



# Student Handbook for Global Engagement

---

Written for and by students from the University of  
Michigan with the support of the Center for Global Health

Science in service of global health equity

“The University of Michigan has a legacy of tackling critical health issues through research and action. Students are a vital part of this history, as leaders and participants in important global health research and service projects around the world. This Student Handbook represents over a year of collaborative work between U-M students across disciplines. With the support and encouragement of the Center for Global Health, every stage in the development of this resource was led by students - from the identification needs to the drafting of content. The Center is proud to have fostered this interdisciplinary collaboration between its Student Associates and other students across campus.

On behalf of the Center for Global Health, I enthusiastically endorse this Student Handbook as a valuable guide for all students interested and engaged in global health.”

**Sofia Merajver, MD, PhD, Director, Center for Global Health**  
Professor of Internal Medicine  
Scientific Director, Breast Oncology Program  
Director, Breast and Ovarian Cancer  
Risk Evaluation Program  
University of Michigan

“Authentic engagement in global health requires a new understanding of the role of students from high-income countries. Beyond dualistic thinking or paternalistic approaches that have sometime been termed “neocolonialism”, the new model of global engagement is a co-creative one in which health priority setting and problem solving are accomplished collaboratively. This manual is an active creation of highly motivated students who are helping to define new ways of working abroad. We encourage you to become conduits of this energy and evoke this new era in authentic global engagement.”

**Frank J. Anderson MD MPH**  
University of Michigan OB GYN  
Faculty Associate, Center for Global Health  
Faculty Mentor, Standards for Global Engagement Committee

“The fact that this document was prepared *by* students *for* students is one of its greatest strengths. Challenges and suggestions are laid out in a clear manner, keeping in mind the limitations of student work and resources. This is a great starting point and reference for students to consult throughout their research and learning endeavors.”

**Hasan Siddiqi, MD Program**  
University of Michigan Medical School  
Student Associate, Center for Global Health

## Contributors

Approximately forty University of Michigan students - representing most of its schools and colleges - participated in the development of this handbook. Group leaders and key writers are shown in **bold**, Associates of the Center for Global Health are noted with an asterisk (\*).

**\*Kathleen F. Bush**, Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Christopher Glen**, Philosophy, College of Literature, Science & the Arts (LS&A)

**\*Julie Maslowsky**, Developmental Psychology, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Annie Mitsak**, Biomedical Engineering, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Sujal Parikh**, Medical School

**\*Carrie Rheingans**, Health Behavior & Health Education, School of Public Health and  
Community Organization, School of Social Work

Andrew Admon, Medical School

**\*Brigitte Bulcholtz**, Microbiology, College of Literature, Science & the Arts (LS&A)

**\*Viktor Burlaka**, Social Work/Clinical Psychology, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Sirui Cao**, Epidemiology, School of Public Health

Maureen Connelly, School of Law

Arun Hariharan, Molecular, Cellular, & Developmental Biology, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Alexander Harrington**, Sociology, College of Literature, Science & the Arts (LS&A)

**\*Annalies Heinrichs**, Medical School

Janaiya Johnson, Health Behavior & Health Education, School of Public Health

**\*Jaqueline Levene**, English, College of Literature, Science & the Arts (LS&A)

**\*Ruti Levto**, Health Behavior & Health Education, School of Public Health

Ian May, Medical School

**\*Joey McCoy**, General Studies, College of Literature, Science & the Arts (LS&A)

Peggy McLaughlin, Nursing, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Massy Mutumba**, Health Behavior & Health Education, School of Public Health

**\*Nyia Noel**, Medical School and School of Public Health

Folasade Odeniyi, Health Behavior & Health Education, School of Public Health

**\*Phallon Officer-Treece**, Public Administration, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Linda Okoth**, Epidemiology, School of Public Health

Sonali Palchaudhuri, Medical School

**\*Joseph Perosky**, Biomedical Engineering, Rackham Graduate School

**\*John Prensner**, Medical School and Medical Scientist Training Program, Rackham

**\*Mekhala Reghavan**, Biomedical Engineering, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Hasan Siddiqi**, Medical School

**\*Jacqueline Smith**, Health Behavior & Health Education, School of Public Health

Alexandra Sova, Political Science, College of Literature, Science & the Arts (LS&A)

**\*Jason Smoot**, School of Public Policy

**\*Amy Starke**, School of Nursing

**\*Will Story**, Health Service, Organization & Policy, Rackham Graduate School

**\*Joanna Tatomir**, Anthropology, Rackham Graduate School and School of Public Health

**\*Alice Zheng**, Medical School

**\*Faculty Mentor**, Frank Anderson, MD, MPH, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Medical School  
Center for Global Health staff, Heather Lutz and Kate Restruck

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>License, Adaptations, and Redistribution</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Ethics of Research Abroad</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Introduction	6
1.2 Defining Purpose, Capabilities, and Limitations	6
1.3 Reciprocity	7
1.4 High Impact Projects	7
1.5 Local Organization Involvement	8
1.6 Cultural Competency	9
1.7 Sustainability	9
1.8 Institutional Review Board Approval	9
1.9 Application and Dissemination of Research Findings	10
1.10 Resources	11
<b>Chapter 2. Project Development with International Partners</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Planning Stage	13
2.3 Design Stage	15
2.4 Implementation Stage	16
2.5 Dissemination Stage	17
2.6 Evaluation Stage	18
2.7 Resources	19

<b>Chapter 3. Guidelines for Professional Behavior Abroad</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1 Introduction	20
3.2 Competence	20
3.3 Confidentiality	20
3.4 Collaboration	21
3.5 Cultural Sensitivity	22
3.6 Personal Time	23
<b>Chapter 4. Global Citizenship and Advocacy</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 Introduction	24
4.2 Global Citizenship: A Conceptual Overview	24
4.3 Advocacy and Stakeholders	25
4.4 Engaging with Governments and Community Organizations	26
4.5 Engaging with Non-Governmental Stakeholders	27
4.6 Engaging with Academia and the Campus Community	28
4.7 Engaging with the Public	28
4.8 Considerations for Social Media Use	29
4.9 Resources	29
<b>Chapter 5. Logistics of Research and Service Abroad</b>	<b>30</b>
5.1 Introduction	30
5.2 Travel Arrangements	30
5.3 Safety	32
5.4 Language	32
5.5 Health	33
5.6 Housing	36
5.7 Communication with Family and Friends While Abroad	36
5.8 Money Issues	38
5.9 Funding for the Experience	39



# Student Handbook for Global Engagement

## Introduction

Traveling abroad for research or service is an exciting undertaking, but it can also be very challenging; there is so much to think about! Designing an effective, relevant and ethical project, working effectively with international partners, and disseminating a useful product are just a few of the important issues that students will encounter as they plan their work abroad. In this document, University of Michigan students who have experience doing research and service abroad have compiled recommendations and resources in five major areas: *Ethics of Research Abroad*, *Project Development with International Partners*, *Guidelines for Professional Behavior Abroad*, *Global Citizenship and Advocacy*, and *Logistics of Research and Service Abroad*. Our intent is to offer a roadmap for planning projects abroad, with advice on multiple levels – from the logistics of paying for your trip and staying safe, to broader issues such as ethics and sustainability.

In *Ethics of Research Abroad*, we introduce the primary ethical considerations that students should address when planning and implementing their projects. In *Project Development with International Partners*, we discuss the five major phases of a project – planning, designing implementation, dissemination, and evaluation – and offer concrete suggestions on how to proceed through each step. In *Guidelines for Professional Behavior Abroad*, we provide guidelines on important aspects of professional behavior abroad: collaboration, communication, cultural sensitivity, and confidentiality. In *Global Citizenship and Advocacy*, we examine the broader context of working abroad: the global flows of influence and capital and how one can engage appropriately as a global citizen. In *Logistics of Research and Service Abroad*, we address the many logistical questions that arise when preparing to work abroad including health, safety, language, travel, and other important areas.

We hope that students who are planning a research or service trip abroad will consult this document early in the process of planning their trips in order to get an overview of the many issues important to a successful trip. We hope that this guide, specifically the *Project Development with International Partners* and *Guidelines for Professional Behavior Abroad* chapters, can continue to be a resource during the implementation of your project and the dissemination of its results. And finally, we hope that students will contribute their knowledge to future versions of this document in order to help it be as useful as possible to all students engaged in international projects.

## License, Adaptations, and Redistribution

This document is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/us/>). This license lets others modify and build upon our work, as long as they cite this document and license their new creations under identical terms and for noncommercial purposes.

We chose to use a Creative Commons License rather than copyrighting our work because we believe that the free flow of information enhances collaboration and that unnecessary restrictions on the use of content hamper innovation. This is particularly poignant for our colleagues in resource-poor settings in the U.S. and around the world. Often, they are unable to access the most reliable health information and research available because of copyright restrictions and payment requirements. By using a Creative Commons License, we hope to contribute to the growing movement of students, researchers, publishers, and policy-makers seeking to expand access to information and knowledge.

Additionally, because numerous students have contributed to this guide over the course of this year, and many more will be contributing in the future, we believe that a Creative Commons License is consistent with the spirit of the voluntary nature of their work.

We encourage students and faculty at schools around the world to adapt and improve upon our work. We ask that they, as a matter of courtesy, inform the University of Michigan Center for Global Health about these adaptations so that we can learn from others as we continue to address critical health issues through research and action.

### For More Information, Adaptations, and Redistribution

Contact: [cghprograms@umich.edu](mailto:cghprograms@umich.edu)



#### Attribution Non-Commercial Share Alike *cc by-nc-sa*

This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon this work non-commercially, as long as they credit the authors and license their new creations under identical terms. Others can download and redistribute this work just like the by-nc-nd (attribution non-commercial no derivative works) license, but they can also translate, make remixes, and produce new stories based on this work. All new work based on this work will carry the same license, so any derivatives will also be non-commercial in nature.

For more information on Creative Commons licenses, go to <http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses>



# Chapter 1

## Ethics of Research Abroad

### 1.1 Introduction

Performing research or service abroad is ethically complex. Even with the best of intentions, it is possible to inadvertently do harm if you are not careful to examine all relevant ethical considerations when planning and implementing a project and when disseminating its results.

This section focuses on eight areas of particular importance when considering the ethical aspects of an international research or intervention project: intent; reciprocity and balance of gain; high impact interventions; local organization involvement; cultural competency; sustainability; IRB involvement; and the application and implementation of research findings. We discuss the primary ethical considerations involved in each phase of the project. At the end of the section, we provide resources for further reading in several of these areas.

It is important to note that this chapter is not intended to give specific guidance on ethical project design. Instead, it is intended to introduce you to broad ethical principles that are important and valuable components of all international work. You are then directed to later chapters in this document to gain specific tips on *how* to ensure your projects are ethically sound.

### 1.2 Defining Purpose, Capabilities, and Limitations

From the onset of any research or service project abroad, it is important to clearly communicate your project's purpose as well as your capabilities and limitations or those of your organization. Without a clear understanding of the purpose and capacity of the project, there may be misunderstandings between you and the people with whom you work while abroad.

*Have a clear plan of the project and its scope from the outset.*

- Share the plan with local collaborators. They should have a clear understanding of exactly what will be done during the course of the project, specifically, what questions will be asked or what services will be provided. Local collaborators will not be able to collaborate effectively on the project if they do not have a clear understanding of its purpose. Ideally, these local collaborators will be involved in the project from inception through implementation, as discussed below.

*Know what you are capable of doing and how much you can afford to do.*

- Honest misunderstandings and false hopes may result if the people with whom you work are expecting you to produce a bigger project than you are capable of producing. Local collaborators should know how many people can be included in the research study or how many people can be served by the program, so that they do not expect more than what you can provide.

*Know your limitations.*

- Knowing what you cannot do is as important as knowing what you can do. Local collaborators or participants may view you as an expert in areas in which you have little experience. It is your responsibility to clarify your areas of expertise and areas in which you are not an expert. For more see Chapter 3, *Guidelines for Professional Behavior*.



*Do not make promises that you cannot keep.*

- When working in another country, it is common to feel that there is so much more that needs to be done beyond your particular research or service project. You may be tempted to offer to do more, either now or in the future. However, resist making promises if you do not know for sure that you will be able to keep them. Local people may develop false hopes, or they may count on you for services you cannot provide. It is important to maintain an open and transparent relationship with the target community for the sake of your own project and the sake of those who will work in the community after you.

### 1.3 Reciprocity

Research conducted abroad is often not fair in its distribution of burdens and benefits between the researcher and the host community, at times compromising the welfare of local researchers, community members, research participants, and anyone else who may be impacted by either the process or results of the work. Your research should neither disproportionately benefit your own interests nor create a disproportionate burden for members of the host community. Prior to the beginning of any research endeavor, the demands of your project on people and resources should be carefully examined and weighed against the potential benefits of the research to the members of the host community.

*Limit the burden of research on a host community.*

- Research may unintentionally impose burdens upon the host community. Projects may require local residents and staff to dedicate economic resources or time that could be better used elsewhere. Additionally, demands placed on the local infrastructure by research projects can have negative effects on the target community.
- Avoid taking away resources and personnel from existing projects of local importance.
- Consider the following questions before embarking on an international research project: Will a project erode the trust between local community members and local hospitals or academic institutions? Will services provided as part of the study replicate and potentially compete with services provided by community institutions? If the answer is 'yes,' you should reconsider the worth of the overall project.

*Attempt to maximize potential benefits to the host community.*

- Research should be designed with the host community as the primary beneficiary.
- Collaboration should begin in the planning stages of a project in order to ensure that an issue of interest to the researcher is also one identified as important by the community.
- Collaboration should continue throughout the analysis portion of any project as well, with local collaborators remaining involved in the interpretation of data and serving as coauthors of any papers stemming from the work.
- When determining the ordering of authors, particular consideration should be given to unique contributions made by local co-authors. At times these contributions may be intangible, yet still have great importance in the final product. For further information on dissemination of research results see Chapter 2, *Project Development with International Partners*.

### 1.4 High Impact Projects

Research or service projects abroad should seek to exert the greatest possible positive impact on the local community, the scientific community, and/or the global community.

*Attempt to seek partnerships with existing projects.*

- Avoid conducting research that is only beneficial to the scientific community in developed countries. Research partners in target countries should not be subordinate to researchers from developed countries.
- Seek to form partnerships with already-existing projects in target countries. This can ensure cultural sensitivity is upheld, help to develop relationships with policy makers in the target country, and build trust and camaraderie that is necessary for long-term research partnerships.

*Attempt to increase impact-to-resource ratio.*

- Design projects and interventions that are sustainable in target communities. Always ask the question, *After my time in this area is complete, will a local individual or group be able to take over my project using only local resources?*

*Consider the multiple sides of burden.*

- Always remain vigilant of personal abilities and avoid committing to tasks that require intensive training or supervision from local practitioners.
- Be mindful of the adverse social consequences that can result from certain forms of data collection such as disease reporting and contact tracing; avoid creating broad categories of ‘at risk’ groups in community health interventions. This can include, for example, partaking in public activities that label individuals as ‘infected’ with a culturally stigmatized disease.

*Give adequate thought to cost-benefit considerations.*

- Ideally, students will commit to a project length of at least one month, as it is often difficult to make a sufficiently large impact with projects of a shorter duration.
- If a cost-benefit analysis reveals project inefficiencies, it might be best to abstain from committing to the project in hopes that another researcher or practitioner will better utilize available resources.

## 1.5 Local Organization Involvement

Any effort to engage in responsible research abroad requires partnership with local organizations or individuals. Regardless of your best intentions, your desire as an investigator to move forward with projects can inadvertently create risk for acting in ways that are disrespectful to the group of people from which you are hoping to learn. Local partners can help guide you in our research efforts while helping you avoid the various mistakes that can be made by researchers working abroad.

*Establish contact with local partners as your first step in formulating your research project.*

- Bringing local individuals on board as early as possible helps to ensure that projects are culturally appropriate and that they address a question that is relevant to the lives of those in the host community.

*Approach local partners during the early planning stages in order to develop a truly collaborative relationship.*

- Waiting until a detailed research question and protocol are fully formulated before asking for input sets up the dynamic of “them” as the host community members working for “us” as the foreign investigators on our own pre-conceived project.

*Develop a documented partnership with local individuals or organizations in order to promote collaborative values at your institution.*

- While making contact with individuals or groups in a given community and engaging with them in the research planning process may be difficult, it is your responsibility as a foreign researcher to give priority to the development of these relationships.
- By creating an institutional culture that emphasizes the importance of local partnership in research abroad, the University of Michigan and other institutions can ensure that all researchers engage responsibly with host communities, ultimately allowing for more collaborative and successful projects.

## 1.6 Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is the ability to interact with people of different cultures. In any health care setting, cultural competency specifically refers to awareness of the regional specificities present in the area serviced by the organization or clinic with whom a researcher will be working. Such competency suggests that the student is conscious of the region's unique cultural, economic, political, and historical attributes. It does not necessarily require expertise.

*The importance of cultural competency*

- There are many challenges to performing research or service in the global arena. When entering an unfamiliar setting, it is essential that you enter as enlightened as possible with respect to the region's sociocultural, historical, and political environment.
- Background knowledge eases transition into a new community. Sensitivity to regional customs and manners helps convey sincere interest in community members and ensures that research is appropriate, respectful, and applicable.
- Suggestions for how to implement principles of cultural competency in student projects are discussed in Chapter 4, *Global Citizenship and Advocacy*.

## 1.7 Sustainability

An ethical project is one that does not create a need or burden that did not exist before the project began and avoids exerting new stress on existing local resources during the process of implementation. In other words, ethical projects are *sustainable*.

*The two broad types of sustainability:*

- Fiscal sustainability of operations. At the start, the leader of a research or service project may be particularly concerned with fiscal sustainability: Are there enough resources and funding to keep the project going?
- "Putting oneself out of business." This more advanced conceptualization of sustainability means implementing a research or service project so effectively that it no longer needs your input or support or can be sustained by local people without outside assistance.

All research and service projects abroad should be designed and implemented with principles of sustainability in mind. Guidelines on how to implement sustainable student projects can be found in Chapter 2, *Project Development with International Partners*.

## 1.8 Institutional Review Board Approval

Institutional Review Boards (IRB) were instituted to serve as a mechanism to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in biomedical and behavioral research. Every research study requires IRB approval prior to commencement. The conditions for ethical approval are more stringent for research studies in vulnerable populations such as children, incarcerated persons, pregnant women, and persons with impaired decisional capacity as well as conditions that are stigmatizing such as HIV.

More details and specific tips on applying for IRB approval can be found in Chapter 2, *Project Development with International Partners*.

## 1.9 Application and Dissemination of Research Findings

It is important to consider how study results will be communicated not only to the scientific community, but also to the members of the community where the research was completed.

### *Questions to consider when thinking about dissemination of research findings*

- What is the purpose of this research study? Some research is directly applicable in real world settings, while other research is undertaken to advance basic scientific knowledge. While both types of research can be valuable, it is important to think through the specific contributions your project may make, weighing them against the potential your project has for imposing unfair burdens on participants who may not benefit from the research.
- What contribution will this research study make to the already existing body of knowledge related to this field?

### *Involving the community in dissemination of findings*

- Findings from research or service projects should be shared with the local community so that they can benefit directly from the work that the student has done. Students should disseminate their products and results to study participants or their community as applicable as well as to relevant persons or organizations that may benefit from this knowledge and be able to apply it in the future.

More details and specific tips on disseminating the results of research and service projects can be found in Chapter 2, *Project Development with International Partners*.

## 1.10 Resources

### Cultural Competency

<http://www.uniteforsight.org/cultural-competency/>

Unite for Site has an online learning module on cultural competency in the international and clinical setting. This online module is free and open to all and is designed to help individuals better understand their impact on the communities in which they work.

<http://www.globalforumhealth.org/>

An integrative tool that can be used to identify and remove biases in health research that derive from any social hierarchy.

*The BIAS FREE Framework: A practical tool for identifying and eliminating social biases in health research* (Global Forum for Health Research, 2006).

<http://www.nationmaster.com>

Website containing detailed information on all matter of country specific information. Students can create their own data sets to learn important cultural, geographic, and demographic information.

Fadiman, A. (1998). *The spirit catches you and you fall down*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Alvort, L. (2000). *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear: The First Navajo Woman Surgeon Combines Western Medicine and Traditional Healing*. New York: Bantam.

Farmer, P. (2006). *AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dettwyler, K. (1993). *Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Ashforth, A. (2005) *Madumo, a Man Bewitched*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### High Impact Interventions

Pinto, A. D. & Upshur, R. E.G. (2009). Global health ethics for students. *Developing World Bioethics* (9): 1-10.

### Institutional Review Board (IRB)

<http://med.umich.edu/irbmed/index.htm>

Website of the IRB at the University of Michigan.

<http://my.research.umich.edu/peerrs/>

Online educational tool for research ethics required by University of Michigan for all researchers.

[http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/irb/irb\\_introduction.htm#b3](http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/irb/irb_introduction.htm#b3)

Institutional Review boards: A guide book

# Chapter 2

## Project Development with International Partners

### 2.1 Introduction

This section includes guiding principles, best practices, and issues to consider when developing projects with international partners. It is organized into sections pertaining to the different stages of a project - planning, designing, implementation, and evaluation. Although the organization appears to be linear, please realize that the design process will be an iterative process where feedback at each step is used to make improvements in the design and design process. Emphasis is placed not only on the final product but also on the process of creation itself. The process starts with identifying appropriate partners who are positively integrated in the community. From here, explicit long-term goals and a timeline and process for achieving these goals can then be decided upon. It is implied throughout this chapter that any and all projects - research, internships, and others - undertaken by students should follow certain ethical guidelines. See Chapter 1, *Ethics of Research Abroad*, for more information.

Since this document is meant for individuals from a variety of disciplines, it is imperative to begin by defining some terms that may take different meanings depending on the origin of the project and its founders.

A *design* can encompass the following:

- Technology (e.g. device or "thing", software, consumable good)
- Process/system/service (e.g. a way to distribute a good)
- Program/platform (e.g. educational or training program)
- Any combination of the above

*Designers* can mean:

- Any individual, group, or organization performing research or activities related to designing health care solutions for developing communities.

A *product* can be:

- A publication, policy, manual, survey, or legislation
- An instrument or device
- Intellectual property such as a patent

*Partners* may include:

- Members of the community
- Study subjects
- Community organizations
- Stakeholders
- Non-government leaders
- Government officials

*Sustainability* can be defined as:

- Project sustainability - Involving the local people through co-creation, leveraging the local resources and infrastructure that already exist, developing a system for continuing data collection in the area and having clearly defined short- and long-term goals.
- Financial sustainability - Differentiating between funding the project efforts from year to year and ensuring that there are adequate resources and financial stability for the project to continue in the future without the presence of the outside designers.
- Environmental sustainability - Considering the life-cycle of any outputs that result from the project and being conscious of energy and resource consumption and waste generation.

## 2.2 The Planning Stage

### *Establish a primary community contact.*

Co-creation is central to any intervention in a foreign country in order to ensure that the project is mutually beneficial to all parties involved. To begin this process, you should establish an “on the ground” contact, typically a member of the community or an individual who has been working closely with the community for some time. He or she will serve as the liaison between your group and the community with which you are working. Communicate via email, telephone, written letters, or Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) applications (such as Skype), using whichever method is most practical for you and your contact.

- Discuss and verify the local partners' goals and expectations.
- Reemphasize each party's specific goals and mission in this project, both those that are common and those that may differ.
- Discuss time constraints and the time frame for the project. This could include a more specific schedule outlining benchmarks to be achieved.

### *Establish partnerships.*

- When searching for partners, clearly define the purpose of the project and the input being sought from that particular partner. For a project to be successful, relationships between partners and designers must be balanced.
- Suitable partners may include NGOs, government, non-profits both in the U.S. and in the region of interest, university connections, and others.
- Empowering international collaborators and local citizens with knowledge and expertise to meet project goals will contribute to the sustainability of the project. Students should be open to the mutual exchange of information and recognize that there is much to learn from local customs and operations.
- See Chapter 4, *Global Citizenship and Advocacy* for more information on establishing partnerships.

### *Perform a resource and needs assessment.*

A resource and needs assessment involves going out into the community to talk to the future users of your technology or program. This assessment provides insight into the community and the users who will interact with the intervention. To be successful, it must be a collaborative effort with the community, not one that is imposed upon the community. Some questions to consider include:

- What challenges and needs does the community identify?
- What are the environmental characteristics (physical surroundings, water and sanitation, presence of vectors, etc)?
- What is the social, cultural, economic, and political context of the target population and community?
- What are the major social and health issues including mortality, poverty, food insecurity, major causes of morbidity, prevalence of malnutrition, health care coverage, presence and history of diseases which are endemic or have epidemic potential?
- What resources are currently available, and which ones are needed (human and material e.g. food; shelter, health personnel, facilities and supplies, transportation, energy)?
- What services, businesses or government programs exist within the community that may support the designers' goals?
- Who are the stakeholders in the community (other organizations working with the community, government involvement, ministry of health, etc.)?
- What is the best strategy for implementation?
- What resources and personnel will be needed?
- What resources are available within the university community and elsewhere domestically that could aid the project (prototyping resources, groups and individuals with valuable skills and experience)?



*Develop a problem statement.*

- Use the information gained from the needs assessment to decide upon a focused intervention centered on a clearly defined problem. This can be done by creating a problem statement. A problem statement states the situation that needs to be addressed, who and what is affected, quantifies the problem, and addresses an issue related to the purpose of the program or project.

*Establish a clear motivation and set goals.*

- From the onset, use the problem statement to clearly delineate the motivation (reasons for embarking on the design project) and goals (what will be accomplished by the design project) of the project. Note that the goals will likely be adapted and changed throughout the course of the project.
- Include objectives to be accomplished by the project as well as learning goals for individual students working on the project.
- Make the goals known to all volunteers, funders, and members of the community with which you are working.

*Determine if Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required for the project.*

- IRB approval is required before performing research involving human subjects and is intended to protect the rights and welfare of these subjects.
- Institutional review boards may be found at institutions of higher learning and ministries of health or related administrative directorates, as well as research institutions within the host country.
- IRBs differ from country to country so the process to determine approval guidelines should be started early.
- Seeking IRB approval may be a long, frustrating ordeal requiring frequent revisions to the research proposal before approval may be granted. It is important that you start early.
- See the UM's IRB website for more information: <http://www.irb.umich.edu/>

*Identify specific factors that may limit the effectiveness of the project.*

- Consider such factors as lack of transportation to access your service, language barriers, and affordability of product in the design of the project.



## 2.3 The Design Stage

*Learn about local culture, government, religion, etc.*

- It is important to be aware of such things before traveling to the community. Care should be taken to behave according to local customs and conduct business using accepted decorum.
- See Chapter 3, *Guidelines for Professional Behavior Abroad*, for more information.

*Develop a timeline with clearly defined goals at each step.*

- Include both a timeline for the planning of project logistics as well as a long-term plan.

*Develop a budget.*

- Consider both the project budget and your own personal budget and expenses.
- Carefully plan out your personal budget being sure to overestimate your expenses. Categories to include in a personal budget include:
  - Living expenses (e.g., lodging, food, phone, in-country transit)
  - Health (e.g., health insurance, vaccinations, mosquito net, medications)
  - Travel (e.g., airfare, visa/passport, travel insurance, airport transit)
  - Pre-departure (e.g., gifts for hosts)
  - Other (e.g., leisure items and activities)
- Talk to your co-investigators about the project budget to determine what it covers, over what time period, and from where the money is coming from. While not all projects will have an extensive budget, the following is a list of relevant categories to include in a project budget:
  - Equipment
  - Office supplies and resources (e.g., electricity, materials)
  - Personnel (e.g., translator)
  - Office space

*Determine and finalize project specifications.*

The finalization of the project design of the project should be an iterative process as feedback is received from the host community. Some questions to consider include:

- What are the “dimensions” of the project? If you are collecting data, how many people are you going to interview? What types of questions will you ask? What will the follow-up protocol be? If you are designing a device, what are the specific things that it must do? How big will it be? What power will be required?
- What will be the role of each team member, collaborator, and/or co-investigator?
- What are the metrics of success? How will you evaluate these metrics?

*Establish a mechanism for real-time feedback at each step to evaluate the local community response to the project.*

- Identify the different groups in the local community from whom input is desired, such as beneficiaries of the project, implementers of the intervention, team members, supervisors, government officials, civil society organizations, and international organizations.
- Identify how each group will be approached. The style of data collection used will yield different perspectives and information, so feedback mechanisms should be designed with the following themes in mind:
  - Type of meeting: Individual interview, small focus group of several individuals, or town-hall type meeting
  - Setting: Home, public location, or in a clinic
  - Resources: In choosing a setting, keep in mind logistical and resource constraints such as time, money, and access.
  - Question style: Broad vs. specific, community vs. personal attitudes, factual v. anecdotal, etc.
  - Incorporate feedback and findings into the ongoing project.

## 2.4 The Implementation Stage

*Establish contact with local partners.*

- Finalize plans with local partners (*see Planning Stage above*).
- Delineate and delegate specific tasks to team members and make sure to have a system for regular feedback and adjustments in order to promote maximum efficiency.
- Establish a schedule of regular updates and meetings among team members.
- Be cognizant of the local professional culture. It may not be the norm to approach the initial meeting as you had planned, so it is important to be flexible and receptive to how your partners might envision setting up logistics and on-the-ground arrangements.
- Arrange for an interpreter if necessary. Meet with the interpreter before finalizing arrangements to ensure that the group is comfortable with him or her and that he or she can effectively serve the group.

*Verify local travel and housing arrangements.*

- These may differ or have changed from previous communications. Please see *Chapter 5, Logistics of Research and Service Abroad* for a more detailed description with checklists pertaining to logistical issues.

*Locate and mobilize local resources needed to implement the project.*

- Locate and contact vendors for raw and manufactured goods, labor and human resources, and transportation of materials.
- If you are setting up a supply chain, establish contact with the various parties involved in the system.

*Introduce technology/platform/program in the target community.*

- This may include training of users, establishment of infrastructure, and advertisement in the community.

## 2.5 The Dissemination Stage

### *Ensure equal access to information.*

While the sharing of information across international, political, and social boundaries may be challenging, steps should be taken early and often to ensure equal access to information.

- Procedures, results, and evaluations should be shared at all levels and should be sensitive to cultural norms and social hierarchy, yet open to avenues for change.
- Local commitment to follow the project through to completion could vary depending on local traditions, so discuss expectations early with partners.
- Keep in mind that the research, patent, and legal processes are often simultaneous; planning ahead and developing a timeline for any of them may prove beneficial for all.

### *Discuss intellectual property issues.*

Producing with international partners generates the issue of ownership - who owns the ideas, documents or technologies that are developed? A spectrum of approaches exists, ranging from obtaining a patent to disseminating findings in an open source manner.

- All parties (including domestic advisors and international collaborators) must be a part of the discussion and exploitive behavior must be avoided. The influence of local knowledge and local products should guide the decision in determining the ownership of intellectual property.
- For further information, see the University of Michigan's Tech Transfer website ([www.techtransfer.umich.edu](http://www.techtransfer.umich.edu)), which includes details pertaining to work with commercial partners, funding sources, patents and other protection methods, as well as legal assistance.

### *Establish clear and ethical scholarship and authorship policies.*

Due credit should be given to those who took part in production of project deliverables, whether a research paper, a device, or a policy.

- Take into account the time and effort that each party contributed to the end product, as well as what facilities and resources were used throughout the process.
- For further details on this subject, see Chapter 3, *Guidelines for Professional Behavior Abroad*.

### *Observe standards of academic integrity.*

Working and researching in an international partnership gives you responsibilities beyond immediate project goals or considerations toward a given host country.

- Dissemination of the final product is not limited to academia, but should extend to the public and the host community members who can benefit from the outcomes. Think about how the findings can be utilized by these individuals.
- Due credit should be given to those immediately involved in any projects, as well as outside resources used throughout the research process.
- For additional guidance on using and properly citing resources, the University of Michigan's library has an extensive section on academic integrity (<http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity>) for both students and instructors. Also see Chapter 1, *Ethics of Research*.

## 2.6 The Evaluation Stage

An important aspect of any project is evaluating if, and to what extent, the project's goals are being met. Evaluation should take place at each stage of the project and metrics for evaluation should be outlined during the planning stages. Evaluation is a key part of the iterative project design and implementation process and helps to clearly outline what is going well in the project and where improvements are needed. The evaluators, who are often also the implementers, should try to be as objective as possible and consider a comprehensive set of metrics. One method by which to do this is to require project evaluators to demonstrate that the project is not having detrimental effects or causing harm. There are several perspectives from which to evaluate a project, all of which should be considered for any project, regardless of its purpose.

### *The functional perspective*

Evaluating from a functional perspective means determining how well the project is carrying out the proposed functions that have been clearly outlined in the planning and design stages. Examples of questions to be asked include:

- Is the project accomplishing what it set out to accomplish?
- Are the various aspects of the project functioning properly?
- Are there unintended or unforeseen functions of the project?
- How is the project affecting local ecosystems and infrastructure or vice versa?
- What improvements could be made to improve the functionality of the project?

### *The capacity perspective*

The capacity building aspects of a project refer to how it is affecting the community members' ability to function in society. Typically, the project intends to improve this capacity through such things as improving quality of life, making goods and services more accessible, improving education, creating jobs, and improving the skill-set of workers in the area. Questions to be asked when evaluating from this perspective include:

- How has the quality of life of the people in the community been affected (either positively or negatively)? Is this change sustainable?
- What opportunities are now available that weren't available before?
- What indirect effects is the project having on neighboring communities?
- Is the project causing deterioration of the capacity of a community or neighboring communities in any way?

### *The relational perspective*

The relational aspects of a project refer to how the project affects relationships between people who are involved in some part of the project. It can refer to familial and other community relationships, relationships between service providers and users of a service, relationships between governing entities and the community, or relationships between those within the community and those from outside the community. Questions to ask when evaluating from this perspective include:

- What new relationships or roles have been created by the implementation of your project?
- Have family or community roles changed? What are the positive and negative impacts of these changes?

## 2.7 Resources

### “Community Toolbox”

General resources for conducting projects that promote healthy communities, courtesy of the University of Kansas.

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/>

### UM IRB Resources

<http://www.irb.umich.edu/>

### UM Library’s Academic Integrity page

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity>

### UM Tech Transfer Office

<http://www.techtransfer.umich.edu/>

### Tools used in developing and evaluating health programs.

[http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/global\\_health/hs/publications/index.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/hs/publications/index.html)

**Resources for developing and evaluating community based projects, including training modules that offer advice and resources for planning health interventions.**

<http://www.childsurvival.com>

*Dym, Clive L. and Little, Patrick (2003) Engineering Design: A Project-Based Introduction. New York: Wiley Press.*

Contains tips on developing a problem statement and motivation taking user criteria into consideration.

## Chapter 3

# Guidelines for Professional Behavior Abroad

### 3.1 Introduction

Those engaged in global health working under the auspices of the University of Michigan should maintain high standards of professional attitudes and behaviors while on the job in foreign work environments. Additionally, it is important to consider the ethical implications of unprofessional behavior during personal time abroad. Students associated with U-M working around the world should work with the following professional principles in mind: competence, confidentiality, collaboration, and cultural sensitivity.

### 3.2 Competence

Competence is the ability to perform a specific task successfully. This requires necessary training and support. While abroad, you may find that the level of competence and training required to do certain tasks differs compared to home. It is your responsibility to assess each situation, consider if your training has fully prepared you, and to clarify with your U-M mentors and local collaborators the kinds of tasks you are permitted, able, and willing to perform.

### 3.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality as a concept may be interpreted differently in different locations, both within the United States and abroad. Because there are different interpretations, always strive to maintain and display the highest standard possible when considering confidentiality abroad. Maintaining confidentiality can aid in gaining trust from colleagues and the community in which you are working. Confidentiality is important for protecting and empowering participants, community members, and colleagues, and can ensure more accurate research results by encouraging honesty among participants. As part of maintaining confidentiality, you should:

- Obtain informed consent when necessary. If doubt or discrepancy exists about the need for informed consent, it is prudent to err on the side of obtaining informed consent.
- Realize that culture may impact people's definition, interpretation, and expectations of confidentiality, including people's various social identities and privileges.
- Refrain from posting and publishing confidential or identifying images, information, and quotations in public domains, including digital and/or social media (i.e. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, blogs, etc.), without appropriate informed consent.

At times there may be a conflict between cultural norms and the concept of confidentiality. In your attempt to maintain high standards of confidentiality, your actions may be viewed by locals as going against cultural norms that require, for instance, more family involvement than your confidentiality standards allow.

#### Excerpt from Duffle Bag Medicine

"A foreigner sets up a clinic in your city. He does not speak much English, he will leave after a week or so, and he is not very likely to ever return. This foreigner tells you that he is a physician in his home country, but that he has never been to your community before and is not going to be working with your family physician or with other health professionals in your local health care structure. Would you take your children to see him if you had any other choice?"

M. Roberts (2006), *Duffle Bag Medicine*. *JAMA*, 295 (13): 1491-1492.

### 3.4 Collaboration

Working abroad necessitates close collaboration with international partners. Equal exchange is the foundation of a successful project. Domestic and international partners should be included in all aspects of project conceptualization, development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of findings. Early in the process, all partners should discuss and agree upon their respective goals, expectations, and compensation.

*Communication is essential for strong collaboration.*

- Know who the supervisors are and what their roles are in their organization or institution prior to departure.
- Know the organizational structure and to whom one is supposed to report findings, go to with questions, and seek assistance from in the resolution of workplace conflicts.
- Engage with local partners both personally and professionally by asking questions, soliciting feedback, and being available to reciprocate in such exchange.
- Be aware of potential language barriers and take steps to overcome them.

*Things to keep in mind while promoting a collaborative relationship with partners*

- Have a clear idea of the project goals as mentioned in section 2.2 (*Project Development with International Partners: The Planning Stage*).
- Meet early with host supervisors to discuss goals and expectations.
- Work autonomously, being careful not to over-utilize the time or resources of collaborators, host institutions, and organizations.
- Be aware that staff on-site may already be working full-time, and therefore may be working extra time to assist with your work.
- Inform colleagues and supervisors of progress, successes, challenges, and failures and actively solicit feedback, advice, and evaluation of the project to date.
- Recognize and work to eliminate disparities in the abilities of coworkers and collaborators to access and utilize different forms of technology.
- Compensate and make attributions in a fair manner agreed upon by all parties.

*Collaborate closely during project evaluation and dissemination of findings in order to promote a smooth project wrap-up.*

- Hold a final discussion and/or presentation of progress before departure from the host community, including bidirectional evaluation of the project and experience as a whole.
- Agree upon criteria for authorship of abstracts, reports, and publications as early as possible.
- Ensure that equal contribution receives equal credit, keeping in mind that compensation may take the form of monetary payment, authorship, and/or recognition in the work place.
- Support efforts that ensure all working partners succeed at achieving their personally defined goals.

“My experiences abroad have taught me about the importance of having local collaboration and input in the success of any global research project. No one knows better than the locals when it comes to the needs of a community and the best approach to address these needs.

In order to be successful in conducting research globally, we must respect cultural differences. It is important to understand cultural practices in advance of travel.”

~ Kelly Hirko, PhD Program in Epidemiology



### 3.5 Cultural Sensitivity

When working abroad, be aware of the similarities and differences between your own culture and that of the host community/communities and government. Culture influences daily life; therefore, when working abroad it is important to recognize how your own culture may be perceived, and in turn recognize the need to respect the local culture(s). As part of being culturally sensitive:

- Actively learn about the social, political, and economic framework of the host country, community and organizational politics, as well as the power structures within the institutions with which you will be working.
- Engage in cultural exchange as part of the project, including asking questions, discussing cultural similarities and differences with host colleagues, avoiding stereotypes and judgment, and informing others of your own culture.
- Be aware of the differences in power and privileges between collaborators within a country and between countries.
- Act with humility.
- Dress in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Avoid unnecessary displays of wealth and/or privilege.
- Understand that technological discrepancies may exist and work to eliminate them.
- Recognize and help define with host colleagues your role and the roles of others with whom you will be working.
- Value the knowledge and experience of collaborators (individuals and institutions).

#### Think of Your Project in Sociocultural Context

##### Religion

Predominant religions  
Religious conflict  
Role of religious leaders in society  
Gender roles as dictated by the religions  
Historical trends in the region

#### Historical context and historical approach to healthcare

##### Culture

Role of traditional healers in the healthcare system  
Role of tribal or traditional healers in society  
Culture etiquette

##### Government and Politics

Type of political system  
Political instability or relative stability  
Corruption vs. transparency  
Perception of foreigners  
Historical trends, including Colonial History if applicable  
Changes in government/government structure, including revolutions, coups, wars

##### Economics

Main economic engine of the region  
Natural disasters  
Effectiveness of NGOs present in region  
Major trading partners and donors  
Role of international institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, and regional organizations setting economic policy



### 3.6 Personal Time

Students working abroad will not be working 100% of the time and will therefore have personal time available to them. It is important to keep in mind that the student may be seen as a representative of the United States of America, the University of Michigan, and other entities while abroad, even while not explicitly working.

*As part of behaving professionally while off the clock:*

- Consider the meaning of drinking or purchasing alcoholic beverages in the host country. Local laws regarding alcohol or other substances should be followed at all times regardless of what laws you are used to back home.
- Consider the implications of having sexual relations or intimate relationships with host community members.
- Your hosts are likely to feel responsible for your safety. At the onset of your stay, speak with them to find out what their expectations are regarding knowing your whereabouts if you travel overnight or outside the local area.
- Consider the implications of purchasing items for host community members with your personal money - this includes food, beverages (including alcohol), clothing or accessories, technologies, and transportation and housing assistance, among other items.
- While abroad, take time to learn about the local community through your coworkers or other friends. Consider visiting the local tourist attractions, especially museums, to learn about the history of your host community. Often, people know what attractions are most visited by foreigners, and they will ask you what you think of their cultural heritage. It is a good idea to make sure to learn about it with as much depth as possible.
- Consider taking cooking classes or learning to cook the local food from one of your friends or a member of your host family.
- Attend cultural events, especially public celebrations, to learn about the values and culture of your host community.
- Volunteer with a local organization.



## Chapter 4

# Global Citizenship and Advocacy

### 4.1 Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, it is incumbent upon globally engaged researchers and students to understand and work to address the ways in which global flows of influence and capital affect the most vulnerable members of global society. This section will give an overview of the necessary elements of this process: global citizenship and the accompanying processes of advocacy and engagement.

### 4.2 Global Citizenship: A Conceptual Overview

#### *The dual paradigm of knowledge-engagement*

Global citizenship does not entail membership in any specific population, but rather a recognition of the shared qualities held by all members of the global population. This recognition is coupled with a desire to both learn how the world's most marginalized populations are impacted by globalization and to help alleviate hardship in the most effective way possible. Traits commonly held by global citizens include:

- Cultural competency, including knowledge of local viewpoints on global issues and events, as well as the effects of global forces on those viewpoints.
- Awareness of global issues and desire to learn more.
- Desire to increase the global awareness of the general population through advocacy.
- Participation in efforts aimed at effectively alleviating poverty and disease in marginalized populations.

#### *Global citizenship vs. internationalization: An important distinction*

- Global citizenship goes beyond understanding a certain country in a vacuum. *Internationalization*, which refers to the process by which a person becomes accustomed to the politics, language, and culture of a given country or countries, often results in an overly narrow perspective of a society which can ignore its positioning within the global order. *Global citizenship* seeks to avoid such short sightedness, by promoting a more contextualized approach to understanding the workings of a given society. In practice, globally-engaged individuals should have perspectives that draw from both doctrines.

#### *The process of becoming an engaged global citizen*

Global citizenship requires an intimate understanding of both local and global aspects of social issues. This, in turn, can inform the work that he or she engages in. Important steps in the process of attaining global citizenship are as follows:

- Learning about a country and its global position by focusing on language, culture, politics, history, economy, etc.
- Engaging with marginalized citizens within the same country. It is critical to gain their perspective in better understanding how social attributes of the country affect their lives.
- Learning about previous attempts at humanitarian aid from locals as well as the impact on the community of the presence of foreigners.
- Collaborating with locals in a community-based participatory framework when initiating projects and interventions.
- Finding appropriate channels of communication for advocacy and determining the best audience(s) to maximize impact.

*Developing cultural competency before departure*

Below are some suggestions for places to start in attempting to develop an intimate understanding of the target community.

- Read a book dealing with cultural competency in health care to get a sense of more subtle problems encountered in the course of research and project work.
- Ask around for the best local guidebook that also provides a sense of history and cultural background.
- Assess the local health conditions and barriers to health care via generally available databases such as those supplied by the World Health Organization.
- Search for publications compiling research already done in your area of interest, particularly as they relate to cultural barriers to biomedical healthcare.
- Contact an individual involved in your project in-country to gain first-hand advice.

*Getting involved without going abroad*

- Often, the skills and resources of students and faculty are best spent, not in the field, but in engaging in advocacy activities at home. The impact of global citizens is not felt solely in the field; often, it can be even more powerful in one's home country. See below for more on engaging actors at home.

“In an inequitable world with competing interests and many stakeholders, global health engagement is challenging. Inequalities in health by socioeconomic status, gender and ethnicity exist both within countries and between them. Such inequities cannot be addressed by advances in medical technology alone. Effective health systems and services that improve the overall access to health care are necessary. Hence, people and organizations (both international and local, public and private) need to collaborate together and share knowledge to tackle health issues at a global scale.”

~Mekhala Reghavan, Biomedical Engineering PhD Program

### 4.3 Advocacy and Stakeholders

Global health advocacy can be focused on effective policies and resource commitments among stakeholders throughout the global health and development communities. Advocacy goals should address the real problems faced by the people that global health advocates and implementers seek to serve.

*Different types of stakeholders*

Stakeholders are individuals or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by global health projects, and may have an interest in such projects and/or the ability to influence project outcome, either positively or negatively. The wide range of stakeholders includes individuals, groups, organizations, and networks that are involved in various aspects of global health projects (such as implementation, evaluation, supply chain, technology, etc) in both the public and private sectors. They also include those who decide on health policy, manage global health programs, provide technical and/or financial support for projects, and individuals affected by disease.

## 4.4 Engaging with Governments and Community Organizations

Ensuring that research and interventions will have a lasting impact is an important concern of global engagement that must be addressed in the name of sustainability. To this end, you may be able to effect meaningful change in policy at the local, national, and international levels using insights gained during the course of your engagement. However, these efforts must be tempered adequately with caution in order to prevent censure from important public figures. Below are some guidelines to follow in any attempts at effecting policy change.

*Be aware of the local government's position and policies on the issues that are being addressed.*

- Whether or not you are interacting with the foreign country's government in your global health engagement, it is important to be aware of relevant policy affecting the issue or population that you are working with, especially if this policy involves sensitive issues. For example, a student working on HIV/AIDS prevention among gay populations might ask, *What is the local legislation on homosexuality? How does the local government look upon gay rights advocacy?* In building awareness on local government policy, you will be better able to navigate the political landscape and ensure success for both yourself and any local partners that will be working within that framework long after your role in the project has ended.

*Look for opportunities to partner with local and national governments.*

- When priorities of the local government, such as reducing maternal mortality or improving rural education, align with students' project goals, these agencies can be effective partners. In these situations, it is helpful for students to meet with the regional or local Ministries of Health, Education, Agriculture, etc. which may be able to provide valuable contacts, resources, or access to members of the community.

*Engage host community advocacy organizations in policy agenda setting.*

- To achieve lasting impact in a community, it may be important to identify and engage relevant advocacy organizations in the host community. In involving these parties in agenda setting, your work can help form networks among organizations with similar interests to further future collaborations. Host community organizations are rich with knowledge about the local context, and are important resources to have when attempting any legislative action within foreign governments. Additionally, initiating advocacy activities through local organizations decreases the chance of negatively affecting the viability of the project.

*Avoid highly vocal advocacy for contentious policies.*

- Field work can reveal issues that may cause field workers to become passionate about changing government policies. However, acting on these sentiments can potentially hinder relations with the government, the censure of which can severely affect the viability of any project. Therefore, students should carefully consider what effect their advocacy might have on the policy in question, the project they are working on, and their collaborators, supervisors, and sponsors.

*Engage with the U.S. government to raise awareness and bring policy change.*

- When delving into a global health issue of interest, you may find U.S. government or institutional policies that promote practices that conflict with the issue being advocated for. Changing government policy can be a daunting task for students and results are not immediate, but many student organizations have dedicated themselves to political advocacy. Possible events to this end include awareness-raising campaigns among peers to engage in political action, call-ins and letter writing campaigns to policy makers, and more.

## 4.5 Engaging with Non-Governmental Stakeholders

Advocacy is a powerful means of achieving the goals of a global health project by influencing the priorities and actions of policy makers. Health is an issue that involves multiple stakeholders, including intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, local governments, academic experts, private organizations, and others. Types of non-governmental stakeholders include:

- Consumers
- Patients
- Clients
- Multi-lateral and private donors
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Public Institutions
- Faith-based organizations
- Foundations, businesses
- Civil society organizations (CSOs)

### *Stakeholders in the business sector*

- It is important to recognize that private sector participation is critical to addressing health issues. Global health advocates should engage businesses across sectors to take action to improve global health in partnership with other stakeholders of society. Because health and the economy are strongly connected, businesses should be encouraged to support improved health policies, governance and architecture, and raise awareness on priority health issues. By promoting the understanding that health creates wealth, businesses can influence senior-level decision makers on policies and investments in health.
- Businesses from all industries—healthcare, food and beverage, IT and communications, energy and natural resources—bring a valuable contribution to addressing health issues. Business can offer management expertise and resources, from technology to training, to help global health projects.
- Influence of business entities on global health can include:
  - Building health information systems
  - Promoting new initiatives and educating on health issues
  - Investing in health infrastructure and technologies
  - Contributing solutions in delivery, funding and innovation gaps
- Public-private partnerships (PPP) are formed between businesses, governments, academics and NGOs. These partnerships use the resources and know-how of all parties involved to run synergistic global health projects that yield real results on the ground.

### *Stakeholders in civil society*

- Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are nonprofit organizations that aim to further the interests of the communities they serve. Driven to protect and empower the vulnerable, CSOs work in areas such as community development, service provision, advocacy, activism, and research.
- CSOs are common in the developing world and can be divided into 5 types:
  - Non-governmental organizations: NGOs work outside the control of the government and can be large or small. The activities of NGOs can be local, national or international.
  - Community-based organizations: Members come from the communities that these organizations serve and decisions are often collective in nature. Women's self-help groups are an example.
  - Faith-based organizations: These organizations may work through local centers of faith and often play an important role in affecting health policies in many countries.
  - Voluntary health organizations: These are often patient advocacy groups focused on a specific disease. Activities involve aiding patients, promoting research and treatment access and recruiting patients for participation in trials.
  - Networks: These are umbrella organizations comprising of various groups and individuals.

- Influence of CSOs on global health:
  - Conducting research and facilitating the development of technology
  - Positively impacting research agendas by influencing governments and scientific bodies
  - Disrupting scientific endeavors if they feel the scientific premise is invalid or harmful to the communities they serve
  - Advocating to local policy makers and politicians to increase funding for the research of specific diseases and to introduce timely health interventions
- While engaging with CSOs and business organizations is useful, it is important that accountability and transparency exist in the partnership and that conflicts of interest are avoided.

## 4.6 Engaging with Academia and the Campus Community

### *Bringing awareness home: getting other students involved*

By being engaged in global activities, you are in the unique position of being surrounded by a dense network of highly involved and open-minded individuals. The college campus is a perfect locale in which to engage in activities aimed at raising awareness of the issues that are faced by many countries around the world. It is important for you to stress that it *is* possible to effect meaningful change in these countries and that students or other audiences *can* take an active role in addressing global issues. Methods of spreading this message include:

- Working with local media outlets, including the student newspaper
- Engaging with other student organizations
- Forming cause-oriented student groups and advertising using social media outlets

### *Maximizing the use of campus resources*

Aside from being a hotbed of activist activity, college campuses also have abundant academic resources that can be harnessed for global causes. Seek out opportunities to join faculty members in research they deem to be globally conscious. Additionally, realize that you can learn from and share experiences with other globally minded faculty members and students, and contribute to an increased awareness of global issues within the academic community.

- Be prepared to answer questions about your own University. It might be helpful to download a PDF of the current U-M profile.

[http://mmd.umich.edu/forum/docs/2010\\_UM\\_profile.pdf](http://mmd.umich.edu/forum/docs/2010_UM_profile.pdf)

## 4.7 Engaging with the Public

### *Raising awareness through the media*

- Fieldwork can illuminate many global issues that may be otherwise hidden from the general public. There are many outlets through which a global health advocate, such as you, can raise awareness of these issues, including op/ed columns and letters to the editor in newspapers. These modes of communication can be important catalysts for changes in global social policy, increases in fundraising capacity, and improved visibility for humanitarian activities.

### *Blogging*

- The publishing of Op/Ed columns and letters to the editor is often out of the control of the writer and can often have a geographically narrow readership. For more control and an even wider dissemination, blogging has emerged as an excellent mode of expression. Blogging can enable global practitioners to reach a widespread audience, instantly obtain feedback, and potentially enter into correspondence with interested parties.

### *Events and social media*

- Students and professionals alike can see their projects benefit from events such as fundraisers, panel discussions, and presentations. The increasing prevalence of social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter makes advertising for these events easier and more effective. Additionally, the formation and effectiveness of cause-focused campus and professional groups can be enhanced through the formation of social networks.



## 4.8 Considerations for Social Media Use

Online social media is a great way to engage the public and be a better global citizen. Social media includes things like online social networks, blogging and microblogging, collaborative online media (wikis, documents, meetings, etc.), and sharing photos, videos, bookmarks, audio files, presentations, news feeds, maps, and more. Please keep in mind that many of the free online services archive the data you post, and it may be searchable and viewable to the general public. This becomes a concern when considering the confidentiality of clients, patients, or research subjects (see section 3.3 *Confidentiality* for more discussion on this topic). When creating content, be sure to inform any participants of the full extent of what it may be used for - a video recorded interview or project photos may be seen by someone's entire community.

In addition to creating content, you can also receive content produced by other organizations and individuals. In this regard, it is important to know the source of your data and to verify it before you use it as for your own research or service project.

If you plan on incorporating social media into your projects, be up front with collaborating partners and any supervisors you may have. Check with them to see if they want to approve project-related content you produce. It's much better for everyone to be in the know and be in agreement than to have to do damage control after the fact.

"Social media applications are mostly free and easy to use, and have no real geographic boundaries, which is great when working with global partners. You have to consider the access of various communities to the resources, but mobile phone use is increasing across the globe and many applications are compatible with mobile phones."

~Carrie Rheingans, MPH/MSW Program

## 4.9 Resources

WHO (2008). Engaging Stakeholders for Retooling TB Control.

PATH: Advocacy to improve global health

<http://www.path.org/publications/details.php?i=1679> (case studies)

Health at the Global Economic Forum

[http://www.weforum.org/pdf/Initiatives/GHI\\_2005\\_Marketing.pdf](http://www.weforum.org/pdf/Initiatives/GHI_2005_Marketing.pdf) , 2005

Bhan, Anant, et al. (2007) Grand challenges in global health: Engaging civil society organizations in biomedical research in developing countries.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1989739/>

The global health case study initiative <http://casestudiesforglobalhealth.org/>

Global Health Council website <http://www.globalhealth.org/>

# Chapter 5

## Logistics of Research and Service Abroad

### 5.1 Introduction

A major task of planning projects abroad is planning the logistics of each aspect of the trip - from project plans to personal plans - including travel arrangements, safety, language, health, housing, communicating with friends and family while abroad, money, funding the project and living expenses, and even packing. This chapter contains lists of logistical considerations to serve as recommendations based on experiences of students who have done a variety of projects around the globe. Logistical considerations vary according to project type and location, so please use these recommendations with your specific situation in mind.

### 5.2 Travel Arrangements

#### Passports

- Apply for a passport as early as possible.
- First-time passports take from 4-6 weeks but that can increase during times of heavy travel, especially in the summer.
- Expedited services are also available for an additional fee (usually 1-3 weeks to process).
- The U.S. State Department ([http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)) has information on costs, processing timelines, filing requirements, and FAQs for U.S. passports.
- The passport expiration date must often be at least 6 months past the expected date of return to the U.S., but be sure to contact the embassy of the host country to confirm (see below for contact information).

#### Visas

- You may need a visa to enter your destination country/ies.
- Get your passport first. If the country you are visiting requires a visa, you'll need to send in your passport with your visa application.
- Not all nations require visas for those with a U.S. passport.
- Country specific information is available for every country of the world. These pages include information not only about visa requirements, but also on locations of the U.S. embassy or consulate in the subject country, unusual immigration practices, health conditions, minor political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties.  
Please visit: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html)
- Visa costs can range from \$0-\$300.
- Visas can take from 1 week to several months to process and approve.
- Another useful resource for foreign embassies in the U.S.:  
<http://www.embassy.org/embassies/>
- Citizens of nations other than the U.S. should contact the embassy of the host country to learn the proper protocol necessary to obtain a visa.

“Trust one who has erred in logistics before:  
these details are the glue for your project.  
Being 110% prepared is advised.”

~ John Prenter, MD/PhD program



*Air travel arrangements*

- It is generally cheaper to buy earlier - 6 months early is advisable.
- There are many useful websites that generate prices and options and allow comparisons to other sites (e.g., Kayak, Expedia, Priceline and Travelocity). It is useful to check the websites of individual airline companies as well (e.g., British Airways, Delta, Lufthansa).
- Be expectant of changes in the flight schedule, especially if the destination is a less frequently visited area.
- Be sure to allot ample time for customs and immigration when deciding on connecting flights in terms of layover times. Also be aware that forced layovers do exist - determine how long it might be and whether you want to overnight in the airport or book a hotel. Leaving the airport may require a visa, so check that too.
- Some airlines also give the option of buying insurance for refunds. This is something to consider and can save a lot of money for last-minute changes.
- Consider convenience, location, size, safety, and amenities of airports if multiple airports are possible for the host community.
- Many countries have exit taxes when leaving; be prepared to pay (usually cash) upon departure. Check with your project host or local consulate for details and bring sufficient cash to pay upon departure - sometimes payment is due before you check-in for flight.

*Travel insurance*

- Travel insurance is different than health insurance - which many universities offer at a very affordable price. The U-M/HTH travel abroad policy is one of the most comprehensive in the nation and is required for all undergraduates and highly recommended for graduate and professional students (see section 5.5, *Health*).
- Travel insurance is essential and can help avoid heavy costs in unexpected situations.
- Private companies provide international travel insurance as well, such as Travel Guard. Insurances can cover medical expenses, but can also be used for other unforeseen circumstances from natural disaster evacuations to lost luggage and stolen items.
- Note that reimbursement rather than being covered directly may be the policy of the insurance company because of insurance policy regulations or because of local practices - check with the insurer before departure.

*Evacuation insurance*

- If the project does not occur in a major city, it is a good idea to get evacuation insurance. It is not hedging against catastrophic acts of nature; rather, it is hedging against the higher risk faced when going into an environment where quality healthcare is unavailable. In sparse, and/or unsanitary environments in the Global South, even the relatively mundane can quickly become a situation that requires evacuation.
- Be forewarned, evacuation insurance is expensive since the typical evacuation costs more than \$100,000. It is worth the cost and it should be factored into your budget if going to a remote and/or underdeveloped area.
- Alternatively, there are plenty of private provider options that can be explored on your own.
- The U-M/HTH travel abroad health insurance covers emergency evacuations (see 5.5 Health)

*Before departure*

- Unplug electrical items at home.
- Adjust the temperature in the U.S.-based home to avoid freezing pipes or unexpected bills and turn down the temperature on the hot water heater.
- Memorize PIN codes to credit cards.
- Check out what hospitals are covered by the health insurance to be used while abroad.
- Get travel insurance.
- Exchange money if possible and balance U.S.-based bank account(s).
- Purchase maps and become familiar of the layout of where you're going.
- Forward (or hold) delivery of newspapers, magazines, and mail.
- Leave expensive watches and jewelry at home (see more on packing in section 5.10).
- Pay the rent and other necessary bills and set up auto-bill pay if preferred.
- Make plant care/pet care arrangements for the duration of the trip.
- Empty the fridge of perishables.

### 5.3 Safety

Personal judgment is the best defense in ensuring personal safety and property. However, the following are some tips to be as safe as possible:

- Register on the University of Michigan International Travel website. This registry allows University officials to track where its students are and assist in times of emergency.
- Register with nearest U.S. Embassy office in your host country.
- Discuss safety with in-country host(s) to be aware of any general safety concerns (regions of cities to avoid, political issues, etc).
- Inform a friend or family member of your whereabouts, including lodging arrangements, host organization contact(s), duration of trip, and on-site contact information.
- Avoid dark areas, walking alone, or venturing to unknown places if possible.
- Beware of the surroundings, especially when exchanging money or withdrawing money. Avoid road-side exchange bureaus and crowded places for money matters if possible.
- Purchase padlocks for suitcases for use in the host community. Avoid padlocking luggage for the actual flight itself, as airlines may break locks to search luggage.
- Avoid leaving valuables like computers and electronics in open areas or tables in the room. Always lock them up when leaving them home.
- Avoid visitors in your room or house, especially if living alone, and always be present when someone is cleaning your room.
- Consider buying an insurance policy for valuables prior to departure (see section 5.2, *Travel Arrangements*).
- Consider buying or bringing a bike helmet If you will be riding motorbikes for transportation (as is the norm in China, several countries in Africa, etc.).

#### Important Registries

UM International Travel Registry  
<http://www.umich.edu/~itoc/>

U.S. Embassies  
<http://www.usembassy.gov/>

### 5.4 Language

You should try to learn as much of the language(s) as possible of the host community/ies before departure. U-M has many resources for language learning and most can be utilized fully with advanced planning. The International Institute has many Areas Studies Centers that can be a resource for where to get language training before departure. Additionally, U-M has many introductory-level courses in a variety of languages into which you could consider enrolling. Some languages are taught in sequence, meaning that in the fall semester is part one and in the winter semester is part two. This may prevent the introductory course from being taken in the winter semester. Washtenaw County Community College also has a few introductory level courses, including some offered at night. Additional resources include buying language software for home learning, or using an online phone service to practice with others across the world.

#### Language Resources

Areas Studies Centers  
<http://ii.umich.edu/ii/centers>

Washtenaw Community College  
<http://www.wccnet.edu/lifelong-learning/browse/view/category/languages/>

<http://www4.wccnet.edu/academicinfo/creditofferings/takingclasses/schedule/>

If taking a formal class is not an option, the very minimum that should be known are safety and travel phrases, as well as important health information. Try to learn how to read a language if it's not written like anything already known to you, and be able to identify some specific signs.

*Fundamental phrases to learn how to hear and say:*

- Hello (or other common greeting, learn if there's a formal/informal distinction).
- I don't speak \_\_\_\_.
- Do you speak (English or another language you speak)?
- My name is \_\_\_\_.
- Goodbye (learn if there's a formal/informal distinction).
- Please (or equivalent, or if it is even spoken regularly).
- Thank you (or equivalent, or if it is even spoken regularly).
- Where is the bathroom?
- Phrases for negotiating public transit—have someone teach you upon arrival.
- Yes/no (learn if there's a formal/informal distinction).
- How much (does it cost)?
- Any phrases dealing with any allergies/food restrictions you have (you may also consider getting a written note to take with you explaining this too).
- I need to go to the \_\_\_\_ Embassy.

*Signs to be able to read:*

- Men/women restroom
- Enter/exit/emergency exit
- Left/right
- Stop
- Do not enter
- Train track number/other transit-related

**5.5 Health**

The University of Michigan requires all undergraduate students on University sponsored or supported trips to be covered by the UM/HTH travel abroad insurance. Certain departments, programs, and schools/colleges require it of their graduate and professional students as well. Travel insurance is only \$1.50 per day and includes medical evacuation coverage.

*Please be aware that the information in the following section changes over time and sometimes frequently. It is best to check with your doctor and other health providers for the most current information and most relevant advice regarding traveling in the host country or countries and community or communities.* Additionally, the University Health Service's online tutorial has a lot of great information about health abroad.

**Travel Health Resources**

University of Michigan Travel Abroad Insurance <http://www.uhs.umich.edu/tai/>

UM Health Service Travel Health Tutorial <http://www.uhs.umich.edu/travelhealth>

## Prevention

### *Immunizations/vaccinations*

- Check with the CDC website (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>) and with the University Health Service (<http://uhs.umich.edu/aithc>) for required or recommended immunizations and vaccinations. Some may need to be done weeks in advance, so it should be a priority to find out early (at least two months in advance of travel). Carefully read the literature provided at the doctor's office to decide which option is best for long-term travel plans, side effects, cost, etc.

### *Malaria prophylaxis*

- The CDC site above also lists malaria endemic areas. It is important to be aware of the different side effects of the different anti-malarial options when making your decision about which to use.
- In mosquito-laden environments, sleeping in mosquito nets is necessary. There are other options—many people in India burn special candles to reduce mosquitoes, and there are plug-in repellants available as well. A physical net is probably the most dependable protection as it does not require electricity and will not 'run out' in the middle of the night like a candle or incense could. On the first night, ask the host to show you how to hang up the mosquito net. Once hung, check for holes in the net and tie them off. If the net does not reach the floor, tuck the net into the bed with care. After you're locked under the net, check the sleeping space for any mosquitoes that may have flown in during set up.

### *Reproductive health*

- Sexually transmitted and bloodborne diseases can be a serious threat depending on your destination (more information on specific locations is available through the CDC and WHO). To be prepared, you may consider bringing condoms and other forms of contraception with you. In addition to the traditional latex condom, polyisoprene condoms are the new latex-free alternative, which are said to be more resistant to breakage and heat damage. For emergency situations, you may also consider bringing emergency contraception (EC pill), HIV prophylaxis, and your own clean syringes. For female travelers, the diva cup is an innovative alternative to pads and tampons. This reusable-silicone cup is comfortable, convenient, and environmentally conscious.

### *Other medications*

- If other medications are taken regularly, pack enough for the trip and carry the proper documentation to avoid issues when boarding the plane/traveling. Consider carrying a few smaller pill-containers for short trips or as a back-up supply. Carry information about the prescriptions in case you need to fill prescriptions on the trip.

### *Sun protection*

- Some international locations are closer to the equator where the sun is the most direct and can cause the most sunburn. Bring enough sunscreen for the time abroad because it is possible that it cannot be found easily in the host community or communities.

## Healthy Eating Abroad

### *Street food/eating out*

- Eating street food can be one of the favorite elements of a trip away from home (the variety of foods, the culture around it, haggling if that is the cultural norm, etc.). However, it is wise to exercise common sense: if it does not look safe or appetizing, do not eat it! If your travels take you to somewhere with unsafe water, avoid fruits/vegetables that were likely washed in local water. Avoid mixed juice drinks, since they were also likely mixed with water. Freshly fried or hot foods are safer than food that has been sitting around for a while. Also, be aware that there are some diseases and bugs that don't get killed when food is simply reheated.

### Water

- Make sure there is access to clean water. For most places in the world, drinking out of the tap is not a viable option. There may be local ways of disinfecting water (filters, UV systems), so ask local hosts what they recommend or may provide. Sports stores in the U.S. sell filters and tablets that can be brought along for water disinfection. Disinfection is noted to be more environmentally friendly than purchasing bottled water and, depending on whom you are working with, it may be advisable to avoid the 'rich foreigner who drinks expensive bottled water' label. When drinking out of glasses, be aware that they may be washed in the same local water, so use caution as necessary.

### Backup supply of food

It is wise to bring some backup food for a variety of reasons:

- If you ever fall ill and want some dependable food to rely on
- If you get homesick for familiar foods
- Snacks for a long day at work or when it might be difficult to find/buy food
- Some situations are more unpredictable abroad (a car might break down on a highway), and you might not know where to find a quick snack easily. Easy choices: crackers, granola bars, oatmeal (if you will have access to boiling water), dried fruit, and nuts.
- Also see packing list suggestions in section 5.10.

### Feeling sick abroad: Preparing for the worst

#### Medications to have on hand

- Most medications are what you want to have for any trip away from home: over-the-counter medications for headaches and fever reduction, and pain relievers to use as necessary. No matter where you go, it is likely your diet is going to be different from home and you are at risk for gastrointestinal issues. Your travel nurse will likely prescribe *Ciprofloxacin*, a powerful antibiotic that works on a lot of stomach ailments causing traveler's diarrhea. As with any antibiotic, it is recommended to only use as necessary (not at the slightest indications) and to complete the course to avoid resistance (learn more here <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2010/chapter-2/travelers-diarrhea.aspx>). Oral rehydration packets are available to buy in the U.S. (you can also make a decent substitute by mixing 5 cups water, 8 tsp. sugar, and 1 tsp. salt if you don't have oral rehydration packets with you).

#### Diagnosing/finding a doctor

- Most gastrointestinal issues are treated empirically, but if you are concerned about something else, ask your host for suggestions for doctors (it is worth asking about this even before you are ill, just to have the information available!). Ask for local availability of rapid tests (ex. malaria can be tested for easily with a rapid test kit, and should be treated as soon as possible). The U-M required HTH insurance has a listing of covered doctors for locations around the world (please see <http://www.hthtravelinsurance.com/>).

#### First aid kit

A general first-aid kit is necessary when traveling and should contain:

- Hydrocortisone for bug bites
- Adhesive bandages
- Headache/pain over-the-counter medication
- Decongestant
- Hand sanitizer

#### Things to look for upon returning home

- Intestinal worms may not give symptoms until later and some people choose to take anti-worm medication after a trip to just be safe ('de-worming' drugs don't have many side effects). Many other illnesses might not present themselves until a week or later after exposure (giardia, malaria); watch for symptoms after returning and tell a doctor if concerns arise. If a malarial area was visited, you must inform any doctors you visit for the first year after return.

## 5.6 Housing

Expect changes in plans to happen—this makes knowing the options and being flexible important. To secure housing in the host community, consider:

- Starting the search as early as possible (travel books, visitor/traveler websites, word-of-mouth, host organization contacts)
- Personal comfort level and budget
- Asking about cancellation policies, both if the renter or landlord needs to cancel
- Type of housing
  - Apartment, room in a house
  - Dorms/university housing
  - Host families (host supervisor, co-workers - consider the pros/cons of this)
  - Hotels/hostels/youth hostels
  - Camping sites
- Rate of pay: nightly, weekly, monthly?
- Are towels/linens provided?
- Are flip-flops for showers necessary (youth hostels especially)?
- Distance from work site: Is public transportation available? Will a company/host organization chauffeur/driver be provided or will a private taxi be used?

## 5.7 Communication with Family & Friends While Abroad

Wherever you go, it is important to plan to be in touch with family and friends and inform them of these plans. Inform family about the details of the initial arrival and check-in to avoid worries. Consider how long it will likely take between initial arrival in the host country and checking in and alert your family to these circumstances.

### Phone

- *Buy a mobile phone in-country:* Many countries use a different technology for phones than the U.S., making many U.S.-based phones incompatible. Phones that have interchangeable SIM cards are available in the U.S., but these are often more expensive than buying them in-country. It is often fairly simple to buy a phone with a matching SIM card in the host country, which can be loaded with prepaid minutes. Some cities have street vendors on every corner with cheap phones and SIM cards. Others require a longer registration process. Consider the duration of your project before making the decision to buy a phone. This expense may be eligible to be covered by your project funding. Check with supervisors and funders to be sure and keep all receipts and records of purchasing the phone and the minutes.
- *Unlock a current phone:* Some U.S. phones can be 'unlocked' to insert a SIM card. Check the specifics of the U.S.-based phone to see if this is possible.
- Keep in mind that dust and dirt may travel into a mobile phone if the host community is very dusty.
- Depending on how long your trip is, a phone may not be needed; however, the phone numbers of hosts and team members should be known and kept accessible. Being with someone who has a phone makes you accessible to family and may ease tensions in emergency situations. If payphones are a possibility in the host country, keeping a few coins in your pocket or purse at all times makes it possible to make a call if necessary. It might be worth sharing phones if travels are with a bigger group.

“Keeping in touch with family and friends back home is easier now with advances in internet capabilities and cellular phones, but internet access is often inconsistent abroad. I found it helpful to remind my family and friends that I would do my best to communicate often, but not to worry if I was out of touch for a few days.”

~ Kelly Hirko, PhD program in Epidemiology



### Internet

- Depending on the host community, Internet access may be similar to or better than in the U.S., but could also be so poor that it may be difficult to check email more than once a month. Some smaller villages in remote areas may not have any connection, so travel to the bigger cities may be necessary. The internet situation may be assessed by examining the communication with the hosts (Do they respond to email quickly? Can you only reach them by phone?). It is worth asking the hosts what to expect before departure. Remember that internet speed may differ across regions of the globe as well.
- Suggestions for when there is limited time online/slow connections:
  - Open different tabs/browser windows for multitasking (but keep in mind that depending on the connection, trying to download two things simultaneously might slow each down).
  - For long emails or newspaper articles, load the content and copy/paste to a word processor so it can be read later.
  - If there is access to a computer, draft emails to send while offline (in a word processor or text editor) so less time is spent doing so when online.
- Options for where to get internet access:
  - *Office computers*: The best option is to use the Internet in a secure environment. Working in an office with its own Internet connection is preferable. Hostels may also have secure connections—it is worth asking.
  - *Internet cafes*: The main concern regarding Internet cafes is the security of the connection. It is highly discouraged to check bank accounts and other sensitive matters in internet cafes. Avoid putting such private data on computers in internet cafes. It might be better to ask parents or close friends to check on those things back home instead. Also, it is hard to tell who is looking over your shoulder while typing in passwords, or who might go through the internet cookies after you use a browser. Always log completely out of everything that uses a password to sign in, and clear the cookies and close the browser.

### Deciding between bringing a personal computer or sharing a computer

- Pros and Cons of bringing a personal computer
  - Pros: Less concern of someone reading internet cookies; having your own space to draft emails and read text whether or not internet is available; and having a place to save your pictures.
  - Cons: It is more difficult to have one if there is concern about where to keep it (no secure place in your living space), or the host community is a dusty place. Some places may not have consistent power, so finding an outlet with surge protection and consistent output may be necessary.
  - Consider bringing an older computer if available to avoid worrying about the above issues. Either way, back up important files on a flash drive or external hard disk. If a personal computer will be connected to the internet, make sure the most up-to-date antivirus software is installed and practice common sense in opening attachments.
- Considerations for a shared computer (computers at the internet cafes, office computers): As with a personal computer, it is important to have flash drives or hard drives for files. Always be aware that the computer being used may have viruses or trojans that a flash drive may pick up. There are a variety of techniques provided online to try to avoid such scenarios (one example being: <http://www.mydigitallife.info/2007/12/15/prevent-viruses-from-infecting-the-usb-flash-drive-or-pen-drive/>). Be careful when putting in passwords for websites on a shared computer, and delete cookies and cache after the session.

## 5.8 Money Issues

### *Essential concerns with money*

- Be safe. Have emergency cash on hand in case you get stuck somewhere. A general guideline is to have enough money to rent a car and eat for 2-3 days.
- Be vigilant. Don't leave any personal information lying around, and tell the bank and other relevant billing authorities where your project will happen so they don't cancel your cards.
- Be aware. A lot of places may not have ATMs, meaning bank cards and credit cards will be useless. Many countries have non-convertible currency, or currency that is worth less than U.S. dollars and isn't easily converted back to USD. Don't convert more than needed or just do not convert. Basically, do the research before you leave.
- Be a pessimist. Enroll in an emergency health insurance plan that covers evacuation (see sections 5.2, 5.3, 5.5 above).
- Have access to a variety of financial resources.

### *Choosing between cash, traveler's checks or a credit or debit card*

- Credit cards and bank cards
  - Advantages: Access to your own accounts; cards may have some theft protection; "unlimited" supply of funds.
  - Disadvantages: Banks sometimes charge multiple fees for out-of-network transactions as well as for foreign currency conversion; it is not always possible to use a credit card or access an ATM, especially if working with local contacts; if stolen, credit cards represent a near-unlimited potential for use.
  - Recommendations: Know what protections are on the credit card; let provider know you will be using the card out-of-country; keep copies of BOTH sides of the cards separate from the actual cards while traveling to ensure access to numbers/contacts.
- Cash
  - Advantages: Allows for a choice of how much to carry; easily accessible; will not present the hassles that other forms of payment might; most situations in a foreign country will be amenable to cash.
  - Disadvantages: Limited amount; unprotected and easily accessible by others; there are often bank fees for withdrawing from foreign accounts and/or conversion fee.
  - Recommendations: Consider withdrawing cash in the currency you need from your bank at home; large bills take up less space and often offer a better exchange rate than \$20 bills (or less); store cash in a variety of places including front pocket and money belt.
- Traveler's checks
  - Advantage: Safe *if* you protect the receipt with the serial number of the check.
  - Disadvantage: Not widely accepted and a hassle to redeem for cash; only sold in certain denominations.
  - Recommendations: Viable alternative in a city where traveler's checks are widely accepted; if uncertain, it may be best to find an alternative source of money.

### *Financial considerations when doing non-profit/research work in developing countries*

- Most payments will be made in cash and will not be through an institution. Also, partner organizations may not have receipts for reimbursement.
- Availability of banks, ATMs, and vendors accepting credit cards will vary depending on location. Before leaving, you should:
  - Research the location and the facilities available therein.
  - Have access to a variety of financial means.
  - Carry enough foreign currency for 2-3 days.
  - Carry a minimum amount of American currency to convert at the airport if necessary.
  - Carry a credit card or debit card with good protection as a backup.



## 5.9 Funding for the Experiences

Many schools, centers, and institutes within the University of Michigan offer funding for research and/or internships abroad.

### *International Institute*

A listing of funding available through the International Institute, including sources both within and outside of the University, can be found at the following links (for undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty, respectively). Note that some of the faculty awards actually support students, so it may be possible to work with a supervising faculty member to apply for these awards. These funds may support research or internships.

<http://www.ii.umich.edu/ii/funding/undergrad>

<http://www.ii.umich.edu/ii/funding/gradstud>

<http://www.ii.umich.edu/ii/funding/faculty>

### *Ginsberg Center*

The Ginsberg Center funds projects that are more focused on service and experiential learning than on research. See the sections "Fellowships for Students" and "Scholarships for Students" at the following link: [http://ginsberg.umich.edu/resources/for\\_students.html](http://ginsberg.umich.edu/resources/for_students.html)

### *Rackham School of Graduate Studies*

Rackham offers research grants and conference travel funds to graduate students including: Rackham Conference Travel Grant, Rackham Graduate Student Research Grants, Rackham International Research Awards.

<https://secure.rackham.umich.edu/Fellowships/support/list.php>

### *Center for Global Health (CGH)*

CGH offers research and conference travel funding to students who are Associates of CGH. Specifically, look at the Conference Fund, and the two research programs: Student Global Health Engagement Program and Student Global Health Research Scholar Program. There is no funding for internships or volunteer work at this time.

Student Association: <http://globalhealth.umich.edu/studentassociation.html>

Funding Programs: <http://globalhealth.umich.edu/programs.html>

### *Center for International and Comparative Studies (CICS)*

CICS offers funding for internships and research abroad for undergraduate and graduate students. CICS also offers the Graduate Seminar on Global Transformations. This is a 3-semester seminar that explores connections among disciplines engaged in global research. Accepted students receive training as well as funding for their international research.

<http://www.ii.umich.edu/cics/funding>

### *Home school/department*

Some departments have funding, either officially allocated for student research/internship funding, or discretionary funding that can be applied for. Talk to the department administrator to find out about such opportunities in your home school or department.

### *Faculty grant*

If research is to be done as a part of a faculty member's grant, they may be able to use grant funds to subsidize the student's travel and research expenses. Talk to the supervising faculty member to find out whether this may be an option.

### *Student Biomedical Research Program (SBRP)*

Medical students are eligible for research funding through SBRP. Application and information can be found at: <https://www.umms.med.umich.edu/sbrp/>

### *William Davidson Institute (WDI)*

WDI supports internships for Master-level students.

<http://wdi.umich.edu/students/globalintern/past-internship-projects/globalintern>

### *Outside Funding Sources*

Funding from sources outside the University can also be found. Michigan State University provides an excellent listing of funding opportunities: <http://staff.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/3subject.htm>

## 5.10 Packing

### *Clothing*

- What clothing to pack will depend upon the climate and season of the location, as well as the setting in which you will be working. You should learn this information before attempting to prepare a packing list.

### *Things to take into consideration when packing clothing:*

- For more professional settings, pack clothes such as slacks, long sleeved button-down shirts, and closed-toed shoes. Women may want to inquire about the local culture with regards to dress. For example, women may be expected to wear dresses/skirts of a certain style or length (e.g., below the knee or entirely covering legs) or be expected to wear a headscarf. Pack clothes that are made of light fabric and can be easily washed and worn. Clothes that are made of heavier fabric take longer to dry after being washed and can start to mold and mildew over time. Furthermore, lighter clothes are easier to pack, and can be easily transported. Also, consider taking clothes that can be left behind or donated. Not only does this allow for giving back to your community, it will help make room for any souvenirs that need to be packed and brought home!
- Clothes to pack in preparation for inclement weather include rain boots (waterproof shoes), and light jacket for warmer climates or full-fledged snow gear for colder climates or high altitude.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Undergarments   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hat   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pants (dress and jeans)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shorts (weather permitting), check with local hosts for length recommendations) | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessories (consider necessity and safety) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shirts (climate dependent, T-shirts, long-sleeve shirts, and dress shirts)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Belt (consider reversible black/brown)      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socks (climate dependent)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jackets/ raincoat (climate dependant)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoes (sneakers, dress shoes, boots, sandals/flip-flops)                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Ties  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas (something to sleep in)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Handkerchief                                |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewelry                                     |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves, scarves, earmuffs, beanies, etc.    |

### *Food*

- Most places will have wonderful food to try, however taking a few food items to help adjust before beginning to try the local food may be a good idea. The following items are non-perishable and easy to pack:
  - ☐ Snacks
  - ☐ Granola and protein bars
  - ☐ Fruit snacks
  - ☐ Peanut butter or cheese crackers
  - ☐ Crackers
  - ☐ Animal crackers
  - ☐ Packets for rehydration (such as Crystal Light or Gatorade)
  - ☐ Instant meals
  - ☐ Instant oatmeal
  - ☐ Instant noodles or cheesy noodles

*Accommodations*

- Depending on your accommodations, it may be necessary to bring your own bed linens and towels. Even if the aforementioned things are to be provided, consider packing some of the following items just in case:
  - ☐ Sheets and pillowcase
  - ☐ Light Blanket (Blanket will also be useful if it is cold on the plane)
  - ☐ Face and body towels
  - ☐ Pillow
  - ☐ Toilet paper (and be careful of flushing it - it may not be possible in all places)

*Survival Supplies*

- The following is a list of items that may come in handy throughout the duration of the trip:
  - ☐ Batteries
  - ☐ Flash light
  - ☐ Umbrella (small travel size)
  - ☐ Local guidebook
  - ☐ Mosquito spray and bite medication
  - ☐ UNLOCKED cell phone with SIM card

*Entertainment*

- During down time (or when there is no electricity) the following list of items may be useful:
  - ☐ Books
  - ☐ Games & puzzles (i.e. crossword, word search, etc)
  - ☐ MP3 player (with movies and music)
  - ☐ Playing cards
  - ☐ Journal
  - ☐ Items such as books, games and puzzles, and playing cards can also be donated

*Project Supplies*

- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Flash drive
- ☐ Notebooks
- ☐ Writing utensils
- ☐ Wireless network card (If applicable) for internet access

*Toiletries*

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush, toothpaste            | <input type="checkbox"/> Fingernail clippers           | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floss                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Moisturizer                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive bandages                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soap, shampoo, conditioner        | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen and after sun cream | <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Diarrheal tablets/capsules  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shaving Supplies                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tampons and pads              | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect and/or mosquito repellent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact lens equipment or glasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Make up                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Pain reliever or fever reducer   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper                  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton Swabs                      |  |   |

### *Administrative*

- ☐ Address list and list of important contacts or numbers
- ☐ Paper or notebook
- ☐ Pencils, pens
- ☐ Passport, visas, tickets (plane, bus, train, etc.), travel Insurance, picture ID
- ☐ Vaccination cards
- ☐ Medicines/prescription drugs
- ☐ Finances
- ☐ ATM card and credit card (note that some card companies are more globally accepted than others)
- ☐ Cash in the local currency of your arrival destination
- ☐ Cash in US dollars for exchange
- ☐ Backpack, suitcase, sports bag (something to pack everything in)

### *Miscellaneous*

- ☐ Camera, film and batteries - spare flash cards or memory for digital camera
- ☐ Snack bars
- ☐ Notebook/ diary
- ☐ Electrical adapter and plug converter (check the type of electricity and plugs of the host community before leaving)
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Gifts - inquire about gift-giving practices/expectations and stock up on small U-M items (pens, pencils, etc.) before departure.
- ☐ Guidebooks
- ☐ Language resources
- ☐ Electronics - mp3 player, laptop, cell phone -use your own discretion based on area and nature of travel
- ☐ Laundry detergent
- ☐ Mosquito net
- ☐ Wet wipes/ anti-bacterial wipes
- ☐ Reclosable bags

### Resources

<http://www.nomadderwhere.com/semester-at-sea/in-the-bag/> packing list

<http://www.nomadderwhere.com/world-traveler-intern/in-the-bag/> packing list

<http://internationalcenter.umich.edu/swt/travel/checklist.html>  
International Center's checklist for travel abroad

## Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

The University of Michigan, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. The University of Michigan is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Senior Director for Institutional Equity, and Title IX/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, Office of Institutional Equity, 2072 Administrative Services Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1432, 734-763-0235, TTY 734-647-1388. For other University of Michigan information call 734-764-1817.

## Regents of the University of Michigan

Julia Donovan Darlow, Ann Arbor  
Laurence B. Deitch, Bingham Farms  
Denise Ilitch, Bingham Farms  
Olivia P. Maynard, Goodrich  
Andrea Fischer Newman, Ann Arbor  
Andrew C. Richner, Grosse Pointe Park  
S. Martin Taylor, Grosse Pointe Farms  
Katherine E. White, Ann Arbor  
Mary Sue Coleman, *ex officio*

The background of the entire page is a solid light blue. Overlaid on this are several large, overlapping, curved shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from a medium blue to a darker, almost navy blue. These shapes create a sense of depth and movement, with some appearing as if they are floating or layered on top of others. The overall effect is a modern, clean, and professional aesthetic.

Science in service of global health equity

Center for Global Health  
University of Michigan

426 Thompson Street, PO Box 1248  
Ann Arbor, MI, 48106-1248

[globalhealth.umich.edu](http://globalhealth.umich.edu)