

# How to Use *Go Tell It* During Your Stint Overseas

## BEFORE YOU LEAVE

### **Step #1: Know the place you're headed to.**

In addition to your agency's training, plow through data from the CIA World Factbook. How big is the country? What's its history? What's the current political situation? What's the religious climate? Read articles about that country and the city or region where you're headed. (Pages 39, 42) Know cultural faux pas. Know and practice greetings in the local language. (Pages 41-42)

### **Step #2: Get your stuff (and your mindset) together.**

Think ahead on how you will report back to supporters at home. Know the Society of Professional Journalist's Code of Ethics: Seek truth and report it. Minimize harm. Act independently. Be accountable. (Page 56) Think through your packing list. (Pages 48-49) Decide on the best photo and video gear for you. (Pages 113-116)

## WHILE YOU'RE THERE

### **Step #3: Look for stories of what God is doing.**

Find answers to the questions: "What is God up to?" and "How can people participate in it?" Think in terms of what God is already doing in that place, even without you there. Identify the monster that God's people are working to defeat. (Page 66) Find the basic human truth within the story. (Page 69) Look for the Other—the person who is usually overlooked. (Page 72)

### **Step #4: Gather stories to share with your supporters. When you decide on a story, take notes, video, and pictures.**

Write a one-sentence statement about what this story is about. (Page 75) Recognize the elements of the story: characters, conflict, resolution, universal themes, redemption. (Pages 76-77) Observe without obstructing. Looking for stories that can be told in a few paragraphs on a blog or in a prayer letter for your supporters. See tips below when you compile these stories.

*Tips for interviewing:* Write down at least five good questions beforehand. Ask open-ended questions—questions that can't be answered with "yes" or "no." Ask "how" and "why" questions to elicit more interesting responses. Prospect for anecdotes and details. Use silence, and don't be afraid of it. Get the basic details right. (Pages 93-94) Record as much sensory detail and dialogue as you can.

*Tips for photographs:* Always be aware of light. Remember the optimum times and places, plus challenges to overcome. Fill the frame. Use the rule of thirds. Find a clean background. Take pictures of real people doing real things. Take scene-setter, medium-range, and detail pictures. (Pages 122-123) Take names. Get permission. Back up your work! (Pages 127-130)

*Tips for video:* Interview the person once before the on-camera interview. (Pages 138-139) Work hard to get high-quality audio. (Pages 150-154) Get plenty of b-roll. (Pages 140-142) Back up your work! (Page 154)

### **Step #5: Check your content for accuracy and safety.**

Make sure all names and places are correct. If you are reporting on a sensitive area, take your cues from the people on the ground. Publish as much as you can, but only as much as the most conservative people with skin in that game will allow. In security-sensitive areas, don't let the strands of *name*, *location*, and *ministry* touch. Pick one and tell only that. (Page 36)

### **Step #6: Share with your supporters.**

As you write or edit stories, keep them simple, with one central point. (Page 150) Build scenes using details and dialogue. (Page 99) Incorporate your interviews, using them to flesh out the scene. (Page 109)

## AFTER YOU COME HOME

### **Step #7: Follow up with your supporters.**

Use the stories you've developed during your stint to explain your work to your supporters.

### **Step #8: Find new people who need to hear these stories.**

Don't limit your stories to your supporters. Take your photos, videos, and articles, and GO TELL IT. See examples of stories of what God is doing at [crossfieldnews.com](http://crossfieldnews.com).

Find more resources and examples of how to report God's stories at [www.gotell.it](http://www.gotell.it).