

#6 Risk Management



Training Resource of:



Central Canadian District
Christian & Missionary Alliance in Canada
155 Panin Road
Burlington, Ontario
L7P5A6

Unit to be used by:

Leader or Leadership Team
Team Members

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Why the reason for so much fuss? A short example:

A married girl from your church decides to participate in a STM to Nicaragua. She is a committed Christian married to a non Christian. One night she decides to go for a short walk to get away from everyone. While out on her walk she is kidnapped.

Something goes wrong with the kidnapping and the woman is killed. Her husband, with the advice of his lawyer, decides to sue the church, sighting lack of any formal training or preparation.

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Discussion Points

1. Review in great detail both the STM Contingency Checklist and the Core Policies. Each member of your group is responsible for knowing the information.
2. Ask for confirmation of understanding after each section. Spend adequate time preparing for the teaching of this unit so that you can answer questions. Contact the District and mission field in preparation of this unit.
3. Ask: Can anyone think of a reason why this would be included in Missions Training?
4. Has anyone every experienced a situation where they were physically targeted for being a Christian?
5. Break your group into 6 teams (or 3 teams) and hand out one article to each group. Have them look over the article and report back to the group.
6. Discuss: How could the success of the Taliban kidnapping could affect your trip?
7. What are the future repercussions of this Hostage situation? How does this change world missions?
8. How does this incident shine light onto Christ's call for us to count the cost of serving Him?
9. What are some practical steps our team can take to avoid risk while in another country?
10. What is the political climate of the country we are visiting?
11. Does my family, especially the unsaved members, understand the risk of my participating in this trip? Have I shared with them why this is important with me? Have I listened to their concerns?
12. Have group members sign the Release/Liability Form. Some may need to discuss this material with a spouse or parent first so allow a period for reflection. **Everyone who participates in this trip must sign a release of liability.**



Introduction to Risk Management

Christian Targets and 9\11: Terrorism and hostage taking in our world is a reality. Christianity finds itself clashing with other religions. As a result Christians are actively being targeted and this includes STM team members. We need to address this threat.

Further, in an environment of lawsuits and legal action, we need to have a Crisis Management System in place in order to: (a) respond efficiently to a crisis situation, and (b) to show reasonable diligence in the case of legal action against the CCD or its churches involved in sending STM teams.

There will always be risk and dangers such as theft, disease, getting lost, or kidnapping. However, risk and danger can usually be reduced to a manageable level. Risk mitigation can be addressed through policy setting.

Part of the process of preparing for a STM in the 21st century is protection. This is not only for the individual on the mission but also for your church. **This is one of the few mandatory training modules for all STM trips.** Failure to comply with this segment of the training manual will truly jeopardize your STM church program.

There are three components within this module as well as some training articles. They are:

- a) The CCD STM Risk Management Core Policies
- b) The CCD Release Liability Form
- c) The CCD STM Contingency Check list. (for the leader)

There is also a long version of the Risk Management Core Policies called Short-Term Mission Contingency Plan for the CCD of the C&MA which is not available to the public. Team leaders will be given a hard copy for their information and understanding. This document must not be publicly disclosed, but only the "Policies" that it contains, (that is, the STM Risk Management Core Policies). Once this aspect of the training has been completed each team member must sign the Release\Liability Form.

Why the reason for so much fuss? A short example:

A married girl from your church decides to participate in a STM to Nicaragua. She is a committed Christian married to a non Christian. One night she decides to go for a short walk to get away from everyone. While out on her walk she is kidnapped.

Something goes wrong with the kidnapping and the woman is killed. Her husband, with the advice of his lawyer, decides to sue the church, sighting lack of any formal training or preparation.

As of January 14, 2008, it is mandatory in the Central Canadian District that all STM participants review this information and sign off. In addition, the STM leader must submit a declaration that ALL participants have reviewed this information.



STM Contingency Checklist For The Central Canadian District of the C&MA

This check list form is to be used by the trainer and the results reviewed by the team members.

It is vital to spend a whole training class on this subject. You may want to do your own research to supplement this information depending on your perceived risk in the field.

Here are just some of our comments:

1) Use the buddy system:

- No-one travels anywhere alone
- Women should always be accompanied by a male team member
- As much as possible have a male at the front of your team and a male at the back
- A nightly curfew should be set to have everyone in their rooms by a given hour
- Don't carry large sums of money or display large sums of money in public areas
- The leader must be informed of all extra excursions, however short they may be [for example, a quick trip to a pay phone.]

2) Follow the Leader

- Under no circumstances shall the authority of the leader be compromised. The signing of the team covenant is the declaration of the team member's commitment to this process.

Section 1 -- Understanding the Risk

- 1.1 A risk assessment has been conducted. Information on dangers and hazards at the STM site has been collected and assessed. STM leaders have confidence in their understanding of the risks associated with this STM.

For our purposes a reading and understanding of the Foreign Affairs Canada Documents "Country Travel Report" and "Travel Warnings" by the STM Leader (s) will suffice for fulfilling the requirements for section 1 point 1.1

1.2 STM leaders have considered what actions can be taken to reduce the known risks associated with this STM, and have taken those actions that are reasonable.

The risk level for this STM is considered to be:

Critical

High

Moderate

Low

The review, acknowledgement and preparation of the STM Risk Management Policy Form and the review of this section of the CCD STM leaders manual will suffice for fulfilling the requirements for section 1, point 1.2. The risk level of the STM will be determined by the STM Leader (s) in cooperation with the DMC, CCD STM trainer and the field. Should you have any questions, contact the field office of your mission field.

1.3 STM leaders have evaluated logistical and operational details.

Section 2 -- Legal Stuff

2.1 The sending entity has predetermined policy guidelines for critical security contingencies.

The review, acknowledgement and preparation of the STM Risk Management Policy Form and the review of this section of the CCD STM leaders manual will suffice for fulfilling the requirements for section 2, point 2.1. The District Office and National Ministry Center have policies in place regarding issues of evacuation and kidnapping. It is a requirement that every participant have some form of Medical Insurance while they are overseas.

2.2 Based on the results of risk assessment, a training plan is in place to equip the STM participants with knowledge and skills to mitigate the risks associated with this STM.

The preparation that a participant receives through the CCD STM Training Program, specifically regarding The Risk Management Module but not excluding the other modules will suffice in fulfilling the requirements for section 2, point 2.2. Every church must have some form of STM training program within their church.

2.3 Each participant in the STM has received, considered and signed the following:

Each participant will sign off on a release form stating that they have read and reviewed the appropriate Canadian travel documents and the release/liability form.

2.3a An acknowledgement of risk, including the current Foreign Affairs Canada documents “Country Travel Report” and “Travel Warnings”, related to the destination. STM

2.3b A Release of Liability.

2.3c A Team Covenant.

Section 3 – Action Plans

3.1 A communications plan has been developed. This plan includes lists of contacts and means for communications for “normal” conditions. It also includes a system for families and others “at home” to obtain information from the sending entity in both routine and emergency situations.

Each STM leader will provide for his local church a list of the home phone numbers for all team members and the phone number for the On-site District Office and home phone number of the in-country missionary/contact person. Each STM leader will as well insure that a copy of every participant’s passport is left with the local church including any other pertinent telephone numbers.

3.2 A medical plan has been developed. This plan includes information, and a plan for onsite care and treatment.

Where possible, a phone number will be provided to the sending church as to the name and the phone number of the nearest medical facility.

3.3 An evacuation plan has been developed. This plan identifies conditions or “trigger points” under which both precautionary and emergency evacuations will occur.

Where possible the STM Leader (s) will request from the on-site contact a process for having participants with major illnesses evacuated from the STM site.

3.4 A crisis management plan has been developed. This plan identifies areas of responsibility and authority in an emergency and assigns primary individuals to these areas of responsibility and authority. Roles and relationships between the sending entity, receiving entity, partnering entities, home churches, etc., are pre-determined in the crisis plan.

The review, acknowledgment and preparation of the STM Risk Management Policy Form and the review of this section of the CCD STM leaders manual will suffice for fulfilling the requirements for section 3, point 3.4. The District Office and the National Ministry Center and the Field Office have in place a contingency plan in the event of a kidnapping or the need for evacuation. To have fulfilled this requirement you need only ensure that the missionaries or organization on the ground have a plan in place regarding potential emergencies.

I (We) have reviewed and informed each one of the participants involved in this STM to _____

The participants include: Name:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Short-Term Mission Risk Management Core Policies of The Central Canadian District of the C&MA

Review each of the 13 points sighted in this policy paper. Read through them with your team.

1. Risk assessment

Policy

It is the policy of the Central Canadian District (CCD) of the Christian & Missionary Alliance in Canada (C&MA) to require all CCD recognized Short-Term Mission (STM) Teams to review adequate and timely risk assessments. Assessments are to be conducted at the beginning of a new project and at least every two years thereafter.

2. Contingency Plans

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that each CCD recognized STM Team prepare and maintain current contingency plans for threats and dangers that are reasonably foreseeable and potentially threaten the safety of the STM members.

The CCD office and National Ministry Center have a contingency program in place that each church may exploit in the event of a crisis. This contact person in this event would be the District Missions Coach or the District Superintendent.

3. Training

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD to make available security and crisis management training to all STM leaders. The type and degree of training shall be commensurate with the assessed risks and dangers the member is exposed to, and also commensurate with the member's organizational responsibility for the safety and security of other STM members.

This module of the training program is the CCD's commitment to training our leaders. Should you have further questions please do not hesitate to contact your DMC (vincevetro@cmccd.com) or the District STM Trainer (cheryl.walsh@gmail.com).

4. Evacuation Authority

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that decision-making authority regarding evacuation exists at the individual level, at the on site level with the STM leadership, and at the district leadership level. In different circumstances, each of these levels may have access to information that makes evacuation an appropriate decision; so, each is authorized to act on such information and make a decision. The remainder of the organization will respect such a decision.

5. Evacuation Criteria

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that each local STM entity, or sending church, will prepare evacuation plans for all personnel serving under its jurisdiction. These plans shall be reviewed, and updated and revised as needed. At a minimum, these plans shall include:

- A description of how the local entity will determine whether an evacuation is necessary; specifically identifying the decision making authority and criteria to be used to make such a decision.
- A description of the notification system that insures all personnel receive necessary information before and during an evacuation.
- A description of the procedures the local entity will use; such as, means of transportation, evacuation routes and alternates, staging and destination sites, and communications procedures.

In lieu of a church policy statement, a church may adopt the District and National policy. It should be understood that every C&MA field has an evacuation policy in place in the event that it is required.

6. Crisis Management Team

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that in the event of a crisis (or emergency), a Crisis Management Team (CMT) will be formed by the District Superintendent of the CCD to manage that event through resolution and recovery.

7. Information Management

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that all information, intelligence, ideas, suggestions, etc. relating to a crisis be directed to the Crisis Management Team at the earliest possible time. Any member of the organization with such information or with suggestions for the

Crisis Management Team shall forward the information or suggestions immediately to the CMT.

It is further the policy of the CCD that during a crisis all information released, and all public statements about the crisis be made by (or with the specific approval of) the Crisis Management Team. No member of the organization outside the CMT is authorized to make any statement that relates in any way to an ongoing crisis. This includes statements to internal constituencies (other members, families, etc.) as well as external constituencies (the media, extended family, home churches, government agencies, etc.).

8. Payment of Ransom, Yielding to Extortion

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that in cases of kidnapping, hostage-taking or other extortion, no ransom or concession that is reasonably likely to cause or contribute to the probability that future similar events will occur shall be paid.

9. Negotiation with Kidnappers and Hostage-takers

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that in cases of kidnapping or hostage taking of our STM members, their safe return shall be a priority of the organization. All reasonable efforts consistent with our policies and core values will be made to achieve their safe return. These efforts include hostage negotiation as a strategy of first choice. In cases where the CCD has the opportunity to negotiate for the safe return of hostages, we will seek assistance from professional hostage negotiators.

A Crisis Management Team is authorized to conduct negotiations, consistent with the limitations of other organizational policies, as it may deem necessary to save the life or lives and affect the release of any member abducted while on a Short-Term Mission.

10. Relocation of Hostage Family Members

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, family members will be relocated from the country of occurrence as soon as possible. This relocation will normally take place to the home country of the family. In specific cases, the Crisis Management Team may waive this policy if doing so is in the best interests of the crisis management effort.

11. Notifications to governments in kidnapping and hostage taking

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD to cooperate with legitimate government inquiries and activities in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, when doing so is judged to be in the best interest of the hostage(s) and the organization. The decisions of when and how to make notifications to government agencies shall be made by the Crisis Management Team.

12. Member Care

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that those personnel who are directly involved in a crisis receive an initial and follow-up evaluation from a qualified Christian mental health professional. These evaluations shall occur as soon as possible following a crisis and again six to twelve months following the crisis (unless otherwise specified by the mental health professional).

The CCD office will help the local church in identifying a qualified crisis councillor for follow-up evaluations.

13. Post-Crisis Evaluation

Policy

It is the policy of the CCD that within sixty days of the resolution of a crisis that an evaluation of the incident be conducted. The evaluation shall be made by an individual appointed by the District Superintendent, and should not be conducted by any person reporting directly to any other person whose actions in the crisis will be reviewed.

The evaluation shall address causal factors in the crisis, initial response to the crisis, and the performance of the Crisis Management Team. The evaluation should address those areas of strength that should be repeated in a future crisis, and those areas of weakness that should be remedied. The evaluation shall also identify any areas in which policy should be established or changed.



**Release/Liability Form
For The Central Canadian District of The C&MA**

In signing this form I, _____, do hereby voluntarily agree not to hold The _____ (Church), its officers, employees, or other agents liable for any injury, loss, damage, or accident that I might encounter while on this Short-Term Mission to _____.

I fully recognize and acknowledge that any participation on this trip includes the risk of possible dangers characteristic of travel in foreign countries. I am well aware that my travel to a foreign country exposes me to such risks as accident, disease, war, political unrest, injury, and many other possible calamities.

I hereby assume any such risks that might result from my travel to and from _____ and I unconditionally agree to hold The _____ (Church), its officers, employees, or other agents blameless from any liability concerning my personal health and well-being, or any liability from my personal property that might be lost, damaged, or stolen while on a mission trip.

I have carefully reviewed and have been made aware of: (1) the Short-Term Mission Contingency Plan of The Central Canadian District, (2) the Canada Department of Foreign Affairs – Travel Alert for my country of destination.

I have also participated in a STM Training Program which includes Risk Management.

I have carefully read the foregoing and I understand that my signature does not hold the _____ (Church), its officers, employees, or other agents liable for any injury, loss, damage, or delay from irregularity in schedule that I might encounter while on this Short-Term Mission.

TEAM LOCATION: _____

TRIP DATES: _____

SIGNED & DATE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN & DATE: _____

WITNESS & DATE: _____

WITNESS & DATE: _____



STM Contingency Checklist For The Central Canadian District of The C&MA

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- 1.2 STM leaders have considered what actions can be taken to reduce the known risks associated with this STM, and have taken those actions that are reasonable.

The risk level for this STM is considered to be:

Critical

High

Moderate

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- 1.3 STM leaders have evaluated logistical and operational details.

Section 2 -- Legal Stuff

- 2.1 The sending entity has predetermined policy guidelines for critical security contingencies.
- 2.2 Based on the results of risk assessment, a training plan is in place to equip the STM participants with knowledge and skills to mitigate the risks associated with this STM.
- 2.3 Each participant in the STM has received, considered and signed the following:
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The evaluation shall address causal factors in the crisis, initial response to the crisis, and the performance of the Crisis Management Team. The evaluation should address those areas of strength that should be repeated in a future crisis, and those areas of weakness that should be remedied. The evaluation shall also identify any areas in which policy should be established or changed.

Taliban vow more abductions in Afghanistan

Sep 4, 2007

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AFP) — Afghanistan's Taliban vowed Tuesday to continue abducting foreign nationals, saying the kidnapping of 23 South Koreans showed the tactic was an effective tool against the government.

Kabul meanwhile acknowledged the threat and said all foreign nationals should register with police and inform authorities of their movements.

"We found this a very effective tactic against the Kabul administration and the invading forces," Taliban spokesman Yousuf Ahmadi told AFP, referring to the international military forces here.

"We'll continue kidnapping foreigners," he said by telephone from an undisclosed location.

The Taliban released 19 of the South Koreans last week after holding them for six weeks. It killed two in July and set free two others in mid-August, when it began direct talks with the South Korean government.

"Through the kidnapping of the Koreans we gained worldwide media coverage," Ahmadi said.

"The Kabul administration was saying that we do not exist and we are a group based outside Afghanistan. When we held face-to-face talks with the Koreans, we showed that we're here and have control over ground inside the country."

Seoul has been criticized for making a deal with the extremists and the Afghan government has said it only allowed the negotiations to save the lives of the Christian aid workers.

Asked about the increased risks for foreign nationals in Afghanistan, a spokesman for President Hamid Karzai told reporters Tuesday that "a terrorist organization will resort to such things."

People should be cautious, limit their movements and register with police, Hodayun Hamidzada said.

The Taliban, toppled in late 2001 in a US-led invasion, are waging an insurgency which has intensified in the past two years.

They have abducted several foreign nationals, releasing some for ransom or, in one case, in exchange for Taliban prisoners in Afghan jails.

The rebels are still holding a German engineer, captured July 18, and four of his Afghan colleagues.

In the Aftermath of a Kidnapping

The South Korean missionary movement seeks to mature without losing its zeal.

Sarah Pulliam | posted 11/07/2007 09:30AM

South Korean Christians are having second thoughts about their approach to overseas missions as they pause to reflect on the 43-day hostage situation that left two men dead.

Church leaders say they will still go forward with the gospel, but with more caution and wisdom.

"Remorse is the face of the church," Park Eun-jo, senior pastor of Saemmul Church, told *Christianity Today*. Located in the Seoul suburb of Bundang, his Presbyterian congregation, which sponsored the trip to Afghanistan, has a weekly attendance of about 5,000 people.

Expressions of remorse were apparently not enough. Criticism of the church and the Korean missions movement, already strong during the hostage crisis, reached a fury once the hostages were freed. Park sent a letter of resignation to the church in September.

Even though the church refused to accept it, Park said he was leaving Saemmul for a month to pray.

The 23 church volunteers were abducted by the Taliban in July while traveling in Afghanistan on a medical-aid trip. The South Korean government negotiated for the group's release in August, but only after the Taliban had killed two members of the group, including a Saemmul Church pastor. There is widespread speculation that a ransom as high as \$20 million was paid, but the only announced terms of the deal were South Korea's agreement to ban missionary travel to Afghanistan and to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan.

Park, who spoke to CT before entering seclusion, wants the church to send more missionaries to Muslim countries and to Afghanistan after the ban is lifted.

"We believe that this is God's providence leading us to other Muslim countries," he said. "I don't want this to be a stumbling block for missions."

Nevertheless, there is concern that the ordeal embarrassed South Korea internationally, and that this may have hurt the church's witness domestically.

"Koreans, particularly those who are not receptive to Christianity, are very emotional and critical about this incident," Park said. "Because of the hostage situation, people withheld their opinions, but since they are released, people are now really letting us have what they think."

South Korea has been known for its zeal for missions; it sends out more missionaries than any other country except the United States. The country currently sends about 1,000 new missionaries every year, according to Steve Moon, director of the Korea Research Institute for Missions.

"At this point, it's hard to guess how it will affect the missionary movement quantitatively," Moon said. "Qualitatively, it will be an opportunity for growth in maturity. ... Churches will need to think more strategically, and churches and missions will prepare better for short-term missions. Many people will maintain the same kind of enthusiasm, but what they need is wisdom and cultural sensitivity."

Park said that 20 of the South Koreans traveled to Afghanistan for a short-term trip to volunteer at a school and to provide medical aid. Three of the hostages were missionaries who had already been in Afghanistan when the group arrived.

In parts of the Middle East and Central Asia, unarmed aid volunteers are at high risk of being kidnapped or injured. They typically travel in very small groups and often with military or police escort. But this group traveled together on a conspicuous bus, without police or military escort. Furthermore, the driver was not carefully selected, since the hostages say he collaborated in the July 19 abduction.

Princeton University sociologist Robert Wuthnow told CT that most American short-term missions volunteers travel to relatively safe environments for relief work. In contrast, many South Korean churches are willing to send short-term groups to dangerous parts of the world.

"[The missionaries] were purely motivated," said Moon, "but were not realistic."

But in the Korean missions movement, some leaders are questioning the motives and purpose of churches with larger-scale missions. South Korean pastor Kim Hyung-tae told *The Korea Times*: "Local churches have

been passionate only about the quantity increase in the number of churchgoers and missionary workers they send overseas, and big events that they hold, neglecting their original mission" of simply reaching people for Christ.

More than 100 pastors held a penitence prayer meeting after the hostages' release, and more than a dozen Christian leaders from the Korea Evangelical Fellowship, the Christian Council of Korea, and the Korean National Council of Churches issued a repentance statement, outlining mistakes the Korean church had made.

"Out of the over-enthusiasm for mission, we did put up big slogans of mission and often took up 'superior,' 'conquering,' 'exclusive,' 'one-sided,' 'displaying,' 'competitive,' attitudes of teaching and governing instead of understanding, embracing, and serving the field people," the statement said. "We deeply regret such wrongdoings and will do our best to take more humble, quiet, and both-sided attitudes and will try to deeply consider and respect the lifestyle and sentiments of the field people."

Before they left Afghanistan, the hostages apologized for something else at a press conference.

"I've had sleepless nights, thinking of what we have caused the country. I am deeply sorry," Yu Kyeong-sik said.

A Matter of State

The kidnapping didn't affect Christians only. The South Korean government's decision to negotiate directly with the Taliban became an international controversy, drawing muted criticism from Afghan and U.S. officials.

"The U.S. government certainly abides by the separation of church and state," said Scott Moreau, missions and intercultural studies professor at Wheaton College in Illinois. "To negotiate on behalf of an agency would raise all kinds of thorny issues."

Most U.S.-based missions agencies have longstanding policies on kidnappings and other security issues, Moreau said. The possibility of lawsuits is another major concern for American agencies. "That weighs on the decision of where they send people, and it's another twist on the whole thing," he said.

In the meantime, South Korea has banned its citizens from going to Afghanistan as aid workers or missionaries. Several long-term South Korean missionaries and aid workers have been forced to leave.

The Koreans had been filling much-needed vocations and their presence will be sorely missed, said Rob Werner, a Christian worker in Afghanistan.

Still, the Korean missionaries are not the only ones who have faced danger in the area, Werner said. All foreigners are re-evaluating their presence and lifestyle, he said, especially as Afghans have been kidnapped or murdered for their association with foreigners.

And it may get worse. After the hostages' release, Taliban spokesman Qari Yousef Ahmadi told the Associated Press that the group plans to abduct more foreigners. "We will do the same thing with the other allies in Afghanistan, because we found this way to be successful," he said.

In late September, four Red Cross personnel were kidnapped by bandits on their way to secure the release of two Western hostages.

Werner says, "I don't know of anybody who has left because of [the kidnapping threats], but perhaps it will discourage people from coming. You can't remain here very long without coming to a sense of abandonment to God's sovereignty and his promises of protection."

Historically, danger does not stop Christian enthusiasm for ministry, said Michael Pocock, department chair of world missions and intercultural studies at Dallas Theological Seminary.

"Suffering is a means to the end of establishing the credibility of what you're preaching," Pocock said. "What happened [in Afghanistan] is not going to stop Christians from sending missionaries to difficult places, but it introduces an element of reality."

Sarah Pulliam is a CT news reporter

Hostages' Pastor: 'Remorse Is the Face of the Church'

Interview with Park Eun-jo: 'I don't want this to be a stumbling block for missions.'

Sarah Pulliam | posted 9/04/2007 08:49AM

The 19 South Koreans freed by the Taliban returned to Seoul Sunday as the church that sent the group fields critical remarks for sending members to such a volatile country. The return ends a 43-day ordeal in which two hostages were killed, including Bae Hyung-kyu, an associate pastor at Saemmul Church.

Before they left Afghanistan, the hostages apologized at a press conference for the trouble they had caused South Korea. "I've had sleepless nights, thinking of what we have caused the country. I am deeply sorry," Yu Kyeong-sik said at a press conference.

"Remorse is the face of the church," said Park Eun-jo, senior pastor of Saemmul Church. The Presbyterian congregation that sponsored the trip, in the Seoul suburb of Bundang, has a weekly attendance of about 5,000 people.

"Koreans, particularly those who are not receptive to Christianity, are very emotional and critical about this incident," he told Christianity Today. "Because of the hostage situation, people withheld their opinions, but since they are released, people are now really letting us have what they think." The hostages did not know until after they were released that two male hostages, including the associate pastor of the church, were killed.

Park said that 20 South Koreans traveled to Afghanistan for a short-term trip to volunteer at a school and provide medical aid. He said that three of the hostages were missionaries who had already been in Korea when the group arrived. Before it had left for the country, the group was told to be cautious in the dangerous area.

As they traveled through the country, their bus driver picked up two people without asking permission, which the pastor called a mistake. The two fired guns before taking the group hostage.

"I feel deep responsibility, strong responsibility, for the two lives that were lost," the pastor said.

Saemmul Church has decided to identify the two killed hostages as martyrs, Park said.

The church will hold a funeral service September 7 for Bae Hyung-kyu, the associate pastor killed by the Taliban.

When the hostages were first taken, the church had prayer services throughout the day. At night, more than 1,000 people would attend. "During those times, we were in shock. We were not able to pray anything clearly but for their safe return," the pastor said. "A week later, we began to calm down, and then we started to pray for Afghanistan."

After the hostages' release, Taliban spokesman Qari Yousef Ahmadi told the Associated Press that the group plans to abduct more foreigners. "We will do the same thing with the other allies in Afghanistan, because we found this way to be successful," he said.

His statement reinforced international fears that South Korea's decision to negotiate directly with the militants would create more hostage situations "I understand that this has created a huge problem and it has become an international issue," Pastor Park said. "Personally I have to be grateful for their effort."

The pastor said that the church will pray that hostage issues will not happen again. "That is what we can do at this moment," he said. The church will cover the cost to bring the hostages back to South Korea.

After the hostage situation began, South Korea banned its citizens from traveling to the country. Park said that the 180 Korean missionaries currently serving in the country have been told to leave by the end of September.

The pastor said that because of the situation, he wants the church to send more missionaries to Muslim countries and Afghanistan after the ban is lifted.

"We believe that this is God's providence leading us to other Muslim countries," he said.

"I don't want this to be a stumbling block for missions."

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Missions Isn't Safe

Let's not learn the wrong lessons from the South Korean kidnappings.

A Christianity Today editorial. | posted 11/07/2007 09:26AM

This summer, associate pastor Bae Hyung-kyu led his mostly female medical team from South Korea into Afghanistan. The plan was to alleviate physical and spiritual suffering. But Taliban terrorists had another agenda. On July 19, radical Islamic insurgents kidnapped the 23 South Koreans traveling by bus through southern Afghanistan.

During 40-plus days of captivity, team members from Saemmul Community Church, located south of Seoul, were relocated repeatedly, beaten, and made to endure forced labor. The Muslim Taliban also tried to convert the Christian hostages by force. When Pastor Bae Hyung-kyu refused, his captors put 10 bullets in his head, chest, and stomach. They also murdered another hostage before freeing the rest—after controversial direct negotiations with the South Korean government.

Blaming the Victims

In exchange for the release of the church workers, South Korea banned missionaries from traveling to Afghanistan, paid a \$20 million ransom (according to the Taliban), and announced it would remove 200 troops from Afghanistan by year's end—a decision the government had already made prior to the abductions.

Missions experts say missionaries around the world are probably more at risk now of being kidnapped for ransom. Certainly the prospect of any government telling Christian missionaries where they can and cannot go is a huge problem.

So guess who is taking the brunt of the verbal backlash in the wake of their release? It's not the Taliban, nor even the South Korean government. It's the freed missionaries and their church. One Korean newspaper opined, "Religious groups should realize once and for all that dangerous missionary and volunteer activities in Islamic countries including Afghanistan not only harm Korea's national objectives, but also put other Koreans under a tremendous amount of duress." Another stated, "Religious organizations are asked to refrain from engaging in excessive missionary activities in risky areas, which will cause anxiety for the people and the government as well."

Under incredible pressure, Saemmul Community Church and the hostages publicly apologized for embarrassing the nation. Even the World Evangelical Alliance's Religious Liberty Commission provided tepid support at best. While denouncing hostage-taking, its statement concluded, "We suggest that organizations with workers in other countries should pay careful regard to security warnings issued by their government." Absent was any acknowledgement of the priority or right to engage in Christian ministry, including evangelism.

In the wake of this ordeal, the Protestant Christians of South Korea—who have risen to prominence in recent years as an evangelical missions powerhouse—are doing some agonizing but necessary soul-searching about what they could have done differently. This painful episode provides an excellent opportunity for Korean Christians to add greater knowledge to their inspiring missions work.

One area that requires immediate attention is planning for the possibility of kidnappings and terrorist attacks. In recent years, American missionaries have been forced to ramp up their contingency plans following a series of murders and kidnappings from Colombia to Lebanon to Pakistan. Since 9/11, we all live in a more dangerous world. We all must address whether or under what circumstances a ransom will be paid; whether, when, and how to evacuate missions personnel; and how to plan missions operations and provide adequate security.

Waiting for a crisis before considering these matters is much too late. We hope that experienced Western missions organizations and agencies such as Crisis Consulting International will come alongside our Korean brothers and sisters to offer their hard won insights.

Unfortunately, the picture that emerges in this instance is of an enthusiastic missionary group unprepared for contingencies in a dangerous, often lawless place. Yet if this devastating incident forces the dynamic Korean missions movement to refine its strategies, much good can still come.

Dangerous Calling

On the other hand, we can learn much about missionary passion, among many other things, from believers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. And one lesson they teach is this: We cannot allow bad publicity or remorse over ill-considered missionary methods to suck the life out of our missionary risk-taking. We do well to remember that missions will never be popular in the world's eyes, even in a great missionary-sending country such as South Korea.

As Jesus said, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Further, let us not forget the common paraphrase of a Tertullian quote: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

We pray that the blood shed by the Korean Christians will work a similar miracle in Afghanistan. Whoever thinks we can practice a safe and moderate Christianity is a fool. That's not the faith that has been delivered to us. Peter said: "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you."

The areas where the spiritual and physical needs are greatest are often the most dangerous. The easy pioneer missions fields are gone. We might as well get used to it— and press on.

THE PULSE

Short-Term Troubles

Lessons from the South Korean kidnappings in Afghanistan.

posted 11/07/2007 09:28AM

Should churches send short-term mission groups into dangerous or closed countries?

46% Only under certain conditions

Yes, if mission groups meet two conditions: They address local needs and obtain the proper government paperwork. They must be both capable and wanted. Not if it were a dangerously closed society, like Saudi Arabia, and the group would be coming in "cold." Yes, if a group is invited by Christians within, and the government tends to look the other way.

Only after: (1) Carefully assessing the mission and its stated outcomes; (2) planning and training, with the understanding that those going take personal responsibility for their actions; (3) receiving invitations and having partnership agreements with the receiving Christians; and (4) planning for contingencies.

Yes, with a caveat: Prepare to be imprisoned or killed.

27% No

Short-term missions do more harm than good. The situation is only compounded in closed or dangerous countries. The risk is too great, not only to the missionaries' lives but to the authenticity of their witness.

Short-term missionaries have enough to learn without making unintentional mistakes. The sort of work required to share the gospel in these places is anything but short-term.

27% Yes

Christians are to go everywhere (Acts 1:8). The Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles spread the message of Yahweh and the gospel in places they were not supposed to go. Jesus warned us that bearing witness to the gospel involves danger. Sacrifice will be demanded. Lives will be lost.

If we are to take the gospel to the entire world as we're commanded, then these kinds of mission efforts are essential.

* * * * *

When such groups go and suffer persecution, how should their government respond?

43% The church should expect government help.

The church can appeal to basic human rights laws for help, but the appeal should include the confession of a lesson learned. They should ask their government and the government of the receiving country to abide by internationally recognized agreements. They should appeal as citizens for intervention by diplomatic means, but have no justified grounds to ask for military action. Reciprocity ought to be demanded by the U.S. government. If we afford religious freedom to nationals of one country, the same ought to apply for Americans visiting that country.

39% The church can ask, but it shouldn't expect government help.

Sometimes the apostle Paul invoked the government's protection, but ultimately he suffered the government's vengeance (Acts 16:37; 22:25). He went with the full understanding that he might suffer the consequences. By going despite the government's advice, the church forfeits assurances of government intervention.

17% The church should not ask its government to respond.

We should use the spiritual weapons of prayer and voluntary suffering—not the diplomatic and military rights of our government—to change the hearts of the persecutors. To do so only confirms the belief of leaders of the country involved that churches are an arm of the government. The church has no government. It should not petition the government for anything at all. Missionary groups go knowing the dangers and should be willing to accept the consequences.

Leith Anderson, Edith Blumhofer, Mark Buchanan, Lisa Ann Cockrel, Charles Colson, J. Samuel Escobar, Ajith Fernando, Chris Hall, John W. Kennedy, Douglas LeBlanc, Paul Maier, Grant McClung, David McKenna, Dean Merrill, Ken Myers, H. W. Norton, Roger Olson, Virginia Owens, Ben Patterson, Richard V. Plerard, Jim Reapsome, Robert Seiple, Bruce Shelley, Uwe Siemon-Netto, Howard Snyder, Agnieszka Tennant, Don Thorsen

SPECIAL ADVISORY UPDATE: Additional Information and Assessment
Regarding the Release of South Korean Hostages in Afghanistan

UPDATE:

Shortly after the release of the final South Korean Christian hostages by the Taliban, a spokesman for the Taliban told the Associated Press in a telephone interview. "We will do the same thing with the other allies in Afghanistan, because we found this way to be successful," Qari Yousef Ahmadi told the Associated Press via cell phone from an undisclosed location. The statement was reported by the Associated Press (and other agencies) on August 31, 2007. Ahmadi has been a spokesman for the Taliban in the past (including during the South Korean hostage event) and CCI's assessment is that this statement was authorized by the Taliban.

SUMMARY

The release of the surviving 19 South Korean hostages held by the Taliban in Afghanistan since July 19, 2007 carries very real increased risk to missionaries and faith-based workers.

1. The South Korean government made an agreement with the Taliban to ban future missionary activity in Afghanistan, a watershed event that had been resisted in prior hostage negotiations for kidnapped Christians.
2. The Taliban, now an insurgency (or, at best, a non-state actor) rather than an incumbent government, was able to elevate itself by directly engaging a state (South Korea) in negotiations.

The circumstances of the negotiations and the agreement leading to the release will increase the probability of future kidnappings of Christian missionaries and relief workers in Afghanistan and other venues.

ANALYSIS

There are often unintended or unavoidable consequences resulting from hostage negotiations, and in this case those consequences include clear, foreseeable and imminent risk to others. Our objective is to inform about that increased risk, not to judge or criticize the process and decisions that may have led to it.

We don't know whether the demand to ban South Korean missionaries from Afghanistan originated with the Taliban or was an offer extended by South Korea. From a risk assessment perspective, it doesn't matter. The result is a situation where a terrorist kidnapping of Christian workers resulted in an agreement to remove (prevent from returning) a group of Christian missionaries from an entire nation that the antagonist does not control. Not only in Afghanistan, but in any location where there is a clash of

Christian and Moslem evangelism, Islamist terrorists and insurgents will take note of South Korea's concession.

An event has occurred with a highly-publicized concession by a modern state to withdraw (or prevent from going) Christian missionaries from an entire country; this action as a direct result of the kidnapping of other Christian missionaries. The implications are serious and predictable. We can expect to see additional future kidnappings of Christian workers (whether missionaries or relief workers) with attendant demands that Christian workers leave the area. The patterns of terrorist activities in general and the patterns of hostage events specifically indicate that actions that succeed are repeated. This Taliban kidnapping succeeded (perhaps not with the original goal, but with a result of arguably equal or greater impact). Others will desire to replicate it, and some will almost certainly attempt to do so. Although the most likely venue for additional future events is Afghanistan, the global publicity of this event and the global reach of Islamist terrorism make future events foreseeable in any venue where Christian workers and Islamist terrorists coexist.

There is a second factor in this event that will increase the risk of future kidnappings in similar environments. The Taliban was displaced as a government in 2001 and functions now as an insurgent group (or, very charitably, a 'non-state actor'). Insurgent groups almost always have an objective of increasing their presence and influence on the political stage, and the Taliban certainly fits this profile.

During this kidnapping event, the Taliban was able to sit down at the negotiating table with a legitimate state, the government of South Korea. Even the use of intermediaries does not mitigate the fact that the participants were the Taliban and the government of South Korea. For that period of time, i.e., while those negotiations were under way, the Taliban enjoyed an elevated political status that was a de facto result of South Korea agreeing to negotiate with them. The lesson learned by the Taliban: This kidnapping elevated their political status, at least for a time. That is a lesson seldom missed by insurgent groups. The result is a second, but also powerful motive for similar future kidnappings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. All Churches should immediately review their operations and security procedures in light of this new, changed environment.
2. STM Teams in any part of the world where Islamist terrorist activities exist should review their operations, risk assessments and security procedures in light of this new, changed environment.
3. Churches sending STM to parts of the world where Islamist terrorist activities exist should communicate clear guidelines and instructions to all of their people in security procedures of avoidance of routines and predictability, target hardening and the detection and management of surveillance.

Information from Crisis Consulting International

CCI stands ready to support Christian agencies in the response to this increased threat, to implement these recommendations and additional actions, and to discuss specific issues and situations.



CCD Training Confirmation Form

In conjunction with and in cooperation with the policy set out by DEXCOM (January 14th, 2008);

We _____ have provided a

(Name of Church)

_____ week training program for our Short Term Mission team that will be

(# of Weeks)

ministering in _____ on _____.

(Country of Primary Ministry)

(Trip Dates)

We have had our leader(s) and each of the participants review and sign off on The Risk Management Policy Forms .

Team Leader: _____

Senior Pastor: _____

Date: _____

******As per the policy passed by DEXCOM at their January 14th board meeting; all Short Term Missions (STM) sponsored or endorsed by a local Alliance Church, must have in place some form of training program including current Risk Management Training.***