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**Protecting People Worldwide: Risk and Insurance for
Missions, Relief and Development Organizations**

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PROTECTING PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

Risk and Insurance
for
Missions, Relief and Development Organizations

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Introduction To Mission Field Risk

- ❖ "I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore Toto"
- ❖ In North America we live in a bubble of relative economic stability, social peace and the rule of law; an existence unknown in most of the developing world
- ❖ Global missions...exciting, life-changing, faith in action, but it's not Epcot Centre!
- ❖ "Career missionaries" versus "short-term missions"
- ❖ High "duty of care" for protecting people and property around the world

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People

Security

- Violent Crimes
- Kidnap & Ransom
- War, Civil War & Insurrection

Health & Medical

- Infectious Diseases (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B)
- Tropical Diseases (Malaria, Dengue Fever, Chagas)
- Poisonous Bites and Stings
- Cardiovascular Health (Heart Attacks, Strokes, etc.)

Injury & Liability

- Construction and Agricultural Injuries
- Automobile Accidents
- Other Transportation (e.g. Watercraft, Aircraft)
- Abuse and Molestation

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**Legal Liability Risk for Missions,
Relief and Development Organizations
(Sources of Claimants)**

- A. SHORT TERM MISSION PARTICIPANTS**
- B. STAFF MEMBERS**
- C. CAREER MISSIONARIES**
- D. FOREIGN CITIZENS**
 - a) Employees and Volunteers
 - b) Clients



**Legal Liability Risk for Missions,
Relief and Development Organizations
(Claims Examples)**

- ◆ Resident in children's orphanage in Africa operated by Canadian Christian charity obtains landed immigrant status as an adult and sues organization and its director for alleged abuse
- ◆ Teenager from U.S. volunteering with Canadian church on mission outreach team in Europe is injured as passenger in an automobile accident and sues church and board members
- ◆ Adult on mission trip building homes suffers heart attack, is airlifted to nearest country with cardiology unit, incurs over \$200,000 of uninsured medical bills and sues sponsoring organization
- ◆ Teenager on short-term missions trip falls from hotel balcony in Caribbean resulting in quadriplegia and launches multi-million lawsuit against sponsoring organization and church leaders on the trip for inadequate supervision and unsafe conditions



Injury and Liability

◆**The largest single financial threat to your organization associated with international missions, relief and development activities is bodily injury, sickness, disease or death to one or more volunteers and staff, particularly with respect to short-term missions participants!**



Injury and Liability

- ◆ Most liability insurance policies issued by Canadian insurers contain restrictions or exclusions for bodily injury or property damage that occur outside of Canada and the United States
- ◆ Importance of ensuring that your organization's insurance program includes General Liability and Directors and Officers Liability coverage with a "worldwide" policy territory
- ◆ Legal precedents for individual or class actions by foreign citizens and foreign nationals in North American civil courts

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Injury and Liability

- ❖ Automobile accidents are the #1 cause of death and injury for travelers abroad, whether in vehicles owned, rented or borrowed by the individual, business or organization
- ❖ The reason for the higher frequency and severity of auto accidents in developing countries include:
 - Older, poorly-maintained vehicles
 - Lack of vehicle safety standards and equipment
 - Poorly maintained and signed road systems
 - Inferior driver qualification standards
 - Lack of insurance standards

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Injury and Liability

- ❖ All transportation and drivers, whether automobiles, taxis, watercraft, aircraft or ferries should be carefully planned in advance as much as possible with reputable operators

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Injury and Liability

- ❖ Sexual and physical abuse is the biggest liability issue facing child and youth-serving charities in Canada
- ❖ It is also an issue for Christian charities who sponsor relief, development and missions activities that include any of the following circumstances:
 - Participants on trips under age 18
 - Evangelistic, educational or relief services provided by Canadian or foreign staff and volunteers who work with children, youth and vulnerable adults
 - Operation of orphanages or other residential care facilities outside of Canada

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Injury and Liability

- ❖ Only a handful of Canadian insurance companies offer abuse coverage for churches and charities
- ❖ All require minimum screening and prevention plans and procedures
- ❖ It is virtually impossible to obtain abuse coverage for Canadian charities operating or controlling orphanages outside of Canada

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Health and Medical

Checklist for Foreign Travel:

1) Check with the Public Health Agency of Canada www.publichealth.gc.ca for information on Travel Health Notices, Clinics, Travel Booklet and recommended immunization for tropical and infectious diseases for yourself and your group, including the following:

Tropical Diseases

Malaria
Dengue fever
Yellow fever
Cholera
Meningococcal

Other Infectious Diseases

Influenza (general)
Avian Flu
AIDS/HIV
Hepatitis B
Polio

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Health and Medical

- 2) Check with Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) www.travel.gc.ca for:
- ❖ Travel Reports and Warnings for current safety and security issues, local laws and customs, entry requirements, health and other important travel information before planning or leaving on a trip. The reports are extremely helpful for planning purposes and countries subject to a Travel Warning may indicate a recommendation that Canadians avoid non-essential travel, or avoid all travel to that country, or to a specific region within that country
 - ❖ Registration of Canadians abroad in advance of your planned trip so that DFAIT can contact and assist you and your group in the event of an emergency in a foreign country, such as a national disaster, civil unrest or notification of a family emergency at home
 - ❖ Additional Travel Warnings and Alerts are available from the U.S. State Department at www.travel.state.gov

Health and Medical

DFAIT Travel Reports and Warnings

- Important Note:** Warnings can be both by county and by region within countries
- Level One – Exercise Normal Degree of Caution (e.g. Honduras)**
- Individuals or groups are approved to travel to these countries or regions
- Level Two – Exercise High Degree of Caution (e.g. Mexico)**
- Individuals or groups are only recommended to travel to these countries or regions under the supervision of experienced leaders with the support and resources of recognized NGO's and local trusted partners in the field
- Level Three – Avoid Non-Essential Travel (e.g. Haiti)**
- Individuals or groups should limit travel to these regions to health care workers or other needed professionals who are under the supervision of experienced leaders with the support, security and resources of recognized NGO's and local trusted partners in the field
- Level Four – Avoid All Travel (e.g. Afghanistan)**
- Individuals and groups should not be travelling to these countries or regions. Note: The only exception is as part of government-sponsored international relief initiatives with full security under the supervision of national or international police or peacekeeping forces.

Health and Medical

- 3) Carefully screen missionary candidates, work teams and any other short-term missions volunteers for pre-existing medical conditions and any food or drug allergies, in order to avoid placing them in life-threatening situations and medical emergencies where there may be strenuous work projects, extreme weather conditions, high altitudes and only limited health care available
- 4) Obtain permission from your doctor and take the appropriate vaccinations and medications as prescribed for preventable diseases in advance of travel
- Examples:
- Antimalarial drugs
 - Twinrix (Hepatitis A and B)
 - Up-to-date Tetanus/Diphtheria vaccine
 - Typhoid vaccine

Health and Medical

5) All participants must complete and sign an application in advance which includes the following:

- ❖ An **informed consent** clearly advising them of the health, injury and security risks associated with foreign travel and the particular destination(s) of their proposed trip
e.g. "risk of death or injury from violence, civil unrest, abduction"
"risk of sickness or disease from influenza, malaria, cholera..."

❖ A **release of interest** and **waiver of legal liability** to protect the organization, its directors and officers for any bodily injury or damage suffered by the participant due to the inherent risks and conditions beyond the control of the sponsoring organization

❖ A **parental permission** for any minors participating on a trip

Note: Waivers and releases signed by (or on behalf of) minors are usually unenforceable

We generally recommend against short-term mission participation for minors for legal, safety and abuse prevention reasons

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Health and Medical

6) Mandatory Travel Insurance for all participants in order to provide no-fault benefits and reimbursement of expenses for injuries and sickness suffered outside of Canada, including:

- ❖ Uninsured medical and dental expense
- ❖ Prescription drugs and treatments related to injury, sickness and disease
- ❖ Emergency evacuation
- ❖ Repatriation expenses
- ❖ Trip interruption and cancellation

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Health and Medical

❖ Proof of travel insurance can be provided to your organization by the individual participant with their application or by coordinating group coverage with your organization through a travel agent/insurer for ease of administration and to ensure an adequate minimum coverage level

❖ Individual and Group travel insurance is available through specialty insurers, including:

- Blue Cross
- TIC
- ETFS (Quebec)
- Group Medical Services
- RBC
- Travel Underwriters

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Health and Medical

7) Emergency First Aid supplies should be carried with your workers appropriate to the regions and conditions in which you are operating

Examples:

- Epipens for use in case of severe and life-threatening anaphylactic to food, insects etc.
- Antivenom supplies in either liquid form (must be refrigerated) or freeze-dried ampules for use in case of bites or stings by poisonous snakes, spiders, scorpions and frogs
- Sterile disposable hypodermic needles for use in case of emergency medical treatment in local hospitals and medical clinics

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Health and Medical

Remember!

In developing countries, hospitals and clinics could be hours or days away and the healthcare and medical supplies provided may be inferior or non-sterile by Western standards. The incidence of HIV/AIDS in many southern African countries exceeds 25% of the general population, (including medical workers) making blood transfusions potentially unsafe.

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Security and Political Risk


- ❖ Violence, abductions and other crimes suffered by Westerners for political, ideological, religious and monetary reasons has been on the rise in the past decade
- ❖ Kidnap and ransom has become epidemic in certain Latin American, Asian and African countries
- ❖ The target victims of kidnapers have expanded from politicians and business executives to any foreigners and is increasingly being perpetrated by gangs for strictly monetary reasons

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Security and Political Risk

Kidnapping Capitals of the World

By Country:


Columbia		Iraq
Mexico		Nigeria
Haiti		Chechnya
Venezuela		South Africa
Brazil		The Philippines

Source: Clayton Consultants

Security and Political Risk

Kidnapping Capitals of the World

By City:

Mexico City	
Sao Paulo	
Johannesburg	
Port-Au-Prince	
Bogota	

Source: Clayton Consultants

Security and Political Risk

- ❖ Kidnap and Ransom (K&R) insurance protection is available only through a handful of specialty insurers in Canada and the United States
- ❖ Policy coverage scope includes kidnap, ransom, hijack, wrongful detention, extortion and expenses related to negotiation, legal and consultancy expenses
- ❖ Premiums are dependant on areas of operation, number of persons insured, frequency of travel, exposure and amount of coverage
- ❖ Concerns about purchasing K&R insurance by religious charities for workers and volunteers:
 - Faith and philosophical objections
 - Coverage makes workers more of a target

Security and Political Risk

Risk Management Summary:

A) Due Diligence:

- Check with the Public Health Agency of Canada for recommended immunizations, medications and emergency health supplies
- Inquire with DFAIT Canada (and the U.S. State Department) regarding travel advisories and warnings right up to the day of departure
- Register with DFAIT to facilitate emergency communication and evacuation in the event of abductions, war, civil unrest and natural disasters



Security and Political Risk

Risk Management Summary:

A) Due Diligence (continued):

- Partner with international charities and agencies who already operate in the area you are working or travelling and/or utilize local individuals, churches, missionaries and organizations who can provide you with invaluable local insight, guidance, security and protection
- Create an emergency and evacuation plan with key medical, transportation, security and consular contact information for trip leaders



Security and Political Risk

Risk Management Summary (continued):

B) Insurance:

- Ensure that your organization's Liability Insurance policy has a worldwide policy coverage territory
- Require Mandatory travel health and accident insurance for each and every participant
- Consider Kidnap and Ransom (K&R) coverage for individuals who absolutely must visit or operate in high risk locations



Thank You!

By: Kenneth A. Hall

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