Learning Exchange Visits/Study Tours

What it is?

A visit or series of visits — learning journey(s) — to one or more countries or sites by an individual or group with a specific-learning goal in mind; participants learn firsthand from the experience of their peers how a challenge was solved or solution implemented. TCI East Africa representatives from Uganda visited TCI Nigeria to learn more firsthand about how to implement the 72-Hour Clinic Makeover and adapt it for the Ugandan context. In anticipation of TCI East Africa's visit, TCI Nigeria developed this Guidance Note for Documenting Learnings from the Study Tour.

When to use it?
- Gain new knowledge and/or learn directly from a project or program
- Establish direct contact with beneficiaries, community members, and/or key stakeholders
- Build networks and partnerships
- Customize, replicate, and scale up tried and tested development solutions

Instructions
- Assign a field visit lead from both the receiver and provider hub to finalize the logistics for the visit.
- Since many field visits include a team of visitors, it is important to make sure that all team members are prepared. Depending on the purpose and formality of the visit, it may be important to prepare a visitor's guide that outlines roles and responsibilities and includes all relevant background information and documentation.
- Please review the questions in the left-hand column and provide written updates related to them in the right-hand column.
- Afterwards, produce a short (1-2 page) write-up on the field visit, describing the activity conducted, learnings gained, and any resultant action steps planned, and include in the quarterly Hub report.

Planning	
Why? Define objectives; decide if exchange visit is the best choice.	
Who? Team composition. How are they expected to benefit? Consider mix of backgrounds, seniority, gender, community members and agency staff, language skills, facilitation skills.	

*No more than 6-8 participants plus project staff that is organizing the event.	
Where? How many sites to visit? Which sites and why?	
When? Check travelers' and host's schedules, budget availability, major holidays, climate, lead time for permissions and travel documents.	
What? Discuss plans with hosts. Mix activities to fit interests and learning styles. Allow enough time for informal discussions, reflection and rest as well as enough time between the different stops/facilities. Allow time for visiting teams to brainstorm on how they'd like to incorporate lessons learned into their programs. In the Caribbean exchanges, this was in the form of a "workplan" of several items/to-do's that the visiting team prioritized to work on after the exchange. It's also important to create a learning environment for the host as well. Consider providing some time to the visiting team to share something working well in their program.	
Implementation	
Documents needed:	

• Itinerary/tickets • Passports/visas • Any tools or background materials needed to familiarize oneself with	
Accommodation: Where should we stay? Are reservations made and where?	
Transportation: Who will coordinate domestic travel? What's the schedule in terms of locations to visit throughout the visit?	
Meals: Will they be coordinated, or will they be taken care of individually?	

Document observations: Consider the questions below when taking notes. This will make compiling your written report after the visit easier. In addition, we ask that you consider writing a blog post on your experience.
• What are you learning?
• What did you find most impressive about the:
    o Planning of the intervention?
    o Implementation of the intervention?
    o Monitoring of the intervention?
• What steps/components can easily be replicated in your context?
• What challenges in implementing this approach do you foresee given your knowledge of your context?	

• What are possible solutions/adaptations for your context? • What are your next steps?	
Follow-up	
Send any materials promised to hosts	
Send thank you emails/letters	
Write report based on observations made during implementation of the actual visit	
Follow-up survey 1-3 months after the visit to see how the visiting team incorporated any of the learnings into their work asking the following questions: • How have you incorporated learnings from the visit into your work? • What is the change as a result? • Why is this important? • What did you like best about the learning exchange visit? • What did you like least? • What suggestions do you have to make future visits better?	