viewed in the context of the worldwide body of Christ, is the opportunity that it gives to any member of the Church to participate in God's mission. McDonough and Peterson have brought out this truth when they say short-term missions affirm the priesthood of all believers. They say:

In its well-intended efforts to tackle the Great Commission task, the church/parachurch has often birthed structures limiting involvement rather than facilitating involvement. Yet the Great Commission applies to all disciples everywhere. Our Biblical mandate, with roots reaching several millennia into Old Testament history, must be repacked today into a facilitating structure which purposely releases the church's non-professional priests – the average man and woman, the average boy and girl, the laity, the lay people, the people who appear foolish, the people who appear weak, the people who appear low, the people who appear despised in the world. That package may just look, taste and smell quite like what the church already calls short-term mission (McDonough and Peterson 1999, 27).

#### Intended Outcomes in Short Term Missions

On the whole, the planners of short term missions desire that the participants grow not only in their spiritual life but also in their vision of world missions. It is true

that one cannot go through short-term missions and remain the same. Short term missions have life-changing possibilities. Apart from gaining useful practical experiences, one can confirm one's calling. One can also gain a new perspective on life.

Borthwick, who directs short term missions trips for youth at his church, says that the main agenda is life change. He continues to explain that though the youth teams work hard and present the gospel and have other objectives for them, the main one is a changed life. Some of the intended outcomes for the youths he presents are:

- 1) Become career missionary.
  - 2) Promote missions on campus.
  - 3) Witness cross-culturally at home.
  - 4) Become a team leader or serve on the mission committee.
  - 5) Develop friendship with missionaries, pray for and support them.
- (Borthwick 1996, 405)

This underscores the need for mission agencies to think seriously about intended outcomes as they plan and execute short term missions. Such vision will not only help to direct the course of the mission but also will be a basis for evaluation. It is equally important for the participants to have a vision of what they hope to gain from the experience. McQuilkin brings out this perspective when he says "There are valid objectives which the prospective short termer should be taught to aim for: inspiration, education, an incomparable equipping to share the vision with others upon returning to the home church" (McQuilkin 1994, 259). Out of the short-term experience may come a changed life. Facing the life changing possibilities of short term missions is therefore vital for the participants.

### What is Involved in Short Term Experiences

Effort was made to establish from literature what constitutes short term missions. As mentioned earlier, short term missions have been thought traditionally as involvement in cross-cultural missions. Hence most of the literature found was from a Western perspective where one moved from the countries of the West to Africa or Asia. For example, five graduate studies were reported in an annotated bibliography of short term missions in "Missiology" all from this perspective (*Missiology* 1994, 394-399). A number of reflective articles were also found in journals with short-term phenomenon discussed in the light of cross-cultural mission. For example the *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* had the following articles:

- a) Paul Borthwick, "Short Term Youth Teams: Are they worth it?" (Oct. 1996). This article describes what comprises a short-term mission's project. It discusses the pros and cons of short term.
- b) Seth Barnes, in his article "The Changing face of the Mission Force" (Oct. 1992), views the short-term phenomenon as contributing to a new look at cross-cultural missions. Eight more articles considered are included in the bibliography.

This shortcoming notwithstanding, the researcher identified two components that are present in any short term venture. Short term ventures endeavor to have a service as well as a learning component. For example, such a program will start with training that is deemed essential for the participants. This would comprise the preparation part. The opportunity is then given for people to engage in responsible and challenging activities geared towards service. On-going training, supervision and support are other practices incorporated into the short-term program. At the end of the day, a person is not only

trained but also renders helpful services to an organization.

Aspects such as recruitment, training, fundraising and supervision differ from agency to agency. There may however be patterns that can be observed. For example, Nelson in reporting about patterns observed in Asia says that training can either be by use of existing Bible schools, setting up training institutes, or in-house training. When it comes to fundraising, this is either personalized, through prayer bands or through the local church (Nelson 1976, 70).

### Short Term Missions in the Kenyan Context

It is quite important that anyone engaged in short term missions in any context takes seriously the realities of that context. We can not assume for example that a program that has worked in one context will automatically work in another. The issue of a desirable short-term missions program in an African context, therefore becomes vital. Tite Tienou in "Missiological Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" although referring generally to the issue of the training of missiologists for an African context, alludes to this issue of seeking to be relevant to the African situation (Woodberry 1996, 93.) Mugambi, in his article in the *International Review of Mission*, "A Fresh look at Evangelism in Africa" talks of the important need to think of culture sensitive evangelism (Mugambi 1998, 342-360). He addresses an issue that anyone involved in the spread of the gospel in one way or another should consider. Each culture calls for consideration of its particular peculiarities. The administrators of a program like STEM are no exception. In formulating their goals and objectives as well as in their choice of means and methods or use of resources, they should bear in mind the realities of their particular situation. They are different from those of others.



It is Kaleli who captures this truth of taking seriously the context of ministry in his paper in which he suggests appropriate mission models for the African church. He says:

The African church should take seriously; a) the different African cultural worldviews, both indigenous and modern. b) Denominationalism or sectarianism. In our missiological efforts, some of us may find it difficult to welcome and support those from different denominations. However it is important to remember that our best efforts and energies are devoted to the building of the body of Christ and not our individual denominations (Kaleli 1987, 44).

Short-term missions seem to be an option for the church in Kenya and indeed in Africa. Ladipo in his papers on the cost of reciprocal partnership in world mission believes this. He says:

The wind of change, which continues, to blow across the developing world calls for a new breed of missionaries. I believe the way forward to genuine reciprocal partnership in world mission lies in the sending of short term missionary workers... At present, the years of faithful African evangelists and pastors do not feature in the world's statistics partly because their sacrifice can not be measured in international currency! Short term missionary service if carefully implemented could help to correct this imbalance by ensuring the free mobility of God's people worldwide (Ladipo 1989, 68).

Therefore it seems that though short-term missions are an option, the key lies in careful implementation. This calls for the Kenyan church to wrestle with issues like appropriate people for short term missions, duration of service, appropriate training, support and accountability. By wrestling with these questions, the church will come up with programs that are not only relevant to the Kenyan situation but are also effective.

Ladipo, in his contribution as to the duration of short term, suggests two years as an ideal time. He goes on to explain that two years make sense biblically, economically, professionally and culturally. Two years, he argues, is ideally suited for missionary "tentmakers" who can secure employment in areas officially closed to Christian witness (Ladipo 1989, 65-66).

One of the things we must appreciate is that the changing situations in Africa, technologically, economically and socially, are presenting new mission opportunities. For example there are many challenges of development in Africa, for example, the economic crisis, the debt burden, the population question, the environmental crisis and HIV/AIDS. And as Kinoti rightly says:

African Christians must cease to be spectators on the economic, political and social scenes. Instead, they must become active participants in the struggle to replace poverty with prosperity, disease with health, ignorance with knowledge, oppression with freedom, war with peace, injustice with justice. Indeed they must become leaders in that struggle (Kinoti and Kimuyu 1997, 12).

These are missions opportunities that Christians can not ignore. This is because Christ calls them to be the light and salt of the earth.

The challenge for African Christians is to take the gospel to parts of Africa, which have as yet not received it. If short term missions are an option in this important work then there is the need to look at them carefully with a view to coming up with programs that are both effective and appropriate for this context.

### **Methodological Literature**

The research strategy adopted in this research was a case study. According to Best and Kahn, a case study is a way of organizing social data for the purpose of viewing social reality (Best and Kahn 1998, 248). A case study allows one to do analysis of a person or social group or even an organization in depth. This may be very helpful in bringing out important information concerning such a person or social group. Borg and Gall say that the main justification for case studies in quantitative research has been that they have the potential to generate rich subjective data that can aid in the development

of theory and empirical testable hypotheses. However, qualitative researchers regard the case study as an important research method in its own right, and believe that it need not be limited to generating hypotheses (Borg and Gall 1989, 402). Isaac and Michael bring out two strengths that were influential in choosing this design for this particular research. They say:

Case studies are particularly useful as background information for planning major investigations in social sciences. Because they are intensive, they bring to light the important variables, processes and interactions that deserve more extensive attention. They pioneer new ground and often are the source of fruitful hypotheses for further study.

Case study data may provide useful anecdotes or examples to illustrate more generalized statistical findings (Isaac and Michael 1979, 20).

In a case study, data may be gathered by a number of ways. Best and Kahn cite four. These are observation, interviews, questionnaires and recorded data (Best and Kahn 1998, 249). The questionnaire was used in this research. According to McCracken, the questionnaire has several functions. Its first responsibility is to ensure that the investigator covers all the terrain in the same order for each respondent. Another function is to establish channels for the direction and scope of discourse (for example in an interview) (McCracken 1988, 25). It is also important to know how to construct good questionnaires that will yield useful information.

In collection of data, where it is not possible to get information from every element in the population, sampling is used. Careful sampling does not only ensure true representation of the population but also saves time and money. A stratified random sampling was used in this study. According to Koul, at times a simple random sample, particularly a small one, may by chance have undue proportion of one type of units in it

and therefore it is necessary to make certain that the units included in the sample are selected in proportion to their occurrence in the population. When the units in a sample are proportional to their presence in the population, the sample is said to be stratified (Koul 1984, 112). Such stratification factors such as sex and age were useful in this study.

In the case of collecting information using questionnaires, Hillway identifies two types of questionnaires- open and closed forms. Open form questionnaires are the ones in which the questions are asked in such a way that the respondent answers in his or her own words. Closed form on the other hand suggests possible answers to each question (Hillway 1964, 203). Both these forms were used in this research as it was felt that a combination of the two would yield more useful information.

The questionnaire should go through several stages of formation before it is administered to the respondent. Engelhart expresses this when he says that the first draft of a questionnaire should be submitted to a competent person for criticism. Thereafter it should go for a preliminary trial by persons typical of the proposed respondents (Engelhart 1972, 101). It is also important to have an attractive looking questionnaire, as this is likely to receive better attention than questionnaires that are not appealing.

In addition to the questionnaire, data was also gathered by conducting interviews, and use of recorded data. Interviews are used to gather information regarding an individual's experience and knowledge; his or her opinions, beliefs and feelings; and demographic data (Best and Kahn 1998, 255).

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

This is a case study, which takes the descriptive mode. The research design included developing the study questionnaire tools, selecting the study samples, collecting data and data processing.

#### **Research Approach**

Data was gathered through three means: a) Mailed questionnaires b) Interviews and c) Recorded information about the STEM program

#### **Study Questionnaire Tools**

The purpose of this research was to investigate what constitutes a desirable short-term missions program in the Kenyan context. In this study, four research questions were identified that would aid in achieving this purpose. Two questionnaires were formulated, one for the administrators and another for the program participants. Both open-ended and closed types of questions were used. For the program participants, the questionnaire was mailed. The questionnaire for the program administrators was administered in an interview. It was hoped that this way the researcher would be able to have more information from the respondents. The information obtained was supplemented by data

gathered from records.

### The Population of the Study

The population of the study was made up of the four administrators or directors of the STEM program and the participants in the STEM program. The first group needed no sampling being a small population. The last group consisted of 133 people.

### The Study Sample

The study sample was chosen from all those who had participated in the STEM program from its inception in April 1992 to April 1999. This information was obtained from FOCUS' records on the STEM program. A sample size was determined on the basis of the required accuracy of estimates and the cost involved in obtaining the data. To get the stratified sample, the total population was divided into strata based on sex and type of placement before actual selection of elements took place.

### **Permission for Conducting the Study**

The researcher had already expressed the interest to study the STEM program with the FOCUS General Secretary. A formal letter of introduction from the NEGST Vice Principal for Academic Affairs to back the researcher's request for permission and cooperation in carrying out the research at FOCUS was obtained. In response, FOCUS replied granting permission for the research.

### **Collection of Data**

Descriptive data for this study was gathered by mailing the questionnaire to the participants, having interviews with the administrators, and from records of the STEM

program. The researcher met all the four people in the group of administrators of the STEM program. Information from this group was collected by using a structured questionnaire administered in an interview.

The second study questionnaire was mailed to the program participants along with a cover letter and a stamped return envelop. The cover letter aimed at emphasizing the importance of the study and encouraging their response. The researcher had already considered the pros and cons of mailing out questionnaires and felt that in order to achieve the aim of randomization this method may have been the best for this study. It was hoped that the program participants had interest in the STEM program and would be willing to cooperate in the study. Care was taken to mail them out early and give sufficient time for responses.

A second mailing was done for those whose response had not been received after three weeks encouraging the STEM participant to fill out the questionnaire. Personal follow-up was also done for those the researcher could meet encouraging them to fill out the questionnaire.

Recorded information about the program, which would aid in answering the research questions, was also obtained.

### **Preparation of the Questionnaires**

The questionnaires' main function was to provide a link between the information needs of the research and the respondents. As such the researcher aimed for a questionnaire that not only got information but the needed information for this study. Sogaard explains in detail the steps one ought to take to construct a good questionnaire. He considers four guidelines that should not be left out a) the main components of the

questionnaire. b) The questions themselves and the format of response. c) How to phrase and sequence questions, and d) Working on the physical layout of the questionnaire form itself (Sogaard 1996, 130). The researcher followed these guidelines to ensure an instrument that was user-friendly, asking simple questions in a straightforward manner.

The questionnaire formulation went through four stages. The researcher began by framing questions designed to get information based on the research questions. The researcher then consulted the stakeholders in the STEM program, that is, some of the program administrators and program participants. This was to give an opportunity to them to present questions that could be covered within this research and which would contribute to information that would be helpful in program planning and implementation. This was because the administrators of the STEM program were likely to make practical use of the proposed research.

The researcher then consulted her colleagues in the mission class and who had also been to the research methods class. It was hoped that this group, who had an idea of what a good questionnaire should look like would give helpful suggestions. The research objectives were useful in this exercise. The fourth step was to take the refined questionnaires to the researcher's supervisors who it was hoped would make helpful contributions in the formulation of the questionnaire.

### **Pilot Testing**

Following the initial design of the questionnaire that had gone through the four-stage process, it was pretested on two people who had gone through a similar program as participants and one person who had been involved in administration of a similar program. The aim was to determine whether their understanding was the same as the



researcher's. The respondents also gave their suggestions for change. Table 1 shows the development of the questionnaire:

Table 1. Questionnaire development

<u>Information Need</u>	<u>Question designed to obtain information</u>
RQ 1 What are the goals and objectives of the STEM program?	
For participants	1
For administrators	1
RQ 2 What constitutes a desirable short term Missions program?	
For participants	2, 3, 6, 7, 8
For administrators	2 a, b, c, d, e, f, g.
RQ 3 What are the factors that significantly affect The effectiveness of a short term missions program In the Kenyan context?	
For participants	4, 5, 9
For administrators	2 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, j.
RQ 4 What has been the impact of STEM?	
For participants	10
For administrators	2 i.

### **Data Processing**

After data collection, this data went through three stages. First there was organization of the data. As observed earlier, three techniques were used to collect data: questionnaires, interviews, and from recorded information. The amount of data obtained from these sources was much and hence the need for organization.

The next stage was description where the various pertinent aspects of the study were described. General information was noted. Frequency distributions as straight tabulations and percentages were calculated for questions needing such treatment. The

data from interviews was typed and categorized. After organization and description the data was interpreted. This involved, as Best and Kahn put it, “explaining the findings, answering the “why” questions, attaching significance to particular results, putting patterns into an analytical framework”(Best and Kahn 1998, 258).

### **Study’s Weakness**

Although the researcher aimed to be objective and ensure validity for example by use of randomization, the threat to objective data gathering and analysis can not be ruled out. The researcher was at one point a participant in the STEM program and there may be the danger of doing the above based on preconceived convictions.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher used three methods of data collection perceived as useful in order to achieve the purpose of the research. All the planned interviews were conducted and recorded information obtained as deemed necessary in answering the research questions. Of the 60 participants that were contacted using the questionnaire, 29 responded or 48.33%.

Table 2 shows the demographics of the sample of the participants.

Table 2. Demographics of the sample

<b>Total Respondents</b>		<b>48.33%</b>	<b>N=29</b>
<b>Age</b>	n=28 mean 25		mean 30
<b>During STEM</b>			<b>Present Age</b>
21-23	4		24-26 3
24-26	21		27-29 12
27-29	2		30-32 10
30-32	1		33-35 1
			Above 35 2
<b>Sex</b>	n=29		
Males	16	55.2%	
Females	13	44.8%	
<b>Education</b>	n=29		
Diploma	1	3.45%	
Degree	27	93.1%	
Masters	1	3.45%	

<b>Training</b>	n=28
Journalism	1
Diplomacy	1
Land Economics	1
Maths	1
Biochemistry	1
Veterinary Medicine	1
Sociology	4
Engineer	4
Agriculture	5
Education	9

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<b>Employment</b>	n=29
Quality Controller	1
Administration	2
Relief work	1
Agriculture	1
Computers	1
Consultant	2
Social Worker	2
Student	3
Christian Worker	4
Community Devt.	4
Teacher	4
Unemployed	4

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<b>Denomination/Church</b>	n=29
Pentecostal Assemblies of God	7
Kenya Assemblies of God	4
Nairobi Chapel	4
Fountain of Life Churches of Kenya	2
Word of Faith	2
Anglican	2
Deliverance Church	2
Full Gospel Churches of Kenya	1
Redeemed Gospel Church	1
PCEA	1
AIC	1
VFCC	1
TPC	1

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**Number of Children in the Home (Where Participant was Born) n=29 mean 7**

Number	Frequency
1-3	3
4-6	8
7-9	13
10-12	5

<b>Position of the Participant in the Family he/she was Born</b>		n=29
Position	Frequency	
1-3	15	
4-6	8	
7-9	5	
10-12	1	

<b>Number of years as a Professing Christian</b>		n=29	mean 15
Years	Frequency		
10-13	16		
15-19	11		
20-24	1		
25-29	1		

The mean age of the sample was 25 years when the participants served on STEM. The largest percentage of respondents were male (55.2%), with a first degree (93.1%). The respondents had different training, the largest number being in education (9 out of 29). Twenty-five out of the twenty-nine respondents were in different types of employment while four were unemployed. The respondents also belonged to different denominations/churches. The mean number of children in the home from which the participant was born was seven. In most cases (15 out of 29) the participant would either be a first, second or third born. The majority of the respondents (55.2%) had been professing Christians for a period of 10 –14 years. The mean number of years as a professing Christian for sample was fifteen years.

The following are other findings according to the research questions. Both open-ended and closed questions are addressed.

**Research Question 1.** What are the goals and objectives of the STEM program?

According to the administrators of the program, STEM was begun in 1992 as a response to increased missions interest among participants of two missions

conferences that FOCUS had organized, Commission '88 and Commission '91. These conferences had been intended to:

- a) Present to one the missionary call of God.
- b) Help students and associates discover God's role for them.
- c) Create an awareness of unreached people and a commitment to reach them.
- d) Stimulate more prayer and financial support towards missions.
- e) Link missionary organizations, churches and Bible schools with prospective missionary candidates.

Many participants had signed up to serve God in whatever area He would lead them to. FOCUS, as an organization, had then the great challenge of how to channel this interest. After prayer and consultation and also borrowing from other sister movements like UCCF (of Britain) and InterVarsity (of USA) which already had short term missions programs, FOCUS decided to start the STEM program. The main goals at the time were

- a) To give young Christian graduates an opportunity to identify God's call in their lives through exposure to ministry.
- b) To develop skills in ministry.

Of the 48.33% participants who responded to the study questionnaire, 75.9% indicated that they had a good idea of the goals and objectives of the STEM program when they began service. Those who indicated they did not have a good idea of these goals and objectives were 24.1%. Further, 82.8% indicated that the goals and objectives had been clearly defined at the beginning. Only 17.2% indicated that the goals had not been clearly defined at the beginning.

When asked to state the goals and objectives of the program, the responses

bordered on five areas namely,

- a) To create and develop missions awareness.
- b) To expose Christian graduates to ministry, e.g. students' ministry, community development and children's ministry.
- c) To encourage spiritual growth for the participant.
- d) To serve the local church.
- e) To witness.

It seems that a greater number of the participants knew well the goals and objectives of the program, a factor that helps to facilitate the smooth running of the program. It is important to note also that both FOCUS and the participants had same goals. This can be attributed to the fact that FOCUS made effort at the beginning of the STEM program to state and clarify the program's goals. It seems also that the objectives of the STEM program were closely related to the objectives of the missions conferences. The aspects of presenting to one the missionary call of God and to help students and associates discover God's role for them are pertinent in both cases.

These findings also reveal that the goals of the STEM program have three dimensions, which were observed in the literature review as vital in the agenda of life change for the participant. These are; creating missions awareness, nurturing the missions vision and equipping for ministry. The goals are clearly vital in achieving for the participant inspiration, education and an incomparable equipping to share the vision with others upon returning to the home church.

**Research Question 2.** What constitutes a desirable short term missions program?

The questions designed to answer this research question looked at aspects such

as duration of STEM, training, placement, supervision, and debriefing. Following is a summary of the responses from the participants.

Table 3. Duration of STEM

Duration	n=29
One year	27.6%
One year renewable	58.6%
Two years	10.3%
Two years renewable	3.5%

Most participants seem to favor duration of a year with prospects of renewing the term. It seemed also that longer periods more than two years are not preferred as evidenced by the fact that those who favored from two years and above were fewer. None of the respondents for example favored the choice of three years found in the questionnaire. Note that these are expressed opinions of the participants and do not reflect the actual term that they served.



Table 4. Training

Timing	n=29
At the beginning of term	27.0%
After a period of service	2.7 %
On-going	70.3%

Of the 29 participants, eight (27.6%) had both at the beginning and on-going. The fact that training should be on-going seems to come out from these findings.

Table 5. Adequacy and relevance of training

Adequacy of training	N =29	Relevance of training	N=29
Adequate	65.5%	Relevant	79.3%
Inadequate	34.5%	Not relevant	20.7%

A large number of the participants 79.3% perceived the training as relevant. A factor that is also confirmed by the fact that when asked what they thought should be contained in the training, most of them wrote down topics that are already reflected in the training sessions. (See sample of training program in Appendix 4). The focus of the training seems to be the following areas: spiritual formation, Bible study and preaching, missions and realities in the missions field and contemporary issues facing Christians, e.g. Ethnicity, HIV/AIDS.

Table 6. Supervision, debriefing, and placement

Supervision	n=29
Useful	82.8%
Was not useful	17.2%
Debriefing	n=29
Component present	79.3%
Component absent	20.7%

Adequacy of debriefing component n=29	
Adequate	34.5%
Inadequate	65.5%

Placement	n=29
STEM students' ministry	68.9%
STEM community development	27.6%
Other placements	3.5%

Did participant have choice of placement? N=29	
Yes	44.4%
No	55.6%

Was placement appropriate according to participant? N=29	
Appropriate	93.1%
Inappropriate	6.9%

Was participant alone or in pairs n=29	
Alone	24.1%
In pairs	75.9%

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The participants also indicated the following as options for placement that are ideal

- a) The local church
- b) Other para church organizations and non-governmental organizations, e.g. NCKK, Action Aid, children's homes, homes for the aged.
- c) Specialized ministries, e.g. indigenous ministries to unreached people groups, Bible translation and literacy, ministry to refugees.
- a) Missionary families in the field
- b) Overseas

The following information was obtained from interviews with the STEM administrators. In recruitment candidates are chosen on the basis of the following qualifications:

- They must have a sense of a call of God to the ministry
- University graduates who must have been actively involved in their Christian Unions while in college.

- They must be recent graduates (age is not an issue but they will have graduated at least not more than two years ago at the time of recruitment)
- They must have an unquestionable Christian life (the CU patron and the officials of the CU give their recommendations on this issue)
- They must not be married
- They must be persons of few possessions willing to sacrifice

Recruitment takes place when people are about to leave college.

Usually, a two-week's staff training and orientation is conducted for the STEM participants at the beginning of their ministry. The content is geared towards ministry they will be involved in (see Appendix 4 for a sample of the program for such a training). Trainers are drawn from the FOCUS staff, specialists or resource persons in various fields, e.g. counseling, AIDS, etc. Refresher courses are recommended every three months to evaluate ministry although this is not always possible because of financial constraints.

In placement, FOCUS tries to match people with needs in the placement. Although an option is given, it is however not always granted. While on placement, the participants are expected to be involved in ministry according to their area, e.g. community development, students' ministry, and children's ministry.

Debriefing takes place at three levels:

Level 1, Team meeting level.

The participant meets weekly in a team and the meetings would tend to emphasize the future.

Level 2, Program director.

The program director holds talks with the participants about their future. Such talks would aim to cover such ground as how the participant can be assisted to get back to his profession, or go for training or even into full time Christian work.

Level 3, Final Retreat.

A final retreat is held for all participants culminating in a graduation ceremony. In this retreat topics covered are such as how to write a CV, how to market one's skills and areas of possible involvement.

From these findings, the value of ongoing, adequate and relevant training seems to come up clearly. It may have been seen as adequate in that it was designed to equip one for the specific ministry he or she was going to be involved in. For example if one was to be involved in students' ministry, then the training had emphasis in that. From the administrators, it can be observed that the training was getting broader with time depending on the actual needs that the participant was likely to meet in the field. For example HIV/AIDS and ethnicity were later introductions in the training because they were thought to be real issues in the campuses that the participants served. It can be said that FOCUS sees the importance of pre-field instructions and training that was emphasized in Luke 9:2-5 in the literature review.

It seems also that adequate supervision is important, providing oversight to the participant and allowing him/her to do his/her work effectively. It seems also FOCUS has laid down a strategy for this. Whether this happens as planned is however another question altogether.

Although a large number of the participants expressed that the debriefing component was present (79.3%) and also supplemented by the information from the administrators, it seems that this component was not adequately covered (65.5%). One interview with the first director of the program (1992-1994) revealed that, initially, this component had not been given much thought and usually was absent altogether. This comes out as an area that FOCUS needs to work on. It could also be that the shortage of staff in the STEM program could have contributed to this aspect being neglected.

Most participants seemed satisfied with their placements (93.1%). This can be partially attributed to the fact that the recruitment process by FOCUS was careful to match the participants with right placements. We can note that there is need for more variety of placements to accommodate the gifts that the participants have as indicated by their suggestions of other possible placements.

On the whole we can note that FOCUS seems to have the expectation of incorporating these components (training, supervision, appropriate placement and debriefing) into the STEM program, but the reality is different.

**Research Question 3.** What are the factors that significantly affect the effectiveness of a short-term missions program in the Kenyan context?

To obtain information related to this research question, questions asked involved family involvement, financial support, the local church and challenges facing the program. Below is a summary of the responses from the participants.

### Family Involvement

69.0% indicated that their family was involved in the decision to serve in STEM. 31.0% indicated that their family was not involved. The concept of volunteering was taken positively by the families of 28.6% of the respondents. 17.9% said it was taken negatively. 53.5% were unsure of how their families viewed the concept. 75% indicated that their families supported them in either ways, prayer, financially or otherwise. 25 % said that their families did not support them in either of the ways.

### The Local Church

41.4% indicated that their local church was involved in the decision to serve in STEM. 58.6% said that their local church was not involved. 55.2% indicated that their church supported them. 44.8% were not supported by their local church. A slightly higher percentage of the respondents 58.6% did not consult their local churches as compared to 41.4% who consulted. The reasons underlying this need to be investigated, as they could be many. However, this may have had a bearing on the support by the local church.

### Fundraising

89.7% indicated that fundraising was clearly explained to them from the beginning. Only 10.3% expressed that they did not get a clear explanation as far as fundraising is concerned. 87.5% of the respondents indicated that they got their support through individuals. 9.4% got from the local church. Of this group, 66.7% also got financial support through individuals. 3.1 % got from other partnering

organizations.

It is important to note that most participants indicated that they got their support through individuals (87.5%).

The following were the responses to the question of what factors significantly affect the effectiveness of short-term missions programs in the Kenyan context.

Table 7. Factors affecting the effectiveness of short term missions programs

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
Financial support	1	0	5	3	20
Family support obligations	3	3	7	10	6
Career development	1	5	13	5	5
Placement opportunities	2	4	7	6	10
Local church involvement	8	5	6	5	5

(1 is the least significant while 5 is the most significant. For example, as far as financial support is concerned, only one out of 29 participants thought it was least significant while twenty thought it was a very significant factor in affecting the effectiveness of short term missions programs.)



Table 8. Factors affecting the effectiveness of short term missions programs (mean) (Arranged in order according to their mean)

Factor	Mean
Financial support	4.41
Placement opportunities	3.62
Family support obligations	3.44
Career development	3.27
Local church involvement	2.79

The financial support factor seems to come out significantly as a factor affecting the effectiveness of short term missions programs in the Kenyan context (20 out of 29 respondents) with a mean rating of 4.41. The local church was lowest with a mean of 2.79. The cause of this needs to be investigated.

The information from the administrators revealed that there is usually fundraising at three levels:

#### Level 1, Individuals

Individual participants are encouraged to have about 40 financial and prayer partners to support them while they serve. Of these, 15-20 are expected to be financial supporters. The individual contacts these people explaining about STEM and his/her desire to be involved.

#### Level 2, FOCUS

FOCUS contacts individuals letting them know of the opportunity to support

the STEM program. Also local churches are contacted. Occasionally, other Christian organizations are contacted both within and outside the country.

### Level 3, Partners

FOCUS partners with other organizations, usually offering the placements, e.g. for STEM community development, World Vision partnered with FOCUS.

## Challenges of the STEM Program

The administrators pointed out the following as the major challenges facing the program

- a) Financial constraints
- b) Inadequate supervision
- c) The problem of identifying the right people
- d) The challenge to sustain zeal and commitment in the life of the participant
- e) Inadequate staff to do administrative tasks for the program (FOCUS staff have many other responsibilities)
- f) An uncertain future for the participants
- g) Too much work for the participants

## Other Factors that Affect the Effectiveness of STEM

The following were pointed out as factors that affect the effectiveness of the program, which have to do with the participants. Adaptability to the new situation is important and his/her ability to bear with any inconveniences which might otherwise affect their commitment. The relationship between the participant and the Lord of the work is vital. In addition the acceptability of the participant by the people he/she is

serving affects the program.

It can be seen that there are both internal and external factors affecting the STEM program. External factors include financial constraints, aspects like supervision and debriefing, as well as acceptability of the participant by the people he/she serves. Internal factors include adaptability of participant to the new situation as well as his/her relationship to the Lord.

### Summary

There are many factors that determine the effectiveness of the STEM program as revealed by these findings and they could be categorized as follows;

a) Administrative

In this we find inadequate supervision, recruitment (identifying the right people), training and inadequate staff for administrative tasks of the program.

b) Participant

One of the challenges is to sustain zeal and commitment in the participant despite what he may go through. Related to this is the issue of too much work for the participant, which could reduce effectiveness and can contribute to negative things like stress and burn out. Adaptability to new situations is also a factor. If the participant is slow in this and given that the duration is short (a year), it may lead to not much being achieved. The issue of career development or the challenge of an uncertain future is real. In the last part of the questionnaire to the participants where they were asked for additional comments on what they thought to be factors affecting the program, a number mentioned that career development is an issue. This could also be tied to family

involvement where some of the participants are expected to contribute financially to the needs of their families. Finally, but not least is the important issue of the participant's walk with the Lord. If this area is weak then the work and relationships are also affected.

c) Financial

Financial constraints too affect the program. This may be one reason for the inadequate staff for the STEM program. We can also include fundraising that was pointed out also as an issue. The fact that majority of the participants indicated that they were supported by individuals can give a hint to the sustainability. The administrators admitted that most of the participants could not raise the expected amount and so the FOCUS office in most cases had to intervene.

**Research Question IV.** What has been the impact of the STEM program?

Of the participants, 89.7% reported that there was an increase in mission related prayer after their STEM service. Some 10.3% indicted that this was not so. 79.3% of the participants reported that there was an increase in mission related financial giving. 20.7% indicated that this was not so. 89.7% indicated that they became more involved in mission related educational activities after their STEM service. 10.3% said that it was not so.

These results seem to confirm the results of an earlier study by McDough and Peterson that revealed that there was a significant increase in time spent on mission related prayer, a significant increase in mission related financial giving, and a

significant increase in mission related education and activities, after as compared to before their short term (McDough and Peterson 1999, 9).

The administrators talked of impact on the life of the participant in three main areas

- a) The individual is equipped for ministry.
- b) There is leadership development.
- c) The worldview of the individual is changed, e.g. the individual becomes more mission minded.

From these results, it can be concluded that the short term experience has a positive impact in the life of the participant.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this research was to investigate in greater detail what constitutes short-term missions in the Kenyan context, specifically in the university graduates context. The research was carried out as a case study and data collected by mailing questionnaires to the participants, conducting interviews for the administrators of the program and gathering data from recorded information about the STEM program. The findings reveal that short term missions in the university graduates context involves a number of pertinent components that determine its effectiveness. A well-defined strategy is the key to an effective program. This strategy would involve clearly defined goals and objectives, and goals that are known to all stakeholders in the program. It would be a strategy that focuses carefully on key areas such as recruitment, training, placement, financial support, supervision and debriefing. If careful attention is not given to any of these areas or the area neglected all together, then it affects the effectiveness of the program. STEM, from the findings, reveals that there is an impact of a changed life, in the area of missions-related prayer, financial giving and missions education and activities. Further it is evident that the experience resulted in training, spiritual growth and a changed worldview.

Based on these findings, I recommend the following:

### **Recommendations to FOCUS**

1. There is need to for FOCUS to evaluate its fundraising methods and come up with a strategy that works.
2. There is need for a data bank of some of the possible exit avenues for people on STEM. To this effect, networking with churches, theological schools or other Christian organizations is essential. I also think FOCUS should take seriously the challenge which was observed in the literature review of post field debriefing and follow up, as was the case of the twelve sent by Jesus in Luke 9:10. In the part of additional comments, a number of participants said that they felt FOCUS abandoned them once their term. was over. FOCUS has this responsibility as a ministry that sends out.
3. The aspect of supervision needs to be reviewed. More pastoral support is needed for the participants given the challenges in the field. The availability of FOCUS staff for this role or the exploration of other avenues of offering supervision e.g. using associates or pastors, need to be surveyed.  
  
FOCUS could also consider setting STEM as a department on its own with more staff e.g. director and field staff.
4. There is need for deliberate effort by FOCUS to involve the local churches in this STEM program. Graduates of STEM, if sent by both FOCUS and the local church I believe could have a greater impact especially in the area of sharing the vision with others upon returning to the home church. The pastors of the churches as observed above could also offer pastoral support while the participants serve.

Ultimately, I believe the local church has a significant role in missions.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

1. This was a case study, useful in revealing information about what constitutes a short term missions program in the Kenyan context, specifically in the university graduates context. There is need for more research in the following areas which this study could not cover and which are important in the understanding and implementation of short term missions, a component that is vital in fulfillment of the Great Commission, in the Kenyan context;
  - a) What are the factors that contribute to low involvement of the local church to a program like STEM?
  - b) What is the impact of STEM on partnering churches or organizations?
  - c) What are other optimum placements that FOCUS could explore in order to give the participants a wider range of ministries to choose from?
  - d) A study of the placements is needed e.g. Students ministries, children's ministry, so that the pertinent issues involved are revealed.
  - e) As FOCUS engages in more missions awareness, it is imperative that the organization also engages in research so as to guide those who show missionary interest. This is very important if FOCUS is to bridge the gap between missions awareness and commitment to missions. For example, currently, FOCUS is planning for another missions conference, Commission 2000, from December 27, 2000 to January 2, 2001. About 2000 people from over 15 countries of Africa are expected. At the same time, of all the different placements FOCUS had, only STEM in students' ministry remains, which takes about ten people per year. What



about the rest of the people who show interest? Research could, for example, be done to come up with an effective mobilization strategy for the local church, which actually can absorb many of these participants. Research could also be done for possible missions networks in Africa and the rest of the world.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPANTS**

**SHORT TERM EXPERIENCE IN MINISTRY PROGRAM**

Hallo!

This questionnaire is aimed at finding out your views on the STEM program. It is hoped that the findings will be instrumental in improving the program as well as a resource for the church. Please try to answer all the questions to the best of your knowledge. Thank you.

1. According to you, what are the goals and objectives of the STEM program?

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a) Did you have a good idea of the goals and objectives of the STEM program at the beginning of your service? Yes/No

b) Were the goals clearly defined at the beginning? Yes/No

2. What should be the duration of STEM program? (Tick one)

One year \_\_\_\_\_

One year renewable \_\_\_\_\_

Two years \_\_\_\_\_

Two years renewable \_\_\_\_\_

Three years \_\_\_\_\_

Others \_\_\_\_\_

3. Training

a) When should training for STEM be done? (Tick one)

Beginning of term \_\_\_\_\_

After a period of service \_\_\_\_\_

On going \_\_\_\_\_

b) Was the training adequate? Yes/No

c) Was it relevant? Yes/ No

d) What should be contained in the training?

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4. Personal preparation

a) Was your family involved in the decision to serve in STEM? Yes/ No

b) How was the concept of volunteering taken by your family?

Positively \_\_\_\_ Negatively \_\_\_\_ unsure \_\_\_\_

c) Was your family willing to support you either in prayer, financially or otherwise? Yes/No

d) Was your local church involved in the decision to serve in STEM? Yes/ No

e) Was your local church involved in supporting you either in prayer, financially or otherwise? Yes/No

Please explain-----  
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5. Financial support

a) Was fundraising clearly explained to you from the beginning? Yes \_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

b) Where did you get your financial support?

\_\_\_\_ Through individuals

\_\_\_\_ Local church

\_\_\_\_ Overseas

\_\_\_\_ Other sources (please specify)



## 6. Placement

a) In what placement did you serve? (tick one)

Student ministry \_\_\_\_ Community development \_\_\_\_ Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b) Did you have a choice in the kind of placement to serve in? Yes/No

c) Was the placement appropriate or inappropriate for you? Appropriate \_\_\_\_

Inappropriate \_\_\_\_

d) Did you go alone, in pairs or in a group? \_\_\_\_\_

e) What activities were you involved in the placement?

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f) What other placement options do think are ideal for STEM participants?

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## 7. Supervision

a) Did the supervision provide oversight to enable you to do your work effectively? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

## 8. Debriefing

a) Was this component present or absent? Present \_\_\_\_ absent \_\_\_\_

b) Was it adequate or inadequate?

9. According to you, what factors significantly affect the effectiveness of short-term missions programs in the Kenyan context?

On a scale of 1-5 choose the number that closely describes your view of the significance of a factor, where 5 is the most significant and 1 the least significant.

1            2            3            4            5

Financial support

Family support obligations

Career development

Placement opportunities

Local church involvement

10. What impact did STEM have in your life?

There was an increase in the time spent in mission related prayer. Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

There was an increase in mission related financial giving. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

I became more involved in mission related education/activities (e.g. reading mission books/magazines, attending mission conferences, bible study with mission focus). Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Personal information

a) Your age (tick one)

At the time of STEM

Present age

18 -20

21 -23

21 -23

24 -26

24 -26

27 -29

27-29

30 -32

30 -32

33 -35

Above 35

b) Sex Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

c) What was your education level at the time of STEM?

\_\_\_\_\_ Diploma

\_\_\_\_\_ Degree

\_\_\_\_\_ Masters

d) What is your training (e.g. Agriculture, teacher, engineer, lawyer etc)? -----

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e) What is your current employment status? -----

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f) What is your church/ denominational affiliation? -----

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g) Family background

Number of children in the home -----

Your position on the family -----

h) How many years have you been a professing Christian? -----Years

Please use this remaining space for any other comments you wish to make regarding what constitutes a desirable STEM program in the Kenyan context.

**Thank You and God bless you!**

## APPENDIX 2

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. Give a brief historical background of the STEM program.
2. Operations of the STEM program
  - a) How is recruitment done?
  - b) What are the criteria used in recruitment?
  - c) Training
    - (i) When is training done?
    - (ii) What is the content?
    - (iii) Who conducts the training?
  - d) Placement
    - (i) What options are there for placement?
    - (ii) Who decides on the placement of candidates?
    - (iii) What activities are done while on placement?
    - (iv) What other options are available for placement or are being explored?
  - e) Fundraising
    - (i) Whose responsibility is fundraising?
    - (ii) How is it done?

## f) Supervision

- (i) What constitutes supervision?
- (ii) When is it done?
- (iii) Who does it?

## g) Debriefing

- (i) What is involved in debriefing?

h) What partnerships does FOCUS have at present as far as the STEM program is concerned? Please explain in what areas are these partnerships involved.

i) What has been the impact of STEM?

j) What are the major challenges facing STEM?

