When A Destination Becomes Dangerous

The Forum's 12th Annual Conference
Navigating the Intersections: The Cultures of Education Abroad
Guiding Questions

1) How do you determine what is really happening in your host nation?

2) Can you mitigate risk and danger sufficiently to sustain a program?

3) How do you communicate the dangers and your response – staying or leaving – to administrators, students, parents, and your partners?

4) How do you successfully transition a program to a new destination?
Panelists

Jennifer Custer: Program Manager, Indiana University Department of Family Medicine Global Health Initiative

Daniel Diaz: Director of Study Abroad, Guilford College

Ivan Villasboa: Program Director, Companion Community Development Alternatives (CoCoDA)
Sorting Perception from Reality

Four

No Three
• Sign up and monitor US Department of State travel notifications

• Maintain close communication with international partners

• Communicate often with International Affairs or appropriate university office

• Closely monitor media coverage of your host country
Mitigating Real Risk and Danger

- Threat
- Asset
- Vulnerability

- Risk

- Accept
- Avoid
- Reduce
- Transfer

Risk
Mitigating Real Risk and Danger

- Trusted, in-country partner, with collaborated risk plan
- Communication with local authorities
- Communication with local community members
- Best practices for travel
  - Trusted drivers / trusted routes / etc.
- Emergency plans organized by leaders and communicated to participants
Communicating Realities, Dangers & Responses

What are some key ingredients for successful communication with:

• Administrators
• Students
• Parents
• Media
Key Communication Actions

- Balance of information (transparency) and mitigating fear
- Staying ahead of trends / issues (as possible) rather than falling behind
- Setting actionable benchmarks
Preparation for risk management:

- **Timeliness:** not too quick to be mis/un-informed and not to slow as to be ineffective

- **Triage list:** have an updated and readily available emergency contact list

- **Practice!**
Transitioning A Program From One Location to Another

What are some steps you can take to make a smooth transition?
Transitioning A Program From One Location to Another

• Develop the academic components of your program in such a way as to be replicable in another location

• Identify an international partner with connections and capacity in other potential countries

• Communicate often with International Affairs or appropriate university office

• Market the transition as an opportunity rather than a loss
Conclusion
Thank you!