Short-term mission has taken Christianity by storm. The numbers are staggering. The October 2006 issue of *Missiology* estimated that over one and a half million U.S. Christians travel abroad each year on short-term mission trips. The same article estimated that 2.1% of U.S. Christians participate each year in short-term mission. If the same number of Adventists participate there would be 21,000 Adventists from the U.S. taking part in short-term projects each year.

With this sudden shift resulting in thousands participating in cross-cultural mission there are many unanswered questions concerning most aspects of the phenomenon. For example, youth leaders and youth pastors are often expected to lead short-term mission trips, but what type of specialized training or instruction have they received that will help them develop sensitivity and insight into foreign cultures?

If 21,000 Adventists from the U.S. go each year and if the average cost for each participant is $1,000 the cost would equal $21,000,000 that would be spent each year for travel and other expenses. Does the giving to short-term mission projects affect the giving to other church programs or to the church’s mission programs? Have short-term mission trips contributed to the long stagnation in mission giving in the North American Division?

Does exposure to short-term mission projects increase the number of those interested and willing to go as full-time missionaries? Does a short-term mission trip increase the likelihood that participants will be more active in local outreach than those who have not had such an experience?

Do short-term mission trip participants become stronger Christians who support the local church more than those who have never gone? As you can see there are many unanswered questions concerning short-term missions. This issue of the *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* begins to answer some of those questions, but much research remains to be done. Short-term mission is here to stay so it is important to investigate ways and means of making it even more productive and beneficial to all.

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