

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Supplement 1. Recommendations in the “Guidelines for Surgeons on Establishing Projects in Low-Income Countries” by Grimes *et al* (38).

Recommendation	Detailed description
Identifying partners	Individuals seeking placements should identify appropriate placements that match their skill set using existing programmes
Understanding local needs and resources	The trip must be responsive to local needs. There must be adequate contact prior to the trip between the visiting team and the local medical staff. Identify the local resources available especially for postoperative care such as availability of blood transfusion, colostomy bags, laboratory facilities, radiological services, diathermy and type of anaesthesia available especially in rural areas. Avoid using complex technology in rural settings to ensure sustainability
Training of local health providers and ensuring sustainability	A significant proportion of any trip should be on training local health providers. There should be time set aside to train these staff in patient selection, pre-operative care, the operative technique, post-operative care and monitoring together with the recognition and management of complications. There is a need to ensure training of other medical staff involved in patient care. Consideration should be given as to whether the trip should be multidisciplinary.
Use of appropriate technologies and skills	Focus on training in basic surgical skills, basic trauma skills and perioperative management. Avoid complex procedures in rural areas. Consider designing post-operative protocols using local resources. Surgical trainees accompanying such trips should be able to teach and train or be adequately supervised. The training of local health providers should take priority
Monitoring the quality of surgery	Outcomes must be monitored. Ideally these should not just be clinical but should involve measures of quality of life
Management of postoperative complications	
Costs	Consideration for the financial impact on the host institution should be taken into account and all efforts should be taken to remove this burden, in order to maintain sustainability
Sustainability	There should be regular trips to the same institution over a number of years to ensure capacity building and sustainability. Surgeons should make an effort to understand and interact with local communities and local medical staff in order to gain a better cultural understanding, enhance relationships and develop a true awareness of local need
Working with local and regional training programs	Surgical initiatives should work in conjunction with and in support of local and regional training programmes