

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS



6. Consider the impact of giving ‘things’

Volunteers – volunteer travelers, short- and long-term volunteers – are often inclined to ‘giving things’. Organizations and tour companies may also be inclined to ask volunteers to support a project through the donation of ‘things’. This section is not specific to volunteer tour operators; it is relevant to all social development projects, tour organizers, and travelers who are considering engaging in philanthropic travel.

INDICATORS	VALUES		EVIDENCE	NEXT STEP
Consultation with Community				
- If any items are given, has the community or organization requested those items?	YES	NO		
- Was a needs assessment conducted before introducing any new items?	YES	NO		
Sustainability				
- Are you possibly creating an unnecessary need by introducing new items?	YES	NO		
- Are repair costs, replacement parts, and usability of items (e.g. wells, electronics), taken into consideration? (Some questions to consider: If repair is costly, who has ownership over repair responsibilities? Do those groups have access to the necessary funding?)	YES	NO		
- Has someone been trained to monitor and fix the items given?	YES	NO		
- If an item becomes broken beyond repair, are there ways for this item to be recycled or returned, or will it become unnecessary waste in the community? (i.e. the environmental impact of giving colored pencils to a school vs. plastic markers which will dry up and become non-recyclable waste)	YES	NO		
Distribution Channels				
- Are volunteers educated about the potential effects of giving food, candy, money, or other items directly to individual community members, (especially children), such as creating dependencies, reinforcing discouraged behaviors, or undermining organizational or community efforts?	YES	NO		
- Are volunteers encouraged and advised on how to give things through existing social structures?	YES	NO		
- If things are given to individuals, are there enough for all to share?	YES	NO		