



Together for a Change

Resource Pack



Together for a Change Pack

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Foreword: The Clue is in the Name

Over the last six years one of the most exciting, unnerving, challenging and hopeful pieces of work that I have been privileged to be involved with has been *Together for a Change*. It has been a shared initiative of the Church of Scotland's World Mission and Ministries Councils supported for the first three years of by the generosity and courage of the *Church of Scotland Guild*.

Both of my teenage sons are currently in the traumatic business of preparing to sit exams. Every so often I offer the very clichéd advice: 'Just make sure that you read the question. The clue to the answer is in the question.'

With *Together for a Change*, the clue to what it is all about is in the name which, of course, could be interpreted in at least a couple of ways – just like lots of exam questions.

- *Together for a Change* has brought people *together* from Ruchazie, Royston, Malawi and the Gambia – and now also from Kenya, Zambia, Drumchapel and Greenock – who would never, otherwise have had the chance to meet. These are people from places where poverty and struggle is part of everyday life. Bringing people *together* has been life transformative at an individual and community level.
- *Together for a Change* has brought people together for a purpose – *change*. At the heart of what we have been about has been the deeply held belief that people who struggle against poverty have a wisdom and expertise which passes others by. If we are to bring about long term and sustainable *change* then we need to find the ways to bring together people who share that struggle in different parts of the world.

You can find out more about the experience of *Together for a Change* for those who have been involved in *Together for a Change – the Story*. The purpose of this *Resource Pack* is different. In this we hope that you will not only learn about what others have done but that, through their experiences and what they have learned along the way, you will find some of the resources, skills and enthusiasm to join in.

Of course, our greatest resources don't come on paper but in people – in this case the people who've done it. So if you want to learn from their wisdom please be in touch.

Martin Johnstone
Church of Scotland Priority Areas Secretary
mjohnstone@cofscotland.org.uk



Together for a Change: The History

Most good ideas start from a casual conversation and this one was no exception.

Two questions prompted this project;

Who knows the most about poverty? Those who live it
Is poverty a global issue? Yes!

The project Together for a Change was born and its vision is that when communities come together to learn from each other, change happens.

The conversations continued between two councils in the Church of Scotland (World Mission and Mission and Discipleship) and they developed the idea. The Guild funded the first three years.¹

"We have to be agents of change, part of a movement for global social justice- a new world where poor and marginalised people have a future....Poor people have names, stories, faces – they are human beings made in God's image."

*Daleep Mukarjii
Director Christian Aid
August 2002*

In 2005, a partnership began between two communities in Scotland and two communities overseas. St Paul's Royston Church and its community began to plan exchange visits with Bakau in The Gambia, and Ruchazie Parish Church and its community with Baula in Malawi. Within the project, they made six visits, each community visiting the other once a year for three years.

More conversations but always the same questions.



How do different communities who experience poverty relate to each other?

What are the common factors in the lives of partner communities?

How do we get involved in decision-making and make a difference?

How do we tell what it's like to be poor and make our countries better places to live?

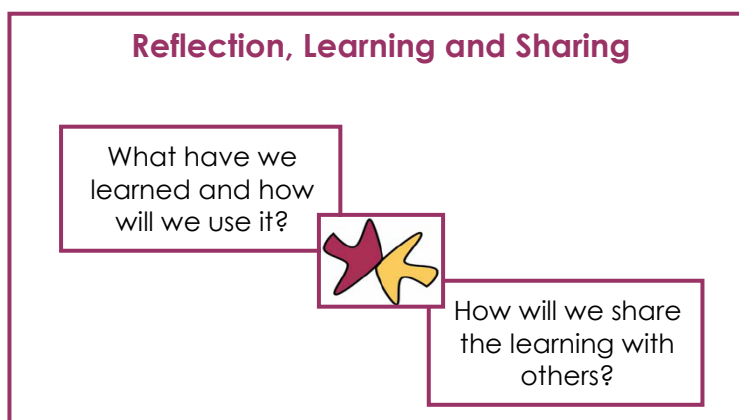
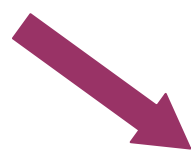
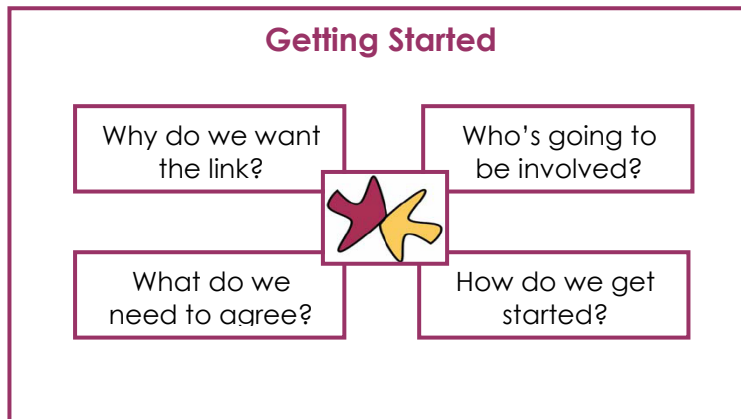
This guide is based on their stories and on their learning so that others can benefit from their experience. It is designed to guide you through the process, so that you can both reflect on what has been learned and to help you make your own decisions. Staff members, from both the Priority Area's team and World Mission Council, are on hand to support and to help with issues, as they arise.

The success of these visits is heard in the stories of those who took part and some of these are included; they are the real experts to whom you should turn for advice. They are the ones who have undergone the process outlined here and know the challenges and successes. They can tell you how much they and their community have gained from Together for a Change.

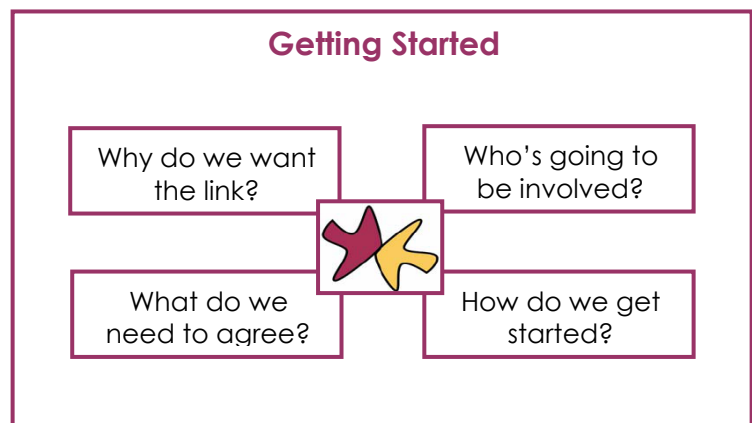


¹ The second phase is funded by World Mission and Ministries Council

Together for a Change: The Process



Getting Started



Why do we want to link?

The first question for the planning group

We often talk of the world today as a global village and it is true that our lives are linked with people across the globe. This project begins to put faces and names to what at first seems a distant part of that global village.

It is important to be very clear about the reasons for developing a link.

Experience shows that talking about why you want to link and what you hope to achieve at a very early stage saves any possible confusion later

“The shaping of our common future is much too important to be left to governments and experts alone.” – **Martin Johnstone** (*That’s what the co-founder of Together for a Change thinks*)

Here’s what some of the Together for a Change folks said:

‘Cos our community had a lot of violence going on and a lot of trouble with drugs and things like that I thought anything positive can really help’

Donna



‘Our minister was worried about the divides in our community and felt that this might bring us together’

Liz

‘Help me to find myself as I walk in other’s shoes’

Kate Compston, 1990

Here are some things which others have said when asked why they wanted to link:

- ◆ To learn about another country and culture
- ◆ To develop some self confidence for myself and others as we take a in this new project
- ◆ Through the exchange visits we hope that deep friendships can form.
- ◆ Linking can help us to understand and really respect another’s country and culture
- ◆ To fulfil a lifelong ambition of seeing what life is like in Africa
- ◆ To learn to look at our own situation and see the positives
- ◆ To be an agent for change in my own community

Health warning: these exchange visits may change your life!

A conversation starter for the planning group

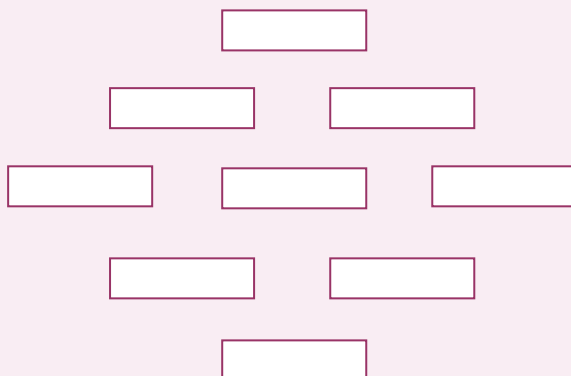
This exercise might help get the conversation going. Get someone who is not sure about the linking project to ask the group questions. Take some time to voice the fears and worries and reassuring folks that this is normal; for example leaving the children for three weeks, getting the time off work, having a stranger in my home.

Exercise 1: A Conversation Starter

Take the suggested sentences from appendix 1 (page 31) and cut them into strips. Make sure there are some blank strips too.

Ask the group in twos or threes to read each strip and then agree which they think is the most important. E.g.

Most Important



Least Important

When they've agreed an order, ask them to say why they put the one at the top and why the one at the bottom.

Did they add any?

Some of the discussion might help understand the motives and guide future preparations.

What do we need to agree?

This question needs to be asked now but looked at again when the leaders from the overseas community visit.

It is really important to set down some guidelines for the exchange visit programme; these will be the principles which will steer your decisions. You should return to them from time to time both with the leaders and with the groups.

- ◆ A way needs to be found to be honest with each other both within your community and with the partners, whether it is in planning, in meeting the visitors or in each member of the group being able to say how they feel at any one time.
- ◆ There needs to be a commitment to the whole programme, the planning, and the preparations, in hosting the visitors and in making the link. At first this may be quite difficult as it can be hard if folks are having a struggle in their own life to feel they can commit. The co-ordinator needs to both encourage and make allowance for this.
- ◆ The difference in wealth and poverty can be a barrier to honesty. Listening to each other will be the key to understanding how poverty affects each person.
- ◆ Listening will be more important than telling. In sharing personal experience, learning from each other will take place.



**Don't walk behind me, I may not lead
Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow
Just walk beside me and be my friend**

What might it mean for the exchange visits?

It is wise to start small and wait and see what happens. No big plans, just friendship and walking alongside. As one member from Ruchazie said; 'it's all about sharing each other's lives' and in that, finding out the common struggles and the common celebrations. He talked of attending a local funeral and the leader saying 'now we are one because you have shared this with us'.

It is important not to see one side as 'helpers' or as charity givers and the other as victims. If money and goods are given, especially in the early visits, it points out a difference in wealth and power. Giving of time is as important as the giving of clothes and other things. It may well be that at the end of the three years a relationship is established where the exchange of goods doesn't seem like charity.



It is however equally important to see that the guests are cared for ; for example Provanmill invited specifics such as jackets, toiletries and shoes from the congregations and community and allowed the visitors to choose. Ruchazie meanwhile budgeted for this and went shopping with the guests to local charity shops.

It is important that as many as possible in the community are included, and seek out those who are often excluded.



Planning **together** makes for a fairer exchange visit programme. Share common exercises in preparation, exchange ideas about what you hope to do, ask if there is anything special they would really like to do.

A key issue to discuss is how you will ensure the safety of the visitors and the families. When the visitors are in Scotland, the co-ordinator of the project should keep all the passports as they can be so easily lost.

A partnership agreement can be developed before you make an exchange visit. Exchange by email until you are both happy with the agreement (Appendix 2 on page 32). You may want to add more to this and should agree before meeting the leaders from the exchange community.

For more see 'Principles of linking 2' on the One World Linking Association website:
<http://www.ukowla.org.uk/toolkitmain/toolkit.asp>.

How do we get started with the link?

In some ways, this can be the most difficult part of the project. There may be lots of enthusiasm and the danger can be that you go full steam ahead without thinking about some important essentials.

- ◆ It is a key to success that planning is done along with your link community. Communications may be slow and the first steps together may be frustrating.
- ◆ If you are to become true partners, each must be equally involved in the planning
- ◆ Who you communicate with is key
- ◆ Skype is wonderful and it's free if your partners have access.

For the Ruchazie group, much of their correspondence had to be done by letters as Baula had no electricity. Baula was chosen by the local hospital chair person and was chosen by him because it had not had any outside connections before.

**For tomorrow belongs to the people who
prepare it today**

African saying

- ◆ When the first link group has formed, you will need to learn about yourselves as well as the visitors.
- ◆ It is important that the first visit of leaders from the overseas community come to Scotland from the partner community as a mark of respect.
- ◆ It is important that the partner overseas already has an established link with the Church of Scotland as this can help to ease communication (as in Baula).
- ◆ Remember that staff at World Mission can help with visas, questions about the area....and much more.
- ◆ When partner leaders come over for the preparatory visit, you should spend some time in discussion around the principles of the exchange visits (see page 17).

? How will we let our community know about this? What will tell them about?



As part of getting to know each other folks from Provanmill did two things – one group made ceramic plates and another made paper and added sayings which kept them going. They then held an exhibition in the local library. This was the beginning of letting the wider community know.

Who is going to be involved?

Each project will develop in response to the need and character of the community but some values and questions will be the same. Ideally, the programme of exchange visits should be led by the church and community working together.

The next step is to decide who will be involved. For example representatives from:

- ◆ Other churches locally?
- ◆ The community council?
- ◆ Local schools?
- ◆ Housing associations?
- ◆ Youth groups?
- ◆ Community centres
- ◆ The credit union



This project is about people's lived experience so don't just opt for paid professionals.

- ◆ You know the people who are often excluded from projects and can consider how they might become part of this.
- ◆ Think through the many levels of involvement so that as many as possible are included
 - Some may want to offer hospitality
 - Some may want to join the group on the visits
 - Some may want to help with the cooking
- ◆ You know your area and you know people who are committed to making the community a better place.

**A good listener is not only popular everywhere, but
after a while he knows something.**

Wilson Mizner

? Who is going to be involved and at what level?

Who will take the lead in the different areas of preparation?

- ◆ The link with partners.
- ◆ The programme for visitors.
- ◆ Looking after the funds.

Lots of conversations, lots of planning and lots of fun!

An example from St Paul's Church Provanmill

Choosing the first participants

Because the first visit was from Gambia to Glasgow, interest had already been raised in the project so through conversations and encouragement people from the area were invited to apply. They were asked to fill in an application form (see Appendix 3 on page 33). They were very clear that the participants should come from the local area and 'be like us' as they understood that on the overseas trip, they needed a common basis for working through fears and worries and any tensions which might arise.

A good example of this was a youth worker working in the area and although they knew and liked him, they didn't think he was a 'right fit'.

Interestingly, they had difficulty persuading men to come on board, partly because it is hard to get three weeks off work but also in the early days a seeming lack of interest. This may need some careful thought in the planning.

They held a meeting of people who might be interested and handed out the forms. The steering group then had interviews with each of the applicants before making a final decision.

They also made a decision to include people who are often excluded; for example, each trip had someone with a physical disability and some trips had members with emotional problems. The steering group felt that this represented a more accurate picture of the community and agreed to help each other work through any difficulty. Even at the end of the project where there were some ups and downs, they felt that they would not do it differently

The application forms were also sent to the link community and shared with the groups in each so that they would know a little about each other before meeting.

Ruchazie did it differently

Because the early decision about becoming involved arose at the kirk session, they then approached community groups and the other local churches; from this people were identified both in the church and in the community. Like Provanmill, they tried to include people on the margins and to ensure that the group was a mixture of men and women, old and young. Individuals were approached and invited.

Both would say that as the project progressed, it became easier to involve people and they always ensured that each visit had people who had been before.

Planning the Visits



How will we plan for the visit?

Step 1 - A leaders' visit

Once the link has been established (by email or by phone), the next step is to invite two leaders of the link community to visit Scotland.

Checklist for hosts of leaders' visit

- ◆ Agree who is coordinating the whole visit.
- ◆ Arrange dates for travel (it is important that they can visit over at least one Sunday but more if possible). Get exact names on passports for flights.
- ◆ Contact World Mission about flights and visas. Have the necessary details ready to hand over to them.
- ◆ Find someone to host the leaders for their visit and agree financial support for hospitality.
- ◆ Decide a programme ensuring that as much of the church and community activity is included.
- ◆ Give them free time as it is very tiring being in a different culture.
- ◆ Allocate who is responsible for showing them around at each project.
 - Decide who takes them from one project to another.
 - Try to ensure that every meal is not sandwiches!
 - If the group is from Africa, ensure that they have a meal with rice at least once a day.



**What you do not want done to
yourself, do not do to others**

Confucius

- ◆ Arrange meetings to look at the partnership agreement so that the leaders can take this back and discuss with their community. The exercise on page 17 might ease conversations
- ◆ Before they return, begin work on the programme together for the exchange visit. Discuss how they prepare the group for visiting in for example telling stories from their communities or bringing photographs as well as personal mementoes.
- ◆ Build in space for conversations and questions.
- ◆ Find ways to challenge stereotypes they may have about the country.

Talking about the Principles

STEP 2 - A discussion for leaders

Below are some key principles on which linking depend. Lay them out on the table or on the floor where everyone can see them (you may want to write/type them in larger print).



Below is a list of statements; decide together which heading they come under. Then agree which is the most important under each heading.

- ◆ Women are often poorly represented in decision-making and we need to recognize the part they play at a local level
- ◆ Values of a community are the beliefs and standards which define it. We need to share these
- ◆ We recognise that each has something to give and something to receive.
- ◆ We will share expectations and practicalities. We will discuss finance openly. We will make clear that both communities are being funded
- ◆ We want to reach people who are often not involved.
- ◆ We want to challenge any past unequal relationships and show a new way.
- ◆ We pledge to sustaining and building on this new relationship.
- ◆ We will prepare as fully as we can for visits
- ◆ We will act with fairness, ensuring that we work collaboratively.
- ◆ We will work out together ways of communicating.

You may want to add some more statements so leave time to do this.

Come together as a group and share how you have allocated the lists. Then talk about how it will influence the visits; also talk about problems you foresee and how these might be resolved.

"We were continually communicating and agreeing together what we will do. It is empowering both communities and giving them a sense of identity and a sense of reality"

Donna

More exercises for both communities to prepare and share are in Appendix 4 on page 34.

How will we prepare to host visitor's?

STEP 3 – Preparing for visitors

The exchange allows people from two very different countries and cultures to share experiences and ideas. As hosts it is hoped that the group can show them the faces and lives behind any statistics the visitors may know. This all needs to be planned before they arrive.

The steering groups will already have signed a partnership agreement. It would be good to plan to share this at an early meeting so that the groups are reminded of the values underpinning the link.

- ◆ The host families play a key role in befriending. Make sure they know how to contact their host if for any reason they get into difficulty. Decide early on what the budget for hosting visitors will be.
- ◆ The visiting group will need time and space to settle in to what may be a very strange and new environment and the programme should take this into account.
- ◆ Both groups will need time together to reflect on what they have seen and also to adapt the programme if necessary. Remember that some of the planned experiences will be new to the Scots families too. For example, some groups have visited the Scottish parliament, or taken a trip to Iona. Others have met with their local Lord Provost and been asked to speak in public about their experience of living in poverty or about the link and what it has meant to them



The steering group will need to find ways to check up on the visitors especially if some are not taking part as much as you hoped (homesick? diet? gender?).

What about all the practical details?

- ◆ The visitors will be cold (whatever the time of year!).
- ◆ They may need toiletries.
- ◆ Don't assume that they will know how things work for example a shower or the cooker.
- ◆ Put up notices in church inviting people to join you any day, or help with meals

**You travel, you see, you learn, you return and
tell the story**

Ugandan saying

? Does the programme you are planning reflect all aspects of the community?

- ◆ Have you reminded everyone that there will need to be space for questions/ for sharing/for just being?
- ◆ Have you agreed whether all meals are together or are some in the host homes?
- ◆ Will there be an opportunity to meet decision-makers? Do people need time to prepare for these meetings?
- ◆ What will the visit cost? Visitors to the UK will need spending money. Have an agreement on what 'pocket money' is to be used, for example, Hosts will provide all accommodation, food and some telephone cards. Spending money is for incidentals and presents to take home. A suggested sum might be £20.00 per person per week.



In Appendix 5, on page 36, there is a sample programme – not for the content but for the level of detail you need to be thinking about.

'Everyone hears only what s/he understands'

Goethe

Getting to know you

Conversation Starters

Although these conversation starters are introduced here for the two groups getting to know each other they could equally well be used for the members of one group getting to know each other.

Exercise 1: A Conversation Starter which Provanmill used

- ◆ Each potential member of the link programme was invited to bring one thing from home which meant a lot to them. Through their object, they told a bit about themselves.
- ◆ Working with a community artist they were encouraged to draw/paint one aspect of their community.
- ◆ Finally they made a list of sayings by which they lived life – modern day 'proverbs' such as 'a warm heart in an old coat' or 'hang on in there'. They asked their exchange group to do the same and then shared stories about life today.

Exercise 2: What's important to me in my life

- ◆ Cut up these cards.

Warmth	Animals	Home
Entertainment	Nice Clothes	Family
Feeling Safe	Owning my House	Having a Job
Faith	Enough Money	Freedom
Transport	Friends	Education

- ◆ Place the cards under the headings; Talk about the differences.

Most Important	Fairly Important	Least Important
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Exercise 3: Telling them about your country

Each of the host group should bring five items/ pictures to make a collection which tell your visitors something about your way of life. Lay all the items on the table. Each person is then invited to say why they brought what they did. The host group should then be asked if they object to any of the items and to say why.

The visiting group now have a chance to ask about any items which they don't understand why they have been included. Then the visiting group should identify and put to one side those which are common to their community.

What have they learned that they did not know before?

Do they confirm their image (stereotype) of Scotland or contradict?

Exercise 4: A Questionnaire about Time

(adapted from Mundi Global Education Centre: 'Good Practice Guide to Whole School Linking' by Lisa Young¹)

Time – Your Master or Your Servant

Below are a set of statements about time numbered 1-9. For each one, choose either A or B by putting a tick.

A		B
People should stand in a queue so that they are served one at a time	or	here is no need to stand in a queue as people will be served when they are ready to be
Interruptions are part of life and are often a bonus	or	Interruptions should be avoided if at all possible
It's more efficient to do one thing at a time	or	I can twice as much done if I work on two or three things together
It's more important to complete the task	or	It's 'more important to stick to the schedule
You shouldn't take a call when you are meeting someone else	or	It would be rude not to take a call or ignore a visitor who drops by
You shouldn't take deadlines too seriously. What's deadline among friends	or	Deadlines are like a promise. You may be letting others down if you don't keep them
In a meeting you should stick to the agenda and not wander off	or	An agenda is just a piece of paper' digressions are normal
I tend to be people oriented	or	I tend to be task oriented
Personal talk is part of my job	or	Personal talk should be kept for out of hours.

When finished, take the score sheet and mark whether you have ticked A or B. Add up your score. If your score is -9 time is your master. If your score is +9 time is your servant. What are the benefits/ disadvantages of each style?

Qu	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A Score	-1	+1	-1	+1	-1	+1	-1	+1	+1
B Score	+1	-1	+1	-1	+1	-1	+1	-1	-1
My Score									

When the 2 groups get together for the first time, bring the exercise with them and compare notes. Each person should choose one 'opposite' of their score and talk about how it annoys them.

Someone else who has scored that opposite tells how it feels from their point of view.

Talk about their own countries and culture and agree to learn from each other.

How will we prepare the group for the visit overseas?

The first decision to make is who will visit?



- ◆ How many people will go (need to work within budget and ability of hosts to 'host')
- ◆ Who are the right people to go (think about age, sex mix and also personalities)
- ◆ Who is available at the time agreed for the visit
- ◆ What is the focus of the visit (who is most appropriate to go in regard to this)

- ◆ Remember that there will be more than one visit – opportunity for a number of people to go.

Planning meetings

Schedule these regularly before you go. You may want to invite people who have made similar trips or have knowledge or experience about where you are going or overseas travel. Include these points in your discussion

- ◆ Getting to know each other – spending time together is important as you'll need to get to know each other and begin to become a group?
- ◆ There will be many practical issues to be discussed including getting a passport, applying for visas, what jags and pills do you need, what clothes you need to pack, what else would you take with you?
- ◆ What stuff do you need to know about the place we are going to – customs, culture, rules about food, dress and behaviour?
- ◆ What stuff do we need to know about our community and how are we going to share this (a good example is to take photos which you can talk about)?
- ◆ Decide who will take responsibility for certain things – who is the photographer, the diary writer, the group leader, the purse keeper?
- ◆ Think what you might be asked to do that you could prepare for beforehand (or know those of the group who are willing) e.g. Saying a grace, making a speech, offering a prayer, introducing the group, participating in bible study, teaching a Scottish dance or song etc.
- ◆ Decide together what you want to take as gifts to your host – should it represent Scotland or something useful or something which people would not normally buy for themselves? For example one group chose to buy bags of rice when they



were there and give to the community leaders as a gift. Some also brought pens and pencils and colouring books for schools and gave them to the teachers.

- ◆ Take time to talk about why you are going and what you need to think when there so you can share the story when you come back?
- ◆ How to communicate with your family when overseas.
- ◆ What to do in an emergency or if there is a difficult situation (bags go missing, there is an accident etc).
- ◆ Take time to look at fears and worries and to talk as a group about how these might be overcome and how you can support each other?
- ◆ How will you share your stories when you come home? It is important to remember this is not a 'holiday' but you are representing your community. How will you report back? What will help you to tell them your story and what you have learned?
- ◆ Take time when overseas to meet together as a group to ensure you are getting all the information you need.
- ◆ You should have a formal meeting with partners and you should ensure someone takes good notes especially of decisions for the future of the programme.
- ◆ Decide how you will record the visit; in photos? With stories?

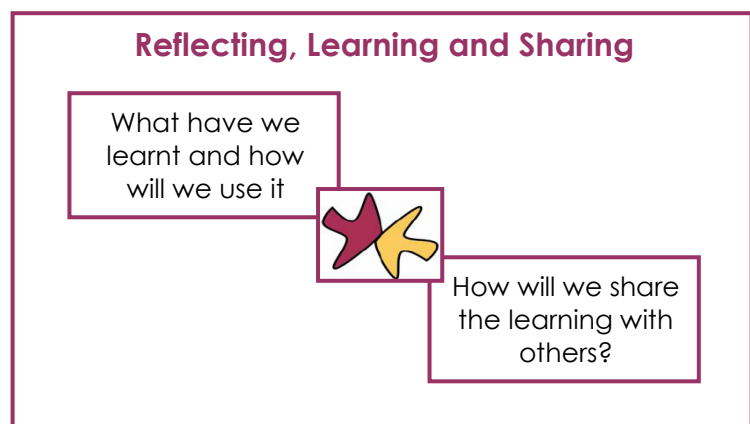


- ◆ Make sure you get correct spellings of names and places. Do not think you will remember them.
- ◆ Record the nice and the not so nice bits of the trip....the fun and the less fun....the happy and the sad experiences. These can be factual and also record your feelings.
- ◆ Record things that are normal everyday things and the things that surprises you (e.g. I was surprised that everyone had mobile phones yet they have no electricity!)

? Good questions to ask (and also to know the answers for your own community too)?

- ◆ How does what happens in the rest of the world affect your community?
- ◆ How do you deal with controversial issues – how are decisions made?
- ◆ What is the biggest problem affecting your community?
- ◆ What is good about your community?
- ◆ What would you like to change? How could you achieve it?

Reflecting, Learning and Sharing



What have we learnt?

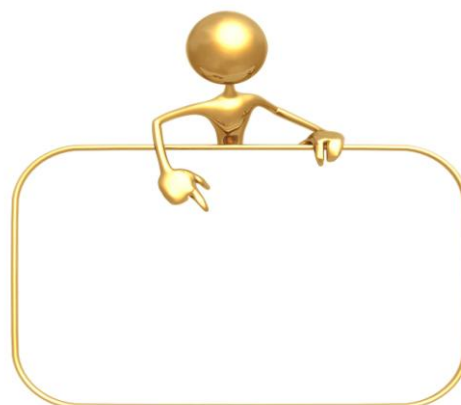
It's important to take some time regularly to think about what has been learned.

A suggested Timetable for Reflection

Year 1	After the Visitors	Before the Trip	After the Trip
Year 2	Before the Visitors	After the Visitors	Before the Trip
Year 3	After the Trip	After the Visitors	Finally

What have I learnt about myself?

- ◆ About my life and Community?
- ◆ About what I can do?
- ◆ About my dreams?
- ◆ About my fears?
- ◆ What do I want to celebrate?
- ◆ What still confuses me?



What did the Community learn from our visitors?

Some suggested exercises to help with reflection

- ◆ Throw a ball to each other and say one thing each that you have learnt.
- ◆ Lay a photograph on the floor and each person is to tell a story of a person in the photograph.

Look back to at the reason you wanted to have a link

Have your expectations been met:

- ◆ in full
- ◆ in part
- ◆ not at all

If 'yes' what are the most important things you have learned. If 'no' what are you most disappointed in and what can be changed for a future visit?

Exercise 1: A Simple Method for Reflection and Evaluation

Draw a large person on a poster.

Give people four different coloured post-it notes.

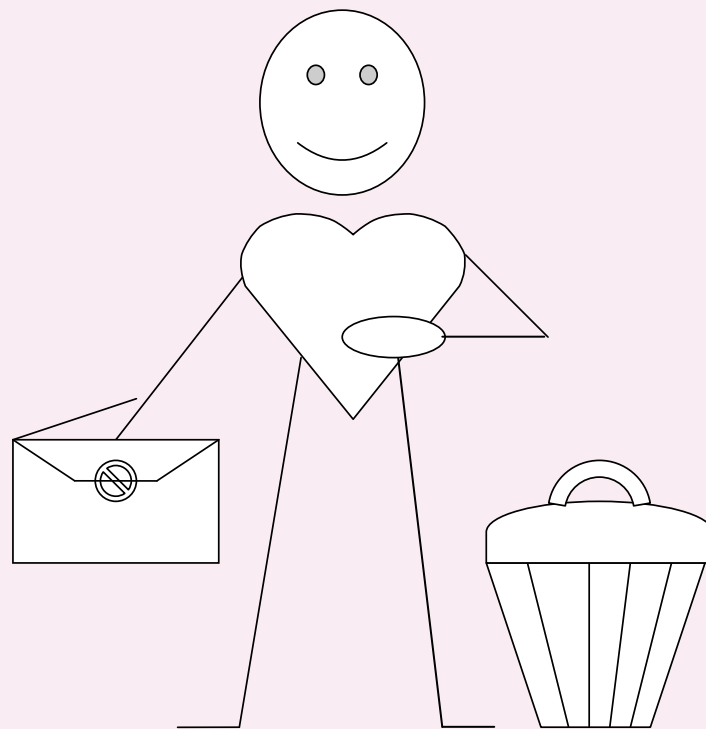
This asks for four things – **HEAD, HEART, BAG** and **BIN**

HEAD: What have you learnt? (One post it per learning)

HEART: Where were you moved, what attitude or perception has changed?

BAG: What learning are you going to take and use?

BIN: What things will not be used in your daily life?



This can be an easy checklist for future evaluations especially in developing relationship and a growing exchange programme.

How will we share what we have learnt?

- ◆ Tell the stories and sing the songs in Church.
- ◆ Plan to put into practise one thing we have learnt.
- ◆ Meet with the local Councillor, MSP and MP?
- ◆ Ask to speak to local Schools
- ◆ Write a song
- ◆ Make a Collage
- ◆ Put on an exhibition in a local shop
- ◆ Tell my family and friends
- ◆ Contact the local Media with my stories (see page 28)

Stories from Provanmill and from Ruchazie

Listening to the groups from Provanmill and from Ruchazie would both inspire and reassure any who have doubts about this venture.

"We are both gaining and strengthening our own communities; both Baula and Ruchazie are benefiting. As the development worker, I can see the benefits since being in Baula and it's about learning to think differently – that we can achieve – giving ourselves affirmation. I do this and pass it on to other members of the community. They (the Malawians) bring such a spiritual presence in their singing and in their dancing and the whole community have been in to see them. The strength of faith in our community has quadrupled- really really grown and the kids are not afraid to say they believe in God.We might not be able to evaluate great big money making schemes but community involvement and faith is what they have brought us. I think personally that is priceless."

"It has brought out a generosity in people that has made us proud ... people in the community feel it is theirs (the link), they feel they have a stake in it and want to know about it'

"People who have come in touch with them have said 'if they can be happy with nothing why can I not be?'

"We went away for a weekend together where families hosted us and we brought in musicians to work with us. It was a time of true sharing of feelings and learning about each others' lives yet it was very relaxed and we just seem to get on well together"

"I wasn't racist before these exchanges began but I would say I was ignorant. I'd never met a black person before and it never crossed my mind to speak to the newcomers to the community or to think about why they were here, was it voluntary or forced. That's all changed now and it's not only me it's changed, it's affected the whole community' because you start telling the stories first to your family then your friends and the word just spreads."

Speaking to the Media

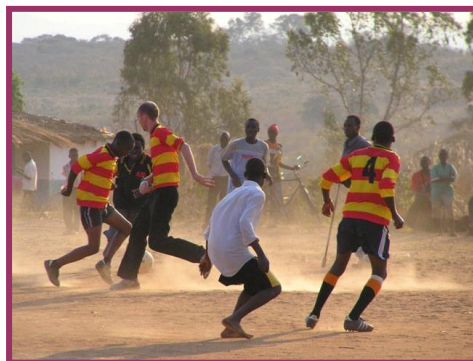
Your story is interesting. Let people know. Having deep connections such as you will be developing with another country is interesting on many levels. You won't get your visits on the BBC but there are many other outlets.

Local Radio

If you are lucky enough to have a small local radio, e.g. Sunny Govan, then you should be able to get endless cover of your visits. Otherwise you should be able to get some cover on a bigger radio station, e.g. Forth FM or Radio Clyde. Think about all the angles to pitch your story at. Is there a religious programme? Is there a current affairs chat show? Are there youth programmes? If all else fails try the news desk then make your first contact by phone. Ask to speak to a researcher for that programme or the producer.

Be clear about what you want them to know. The 5 W's is a good rule here and for all media:

- ◆ **What** is happening?
- ◆ **When** is it happening?
- ◆ **Where** is it happening?
- ◆ **Why** is it happening?
- ◆ **Who** is taking part?



Have a prepared crib sheet with that information on it so that you don't forget when you phone them up. If they show some interest say that you will follow up your conversation with a press release. That sounds grandiose. All that means is giving them the information you have spoken about on the phone on paper – the 5Ws in the first paragraph and any further information in a second or third paragraph. One side of A4 paper is plenty. Make sure you have a contact name and phone number on the bottom.



Contact with radio may have several outcomes:

- ◆ Events you are having may be advertised
- ◆ Someone from your host group might be interviewed
- ◆ One of your visitors may be asked into the studio
- ◆ If you have a really unusual event happening the radio station might send out a reporter but you would really have struck it lucky if that happened.

Ensure that any spokesperson is well briefed, knows the history of the connection and the purpose of the link. If someone is called into the studio and has not done this before it is worth having a dummy run just to get in some practice and calm the nerves.

Local newspaper

Tell them your visitors are coming the week before they arrive but beef up the local bit. Send a press release e.g. 'Children in Drumchapel learning extra foreign language'. All that means is that the children in the church have learned to say 'good morning' and 'please' and 'thank you' in the language of their visitors but it makes it sound interesting. Send it to the news desk and then

follow it up with a phone call. This is really important as papers get dozens of bits of information and many just end up in an in basket. Check with your local paper how they like to receive information. Most now want e-mail but there are a few who still prefer a fax. Phone up the switchboard and ask for the name of the person on the news desk so that your information is going to a named person.



Try and get the information about your visitors arriving into the local paper the week before they arrive and then once they arrive invite a photographer from the paper up to photograph them being met or at their first meal in the church or whatever. Contact the photo desk separately.

Website

Make sure your church website is kept really up to date on everything that is happening in terms of preparation for the visit and then when your visitors come have one person whose job it is to update the website daily with what has happened and what is coming up. Add a link to the local churches together website or other appropriate networks.

Twitter

This might be a way of keeping some of your young people engaged with what's going on. Nominate someone to be your main Tweeter (is that the word) to get other people to follow the activities of your visitors and especially give information about public events.



Facebook

You might want to set up a special Facebook page with information about your visitors to keep those involved up to date. This would probably not be a public page but would help keep those involved up to date.

Church newsletter

This goes without saying but it is important to keep your congregations as informed as possible so start providing information as early as possible.

Photographs

A good bank of photographs will always be useful. For example if you're local newspaper won't send out a photographer send in some good photos of your own.



Appendix

Appendix 1

Exercise 1: Suggested Sentences for 'A Conversation Starter' from page 9

I want to learn about another culture

I want to make friends with someone from another culture

I'd like the chance to travel

I'd like to learn how others live and work

I'd like to learn how they deal with being poor

I've heard that they have lively worship

I hope to learn some new skills

I think it may increase my self confidence

I think it would be good for our community

Appendix 2

A sample Partnership Agreement

Partnership Agreement

Between And

These are the values we share:

This is the purpose of our link

People and responsibilities

Link steering group:

Group a

Group b

Link Co-ordinators are:

Group a

Group b

Signed:

Appendix 3

A sample Application Form

(Reprinted with permission from Liz McCoy, St Pauls Provanmill)

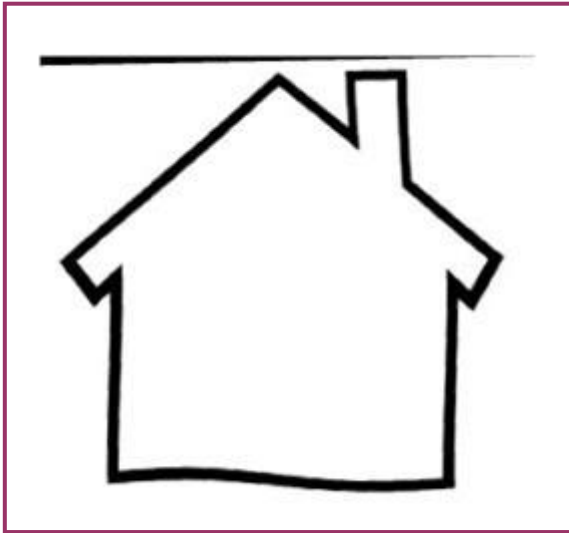
Together for a change		
Photo (which can be taken later)	Name:	Age:
	Male/ Female:	Any special diet needs?
	Any special medical needs or disability?	
Please tell us of your religious interest and practice (so that we can arrange for you to attend church of mosque if you wish):		
Tell us about your interests and hobbies:		
Tell us about your life in Scotland:		
How did you get involved in Together for a change?		
What do you hope to achieve through the Together for a Change project?		
Is there anything special you would like to see on the exchange visit?		
We would like to take pictures and make a DVD of the group in (add name of country); please sign below if you give permission to be photographed.		
Signature:		
Please return to <i>Name and email xxx@ xxx</i>		

Appendix 4

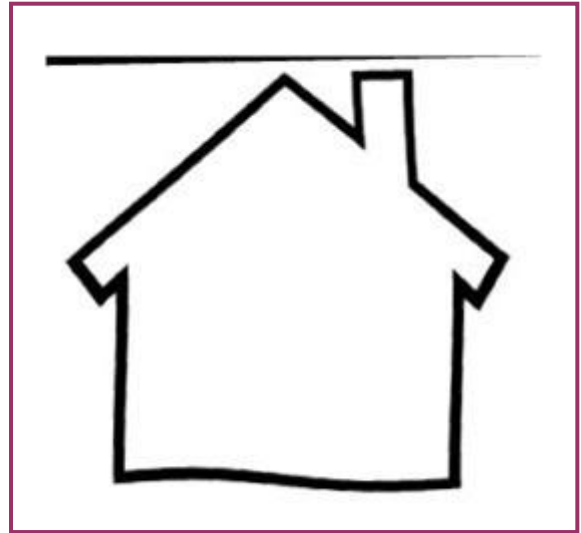
Exercises for both communities to prepare and share:

A. Where I live

I (we) like...



I (we) don't like....



What other people say about (good)



What other people say about (bad)



Appendix 4

Exercises for both communities to prepare and share:

B. Local area audit

Local Characteristics	Positive (+)	Negative (-)

On balance, what is it like to live here?

Appendix 5

Together for a Change Programme: Issues we are looking at:

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
				Visitors Flight leaves	Flight arrives at ? x and y to meet and take to homes	11am worship at ? Welcome lunch Tour of city/ boat trip 6pm meal at church Intro to area
				x prepare a soup and pie for lunch x and y prepare evening meal		
Meet at church at 9.00 and walk to local centre Lunch at ? Afternoon visit 6pm meal at church Getting to know you	Meet at church Visit x Lunch at ? Afternoon visit Meal at church Time for reflection	Rest morning Visit to Lord provost Lunch at ? Afternoon talk/visit Meal at church	Visit to local schools (Primary and secondary) Afternoon sightseeing Meal at church Talk from local leader	Morning visit Lunch at church Afternoon visit Travelling to x for weekend	Programme with artist/ musicians/ Seeing the countryside Ceilidh	Worship at local church Lunch Travelling back to hosts
Mon – x and y will accompany to centre. Open to all x will drive group to y x and y will prepare meals at church each day (needs rota) x will check with schools x will ensure transport is organized An opportunity for African food?						

Also: Might you include work placements for a couple of days?

Might you take the groups away for a weekend with a planned programme of both fun and more serious conversations?

Appendix 6

The Ultimate Checklist

A year before

- ◆ Choosing the group
 - How have others done it?
 - Calling a meeting?
- ◆ Contacting World Mission and Priority Areas Team
- ◆ Leaders choosing community activists
 - What criteria?
 - An application form?

Four months before

- ◆ Passports up to date?
- ◆ Visas applied for?
- ◆ Inoculations?
- ◆ Getting to know you games and activities (for the group)
- ◆ Do a community audit (See Appendix 4 on page 35)

Three months before

- ◆ Start gathering stories about our community
- ◆ Start telling the local groups about your trip

One month to go

- ◆ Has everyone got regular medication in stock?
- ◆ Pictures of their family?
- ◆ A group medical kit?
- ◆ A contact list of family at home?
- ◆ Organised a telephone contact in host country?

Appendix 7

Useful Websites

www.dfid.org.uk - Quick updates on countries but very useful support and possible finance for local groups as well as regular newsletters on linking

www.ukowla.org.uk - A comprehensive guide to the issues around linking

www.globalfootprints.org/issues - Good for quick updates on global issues such as food, water, debt, trade

www.fairtrade.org.uk - For all fair trade goods but also a series of you tube clips which might include your country

www.christian-aid.org - The church's official agency with lots of ideas and information on countries, education and campaigning.

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/together/index.htm - Information on the background to the project and regular updates.

<http://activecitizens.britishcouncil.org/> - You will need to register to be able to access updates, stories, tools for linking as well as possible funding streams.



Together for a Change is supported by the Church of Scotland Priority Areas Committee and the Church of Scotland World Mission Council

