



Preparing Your Church for STM Teams - Marc & Lisa Honorat

Marc and Lisa Honorat, founders of Haiti ARISE Ministries, started in 2003 in Haiti with the goal of raising godly leaders through spiritual and practical education. We have been involved in missions since 1996 and have hosted hundreds of teams and individuals on short, mid and long-term missions.

Today, we would like to talk to you about refocusing your church's mission to fulfill this calling in a changing world & challenging time and help you know how to prepare your church to be successful in your missions pursuit.

What is Missions?

An important assignment carried out, typically involving travel. A missionary is an ambassador, a representative, a "sent-one".

A missionary is simply a person or group who uses their abilities for others in another culture, whether that is far or near. **Genesis 12**

How Does Missions Address Needs?

1. **Poverty:**

To be lacking physically, emotionally, economically, or spiritually.

In seeking to address poverty, there are **three** methods or stages that we see modelled in the Bible. These have become the framework for missions & humanitarian groups.

2. **Relief:** Meets the immediate needs, stops the bleeding, does for someone what they cannot do for themselves. (Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37)
3. **Rehabilitation:** Once the bleeding has stopped, helping someone get on their own two feet. It's a collaborative effort walking alongside someone. (Paul's blindness & Ananias' prayer in Acts 9:10-19)
4. **Development:** Moves people into right relationship, with God, one another and their community, creating environments moving forward to a better life and there becomes a mutual benefit in relationship to both the helper and the helped. (The believers together in Acts 2:44-45)

Why are you going? What's your motive?

1. **Feelings, Guilt, 'The Right Thing' Motive**

Feelings change.

One-off giving & stuff may appease guilt but it's not missions.

Obligation to obedience alone will be ineffective.

2. Love, Passion & Compassion

"God **SO loved the world**, that He gave."

Jesus had a passion for the people >> led Him to show compassion. He shared who He was, He had inside of Him and He met their needs in love.

What can you Expect?

There is a transforming work that happens in the lives of churches and individuals when they answer the call to missions. (Testimonies)

How do we do it?

When we are well prepared we can have a greater impact on the world and you will see the life of your church people transformed. We will know what we can learn, give and receive through knowing the cultural context, deposit and exchange ahead of time.

We can apply the **5R's**.

1. Represent:

- a. Partner with a ministry local ministry and support their efforts to build the local church, the community & the country.
- b. Ask questions about their mission, vision and values to ensure they line up with yours.
- c. Seek a reputable partner that you've seen firsthand, or someone in your church has already visited. Get references.

2. Ready:

- a. Go a vision trip with a small group of core leaders first.
- b. Select an administrative team leader (not the senior pastor).
- c. Gather required information from host partner; applications, budgets, deposits for flights and expenses, policies and waivers, what is required for visas, passports, and disease prevention.
- d. Fundraise as a team for your team's project and budget.
- e. Plan a packing party close to the departure date.

3. Remember:

- a. The true purpose of missions is this message of reconciliation.
- b. Remember what Christ did in His mission and how He did it. He did not do it alone.
- c. Build your teams with individuals that have this goal and motive of love & build an application process for teams with a selection criteria.
 - ◆ Proven Character
 - ◆ Willingness & humility to learn
 - ◆ Skills & Talents

4. **Recognize:**

- a. Recognize our own poverty, our need for God & find common ground with those we are going to minister. Build bridges through commonalities that will open the door to share Jesus' love with them.
- b. Team training in cross-cultural interactions.
- c. Use an STM training program or organization. 3-6 months ahead of the trip, at least once a month or bi-weekly for the first # of months, then weekly the month leading up to the trip. (*Haiti ARISE partners with Hungry for Life and STM Network & STM Leader for this purpose.*)
- d. Team building exercises, sharing testimonies, prepare ministry activities.
- e. Each member prepare themselves spiritually.

5. **Relationship:**

- a. Build authentic life-long connections with & through your partner.
- b. Inspire healthy relationships with the organization, church and individuals by establishing healthy goals, expectations and boundaries.
- c. Follow-up after your trip with evaluations, debriefings and open dialogue with your team members and your host partner.
- d. Keep the momentum going.
- e. Have a plan for conflict resolution. Every relationship will face conflict. (*come hear more @ Pastor Jim Reimer's workshop - When the Unexpected Happens*)

As a ministry that hosts 2-4 teams a month, we see and experience this often and have sought to help train teams ahead of time to prepare them for their mission. Our #1 goal in having mission teams come is long-term relationship; mutual learning and transformation.

An example of one policy we encourage: **No Cameras, No Money, No Stuff**

1. **No Cameras:** When you take pictures randomly, it changes the way people behave and how you see them. We usually are drawn to take pictures of the poverty and the worst, rather than the beauty of the country and people we go to serve. It's like media exploitation, or what some call "poverty porn". Sounds shockingly harsh, but think about it. It's exploiting the poor for pity. We also limit our experience when it's always behind the face of a camera, cause people don't act the same and we miss out on the moment - We ask our teams to not take pictures unless to celebrate advances, victories, relationships & beauty. How would you feel if a tourist who had no interest in you personally walked up and asked to take your picture?
2. **No Money:** Money changes the motive. What if you did not have the money in your pocket? When we rush to meet what we perceive as an immediate need, we are often only creating an unhealthy dependency rather than inspiring their own ability and creativity. We do not allow any of our team members to directly give money to locals. We ask that all money goes through the ministry and programs we have set out to serve the community. Their trip is not about the one individual they meet, it's about the

transformation of the community as a whole. Every member should put their efforts into supporting the ministry that is there long-term and knows the actual needs of the people.

Ex. first trip to Haiti/ asking for \$ for cell phones

3. **No Stuff:** Don't focus on taking stuff unless your host asks you to bring specific things they need and even then, they should go towards supporting the ministry projects and programs. Look at the big picture rather than just appeasing your own need to stroke your ego and feel good about handing stuff out. It is far more advancing to meet the larger need of the ministry serving the area long-term and help in development, rather than trying to hand out stuff in the moment. Would it change the way you relate to the people you talk to if it isn't about stuff? **Ex. soccer balls/ goats**

We have a webpage to share with you of resources that may help your church kick-start your missions, or go farther in your team preparations and planning. You are welcome to use the resources, copy them, change the names and make them your own.

Team Preparation Resources:

<https://www.haitiarise.org/teaminfo>