

# **LINKS**

## **Study Tours**

**A Resource Pack for Tour Coordinators**



## Contents of Tour Coordinator's Resource Pack

1. [Visa letter template](#)
2. [Sample timetable](#)
3. [Daily diary template](#)
4. [On arrival workshop outline](#)
5. [Financial briefing](#)
6. [End of tour workshop outline](#)
7. [Action plan template](#)
8. [Risk Assessment](#)
9. [Tour certificate](#)

## VISA LETTER TEMPLATE - USE HEADED PAPER

[HOST COUNTRY NAME] Embassy  
[ADDRESS OF EMBASSY IN SENDING COUNTRY]

[DATE]

Dear Sir/Madam,

Study tour from [SENDING COUNTRY] to [HOSTING COUNTRY]

We are arranging a study tour to look at good practice in [TOPIC OF STUDY TOUR] in [HOSTING COUNTRY].

[TOUR COORDINATING ORGANISATION] is making all the arrangements for the tour. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) will be covering all expenses, and providing insurance and return flights for all the participants.

The study tour will be from [DATE] to [DATE].

The participants' details are as follows:

Name	Date of birth	Passport number	Date of issue	Expiry date

I would be most grateful if you could assist the participants in obtaining the necessary visas.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

NAME

[JOB TITLE OF SENIOR MANAGER AT TOUR COORDINATING ORGANISATION]

[CONTACT DETAILS OF TOUR COORDINATING ORGANISATION]

## Sample Timetable for LINKS Study Tours

This is an example for a two week study tour. If the tour is one week you may consider allowing half a day in the middle of the week for the participants to rest.

Date	Activity
<b>Sunday</b>	group arrives and are taken to the hotel by the coordinator
<b>Monday</b>	<b>morning:</b> on arrival workshop <b>afternoon:</b> briefing on the local context by local expert
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>day:</b> visit to host organisation <b>evening:</b> daily reflections session
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>day:</b> visit to host organisation <b>evening:</b> daily reflections session
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>day:</b> visit to host organisation <b>evening:</b> daily reflections session
<b>Friday</b>	<b>morning:</b> visit to host organisation <b>afternoon:</b> reflections on week 1 and planning for Thursday visits during week 2 if appropriate
<b>Saturday</b>	leave free from visits for relaxation - if relevant organise shopping trip or visit to local
<b>Sunday</b>	tourist attractions
<b>Monday</b>	<b>day:</b> visit to host organisation <b>evening:</b> daily reflections session
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>day:</b> visit to host organisation <b>evening:</b> daily reflections session
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>day:</b> visit to host organisation <b>evening:</b> daily reflections session
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>day:</b> if possible leave free for group to nominate organisations to re-visit, or new organisations not covered during the programme <b>evening:</b> daily reflections session
<b>Friday</b>	<b>day:</b> final workshop <b>evening:</b> farewell dinner
<b>Saturday</b>	group departs

# LINKS STUDY TOUR

## Daily Diary

Participant name:.....

Please write your objectives in the space below.

### Study Tour Objectives:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

To help you remember what you have seen and done each day and to identify what you have learned and what you still hope to achieve, please fill in this diary each evening. Use the section for each day to answer the following questions:

1. How did you feel at different times of the tour today? Which bits did you enjoy? Which bits did you dislike?
2. What have you learnt so far in terms of Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes?
3. How does the tour so far relate to your expectations?
4. How does the tour so far relate to your work?
5. What areas need further exploration during the rest of the tour?
6. What questions would you like to ask at this stage?
7. What are your feelings about sharing learning on return?

**Date:**.....

**Date:**.....

## **LINKS Study Tour: On Arrival Workshop Guidelines**

Using the activities below, or any others you have identified, put together a timetable of sessions that cover the key themes of the on arrival workshop. Try to use a mix of different methodologies to keep it interesting for participants. Don't forget to schedule in time for breaks and lunch as well as energisers to keep the group lively.

**Time allowed: 1/2 day**

**Reading for participants: Welcome pack** (provided by tour coordinator)

### **Workshop Objectives:**

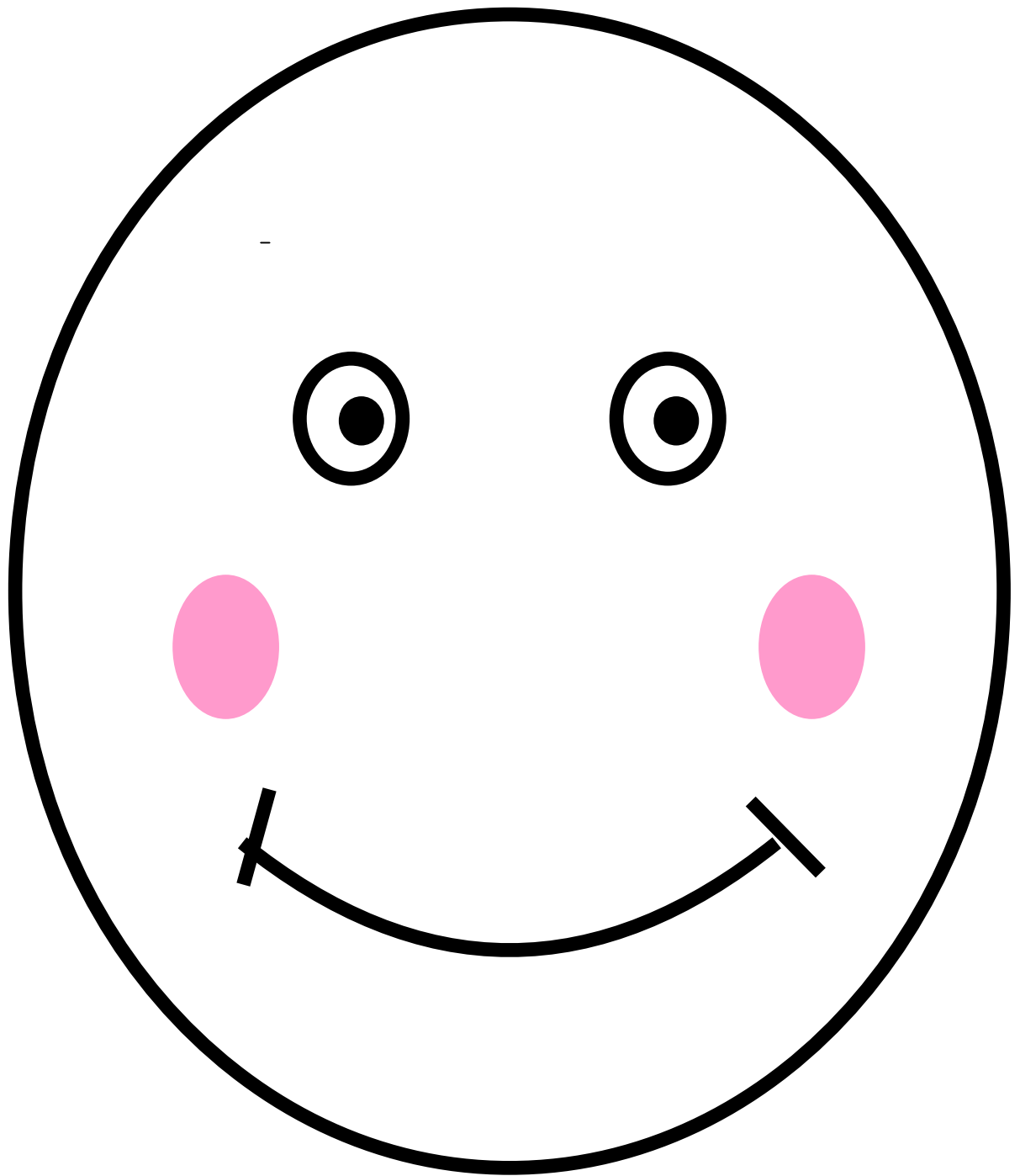
1. For participants to get to know the coordinator and vice versa
2. To clarify the tour programme and logistics
3. To clarify participants' roles and responsibilities
4. To Identify tools for reflection on learning
5. To clarify finances and distribute allowances
6. To provide an opportunity for participants to contact home and/or change money

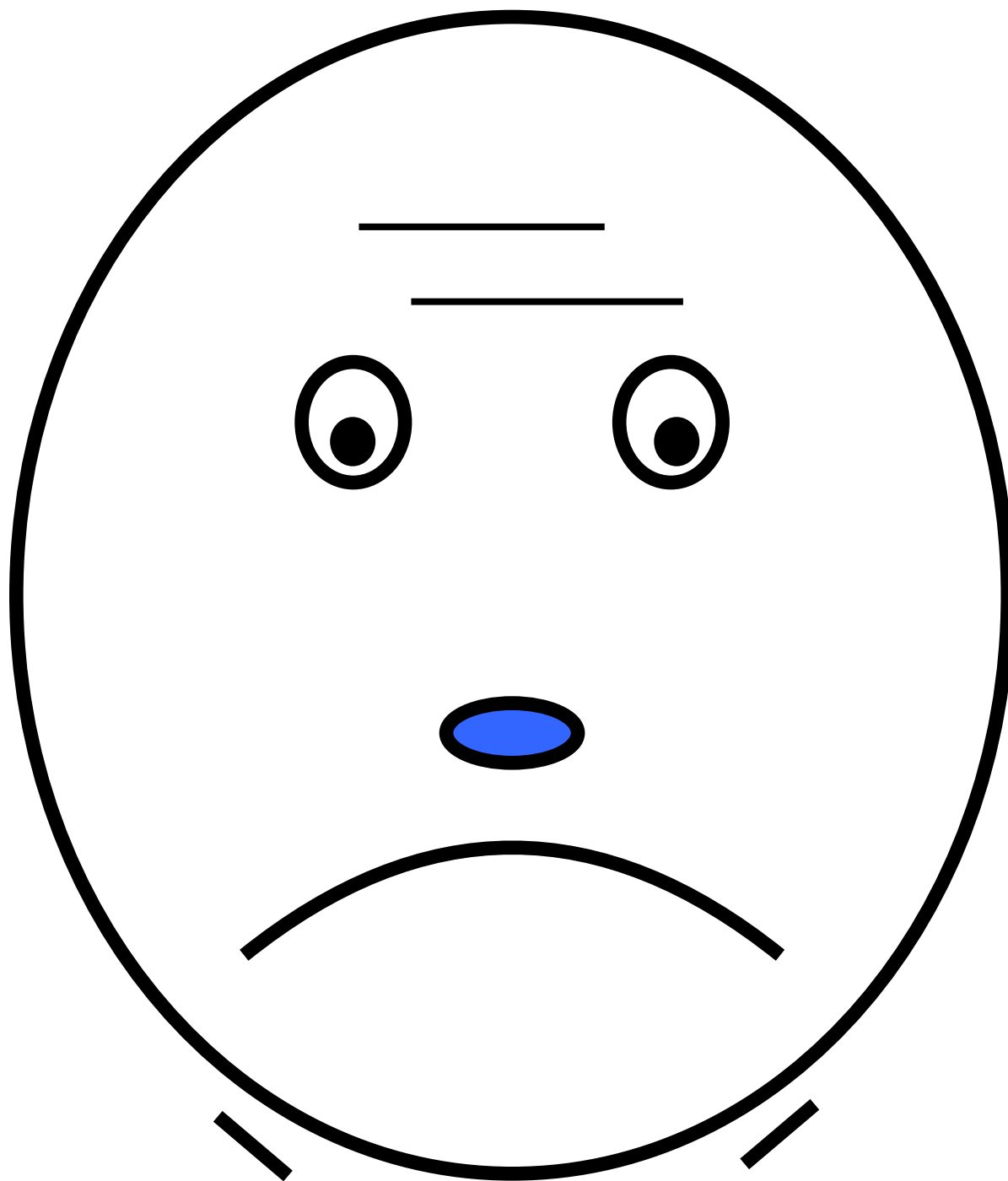
**On Arrival Workshop Outline:** use this as a guide to the areas you need to cover and to help you devise sessions

Theme	Aims	Possible Activities/Methodology	Timing	Resources
<b>Welcome and Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce participants to the workshop</li> </ul>	<p><b>Overview</b> Talk through the two pre-prepared flipcharts of objectives and timetable for the workshop. Please see the list of objectives above.</p>	10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flipcharts of objectives &amp; timetable</li> </ul>
<b>Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For participants to get to know the coordinator and vice versa</li> </ul>	<p><b>Introductions</b> In a circle ask people to introduce themselves (name, country, organisation etc), go round a second time to remind each other of names. Then throw the ball to one person and shout their name as you throw. The person who catches then throws to another person and shouts their name and so on.</p>	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ball or scrumpled ball of paper</li> </ul>
<b>Overview of the study tour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify any last minute changes to the tour schedule</li> <li>For participants to have the chance to ask questions and gain clarity about the tour</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post it Questions</b> Ask participants to note down any questions they have about the tour programme. Ask them to stick their questions onto a flipchart of the study tour timetable where they fit, or on a separate piece of flipchart if they relate to the tour as a whole. Once the post-its are up, group common questions and answer the queries</p>	40 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flipchart of the study tour timetable</li> <li>post-it notes</li> <li>pens</li> </ul>
<b>Overview of Logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform participants about any logistics related to the tour</li> </ul>	<p><b>Coordinator Briefing</b> The briefing on logistics and space for questions should cover the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>transport</b> – give details of how participants will get around during the tour</li> <li><b>emergency</b> – Explain that in case of an emergency VSO staff in the host country and home country will liase to make any necessary arrangements. Highlight that your contact number is in the welcome pack</li> <li><b>medical</b> – Explain that you will support participants to access medical care if required</li> </ul>	30 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>welcome pack</li> </ul>

Theme	Aims	Possible Activities/Methodology	Timing	Resources
<b>Reflections and Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify tools to support participants to reflect on learning during the tour</li> </ul>	<p><b>Coordinator led Briefing</b> Coordinator talks through the importance of daily reflection sessions and also highlights the daily diary and explains how it can be used to process learning each day (see guide for more information).</p>	10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>welcome pack, including daily diary</li> </ul>
<b>Ensuring equal Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants to have thought about equal participation, and how to ensure that it happens.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Team Comfort Continuum</b> Put the smiley face and the unsmiling face a few metres apart, eg on a wall. Explain that the space between the faces is a continuum of how comfortable and confident they feel. Read out the following statements, and ask them to stand between the faces, depending on how comfortable they are – the smiley face being completely comfortable, and the unsmiling face being very uncomfortable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>I feel confident asking questions to the host organisations</b></li> <li><b>I feel confident that I will understand the new ideas that we come across on the study tour</b></li> <li><b>I feel confident why I am on the study tour</b></li> <li><b>I feel confident that the other group members know why I am on the study tour</b></li> <li><b>I feel confident that my opinions (eg in the reflection sessions) are equally as important as other participants</b></li> </ul> <p>After each question, when they have moved into position, comment that everyone has different levels of comfort, and discuss how as a team they can ensure that everyone is as comfortable as possible, and move towards the happy face! Ask them to come up with suggestions, but some possible methods you could suggest could include; going round the group to ask questions while on visits, giving everyone the time they need to understand the issues – don't leave until everyone has finished asking questions, listen respectfully to all questions – everyone's view is equally valid, respect everyone's opinions, learn from each other, discuss what you have seen in an open way, lay the ground rule that 'no question is a stupid question'.</p>	30 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Smiley and unsmiling faces</a></li> </ul>

Theme	Aims	Possible Activities/Methodology	Timing	Resources
<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants to understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the study tour</li> </ul>	<p><b>Group Brainstorm</b> Group to identify the key roles and responsibilities during the study tour. Coordinator to flip chart suggestions. This activity can lead on from the comfort continuum, and include the suggestions raised in that activity. They should also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>timekeeping</li> <li>any specific rules relating to visits e.g. taking photographs of vulnerable groups</li> <li>responsibility to share and learn</li> <li>respect</li> <li>recognising that everyone's opinion is equally valid</li> <li>allowing and encouraging each member of the group to contribute and ask questions</li> <li>minute taking</li> <li>leading group thanks following visits</li> </ul>	30 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flipchart</li> <li>pen</li> </ul>
<b>Finances</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to talk through and distribute allowances to participants</li> </ul>	<p><b>Allowances</b> Coordinator to explain what allowance is given for (see guide) and ask each participant to collect and sign for their allowances for the duration of the tour</p>	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>allowance signing sheet</li> <li><a href="#">Financial briefing</a></li> <li>money</li> </ul>
<b>Housekeeping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to provide an opportunity for participants to contact home or change money</li> </ul>	<p><b>Housekeeping</b> Allow time and opportunity on the first day for participants to access the internet or phone to contact home and if required, change money or travellers cheques</p>	90 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>internet access</li> <li>phone</li> <li>money changing facilities (or transport to the above)</li> </ul>





## Financial Briefing for LINKS Study Tour Participants

During the tour all your accommodation, travel and most meal costs will be covered by VSO. However, you will also receive an on-arrival allowance that you will manage yourself.

In some cases you will be provided with a daily food allowance so that you can buy your own meals in the evening or at lunchtime. You do not need to provide receipts for any allowances you receive, but you are required to sign for the allowances when they are distributed.

Allowances are provided by VSO at the following rates:

Allowance	Details	Amount
<b>On-arrival allowance</b>	An allowance to cover out of pocket expenses such as calling home or buying soft drinks for the duration of the tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ £60 per participant from a different continent</li><li>➤ £30 per participant from the same continent</li></ul>
<b>Daily food allowance</b>	Where meals are not provided, a daily allowance is given to cover the buying of food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ £10<sup>*</sup> per day if no food is provided</li><li>➤ £5<sup>*</sup> per day if lunch is provided during visits</li></ul>

*\* These figures may vary depending on food costs in the host country.*

## **LINKS Study Tour: Final Workshop Guidelines**

Using the activities below, or any others you have identified, put together a timetable of sessions that cover the key themes of the final workshop. Try to use a mix of different methodologies to keep it interesting for participants. Don't forget to schedule in time for breaks and lunch as well as energisers to keep the group lively.

**NB: invite host organisations and other local experts to act as contributors and resource people during the final workshop**

**Time allowed:** 1 day

**Other resources:** Resource Request Flipchart (for participants to note down any resources they would like during the day)

### **Workshop Objectives:**

1. Share impressions of the study tour and 'big picture' learning
2. Share good practice both observed during the tour and from past experience
3. Reflect on the challenges of implementing good practice and begin to identify solutions
4. Begin to identify areas of practice to change and plan how to achieve this

**Final Workshop Outline:** use this as a guide to the areas you need to cover and to help you devise sessions

Theme	Aims	Possible Activities/Methodology	Timing	Resources
<b>Welcome and Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce participants to the workshop</li> </ul>	<p><b>Overview</b> Talk through the two pre-prepared flipcharts of objectives and timetable for the workshop</p>	10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flipcharts with objectives and timetable</li> </ul>
<b>Overall Reflections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For group to share impressions of the study tour and 'big picture' learning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Verbal Feedback</b> Give participants 5 minutes to identify three key phrases that sum up their impressions of the study tour. Go round the group asking each person to feedback their three phrases. The coordinator can make notes and summarise the key themes.</p>	30 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No materials needed</li> </ul>
<b>Identifying good practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For group to share good practice both observed during the tour and from past experience</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post its</b> Individuals or small groups identify good practice and then note it down on post it notes. The post its are then stuck on a flip chart and grouped according to key themes by the participants</p>	45 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>post it notes</li> <li>flipchart</li> <li>pens</li> </ul>

Theme	Aims	Possible Activities/Methodology				Timing	Resources
<b>Identifying Challenges and Solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For participants to reflect on the challenges of implementing good practice and begin to identify solutions</li> </ul>	<b>Flip Chart exercise</b> Small groups are asked to complete the following flipchart				60 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flipcharts with challenges tables drawn on them</li> <li>pens</li> </ul>
		<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Solutions</b>				
		Flip charts are then displayed and participants can add solutions to other groups flipcharts where possible					
<b>Action planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants to begin to identify areas of practice they would like to change and plan how they will achieve this</li> </ul>	<b>Action Plans</b> Participants are asked to complete the following <a href="#">A3 action plan</a> format either individually or working with colleagues. The coordinator should support the groups so that their plans are realistic and concrete.				120 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A3 action plan templates</li> <li>pen</li> </ul>
		<b>Good Practice you would like to introduce</b>	<b>Who will you need to involve?</b>	<b>What will you do to introduce the practice?</b>	<b>When do you plan to do it?</b>		

**LINKS Study Tour Action Planning**

**Names:**

<b>Good Practice you would like to introduce</b>	<b>Who will you need to involve?</b>	<b>What will you do to introduce the practice?</b>	<b>When do you plan to do it?</b>

## LINKS Study Tours - Generic Risk Assessment Checklist

### For Tour Coordinators to consider...

This list is not exhaustive. We have tried to think through potential activities and related risks on a study tour. Rather than loading you with further paperwork, look through the following list of potential activities on your tour, consider the areas listed and then tick to show it has been thought through. There is room for you to add in anything else you have considered. If there are any further activities that are not listed here, that you consider having potential risk then please complete the Risk Assessment Form, considering what measures need to be put in place to reduce risk.

Activity	Control measures to consider
<p><b>On Arrival</b></p>	<p>Do participants know who will be meeting them at airport?</p> <p>Details of accommodation given out?</p> <p>Local briefing – security situations, safe houses (if required), areas to not go to, times to be at accommodation etc.</p>
<p><b>Transport: Day-to-day travel to partner organisations</b></p>	<p>Public Transport (taxi, bus, rickshaw etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarity of where travelling to?</li> <li>- Travelling alone?</li> <li>- Times to be travelling/not travelling?</li> </ul> <p>Local travel company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is this travel company one you've used before?</li> <li>- Do they include insurance in the hire price?</li> <li>- Do all drivers have licenses?</li> <li>- Are there safety belts available?</li> </ul> <p>Prevalence of accidents on roads?</p> <p>Phone number for emergency services?</p> <p>Is a PEP kit available if risk of exposure to HIV?</p> <p>Who would be carrying a medical kit for the tour?</p>
<p><b>Accommodation (hotel, hostel, local homes)</b></p>	<p>Are there locks on doors and safes in rooms?</p> <p>Security guard on reception at night?</p> <p>Area and neighbourhood accommodation is situated has been considered?</p> <p>Nearest police station identified?</p> <p>Fire and smoke warning systems? Emergency exits?</p> <p>Group staying together in one hotel?</p>

<b>Meal times</b>	Variety of foods so that people can eat something? (e.g. hot, Halal/Kosher etc.)
<b>Visits to Partner Organisations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Schools</b></li> <li>- <b>Hospitals/clinics</b></li> <li>- <b>Offices</b></li> <li>- <b>Field visits</b></li> </ul>	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will there be any interaction of participants and children? Children left alone with adults?</li> </ul> <p>Hospitals/clinics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Risk of exposure to infectious diseases?</li> </ul> <p>Offices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and Safety procedures for fire known?</li> </ul> <p>Field visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How far is destination?</li> <li>- Road conditions – are these affected by time of year? any risks?</li> </ul>
<b>Workshop sessions</b>	Health and Safety information given at start of workshop – what to do if there is a fire, warning system for fire, flood, earthquake, times to be back at accommodation at night , no-go areas

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Role on Study Tour \_\_\_\_\_

Position in Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

# LINKS

## Specific Activity Risk Assessment Form

Study Tour:.....

This form should be used for specific activities that could incur a level of risk on a study tour, that have not been detailed in the LINKS Study Tour Generic Risk Assessment Checklist.

The Risk Assessment procedure is intended to prevent injury and ill health to coordinators and participants.

The assessment process involves a straightforward way of identifying hazards, estimating the probability of harm and identifying the appropriate control measures to reduce risk to an acceptable level.

Activity (date if relevant)	Hazards (something that can cause harm)	Who might be harmed?	What's already in place to reduce risk?	Assess level of risk (low, medium or high) and identify further action needed	Signature of person who has considered risk
e.g. Social excursion to Lake Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Travel in Malawi by road</i></li> <li>○ <i>Around Lake – animals, drowning, water sports etc.</i></li> </ul>	<i>Coordinator, participants, driver, other members of public</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Drivers license, VSO insurance</i></li> <li>○ <i>Allocated areas for tourists around lake</i></li> </ul>	<i>medium: illness or accident action: carry medical kit and ensure someone in host PO has details of all travel movements of tour ppts.</i>	



**Sharing skills**  
**Changing lives**

This is to certify that

*Participants name*

participated in the

LINKS Study Tour from..... to.....  
(insert date)

in.....  
(insert location)

*The aim of this study tour was to give  
participating organisations the chance to  
create stronger networks and share learning  
of good practise  
in the field of .....(insert theme of tour)*

*Signed*

Study Tour Coordinator, on behalf of VSO