Make an IMPACT

DEBRIEF GUIDE

Please use the guide below at the end of each day while on your short-term mission. This is a comprehensive guide. Utilize the suggestions as you see fit for your group and based on the activities of the day. This could be done as a large group or in smaller groups.

PURPOSE: Daily debrief is not simply a time to ask the team about their day. It is a space to help the team slow down, notice what God is doing, examine their own assumptions, understand the people and culture they encountered, and consider how they should respond. It is also a helpful time for the team to gather and process through the way they saw God working and the challenges of the day. This gives a sense of unity, especially if the team was spread out during the day. It opens up a time for prayer and any necessary announcements.

The Daily Framework Questions & Considerations

1. OBSERVE — What did we actually see?

Start with facts before interpretation. (These are suggested questions and should be used as a guide for conversation. Please do not use all the listed questions, but rather choose from the list or develop your own that are reflective of the tone below)

Ask:

- What happened today?
- What did you notice?
- Who did you meet?
- What surprised you?
- What did you see that you didn't expect?
- What did you hear people saying?
- What seemed important to the people we were serving?
- What did you notice about the way people related to one another?

- What did you notice about the local church or ministry leaders?
- What assets, strengths, skills, relationships or resources did you see in the community?
- What did you find beautiful?
- What made you uncomfortable?

Leader reminder:
Be careful when someone says, “They don't have…” or “They don't know…”

Gently ask:
“What makes you say that? What *do* they have? What might we be missing?”

The goal is to move the team from **deficit thinking to seeing people and communities as image-bearers with God-given dignity, gifts, relationships, and resources.**

2. INTERPRET — What might God be showing us?

Now move beneath the surface.

Ask:

- Why do you think that happened?
- What might we be misunderstanding?
- What cultural assumptions are we bringing with us?
- How might someone from this community interpret what happened differently?
- What did today teach you about this culture?
- What did today teach you about yourself?
- Where did you see brokenness?
- Where did you see beauty, resilience, wisdom, or flourishing?
- Where did you see God already at work?
- What did you learn from the people we came to serve?
- Did anything challenge an assumption you had before coming?
- What does today's experience reveal about God's mission?

A Perspectives Question

“What does this experience help us understand about God's heart for the nations and His mission in the world?”

Remind the team: **We did not bring God here.** God was already here.

We are learning to recognize His activity and participate faithfully in what He is already doing.

3. RELATIONSHIPS — What happened between people?

Because healthy ministry is fundamentally relational, spend intentional time here.

Ask:

- Who did you connect with today?
- What did you learn about that person?
- Did you listen more than you talked?
- What questions did you ask?
- What did they teach you?
- Did you make assumptions about them?
- Did you treat someone as a project rather than a person?
- Did you notice yourself feeling superior, inferior, afraid, uncomfortable or responsible to "fix" something?
- Did you receive something from the people you served?
- What would it look like to see this person as a neighbor rather than a recipient of our help?

Leader Question
"If we had not been able to do the project today, could we still say that we had a meaningful ministry day because of the relationships we built?"

4. HEART — What was happening inside me?

Don't only process **what happened around you**. Process **what happened within you.**

Ask:

- What emotion was strongest for you today?
- When did you feel joy?
- When did you feel frustrated?
- When did you feel uncomfortable?
- When did you feel helpless?

- What made you angry?
- What made you proud?
- What did you want to control?
- What did you want to fix?
- What did you want people to think about you?
- What fear or desire might have been underneath that reaction?
- What did today's experience reveal about what you believe you need?
- Where did you see God changing your heart?

A helpful leader phrase:
"Don't just tell us what happened. Tell us what happened **in you**."
Avoid shaming people for their reactions. Curiosity is more productive than condemnation.

5. RESPOND — What should we do with what we learned?
Move from reflection to faithful action.

Ask:
- Is there something we need to do differently tomorrow?
- Is there someone we need to apologize to?
- Is there something we need to ask instead of assuming?
- Is there something we need to learn?
- Is there someone we need to listen to?
- Is there something we should stop doing?
- Is there something we should continue doing?
- Is there someone we should empower rather than do something for?
- What is God inviting you to surrender?
- What is God inviting you to practice?

The key question:
"Given what we learned today, what would faithfulness look like tomorrow?"

The 5-Minute Heart Check
If the team is exhausted, don't skip debrief entirely.

Ask everyone to answer these five questions:

1. **I noticed…**
2. **I wondered…**
3. **I felt…**
4. **God showed me…**
5. **Tomorrow I want to…**

Please close in prayer.