

**Department of Family Medicine GEOJOURNAL  
For Predeparture Training for Overseas Clinical Experiences (OCE)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of OCE: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note: The goal of this exercise is to enhance your experience overseas by deepening your knowledge of the country, culture and medical system. Should there be questions which you feel compelled to answer which are not included, please adjust accordingly. If you will be working with a specific ethnic group, and if it is this groups culture and history that is most relevant, please specify that this is what you will be researching. A secondary goal is to increase your familiarization with organisations which document health indices overseas, and you are encouraged to access the World Health Organisation website (<http://www.who.int/en/>) as well as the UNFPA (<http://www.unfpa.org/public/> - see State of the World Population), among others.*

*You are welcome to complete this document in point form, or in narrative form, as you prefer. Again, the goal is to get a comprehensive sense of where you will be going. **All sources should be documented**, and you are asked not to cut and paste your responses from other documents but to synthesize them in your own words. If you find that some questions are truly not relevant to your setting, you can answer them or not, at your discretion, but may be challenged on your choice (for instance, if you are doing a peds rotation, understanding the causes of adult mortality remains relevant to your trip).*

**A. Socio-Demographic Setting**

**1. Geography**

- a. Geographical country description (please provide a map with your country and location of your OCE)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Climate and seasonal variations which might affect epidemiology and/or security (consider rainy seasons, droughts/floods, insect cycles, etc)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c. Location of OCE (rural vs urban, hospital vs clinic, etc)

## **2. Population**

**a.** Please include a population pyramid  
(<http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/pyramids.html>)

**b.** Please complete the following:

**i.** Population:

**ii.** Birth rate:

**iii.** Death rate:

**iv.** Population growth rate:

**v.** Infant mortality rate:

**vi.** Under-5 mortality rate:

**vii.** Maternal mortality rate:

**viii.** Life expectancy:

**ix.** Literacy rate for women:

**x.** Literacy rate for men:

**c.** Is this country producing refugees, or are there refugees arriving in this country? If so, where are they going to/coming from, and why?

**d.** What is the urban vs rural breakdown of the population in this country?

**e.** Is this country experiencing a brain-drain, or a migration in search of labor? If so, what type of labor are people seeking, and where are they going?

### **3. Political Situation**

**a.** What is the political system in this country? If this country was a former colony, when did it gain independence, from whom, and has there been an associated struggle?

**b.** Who is the head of the country, and how is s/he perceived?

c. Please summarize a brief history of this country's last 100 years

#### **4. Cultural Issues**

a. What is the main ethnic group, what if any, are the significant minority groups?

b. What is the dominant and secondary religions? Is religion important in this country? Is the legal system religion-based?

c. What are the main and secondary languages?

d. What is the religious, linguistic, and ethnic make-up in the area in which you will be working?

e. What are the relationships like between the different ethnic groups (ie: is there conflict, discrimination, legalized discrimination, etc)?

f. What is the situation of women in this country, and how might this affect your experience (in dealing with female patients, in interacting with colleagues and patients if you are female, etc.)?

- g.** How does this culture relate to the issues of gay/lesbian/transgendered, or to people of different races?
  
- h.** Are there any significant cultural practices of which you should be aware (ex: dress code, codes of physical contact, practices around alcohol or substance use, etc)?

## **5. Economy**

- a.** What is the currency and exchange rate?
  
- b.** What is the per capita income?
  
- c.** What are the main sources of economic activity (ie: what do most people do for work in the country? In the area in which you will be)?

## **B. Medical Situation**

### **1. Medical System**

- a.** How is healthcare distributed (ie: hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, etc)?
  
- b.** Who distributes is (ie: physicians, nurses, clinical officers, medics, traditional healers)? And what is their level of training?

- c. Is the global brain drain on healthcare practitioners a problem in this country?
- d. What is the funding of the system (ie: two-tiered, public, private)? Do people have to pay for services? For medication?
- e. What is the per capita budget for health?
- f. What percentage of births are attended by a skilled birth attendant?
- g. What is the urban-rural distribution of healthcare resources like?

## **2. Epidemiology**

- a. Nutrition: Please complete the following:
  - i. Staple food:
  - ii. Main crops/dietary items:
  - iii. Rates of breastfeeding:

**iv.** Weaning practices/foods:

**v.** Rates of iodine deficiency:

**vi.** If available, rates of childhood chronic and/or acute malnutrition:

**vii.** Issues around food security (history of drought, famine, etc):

**b.** Please list the 5 most common infectious diseases:

**c.** Please list the 5 most common chronic (or non-infectious) conditions (you may include accidents in this if appropriate):

**d.** Please list the 5 most common causes of mortality for children:

**e.** For adults (separate for women and men if appropriate):

**f.** Please list the 3 most common causes of maternal mortality/morbidity, and reiterate the maternal mortality rate:

- g.** Please discuss any war injuries, land-mine injuries, etc that are important in this country:

## **C. Travel Issues Pertaining to Your OCE**

### **1. Your organization**

- a.** Please discuss the organization with whom you are going. Is it an international or national NGO? Is it a hospital, a community organisation, a university, etc? Please discuss the structure, as well as your role as you understand it.
  
- b.** Please list other NGOs which you may encounter locally
  
- c.** What medical licensing and/or insurance, if any, do you need to work in this country? What tasks will you be legally allowed to perform?

### **2. Your objectives**

- a.** What objectives would you like to meet during your OCE (ie: please list the objectives for your rotation)?
  
- b.** How will you arrange to have these objectives met, and how will we back at Queen's know whether or not you have met them?