

**Pathways To Service
Checklist - Part I**

Positioning Yourself for International Technical Assistance Opportunities

1. *Inventory and develop your skills*

- Consider and identify the substantive areas of law in which you could provide assistance – and keep abreast of developments.
- Do you speak a foreign language? If so, you need to keep your skills current.
- Do you have other skills, such as computer skills, business experience, or experience living overseas?

2. *Assess what you are able to do*

- Consider and identify your contacts in your home community, in the organized bar, in the legal profession, and in business – would they be helpful in hosting a visiting delegation?
- Are you able to travel overseas? If so, for how long – a week, two weeks, longer? Some venues for international technical assistance work are in remote destinations, and regular communications may not be easy to achieve. Are there any restrictions on when you could travel, or how long you could be away?

3. *Undertake some preliminary general preparation*

- Be sure that you have a valid passport. Does it have at least a year's validity remaining?
- Brush up your foreign language skills. Conversational-level ability in a language can be very helpful in building relationships with foreign delegations, and even a few words can be of assistance in establishing a positive and engaging context for your work.

- Broaden your horizons in terms of prospective destinations and regions of the world. International technical assistance work often takes place in countries with developing economies or judicial systems. These can provide the greatest challenges and rewards to the participant, but they may well not be venues that you have previously considered visiting. Have an open mind!

4. *Get involved in the organized bar entities that address international collaboration and exchange*

- Seek out committees and entities within the organized bar and bench, including bar and judicial associations in which you are already active, that are concerned with international collaboration and exchange. Join and become aware and involved in their activities and programs.
- Make known your interest in participating in international technical assistance work, whether through hosting a visiting delegation or traveling overseas yourself, to the entity's leadership.
- Seek out the advice and experience of others who have participated in international technical assistance. How did they first become involved?

**Pathways To Service
Checklist – Part II
Preparing for an International Technical Assistance Project**

1. *Make yourself available!*

- When you are asked to participate in an international technical assistance project, whether in your own community or overseas, do your best to accept! The timing of such projects is often contingent on many factors, and your ability to be flexible and responsive will be greatly appreciated by the sponsoring entity. Be aware that sometimes you can be asked to be available in a very short time frame – even as short as seven days.

2. *Learn about the project*

- Ask the sponsoring entity to describe the goals and objectives of the project. Their perspective and insight is likely to be invaluable as you prepare.
- Ask the sponsoring entity to put you in touch with other judges who have participated in similar technical assistance projects in the same venue, if possible. The more you can learn about what to expect, the better position you will be in to prepare.

3. *Learn about the country*

- Collect and study resources about the legal system and other background information of the country involved. Many useful resources are available on websites maintained by the country's government or embassy, the U.S. Department of State, and non-governmental entities. Helpful resources include:
 - the constitution, statutes, and codes;
 - information about the structure of the government and the

judiciary;

- information about judicial selection and training;
- economic, demographic, and cultural information;
- recent history and current events; and
- maps of the country and region.

4. Learn some basic words and phrases in the local language

- Whether you are hosting a visiting delegation or traveling yourself, learning a few simple greetings and phrases in the local language will help to pave the way for a productive engagement.

5. If you are hosting a visiting delegation in your community ...

- Consult with the sponsoring entity about the professional interests of the visiting delegation. Consider whether local groups, such as bar associations, non-governmental organizations, other courts, or other professional entities, would have an interest in meeting with or hosting a reception for the visiting delegation, consistent with the goals and objectives of the program. Make contact as early in the planning process as possible with any appropriate groups or entities.
- Are dietary restrictions likely to be an issue for some of the delegation? If so, then identify a range of suitable options for casual meals, and alert any group that is hosting the delegation.
- Are you helping to plan the schedule? Be flexible, be sure to leave adequate “down time” for rest, shopping, and cultural activities.
- Consider collecting local mementos as a welcome or departing gift. These not be costly in order to be valued by the visiting delegation members. Transit maps, tourist brochures, and items bearing the logo of a local bar association will be greatly appreciated. A special item,

such as a tie or scarf, for the delegation leader, if there is one, may also be appropriate. Also consider whether you have access to copies of court rules, codes, or other legal resources and references that would make an appropriate gift. Be sure to have a few extras in reserve, in case the delegation proves to be larger than expected!

- Embrace the idea that you are participating in an exchange of ideas, and that you are likely to learn as much as you impart.

6. *If you are traveling to another country as part of a visiting delegation ...*

- Be aware of the applicable travel formalities.
 - Be sure that your passport is valid for any required period beyond the date of your travel. Many countries require that your passport be available for at least six months past your scheduled time in their country. Given the time frames currently required for renewal, do not wait until the last minute to process a needed renewal.
 - Find out whether a visa is available at the border, and plan far ahead if a visa must be obtained before departure. The sponsoring organization may be able to work with the host country's embassy or consulate to facilitate the issuance of a visa.
 - If you are going to require visas for several countries, consider using a visa service to facilitate taking your passport from embassy to embassy
- Are special medical precautions recommended? Inform yourself and plan in advance.
- Look into whether telephone, "blackberry," and internet service will be available so that you and your colleagues and family understand the extent to which you will be able to be in contact by phone, e-mail, and otherwise. While access to these services is common in most parts of the world, they are not universally available.

- Prepare a portable “resource book” of key documents and materials. As described above, many useful resources can be found on the internet, including:
 - the constitution, statutes, and codes;
 - information about the structure of the government and the judiciary;
 - information about judicial selection and training;
 - economic, demographic, and cultural information;
 - recent history and current events; and
 - maps of the country and region.
- Learn about the cultural, historic, and other tourist venues in the vicinity – your hosts will appreciate your interest. But remember that your schedule may allow very little time for such activities, and be sure that your expectations are reasonable. Keep in mind that you are there to do a job; you do not want to come across as a tourist.
- Bring photographs of your courthouse and neighborhood, and if you are comfortable with sharing them, your home and your family.
- Bring memento gifts that are unique to your home jurisdiction, such as your state flag lapel pin, local transit tokens or maps, items from local cultural institutions, and items from local, state, or national bar associations in which you are active. Be sure to bring a few extras just in case the group is larger than you expect!
- Be ready for the unexpected!