

## **Handling Crisis or Emergency with YWAM Teams in Remote Locations**

The following process has been developed in order to help and assist our staff and leaders of bases to respond to a crisis that may materialize with our teams on outreach.

This information has been gathered as a result of several such crisis's that bases have needed to respond to. We would like to point out that more often than not we have discovered our people to be under prepared in a place of trauma often because of a lack of planning, training or a point by point guide to what possibly could be done. This often results in our people feeling overwhelmed and disempowered by the situation at hand negatively affecting those who have been directly or indirectly experienced by such an event.

We are well aware that many of that our African neighboring countries might not necessarily have all such resources mentioned here available to them such as possible travel insurance, never the less these are still advisable to have and therefore should be explored or other possible options.

As these documents remain documents in the working should you feel that there is an item or pointers missing or something specific to your location it would be appreciated if you could please E mail the information to [info@ywamafricare.org.za](mailto:info@ywamafricare.org.za), so that we may add your contribution to the document.

### **There are three important stages:**

- ❖ The home base stage or pre departure stage.
- ❖ The critical/crisis stage
- ❖ The after or ongoing stage

### **Home Stage or Pre Departure Stage:**

It is essential that we put the effort into collecting this information that would be needed in a crisis.

### **A comprehensive data page for each person that outlines the following:**

- ❖ Name as spelt on the passport or ID Document.
- ❖ Passport Number
- ❖ Passport Nationality
- ❖ Expiry Date of passport
- ❖ Copy of Passport and Interntional Drivers License. (This information could be requested by the authorities.
- ❖ Existing visa details
- ❖ Personal cell number of the staff/student
- ❖ Home land line phone number
- ❖ Home cell number
- ❖ Person/s to contact in case of the emergency and contact details such as telephone numbers and E mail addresses.
- ❖ Any personal insurance details
- ❖ Travel Insurance policy number and international contact details.
- ❖ Copy of front page of travel insurance policy.
- ❖ Medical conditions
- ❖ Medication
- ❖ Doctors details.

Once this has been received it should be typed up and checked by the students and the staff who are going on outreach. It is strongly advised that a copy to be left on base with the school leader or training director, another copy to be taken with the outreach leader.

**Should a crisis take place, it is essential that we exercise a 'duty of care' for each student/staff in communicating well to their family as they may not be able to. The following information could assist you in facilitating this care.**

**Travel Insurance Policy.**

- ❖ A well researched travel insurance policy for each staff/student.
- ❖ The policy should be checked to make sure that each student and staff is covered.
- ❖ Copies of the policy should include the front page of the policy schedule including contact details for the insurance company.
- ❖ Please note that if your insurance is corporate then make sure that on the departure of each team a list of each student and staff going on outreach is sent to the insurance company. If they are not listed with the insurance company they will not be insured.

**Handy other information to have who might need to be informed.**

- ❖ Database of national, regional, field and international leaders who would need to be informed. A contact list of YWAM Prayer networks, Body of Christ Prayer networks and so on.
- ❖ Should the region have a Trauma or Crisis Response Team it would be helpful to know who they are and to know who to contact. Have their contact details such as name, telephone no and E mail address handy.
- ❖ Media Personalities: Get advice from close media personalities on what to say, what not to say in various crisis scenarios. How often to communicate? Press releases who and what should be said.
- ❖ It would be wise to appoint someone, with background knowledge preferably, in the team to be the media spokesperson. The team needs to know who this is and that all media related queries to please be referred to the appropriate person.

**Critical or Crisis Stage:**

**Life threatening (Accident, Serious Illness, Threat etc)**

A small but efficient team of senior leaders should gather to take responsibility and work through the details of the crisis.

Delegate responsibilities to each member

- ❖ Set up a communication line with the location.
- ❖ Obtain insurance details and contact insurance company
- ❖ Inform the home base such as the Base Leader, Training Director and School Leader.
- ❖ Obtain family details and make initial phone call to the immediate families – confirm that email details are correct and any other phone numbers that may be helpful over the next few days of the crisis.

- ❖ Make contact with the various embassies if appropriate.
- ❖ Contact the home government department of foreign affairs for advice and guidelines if necessary.
- ❖ Contact your leaders, geographical and regional (and depending on the severity, field and International)
- ❖ Make sure that each conversation regarding the welfare of the team is recorded accurately with a log of all telephone calls being made.
- ❖ It is important that key conversations with the people and insurance representatives be recorded. Include name, date and time of phone conversation for future insurance claims and for YWAM reference in case of review and auditing of the crisis.
- ❖ Continue to communicate with embassies, families, prayer networks and YWAM leadership. In a crisis, depending on its severity, there should be regular updates every 6 or 12 hours to families. Families are deeply comforted by our active involvement in the crisis.
- ❖ Stay with the crisis as long as necessary, until there is a shift and there are definite facts that the crisis has passed. In some cases this would be extended depending on the location and issues of isolation, access to air evacuation, etc for a lengthy period of time.

#### **The After Stage or Ongoing Stage.**

- ❖ This is where communication with insurance companies, written communication, receipts, minutes of decisions become very important. Claims and ongoing care are negotiated with the insurance company at this point.
- ❖ The debrief of the team is also very important and should be planned and anticipated. Experienced YWAM staff should be on hand to work through the trauma of the incident. YWAM Leadership should be involved at this level.
- ❖ Depending on the size of your base or the nature of the accident, perhaps you may need other leaders to come and assist with trauma counseling and care.
- ❖ This should be ongoing communication with family members and assistance offered where we can. This stage could extend to 6 – 18 months.
- ❖ Communication and requests for ongoing prayer for those involved in the incident should be sent through to your mailing list and other contacts.
- ❖ Should the incident have happened on a base or implicated the base in anyway the leadership should exhibit sensitivity and care in leading the base forward. Be aware that some people will have questions “Why did God allow this?” and fear, withdrawal, etc. In those cases they need to be individually helped through that. On the whole though your base is looking for ongoing leadership that is not dismissive of what they have just been through but still looking toward the vision of the base.