



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**



Voluntourism Best Practices in the Asia-Pacific Region

**Promoting Inclusive Community-Based
Sustainable Tourism Initiatives**

APEC Tourism Working Group

February 2018

Voluntourism Best Practices: Promoting Inclusive Community-Based Sustainable Tourism Initiatives
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Tourism Working Group
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Glossary of Terms

Voluntourism: the combined act of tourism and volunteering, where volunteer services are delivered free at the point of delivery at the destination. The duration of volunteering can last from a few hours to up to one year and can be undertaken by domestic or international tourists.

Tourist: someone who is making a visit to a main destination outside their usual environment for less than a year for any main purpose including holidays, leisure and recreation, business, health, education or other purposes.

Voluntourist: a participant who is volunteering outside of their own community for a period of time that is less than a year and is seeking a touristic experience. Note that in many cases, these people would refer to themselves as 'volunteers' not 'voluntourists'.

Voluntourism organisations: organisations that cater for the voluntourism market. These organisations arrange the trip for the voluntourist. Services range from payment for the activity to a full touristic package including flights, accommodation, voluntourism activities, meals and other touristic trips.

Host organisations: organisations that receive the participant and provide guidance and instructions at a volunteer project, either as a contractual local partner of the sending organisation or as a totally independent organisation, such as an NGO. Hosting organisations often also provide location-related living conditions such as food, accommodation, free-time activities, contact with local community, support and so forth. They also address work-related needs including training, materials, safety instructions and insurance. They usually partner with volunteer-servicing organisations to attract volunteers.

Servicing organisations: organisations that act as brokers, mediators, agents or third-party providers that recruit, manage and support voluntourists. Servicing organisations mainly operate through websites or umbrella organisations and provide steady flows of volunteers to the sending and hosting organisations of voluntourism projects. In doing so, in most cases, servicing organisations host an online portal for voluntourism opportunities, through which they offer, market and sell a variety of activities that are available through sending and hosting organisations.

Sending organisations: sending organisations are generally based in the home economy of the participant and provide information about the project. They usually take responsibility for the recruitment of voluntourists and organise (to various extents) accommodation, travel and free-time activities, as well as provide financial and visa advice. They also provide preparation materials for the participant prior to their departure to the destination. Sending organisations communicate with (potential) hosting organisations and participants during their stay abroad, and in some cases follow up with the participant after they return home. These organisations can be voluntourism specific, or they can be tour operator/travel agents, school/universities, church or religious-based groups.

Host communities: communities who are directly affected by voluntourism taking place in their locality.

Voluntourism activity/programme: a particular activity or longer-term programme that participants are involved in volunteering with in the host economy. Usually activities are themed; for example, building, teaching, conservation, animal welfare, business development, etc.

People-to-people connectivity: refers to the movement of people across APEC economies and the exchange of cultures, skills and knowledge. It forms part of the APEC blueprint on connectivity.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Voluntourism is a fast-growing multibillion-dollar segment of the global tourism industry, driven by tourists who want to 'give back' while travelling and – in many cases – connect with local communities (Figure 1).

Voluntourism can be a powerful tool for tourism and community development. The APEC Tourism Working Group (TWG) seek to determine and initiate best practice in voluntourism to promote inclusive community-based sustainable tourism initiatives.

Figure 1: Voluntourism International Market Overview



Sources: Popham, 2015; Mostafanezhad, 2013; SPTO, 2013; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008; WYSE Travel Confederation, 2007.

Voluntourism **when done well** can add significant value to local communities in member economies and is a source of people-to-people connectivity in the APEC region.

Voluntourism is closely aligned with community-based tourism. It has the ability to bring tourism development to remote places. Voluntourism brings unique opportunities and challenges which, from a policymaking perspective, must be well considered when developing this niche market.

This guidebook will help the reader to harness the opportunities that voluntourism can bring to communities as a force for good while mitigating unintended negative impacts. The guidebook outlines steps on how to initiate best practice voluntourism in the APEC region.

Purpose of the Guidebook

The aim of this guidebook is to help stakeholders (community, government, sending organisations, host organisations and voluntourists) to leverage voluntourism to contribute to sustainable development in their host communities and APEC member economies.

The purpose of this guidebook is to help to initiate best practice voluntourism in the APEC region. The guidebook shares global best practice in voluntourism and is designed to help stakeholders maximise benefits from these activities in the APEC region.

The guidelines are presented in a fashion that allows for interpretation and leeway in implementation across the different contexts that comprise the diverse APEC region.

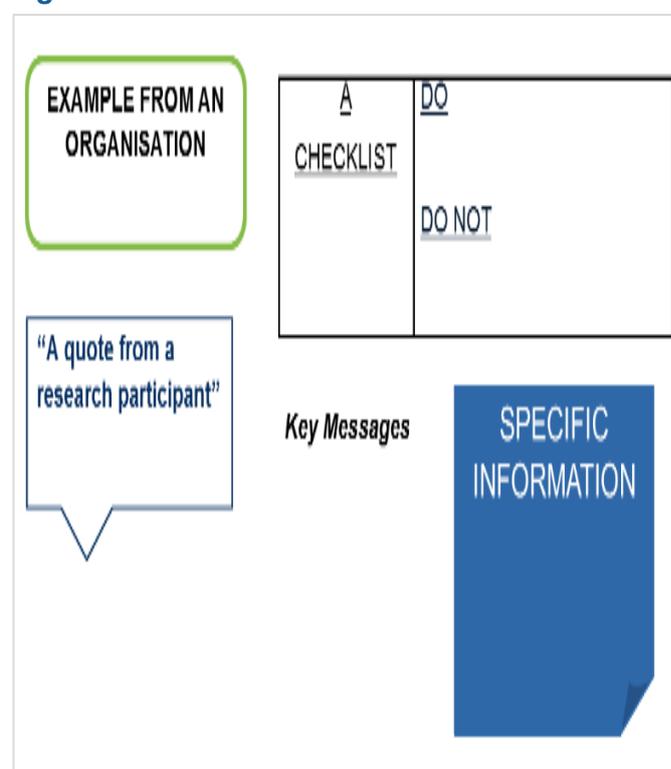
How to use the Guidebook

The guidebook is divided into five sections.

Throughout the text, links to existing key resources are provided that give further guidance on best practice voluntourism (Figure 1). Further resources to assist different key stakeholders implement best practice principles are included as appendices.

Examples of best practice in voluntourism from different settings demonstrate key points and provide further insights. These are highlighted in green text boxes with soft edges. Relevant quotes from research participants are in blue-outlined quotation boxes and illuminate key points. Solid-blue boxes contain further information about specific issues. Checklists containing guidelines for each identified key stakeholder are presented in tables. Significant guidelines for specific activities are also included as tables.

Figure 1: Resources in the text



Section 2: What is it and where do you fit in?

Section 2 defines voluntourism and explains its diversity and broader structures. The aim of this section is to help different stakeholders to understand where they fit within the various elements of the voluntourism chain.

Section 3: Best practice principles

This section includes checklists and resources for each stakeholder to move towards achieving good practice. In initiating good practice voluntourism, both supply and demand factors are taken into account as well as the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.

Five cross-cutting principles are outlined that can be applied by all stakeholders in their attempt to improve the performance of voluntourism. These principles (community empowerment, partnership, sustainability, continuous improvement and 'do no harm'), can be applied in any context or to a specific voluntourism activity/programme.

Reflective questions are included under these five core principles for stakeholders to apply to their respective activities.

Section 4: Voluntourism activities

Voluntourism takes many forms. This section outlines specific checklists that can be applied to particular voluntourism activities/programmes. The checklists outline the key risks and appropriate guidelines for different voluntourism activities. The benefits of certain activities are highlighted, as well as the potential risks they may create.

Section 5: Going forward

An outline of future trends is followed by a reinforcement of the need to share information among stakeholders. The necessity of evaluating and monitoring voluntourism's future performance in the APEC region is highlighted.

How the Guidebook was developed

This guidebook is informed by those actively involved in the supply, management, governance and study of voluntourism across the APEC region. Research was undertaken with informants via an online survey and semi-structured interviews.

Examples of best practice in voluntourism were sourced from around the world to demonstrate what best practice looks like. Best practice cases were sourced using a combination of critical literature analysis and peer referrals by experts during the research process.

A one-day workshop was held in Penang, Malaysia on 9 October 2017 to bring together policymakers and industry to discuss best practice in voluntourism in the APEC region.

SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

What is voluntourism?

In this guidebook, voluntourism is defined as:

The combined act of tourism and volunteering, where volunteer services are delivered free of charge at the point of delivery at the destination. The duration of volunteering can last from a few hours to up to a year and can be undertaken by domestic or international tourists.

Voluntourism combines tourism and volunteering. It is the combination of being a tourist and engaging in volunteering activities (Figure 2). In some ways, the term voluntourism is an uneasy combination of two terms that do not sit well together and is the focus of heated debate within the media and academia. The term volunteering is associated with charitable giving and selflessly providing time and dedication to a project; the term tourism is associated with fun, leisure and relaxation.

Figure 2: Voluntourism



Voluntourism can be a powerful force for good. Voluntourism can be short term (a few hours) or long term (up to one year). It can be undertaken by international tourists travelling long distances across continents, or domestic tourists travelling within their own region or economy.

Among the diversity of the types of tourism (short/long/international/domestic) there are varying levels of community engagement that characterise voluntourism, ranging from no engagement at all to high engagement or total ownership of the project. There are also differing levels of community benefit and outcomes, from negative consequences to positive outcomes. The higher the level of community engagement and ownership, the better the outcomes for local communities.

The key to ensuring positive community outcomes from voluntourism is making sure the activity or programme is well planned and managed in conjunction with local communities. Voluntourism must be well thought out, planned and managed collaboratively with all stakeholders.

SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

Voluntourism differs to volunteerism with the latter associated with longer-term traditional forms of volunteering. There is no well-defined difference between the two terms and there are several grey areas.

Voluntourism has the following characteristics:

- Short term (periods less than one year)
- Organised programme
- Element of leisure and touristic activity
- Being on holiday outside of your own community and volunteering at a destination for any time period under one year
- Element of payment for the activity by the participant to an organisation
- Packaged trips including accommodation, meals, touristic activities
- Sold as adventure and involving some degree of cultural immersion
- Access to communities which a tourist might otherwise not be able to interact with
- A range of activities, including volunteer work, that can contribute to both community development and local economic growth

The voluntourism market

With an estimated 10 million trips per year, voluntourism is a fast-growing sector internationally. **When managed well**, it can be classified as a significant niche market and a form of responsible and ethical tourism.

The voluntourism phenomenon, estimated to be worth over US\$1.7 billion, reflects a rise in those wanting to travel *and* make a difference. Motivations of voluntourists include the transformational effects of connecting closely with local communities and giving back by participating in a meaningful project. Although altruism and a desire to give back can be achieved in your own community, voluntourism gives the experience an element of adventure.

The market is mainly youth (20–25 years) and female, with the second largest demographic being baby boomers. Worldwide, there are more than 800 organisations and 151 countries offering voluntourism projects. The United States is host to the largest number of sending organisations, with Western Europe, the United States and Canada being the top source markets. The average spend per trip is estimated to be US\$2800.

Voluntourism activities

Voluntourism is a diverse industry offering multiple activities that volunteers can do as part of their holiday. When well planned and managed, these activities can benefit communities and the local environment. A basic tenet is to make sure that all voluntourism activities are conducted in compliance with the local laws and regulations of the APEC member economy.

Structuring voluntourism activities to support existing government strategies and local development plans adds value to host communities and APEC member economies. This reassures the voluntourist that what they are doing is making a positive contribution to the local community. An example of this is voluntourism activities that link to education and conservation plans, supporting the completion of short-term outputs linked to longer-term

SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

outcomes. This may be more children getting access to English tutoring, or more research assistants to support goals of a longer-term conservation strategy.

Some voluntourism activities – in particular, working with children, healthcare and medical assistance, and activities involving animals – are high risk and require greater scrutiny and stronger planning and management to mitigate risk. Specific guidance around voluntourism and vulnerable groups is discussed in detail on page 39.

Voluntourism can add value to communities when it supports the achievement of a longer-term community project or goal. It does this by providing resources to projects and initiatives that otherwise would not receive support. For example, with the support of voluntourists, a project that aims to provide solar power to all houses in remote villages in Peru can be completed.

Box 1: Who benefits from voluntourism?

- The volunteer
- Community segments: including school children, older people, women, and people with disabilities
- Project employees
- Wider business sector, hospitality, tourism and services
- Host families/homestays
- Local organisations/local NGOs
- Activity specific, e.g. teachers in schools, school children, locals who get access to new infrastructure, conservation projects
- Government (national/local)

Skilled voluntourists can assist in developing the capacity of local people to achieve a certain goal or fill a particular knowledge gap. This is usually in the areas of business development, access to markets, and healthcare and medical, but can also be technical skills such as computing and engineering. The more time the voluntourist spends in a community, the more engaged and connected they are with local people and culture. When developing voluntourism activities, it is important to think about who benefits (Box 1).

A key benefit in developing voluntourism is the opportunity for people-to-people connectivity and cultural exchange. This is what makes the experience special for both host and guest. Voluntourism can facilitate cross-cultural understanding. To ensure that the exchange is positive, organisations have a role to play in actively facilitating this conversation. If not, there is a chance that stereotypes may be reinforced rather than transformed.

An emerging trend is to shift the focus from volunteering as the primary activity onto cultural exchange and learning about different ways of life. The trip fee goes to help the community and advance community projects, which is the voluntourist contribution. In return, the voluntourist get first-hand access to a particular project/organisation and can ask questions and have candid conversations about issues. This helps move the narrative from 'helping' to 'learning', especially in shorter-term trips. Voluntourism elements including activities are still part of the package; however, they are a secondary focus and there is a stronger emphasis placed on the exchange with the community than the activity itself. In this facilitated exchange and learning, voluntourists are then motivated to support communities and local projects when they return home and are more aware of the complexity of development issues. Travel and altruism still form a key part of the motivations of the voluntourist – to

SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

have a managed adventure as well as knowing that trip fees are supporting meaningful projects.

In the example below (Case 1), GOOD Travel links to a local microfinance initiative 'Investours' that uses tour fees to provide financial aid to local entrepreneurs. GOOD Travel participants, in turn, gain direct access to the staff who run the local initiative to learn about how it works and what challenges they face.

Case 1: Learning about local initiatives

GOOD Travel support micro-investment in Tanzania. 'Investours' in Tanzania uses tour fees from GOOD Travel to provide microfinance aid to local entrepreneurs. GOOD Travel participants meet with investours to discuss and learn about the initiative. Debrief discussion encourages learnings to be distilled, and facilitates conversations between participants and locals.



GOOD Travel: An investours' debrief discussion

SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?



PEPY Tours: Active facilitation and education to foster understanding of complex

Voluntourism in the APEC region

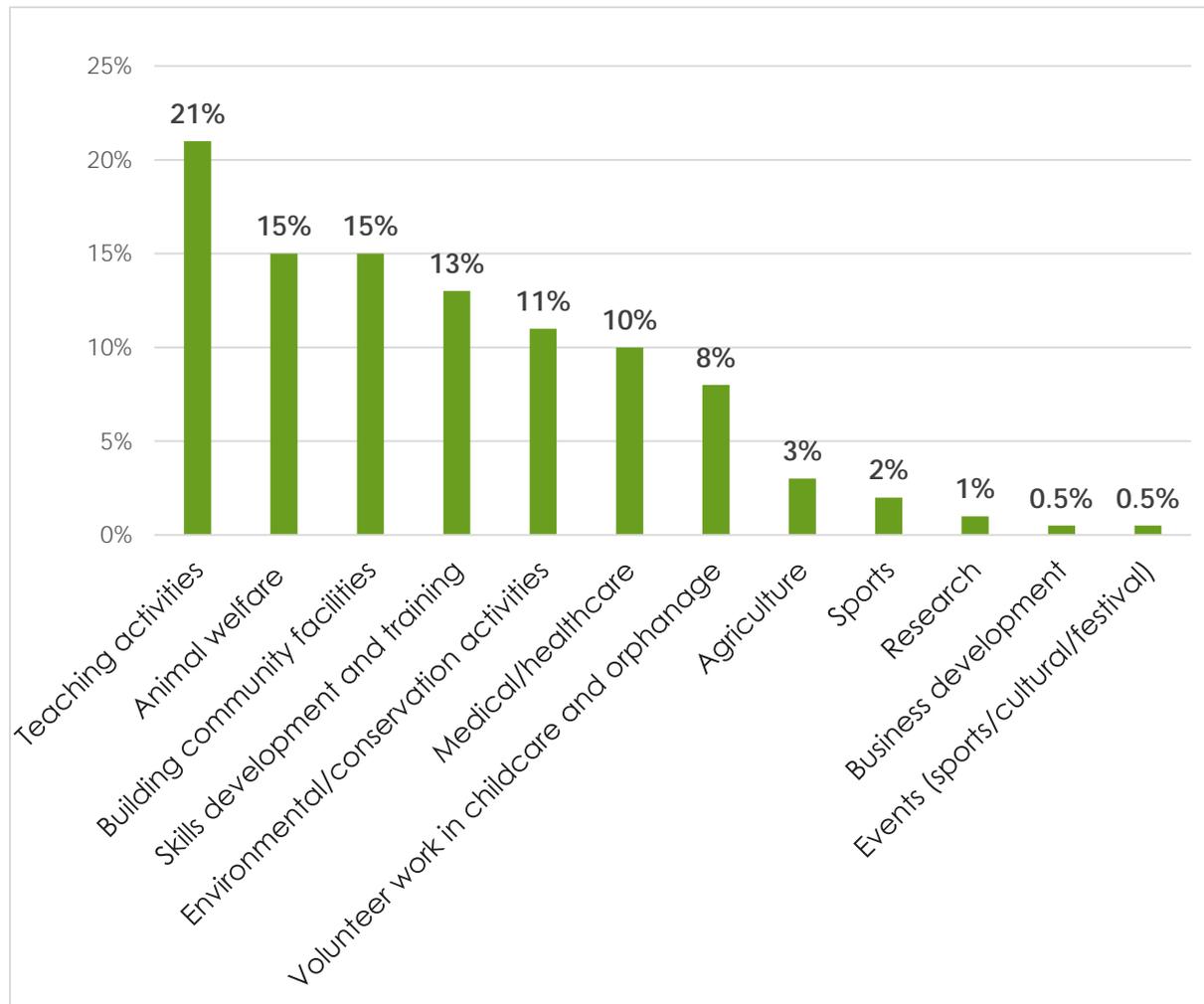
The voluntourism market has grown significantly in the past decade. Two hundred and fifty-one voluntourism organisations (organisations that accept or send voluntourists) and 1408 voluntourism activities were identified across the 21 APEC member economies via an online analysis of organisations and activities. Figure 3 shows the most common voluntourism activities across the APEC region. Other less frequent types of activities include fundraising events for charities such as child and youth education; journalism; museum activities; participation in after-school activities; office work, writing proposals and reports; and social media and website development.

The majority of voluntourism activities/programmes are located in Asia (Appendix 1). The South East Asia region is a significant area for volunteer activities, with almost one fifth of voluntourism organisations operating in Thailand.

Twenty-one voluntourism sending/servicing organisations dominate the APEC region, with ten organisations offering a variety of activities in at least ten of the APEC member economies. These companies (see Appendix 2) send the majority of voluntourists to APEC member economies and are among the world's largest voluntourism sending organisations.

SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

Figure 3: Voluntourism activities in the APEC region (n = 1408)



SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

Supply and demand

Voluntourism is a complex industry, involving multiple stakeholders and partnerships across borders. As demand for ethical and responsible tourism increases, to stay competitive the voluntourism industry will have to shift to meet market demand and rising customer expectations.

Applying best practice principles and raising awareness along the voluntourism chain – on both the supply and demand side – can help to initiate best practice voluntourism in the APEC region. This involves shaping demand; that is, the voluntourist being educated about what constitutes best practice and asking this to be provided by organisations. It also involves shaping supply, and as organisations also lift their standards, evaluate their activities, learn and improve their operations, best practice will result (Figure 4).

“Raising awareness of the responsibilities of organisations and also raising that awareness on the demand side”

– Tour operator

Figure 4: Best practice – voluntourist education and industry standards



In the following example (Case 2), two organisations actively try to shape demand. By providing education for the voluntourist and facilitating learning about their experience, the voluntourist is able to reflect on the complexity of the issues at hand.

Case 2: Organisations taking responsibility to shape demand

PEPY Tours and GOOD Travel are two organisations that are actively taking responsibility to shape customer demand and educate voluntourists on how to best approach voluntourism. PEPY Tours launched a campaign called Learning Service, which produces several engaging and fun online videos and resources for voluntourists. The resources focus on **learning first** about communities and then thinking about ways you can help.

GOOD Travel provides ten tips on how to be a GOOD traveller, blogs for voluntourists to reflect on why they are motivated to be a voluntourist, and links to resources on how to be a better voluntourist. Both organisations share links to blogs and videos for volunteers to reflect on their motivations as well as tips to be a good volunteers and responsible travellers. GOOD Travel shares resources from other organisations such as the ChildSafe Movement, which provides tips on how to protect children during your travels.

SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?



An example of collaborating with child protection charities to educate travellers about the importance of protecting children.



Learning Service: Online resources (videos, checklists, research, articles, blogs, TED Talks) for voluntourists to learn about responsible voluntourism around the world.

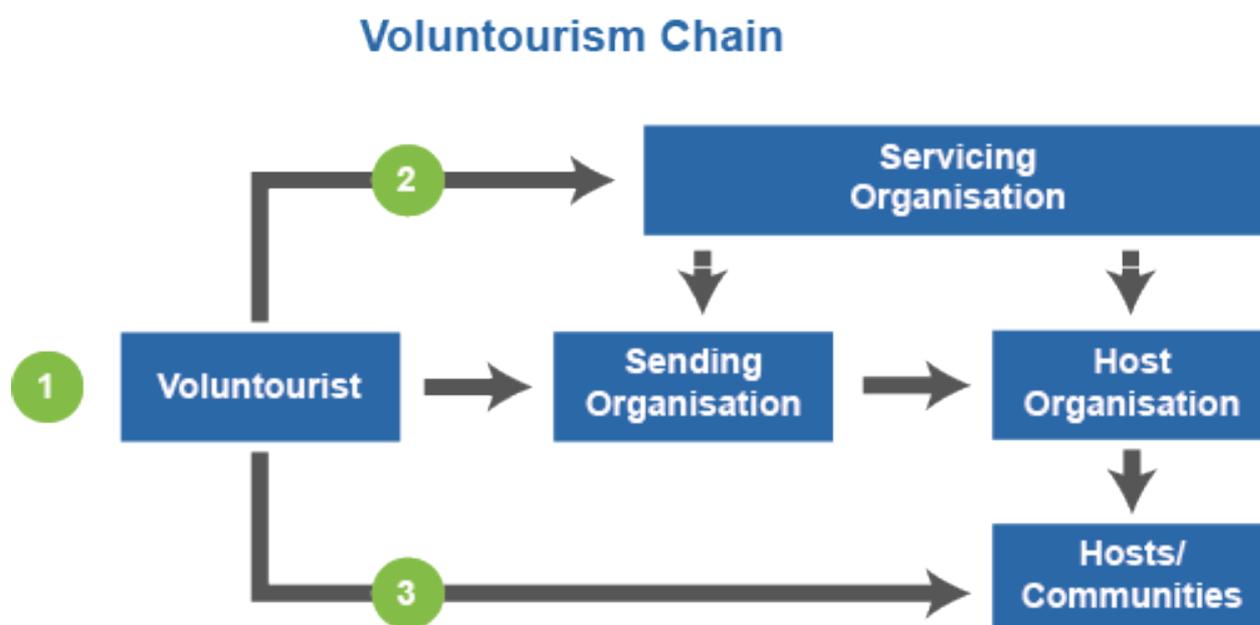
SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

Voluntourism chain

The voluntourist chain outlines three different routes through which a domestic or international tourist can get involved in voluntourism (Figure 5).

1. The voluntourist goes directly to a sending organisation, often based in their economy of residence, to whom they would typically pay a fee to organise their chosen/desired trip. This organisation can be a commercial organisation, a non-profit organisation, an NGO, a tour operator/travel agent, educational institution, church or religious based group. This organisation links the voluntourist to an in-economy organisation (which can be attached or independent of the sending organisation) which organises the volunteer programme/activity. The host organisation then directly links the voluntourist to local hosts and communities.
2. The voluntourist goes to a servicing organisation, an online directory that contains information about sending and host organisations. The voluntourist selects an organisation and deals directly with them to organise their trip.
3. The voluntourist, while at home or on holiday at a destination, engages directly with the local or in-economy organisation. Similarly, the voluntourist while travelling independently can also volunteer directly with the local community or host organisation.

Figure 5: Voluntourism chain



SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

Where do you fit in?

There are six main stakeholders commonly in the voluntourism chain: the voluntourist, the sending organisation, host organisations, government, servicing organisations and local communities. These six major stakeholders directly benefit from voluntourism, as outlined in Table 1. Best practice is achieved when all stakeholders derive positive outcomes, with community benefits being the highest priority of all.

The stakeholders involved in voluntourism have a responsibility to one another. When responsibility is accepted and acted on, then best practice is achieved across the voluntourism chain.



SECTION 2: VOLUNTOURISM – WHAT IS IT AND HOW DO YOU FIT IN?

Table 1: Voluntourism key stakeholders – benefits, roles and responsibilities

<p>Voluntourist</p> <p>Benefits derived: learning outcomes, personal development, connecting with community and other volunteers, meaningful/transformational experience.</p> <p>Role: to learn from the community and develop cultural understanding; to add value to projects that they have selected.</p> <p>Responsibility: to the local community – to add value, learn about their way of life and be respectful.</p>	<p>Sending Organisation</p> <p>Benefits derived: profit, non-profit benefits, sustainable outcomes, mutually beneficially experiences with communities/projects, organisational development.</p> <p>Role: to prepare the voluntourist, package trip, and ensure their safety; organise, plan and oversee the voluntourism activity and ensure that a good experience is had by both host community and voluntourist; liaise with the voluntourist and the community; must ensure voluntourist's safety and prepare them for the experience; must ensure host community's needs are met, and the programme is well resourced/managed and adheres to policies designed to protect community members and voluntourists.</p> <p>Responsibility: to the voluntourist and the host community.</p>
<p>Host Organisation</p> <p>Benefits derived: profit, non-profit benefits, sustainable outcomes, mutually beneficially experiences with communities/projects, organisational development.</p> <p>Role: to organise and manage the voluntourist activities; to liaise with the voluntourist and the community.</p> <p>Responsibility: to the local community and to the voluntourist.</p>	<p>Host Community</p> <p>Benefits derived: economic, social, environmental benefits, new ideas, outlooks and motivation, people-to-people connectivity.</p> <p>Role: to be actively involved in the planning management and oversight of voluntourism; to give feedback.</p> <p>Responsibility: to the local residents and to the voluntourist.</p>
<p>Servicing Organisation</p> <p>Benefits derived: profit, non-profit benefits.</p> <p>Role: to share information and raise awareness of what is best practice and how to be a responsible tourist. This allows the voluntourist to decipher between organisations and ultimately choose one that best fits their motivations. It is important that servicing organisations portray communities fairly in their advertising.</p> <p>Responsibility: to the voluntourist and to the community.</p>	<p>Government (National/Local)</p> <p>Benefits derived: tax/revenue from the tourists and companies, assistance with local and government development initiatives.</p> <p>Role: to share information and provide oversight; to provide advice on best practice to all stakeholders, regulate, and formulate policy.</p> <p>Responsibility: to the local people.</p>

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

Voluntourism must first work for communities but the voluntourist experience must also be considered.

Best practice is ultimately achieved when voluntourism works for all parties, and when both communities and the voluntourist experience is positive, and the interests of both stakeholders are balanced (Figure 6).

“The greatest challenge about voluntourism is to create a positive impact in all the communities at the same time that volunteers learn and improve their skills. We need a balance between these groups.”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

Figure 6: Balancing community and voluntourist interests



Getting value from voluntourism

Adding value

Voluntourism can add value when it is conducted responsibly and ethically. Often voluntourism brings most value when it:

- Addresses a basic community need and contributes to small local projects
- Supports existing local projects, programmes and organisations, and/or NGO activities
- Contributes to achieving outputs that support longer-term strategic outcomes.

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

The potential to cause harm

Voluntourism can be a hindrance or cause harm when it is not well planned, and the voluntourists themselves are not prepared (socially, culturally, physically, mentally). In particular, voluntourism can have negative impacts when:

- When the project involves short-term unskilled volunteering with vulnerable groups such as children in residential care/orphanages. (See Box 5, page 47 **Box 5: A note on voluntourism with regards to orphanages and residential care** for further information.)
- When involving animals without due thought to animal welfare principles.
- The voluntourists are not skilled or experienced for the jobs assigned to them.
- It is short-term and does not contribute value to the locals or project; thus, the voluntourist becomes an operational and financial burden on the organisation and/or community.
- The community has been overlooked and projects do not address identified needs, and locals are not engaged or involved with the project.
- When voluntourists and organisations are not prepared, and do not fully grasp the local context or culture and then cause offence.
- When money is given to one party and this causes imbalance of power within communities.
- When the project involves children and there are inadequate controls and child protection policies in place.

Get quality voluntourists

Getting quality voluntourists for projects is vital to maintain good relationships with communities and ensure that value is received from voluntourism activities. Organisations can facilitate the recruitment of quality voluntourists by:

- Managing voluntourist expectations – ensuring the voluntourist knows what is expected of them, and that they will be contributing to a project within a team. This includes tempering expectations about what the voluntourist will be able to achieve in the short time they are contributing to the project
- Screening/vetting of voluntourists – police checks, references, interviews for voluntourists, asking for CVs and/or expressions of interest
- Providing pre-trip preparation and training for the voluntourist – including understanding the cultural background and context at the destination, expected behaviour, details of what they will be doing and for how long, and what is expected of them
- Linking voluntourist skills and experience to specific projects
- Creating a position description for the role so that people and skills can be better matched to projects
- Looking for and actively encouraging soft skills such as communication, relationship building, team work, reflective practice/learning and a positive attitude.

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Community value

For local communities to get value from voluntourism, it is vital to reflect first on what is needed and what voluntourists can contribute. A community needs assessment forms part of this process. In particular, it is important for community members to reflect on how the addition of voluntourists to the community will affect local social dynamics. This is particularly the case when deciding how the money from voluntourism will be distributed; for example, who gets the money from voluntourism and who does not? Also, is there transparency on how the money is distributed and used? For instance, if voluntourists wish to donate money or gifts to one child or family, this can create tension when some gain and others do not. To overcome such challenges, strategies need to be implemented *before* voluntourists arrive. For example, communicating what resources are needed to organisations and voluntourists, and then establishing a community library where gifts such as books and pencils, footballs and so forth can be donated, stored and shared.

Stakeholder checklists

The following checklists outline key guidelines for each of the six stakeholder groups – the do's and do nots to keep in mind when engaging with or planning for voluntourism. Further resources to support each stakeholder group to work towards a positive impact from voluntourism are included in Appendix 3.



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For the voluntourist, the focus is on responsible travel – being conscious of expectations, respectful of local culture and customs, and mindful of conduct and behaviour (Table 2).

Table 2: Key guidelines for the voluntourist

Voluntourist	<p><u>DO</u></p> <p><i>Be reflective</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Know what is involved and what is expected of you ✓ Understand what your contribution will help to achieve ✓ Understand that your contribution is a small part of a longer-term achievement ✓ Add value and leave preconceived notions at home ✓ Research and learn about what good voluntourism entails and ask questions of the organisation about steps they take to achieve this ✓ Choose a good project that matches your skills and experience ✓ Do research on the project and the economy before you leave home <p><i>Be respectful</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Of local people ✓ Of how communities are portrayed to the outside world by social media ✓ Of local community culture and customs, including what is appropriate in terms of dress and behaviour ✓ Understand the context and culture of the community/economy ✓ Work in partnership, and as part of a team ✓ Adhere to organisational policies and codes of conduct <p><i>Be positive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adopt a positive learning attitude <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Assume that you will be able to make a large contribution; understand that your short time assisting with a project is part of a longer-term goal ✗ Bring gifts for families or children without first checking with the organisation about what is appropriate ✗ Behave or dress in ways in ways that might be offensive to certain cultures ✗ Assume that you know better than local people
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Sending organisations have a responsibility to both the voluntourist and the host community and/or host organisation to ensure both share a positive experience and derive benefit from the interchange (Table 3).

Table 3: Key guidelines for sending organisations

Sending Organisation	<p><u>DO</u></p> <p><i>Be transparent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In terms of organisational values, aims, objectives, financials and impact reports <p><i>Be honest</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ About the type of experience a voluntourist might have and expectations of voluntourists in terms of behaviour and roles ✓ With marketing and selective in the use of issues – do not market poverty <p><i>Be collaborative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ With local communities, organisations, businesses and governments ✓ Create a programme that addresses a genuine community need, with engagement and collaboration with the local community ✓ Work with existing <u>reputable</u> local projects and initiatives ✓ Work with child protection agencies to protect vulnerable people <p><i>Plan and evaluate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adhere to government and local laws ✓ Ensure adequate supervision of voluntourists by an in-economy member of staff ✓ Create a sustainable programme including exit planning ✓ Communicate well with all parties ✓ Support and prepare voluntourists (before, during and after) including pre-trip information, and post-trip feedback and reflection ✓ Evaluate and reflect on programmes, adapt and improve as an organisation ✓ Regularly vet hosting organisations for compliance with policies <p><i>Provide quality voluntourists</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Always conduct due diligence when selecting voluntourists – including interviews, reference and background checks <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Create projects without community consultation and support ✗ Market poverty for advertising purposes ✗ Create situations that put vulnerable people at risk; in particular, do not have short-term voluntourism in residential childcare and/or orphanages
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	× Operate without implementing policies that protect community and voluntourists
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There are several questions that sending organisations can ask themselves when developing voluntourism initiatives (Box 2).

Box 2: Questions for voluntourism organisations

- Does the project support local project and needs?
- Have you contacted a local community member/leader or existing project?
For example:
 - Village chief
 - National tourism office
 - Local NGO
 - Community group/project
 - Local school head teacher or local educational authority
 - Local government entity
- Have you worked collaboratively with the community to identify how the organisation and programme will add value?
- Have you completed a community needs assessment?
- Do you have a roadmap and an agreed plan with the community of how volunteers can help?
- Do you have a system in place to ensure both volunteers and community expectations are realistic?
- Do you have local teams to manage volunteers?
- Do you measure the impact of your work? For example:
 - Community benefit/impact
 - Economic income to community
 - Social and environmental impacts
- Do you share findings with local community?
- Do you spend time to reflect on operations with the community and your volunteers?
- Are you aware that certain voluntourism activities that are higher risk and can cause harm?
- Do you have measures in place to minimise risk?

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An example of a best practice in financial transparency comes from People and Places, an awarding-winning voluntourism sending organisation. In this example (Case 3), the organisation shows where the voluntourist fee goes on a voluntourism trip to Peru and is clear on what is actually included. The organisation has a pricing policy that voluntourists can access and an exact breakdown of the fee, supplemented by an explanatory video. There is also a link where families and friends can donate money to the local project. The example is outlined in a format that other organisations could easily replicate.

Case 3: Transparency in financials – where does my voluntourist fee go?

£1425 for 32 days full board accommodation.

Read about our costs and pricing policy [here](#).

Watch an explanatory interview with programme director.

Included: all in-host economy transfers, accommodation and meals, full local orientation and training, project and placement liaison.

How your money is spent – based on 4-week placement duration:

£845 – direct costs in Peru (airport transfers, in-host economy transportation during work on the project, accommodation and meals, orientation)

£350 – project management, liaison and supervision in Peru

£130 – project contribution in Peru

£100 – people and places fee

Not included: flights, insurance, visa costs, personal expenses such as phone calls, medical expenses, etc.

If you or your friends and family wish to make further donations to this project, [CLICK HERE](#).

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Host organisations play an important role in organising and managing voluntourism activities in economy. They liaise with and have a responsibility to both the local community and the voluntourist. Key guidelines for host organisations are focused on being transparent, collaborative, and having good communications to ensure the in-economy logistics work well (Table 4).

Table 4: Key guidelines for host organisations

Host Organisation	<p><u>DO</u></p> <p><i>Be transparent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In how the project will benefit the community ✓ In how the benefit is shared among the community <p><i>Be collaborative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In working with community, voluntourists and organisations <p><i>Plan and communicate well</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Articulate needs and the expectations of voluntourists and sending organisations ✓ Plan projects and activities to be sustainable in the long term and provide adequate supervision ✓ Review programmes and evaluate their impact ✓ Set relevant policies in place, including resources needed to support voluntourists ✓ Provide local leadership ✓ Screen voluntourists to see if they will be a good match with the project ✓ Have procedures in place for health and safety of community members and voluntourists <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Have voluntourists work on projects that they are not suitable for or do not have the skills to do ✗ Put vulnerable people in a position where they could be harmed. In particular, do not provide short-term voluntourism in residential childcare and/or orphanages
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Government, both local and government, has a role to play in the protection of local people in voluntourism and ensuring better standards. This involves sharing information and supporting programme monitoring and supervision of high-risk activities. A key role for government is to provide best practice advice to stakeholders. Guidelines for government are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5: Key guidelines for government

Government	<p><u>DO</u></p> <p><i>Be supportive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Of industry and communities in sharing information on best practice and helping to evaluate programmes ✓ Assist communities and organisations to link voluntourism to local or government initiatives, plans and strategies ✓ Provide sending organisations with information on economy-specific regulation ✓ Help to prepare the community for voluntourism, ensure they have the infrastructure to support the programme, and advise to start small and experiment before growing larger ✓ Support the transition away from voluntourism in orphanages and residential care to community-based support <p><i>Provide supervision</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Oversee high-risk voluntourism activities – childcare, medical and healthcare, and animal welfare ✓ Provide a level of support and leadership to the voluntourism industry ✓ Promote community development through the implementation of best practice ✓ Compile and keep a register of reputable local organisations/NGOs and community projects that can benefit from international or domestic voluntourists <p><i>Share information on best practice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Communicate best practice to stakeholders ✓ Gather information about voluntourism operations in your APEC member economy <p><i>Evaluate impact</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Undertake independent assessments of voluntourism programmes ✓ Provide mechanisms for community to provide feedback about voluntourist tourism planning and implementation ✓ Support objective research into impacts of voluntourism in local communities <p><u>DO NOT</u></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Support or encourage short-term voluntourism in residential childcare/orphanages
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Servicing organisations can help to initiate best practice by sharing information on how to be a responsible voluntourist. Key guidelines for servicing organisations relate to responsible and ethical behaviour, and not advertising poverty when marketing various voluntourism organisations (Table 6).

Table 6: Key guidelines for servicing organisations

<p>Servicing Organisations</p>	<p><u>DO</u></p> <p><i>Be responsible</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ By promoting best practice information and resources through online platforms ✓ Assist with matching voluntourist skills to projects ✓ Help to educate voluntourists and provide simple information about how to be responsible and how to select a good organisation ✓ Ask organisations to provide evidence of best practice; for example, partnering with child protection charities and organisations <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Support organisations that market poverty ✗ Support organisations that have networks that might lead to child exploitation and trafficking
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Community: Host communities play an important role in voluntourism with responsibilities to both local residents and the voluntourist. Communication and collaboration with partners and stakeholders are key guidelines for community (Table 7).

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Table 7: Key guidelines for host communities

<p>Community</p>	<p><u>DO</u></p> <p><i>Be leaders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be an educator for the voluntourists to allow them to learn about local culture and customs ✓ Ensure host and sending organisations know what the community needs are and what is acceptable practice ✓ Ensure community leadership and consultation; for example, village chiefs are engaged and consulted <p><i>Be collaborative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be collaborative in working with voluntourists, sending and host organisations ✓ Be clear about what is required and acceptable in the communication with stakeholders ✓ Work with voluntourists on projects <p><i>Be reflective</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluate the impact of activities/projects and communicate this back to organisations ✓ Reflect on the need for voluntourists, including what skills are required, how many are needed and how long each voluntourist should stay for <p><i>Plan and evaluate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Establish a list of community assets and requirements, including gaps and maintenance needs, and clearly articulate these ✓ Communicate needs to voluntourist, sending and host organisations ✓ Plan logistics, including resources to support voluntourists ✓ Make voluntourists feel welcome; put processes in place to welcome new voluntourists ✓ Ensure health and safety of voluntourists; implement policies ✓ Advise community members why voluntourists are around and what they are likely to achieve <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Create ‘busy work’ for voluntourists — ensure that voluntourists are working on a project that will be a positive contribution to the community ✗ Disengage from voluntourism; ensure there is a high level of community engagement including if it is working or not ✗ Put children or vulnerable people in a position where they could be harmed ✗ Support or encourage short-term voluntouristing in residential childcare/orphanages
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Cross-Cutting Principles

In addition to the key guidelines outlined above, we can identify five key cross-cutting principles for every stakeholder to apply in all voluntourism projects and contexts. The *key messages* from each principle are highlighted in black italicised text.

1 Community empowerment

The number one tenet of voluntourism best practice is to ensure that the host community is prioritised above all other stakeholders. Best practice voluntourism focuses on empowering communities to develop sustainably by providing much needed assistance to build local capacity (finances/skills/human resources) rather than creating an ongoing dependence on voluntourism. When voluntourism meets a genuine local need, there is satisfaction for the voluntourist that they are making a difference, and for the community that a need is being met.

Voluntourism organisations can work with local communities by engaging with local leaders. These often include both official leaders such as village chiefs as well as other unofficial community leaders. Other ways to engage communities is through local NGOs, charities or community groups already working on a project in the area.

To create a voluntourism programme that is of genuine benefit to a local community, organisations need to work together to ensure a level of engagement or better long-term community ownership of a project. This involves jointly researching and identifying community needs, communicating requirements and, where relevant, assigning and matching voluntourists to projects.

When community is clearly identified as the first priority, voluntourism has the following features:

- Community leads the identification of *genuine* needs.
- Projects are designed so that voluntourists work alongside locals and do not replace local jobs.
- The core objective of voluntourism programmes address the needs and priorities of local people and their environments.
- The community is actively involved in the development of voluntourism projects and the benefits derived from them.
- There is a high level of community engagement and input into the project; for example, the organisation of voluntourists, including support and training.
- There is an element of ownership, or total local leadership of the project
- The operations of voluntourism programmes do not jeopardise the fundamental needs of the local community such as access to local resources, land rights or intellectual property protection.
- Voluntourism projects support existing local or government projects initiatives and provide support where it has been identified as needed.
- Voluntourism activities have local economic linkages, such as supporting local markets, food and accommodation.

“The most successful organisations solve local problems. Fix a problem and then set it up so the community can continue.”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

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Work with the local community

The following example demonstrates how voluntourism is supporting a community initiative, meeting identified needs as well as connecting to the local economy (Case 4).

Case 4: Voluntourism supports community initiatives

People and Places is a sending organisation with links to, among others, a local community NGO in Cambodia. The NGO clearly identified needs as well as where and how volunteers could provide support. The NGO is run as a locally registered, non-religious, non-political organisation and is managed by a committee of local village representatives, staff representatives and expat founders, with the majority of staff being local. The NGO supports children and young adults in remote rural communities who rely on subsistence living. The NGO organises English teaching, sports and arts, plus vital community support such as providing rice, clean water infrastructure, and sanitation including hygiene packs. The NGO also provides micro-loans and supports the development of small business.

Voluntourists sent by People and Places are incorporated into the NGO programmes based on the voluntourist's skills and where they can add value. For example, volunteers can provide assistance to teaching staff, offer practical help such as arts and crafts, and maintain a facility. Skilled volunteers are identified to help in targeted areas. A minimum commitment of four weeks is required in most cases and volunteers stay at a locally owned guesthouse. A portion of the volunteer fee goes directly to support the NGO and volunteers buy their own food locally. Volunteers are supervised and the cost of their supervision is incorporated into the cost of their trip.

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Case 5 represents an example of community-led voluntourism in rural Thailand.

Case 5: Community-led voluntourism

Warm Heart is a grassroots organisation based in rural Thailand which aims to empower rural Thai villages through community-based initiatives. The main focus of these initiatives is to foster equal educational access and create economic opportunities that provide jobs and sustainable livelihoods to low-income families. The organisation is staffed by locals and the Board comprises mainly Thai citizens. Voluntourists are recruited through the Warm Heart website and various servicing organisations. Voluntourists complete an online application form outlining their skills and experience. The organisation prioritises applications to address local needs. These needs include developing micro-entrepreneurship; supporting children to develop language skills, specific skills or sports and education; environmental conservation; organic farming; and providing assistance to local people who are older and/or disabled (for example, home visits to support those unable to live off the state pension). Where volunteers have specific skills, such as business development, they provide assistance with micro-entrepreneurship. There is a minimum commitment of three months. Voluntourists are supervised by coordinators and assigned various tasks. The key benefit that the local organisation gets from the volunteers is the funding that they provide to support important initiatives that address local needs.

2 Partnership: build trust and relationships

A central best practice principle is to build partnerships, based on trust and good working relationships. This will develop long-term understanding between organisations and communities.

In some instances, the money that voluntourism brings can lead to corruption, and the creation of 'busy work' where projects are dreamt up solely for the purposes of the tourist dollar rather than benefit to the community. In order to look at the genuine needs of the community, the organisation and the voluntourist, it is important to have good relationships and build trust between stakeholders.

It is especially important for organisations and communities to have trust in one another. This requires organisations to vet and employ reliable, trustworthy staff who have good social skills – people who can create professional working relationships with others. Similarly, those who engage with voluntourism projects from the community need to be trustworthy and well regarded locally.

“Form a strong bond with the community and listen to them. Find out what really needs to be done rather than coming in saying, ‘Our volunteers want to do this.’”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

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Communities will have changing needs. By having strong relationships and trusted community leaders proactively engaged, projects and activities can be altered accordingly.

Effective partnerships between organisations and communities have the following features:

- An equal and balanced relationship between community leaders and organisation staff
- Clear communication and feedback mechanisms between all parties
- Values alignment between the community and the organisation
- Organisations providing local staff in-economy to meet with local representatives and help to organise voluntourists
- Trust between local organisations and offshore organisations
- Having conversations about how a partnership can work with a local organisation or community, and outlining how voluntourists might be able to help to solve a local problem or support an existing initiative
- Organisations working alongside communities to develop project aims and objectives
- Engaging the community in a discussion about what sort of voluntourists they would like to receive, including desired types of people who are, for example, 'open to learning', 'hard working', etc. This will help to prepare position descriptions and better link people to projects
- The expectations of all parties are clear, including voluntourist, sending organisation and community

“There are huge benefits when done properly, but if that balance isn’t right... You need to genuinely look at the needs of both and minimise risk for both. It’s constantly in flux, hosts having changing needs.”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

“Maintain the engagement and interaction between operators and government representatives, to share and exchange ideas and best practices.”

– Government official

DO NOT RUSH IN: Spend time to develop trust and build relationships with communities and host organisations. Research local needs and find ways that the project can add value.

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Case 6 shows how voluntourism is linked to government initiatives (conservation, heritage, tourism). The example, from Malaysia, shows how a government-led voluntourism initiative is actively linking activities to advance government plans.

Case 6: Linking to APEC member initiatives – Malaysia government-led

Led by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, the programme *1Malaysia Voluntourism* aims to “foster the spirit of volunteerism in contributing to the growth and progress of tourism and cultural sectors”. Malaysia has a cross-sectoral National Voluntourism Council based on three principles: (1) Do not cause harm or create problems, (2) Create business opportunities for communities, and (3) Adhere to ISO and standard guidelines for operations. The government-led voluntourism programme links to and helps to advance government initiatives in social work, conservation and culture. The social work programme is linked to health, education and economic business development including community-based activities with the volunteers. The conservation activities are aligned to projects in national parks, marine parks, wildlife rehabilitation and conservation centres, zoos and natural heritage sites. The activities around culture include working with heritage bodies, assisting with cataloguing heritage assets, traditional food and cuisine, and linking to traditional lifestyles. Packages aimed at the international market will be from one week to three months in duration and link in with tourism initiatives such as community-based tourism strategies and existing homestay networks.

Malaysia began the programme with domestic volunteers, mainly the youth market linked to schools and universities. This allowed for local communities to become more familiar with the concept of volunteering. It also prepared their young people to be hosts to international voluntourists.



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The example given in Case 7 demonstrates how voluntourism can support local initiatives and how voluntourists derive value from learning and supporting local initiatives.

Case 7: Linking to existing locally led initiatives – indigenous women business development

A micro-finance organisation in Oaxaca, Mexico provides interest-free microloans to indigenous women, in addition to business training, support and more. These microloans are funded from tours into the communities where the women borrowers are from. The women share their stories with the tourists, and tourists can ask questions about local culture and practices. Each tour fee goes into the loan pool. Tourists leave with a more nuanced understanding of the women and their communities. Volunteers able to commit six months or more of their time can assist with marketing and business – for example, photography, loan administration and accounting data – and teach classes in the communities.

3 Sustainability

Voluntourism must advance sustainable community development. Sustainability relating to voluntourism is three-fold. Firstly, on a basic level there must be sufficient resources to support the project activities and the voluntourists. Secondly, the project must empower communities by providing support to advance a longer-term community goal or solve an identified problem. This can involve capacity building where there is an identified gap and providing resources that have been identified as required in the planning of a project. Voluntourism can support existing initiatives that are in need of resources to start/continue/advance operations. Lastly, voluntourism is sustainable when it has linkages to the local economy and supports sustainable business development; for example, local homestay initiatives, sustainable tourism and accommodation providers, microenterprise such as handicrafts, and local food markets.

The programme addresses a genuine need

To ensure projects are sustainable and meet local needs, they need to be well planned from start to finish.

Community needs assessment

The first step, if not linking to an existing project already underway, is a community needs assessment. In collaboration with local community, this involves identifying needs and where voluntourists can add value. Part of this process is ensuring that the project has the support and engagement of the local community.

Thorough planning of the project

The second step is thorough planning around what is needed to achieve aims and objectives. This might include where the project could link to or support existing local initiatives, or where capacity building of local people could achieve a goal or fill a knowledge gap. This ensures the optimal use of voluntourists with specific skills and experience. Clear responsibilities, including expectations of the voluntourist and the host organisations and/or

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local community, form part of the process. Planning should be optimised to ensure that the experience for both the hosts and voluntourists is positive.

Opportunities for local employment should not be replaced by voluntourists. Instead, build into the project the creation of local jobs in the short, medium or long term.

A roadmap or project plan can be created, including expected milestones and desired outcomes. Regular evaluations of the project are needed to ensure desired outcomes are being achieved. Evaluation methods against these outcomes can also be noted, including indicators of success and proposed measurements. This can be as simple as having community conversations every 12 months about how things are going and how things might be improved.

Sustainability needs to be incorporated into the project plan. For example, can the project run without voluntourists? This is particularly important in the case of education, childcare and animal welfare focused projects. Building in local economic linkages, such as local accommodation, food and activities, can support sustainability. Sustainability also needs to be thought of in terms of logistics and resources required to support voluntourists in a local community.

Think about logistics

Projects logistics must be well thought out. Questions to address include:

- How the logistics will work? Who will train and support the voluntourists? How will the community be involved? Where will the fees go and how will they be used?
- How much voluntourist time is needed, and how much supervision will be required?
- Is there local supervision and oversight of the project?
- Do we have enough resources to support voluntourists? Consider staff time/supervision, finances, accommodation, food and water.
- Do voluntourists know what is required of them before they arrive?
- Have voluntourists been prepared and is there someone to train and supervise them at the destination?

Find the right voluntourists

Attracting the right voluntourists is the next step. Include a statement of community requirements and voluntourist skills that are needed in marketing materials. Create a simple position description including what sort of skills you are looking for.

The end of the project

In some cases, the project will come to a natural conclusion when the objectives have been fulfilled. In this case an exit plan and/or plan for diversification is required.

An exit strategy is a plan of what to do once the voluntourists leave or a project ends. An exit plan ensures that communities are empowered by the activities rather than becoming dependent on them. An exit strategy forms part of the planning, links to the project's aims and objectives, and outlines what happens when they are fulfilled.

Diversification

For voluntourism to be sustainable for communities, a key issue is how to sustain activities after a project has come to an end. For example, when building community facilities, once the school is built or the water infrastructure completed, this would signal the end of a project

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and of voluntourists in the community. An example of diversification would be for voluntourists to come and learn about local initiatives and help to support these. For example, learning about a local conservation project and assisting with research.

Voluntourists support and do not replace locals

The following best practice example shows how voluntourists are well planned into a project (Case 8).

Case 8: Well-planned voluntourism

Cress Peru is a host organisation focused on community and conservation in the Peruvian Amazon jungle. The voluntourism programme is well structured and allows unskilled and skilled volunteers to be integrated into activities that advance conservation and community via a 2- to 12-week programme. The team are based at the Manu Learning Centre, a research and education hub in the remote Amazon, where there is a lodge for all staff and volunteers to stay. Voluntourists are required to start on specific dates so that they are planned into activities of the centre. Voluntourists work under the supervision of skilled team leaders and assist with the recording of rare species and help communities to plant bio gardens. Culture and tourism are well integrated into a typical programme: volunteers have the opportunity to learn from local staff about local language, culture and customs as well as conservation issues. Tourism and relaxation is also part of the experience, including jungle treks and Sundays off to relax, enjoy the area and play sports.



Case 9 provides an example of how an organisation builds in economic linkages to the local community by supporting sustainable businesses and local production.

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Case 9: Supporting sustainability in the community

When creating itineraries, GOOD Travel, whenever possible, ensure that they stay at local accommodation, specifically endeavouring to support those who promote sustainability (social/environmental). In Peru, GOOD Travellers stay at a carbon neutral lodge which is owned by the local community and supports conservation initiatives. Local businesses are supported by GOOD Travel; for example, activities include food tours at local markets in Peru.



GOOD Travel Supporting Local Business in Peru – Norma Market

Further Resources And Information – Planning

Moving Worlds: provides a free and comprehensive template for project planning and ensuring community needs are well articulated. The resource facilitates a collaborative planning process. <https://movingworlds.org/international-volunteering-resources>

A sustainable way forward is to diversify products away from 'helping' towards learning from one another. Reputable community initiatives receive financial assistance from this, tapping into a main motivation of voluntourists who wish to connect and engage with the local community. The following examples show a diversification from traditional voluntouristing activities to learning about development issues and supporting existing initiatives (Case 10).

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Case 10: Diversification – sharing culture, connecting and learning by having conversations

Some sending organisations have diversified away from a traditional voluntourism model to one where participants go to destinations to learn from the community about their culture and customs. The participants pay for this experience, including a travel package, and money is donated from their trip fee to local NGOs or initiatives and guest speakers from the community or local NGO.

The volunteering element is incorporated by visiting local NGOs or local initiatives and the volunteers having the opportunity to speak with the staff about the project and the opportunities and challenges they face. Participants get the opportunity to engage and connect with remote local communities and enjoy a genuine cultural exchange. This exchange is facilitated by the organisation with participants having time to reflect on what they have learnt. Importantly, the interaction between participants and communities is equal – it is about having a connection and doing things together. In Thailand, groups with GOOD Travel visit a Burmese learning centre that supports Burmese migrants. Here the participants learn about the centre and have lunch and interact with the staff. US\$100 from each participant is donated to the centre and participants are encouraged to stay connected with the project after the trip. The trip also includes local homestays with activities such as cooking lessons, and private tours with indigenous guides in the national park. In Peru, GOOD Travellers are linked to a local charity called Peruvian Hearts which supports women and girls' empowerment. The tourists are able to spend time getting to know the Peruvian Hearts scholars and support fundraising initiatives of the organisation.

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PEPY Tours – Participants learn about the issue and challenges faced by a local NGO



GOOD Travel – Participants and locals sharing afternoon tea in Nacula Village, Fiji

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4 Continuous improvement and evaluation

Voluntourism can be beneficial for all parties. Yet it is complex, diverse and both context and content specific. Therefore, no one has all the answers and there are countless grey areas. It is for this reason that honest self-reflection and evaluation, and dedication to continually improving is needed to achieve best practice. This is required of all stakeholders – the voluntourist, the sending and host organisations, local communities and government.

“Everyone is learning – there is constant learning for everyone involved. There a role to play in developing, improving and teaching others.”

–Voluntourism sending organisation

“Best advice: Only assume you have 12 months to do what you do. Every 12 months look back and have an honest evaluation of your work, and then decide ‘Do I believe it is worth 12 more?’, because otherwise we build institutions that can’t change. They can’t change, because they get entrenched with their mission without changing. Do not build an empire; build a year’s worth.”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

Being a relatively new form of tourism (the concept of voluntourism is around 20 years old), voluntourists, voluntourism organisations and other stakeholders are continually learning about the challenges and how to manage them. Often projects with the best intentions result in unintended negative consequences. Reflecting on past actions, improving and moving forward is what constitutes best practice. This is an iterative and constant process with the aim to improve and enhance the benefits derived from voluntourism.

For continuous improvement, evaluation needs to include activities, programmes and partnerships. Feedback needs to be sought from community, voluntourists and local or, if relevant, the government of the APEC member economy (Box 3).

Box 3: Voluntourism checks and balances

- ✓ Community feedback
- ✓ Government supervision
- ✓ Volunteer feedback

Co-creating the evaluation criteria in conjunction with various stakeholders, especially community, helps to ensure that everyone is moving towards the same objectives. Impact is tricky to measure, so collectively thinking of useful and relevant ways of how impact can be measured is important. This includes reporting on outcomes that were planned at the beginning of the project. Whenever possible, use data to measure against outcomes; for example, surveys. Other ways to measure impact can be:

- Sharing stories about how the project has helped the local community
- Having an open and honest conversation with the community about how things have gone and how they can improve moving forward, and
- Linking to others who can help measure impacts, such as universities.

Is the programme meeting the needs of all stakeholders?

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

The following example shows how one voluntourism organisation evaluated itself and the impact it was having on both voluntourists and communities (Case 11).

Case 11: Voluntourism organisation changes business model after evaluating impact

PEPY Tours began as a typical voluntourism organisation, sending volunteers to Cambodia to build schools. When a few volunteers stayed in the area after the school had been completed, they realised that a school is much more than a building. They had not thought about providing teachers to teach kids at the school.

PEPY continued but brought people in to help the school – volunteers would bring any skills they had (yoga, guitar, English language, etc.) as well as money for the NGO that ran the local school. When PEPY, the school and the NGO reflected, the help the volunteers provided was negligible and sometimes was actually a hindrance, getting in the way of teaching the national curriculum. What was beneficial was the financial support the school received from the volunteers.

PEPY conducted a candid evaluation and, in the end, they felt they were letting down both the communities who thought they were getting development outcomes but were not, and the volunteers who thought they had a chance to make a difference but that difference turned out to be very little.

PEPY changed its business model from voluntourism to a learning service. The focus is now on group (school or university) travel to Cambodia or Nepal to learn about local cultures and issues from the locals themselves. Through facilitated sessions, volunteers explore complex development issues and reflect on global issues. The volunteers' chance to make a difference is then at home, being advocates and being conscious of issues in the rest of the world.

Local communities continue to benefit from this different business model, with PEPY ensuring that tourist dollars support existing projects that are already doing good, and that they are transparent in their finances and are reporting impact in Cambodia. Guest speakers from local projects who speak with the participants are compensated for their time. In addition, the money from PEPY Tours supports the PEPY NGO that supports education in Cambodia.

Further Resources and Information – Evaluating Your Project

PEPY Tours: provides an operator self check guide.

<http://www.travelersphilanthropy.org/resources/documents/VOLUNTOURISM101self-checktool.pdf>

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

5 Do no harm

Voluntourism is a force to do good, yet there are instances when unintended negative impacts occur. In the majority of cases, these impacts can be avoided or mitigated by sound planning and good communication throughout supply chains. This includes ensuring resources are in place to support voluntourists so they are not a drain on the local community.

Harm to both voluntourists and communities can be mitigated by implementing policies that embed safety as well as protect vulnerable people. It is important that everyone is aware of policies and that they can be adapted and implemented in different settings.

When working with vulnerable people – in particular, children in residential care – it is important that this is not done by unskilled and short-term voluntourists. In some cases, long-term and skilled voluntourism can help projects that are in need of longer-term expertise and support. Long-term skilled volunteers working with children in residential care can contribute most and/or cause the least harm when they are given a support role in the project and primarily assist local skilled workers (such as local teachers, caretakers, etc.). This mitigates the issue of detachment when children are being cared for mainly by others who come from outside their own community and culture. A positive alternative to having voluntourists work in residential care is for skilled voluntourists to support local initiatives to reunite children with their families and transition away from residential care models.

When activities relate to working with vulnerable people, such as with school children in a support role to local teachers, it is imperative that there are policies in place to protect the children and that these policies are implemented – everyone must be committed to them. Partnering with child protection charities and membership organisations is a good way to receive support in creating and implementing policies. Sending organisations have a responsibility to ensure that host organisations are implementing child protection policies.

When activities relate to wildlife and domesticated animals, policies to protect animals should be implemented along the supply chain.

Training with voluntourists and host communities can help to entrench a safety-led culture through active implementation of health and safety plans. Sufficient supervision resources must exist on the ground for the health and safety of both the voluntourists and locals working on projects.

Voluntourists should be suitably matched with projects and well prepared before arriving. This includes communicating local protocols and the need to be respectful and responsible. Due diligence of voluntourists is needed, including background checks and references.

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

Safeguard the dignity of the local people

It is important to put measures in place to safeguard the dignity of local people. This relates to a mutual respect between everyone. This can be achieved by ensuring the following steps are instigated:

- Do not 'market' poverty. Organisations should not use marketing images that portray local people being in helpless situations needing to be 'saved' by outsiders; instead they should use images that show authentic pictures of community life.
- Stress the ideals of partnership in training and preparation and live these ideals during the project.
- Where possible, *facilitate* learning about local culture and customs and different world views.
- Consider what is an appropriate level of voluntourist time; in particular, contexts and activities.
- Provide mechanisms for the voluntourists, community and staff to reflect on and evaluate what they have learnt.
- Ensure voluntourism is conducted on local terms.
- Involve local leadership and employ collaborative planning from start to finish.
- Link to homestay programmes in the area.

“If you cut out all the power and cultural differences, its about humanity. If you have humanity you help each other. It’s the root of hospitality, caring for a stranger.”

– Researcher

Case 12, on the following page, demonstrates how indigenous culture in New Zealand was strengthened by voluntourism.

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

Case 12: Voluntourism strengthens indigenous culture – New Zealand

A voluntourism programme was established between an Australian NGO and an indigenous Māori community in New Zealand. The community was engaged with and consulted from the beginning and agreed to the voluntourism programme. In the programme, 12 voluntourists were sent from Australia to be immersed in Māori culture and to assist with community projects. The objectives of the project were to immerse volunteers in culture as well as physical labour and community work. In the first week, the group stayed at the *marae* (a Māori community meeting place), which included a traditional welcome and interaction with *kaumātua* (tribe elders) who explained the stories of the *iwi* (Māori tribe) and the marae. The volunteers also took part in cleaning, water-blasting and painting on the marae. In the second week, the volunteers designed and helped to deliver a school holiday programme for local children in a low socio-economic area. Activities included craft, art, drama, music and sports. The volunteers were not a burden on the community – they cooked and cleaned for themselves.

The young Australian voluntourists gained a deeper understanding of Māori culture – beyond the All Blacks (New Zealand's national rugby team) and the haka (traditional war dance). They learned what life, culture and identity is for contemporary Māori communities. By interacting with the community, on the terms outlined by the community, the volunteers gained a meaningful interpersonal experience, with the value of feeling welcomed into a different culture. For the indigenous host community, there was a sense of pride in their community of telling their stories, especially in their young people. In this case, interaction between the volunteers and the community was mutually beneficial.



SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

Protect vulnerable people

Organisations must ensure that vulnerable people do not come to harm as a result of voluntourism activities. Children are particularly vulnerable in this respect. When working closely with children, there are risks of harm, including abandonment and abuse. To mitigate these issues, the following must be employed:

- Do not allow unskilled and short-term voluntourism in residential care or orphanages.
- If volunteering in residential care or orphanages is longer term and skilled, it is important that these volunteers act in a support role to local staff and due diligence is engaged in terms of child protection.
- Compulsory full police checks are carried out on all voluntourists working or coming into contact with children.
- References are provided for those who want to work with children.
- Child protection policies, including items such as 'Volunteers are never to be alone with a child', are communicated and enacted by all.
- Voluntourists act in a support role to local people. For example, voluntourists might coach sports or assist with teaching but are not in close contact as primary carers in residential care facilities.
- Registration at a government level should be required for all voluntourism organisations that work with children and vulnerable people in the receiving economy.
- Partner with child protection charities or membership associations that can provide toolkits on child protection (see Appendix 3).
- Support organisations that transition and diversify away from voluntourist work in orphanages or residential care where the main activity is providing care for the children.

Ensure animal welfare

The large majority of voluntourists who want to work with animals care about their welfare. A challenge when it comes to ensuring animal welfare is overseeing a loose international supply chain. For example, ensuring local partners also adhere to policies, or ensuring that an animal sanctuary is in fact legitimate and not contributing to breeding animals for canned hunting (wild animals being put in a football pitch sized area for hunting purposes). There are also differing cultural views of animals and animal welfare.

According to the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, an animal sanctuary should maintain a non-breeding policy, where appropriate humane measures are taken to prevent breeding, and where animals are not bought or sold commercially or exploited for commercial gain.

Strategies to ensure animal welfare include:

- Having an animal welfare policy in place
- Encouraging local partners to sign up to the policy
- Helping local partners to understand the demand from visitors for animal welfare standards, and
- Providing information about cross-cultural attitudes and history.

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

This best practice example shows how communicating demand, in this case that voluntourists do not want to ride elephants, along the voluntourism chain to local partners can adjust attitudes and help best practice to be achieved (Case 13).

Case 13: Communicate the demand for ethical experiences

In Thailand, elephants have for centuries been used by Mahouts (elephant guardians) for agriculture and later logging, and are often domesticated animals. Frequently, elephants are used for touristic purposes to financially support families and the costs of keeping a full-grown elephant.

“You see things that you might not agree with – for example, in an elephant village where locals have worked with them for centuries – so you can’t say ‘I’ve seen a video on YouTube and I know better.’ But with relationships we have with the Mahouts, we can talk to them about what tourists want. For example, they used to allow volunteers to ride elephants. We said volunteers do not want to ride elephants; we guarantee you it will make people happier if elephants are not ridden. Then he (Mahout) saw and he explained to other Mahouts about tourists not wanting to ride them, about the demand for animal welfare. Slowly, by showing alternatives, not telling people they are wrong, we are able to shift attitudes.”

– Sending organisation

One voluntourism sending organisation has agreement with three villages in rural Thailand to help the Mahouts look after the domesticated elephants. A portion of the voluntourist fee goes to support the Mahouts and their families, as well as care for the elephants. An adult elephant consumes up to 300 kg of food per day and the voluntourist fee supports the provision of this. The volunteers live in the communities and help the families to take care of the elephants and their surroundings. Part of the agreement between the organisation and the community is that the elephants are kept in line with international animal welfare guidelines, including freedom from harm, discomfort and stress, and access to veterinary care.



SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

Box 4 highlights key questions to consider when developing a voluntourism initiative in local or indigenous communities. It is recommended to start small and evaluate often.

Box 4: Considerations when initiating a voluntourism project

- Has a community needs assessment has been completed?
- What is the duration of the activity?
- What is the appropriate length of stay for the volunteer?
- Is there a system in place for the management of the voluntourist? Does the burden of care fall on the community?
- Is the project structured so that lots of short-term voluntourists can be managed to meet a longer-term project goal? Can the work on the project achieve outputs that will move a longer-term objective forward?
- How well structured is the project? Are the voluntourists expected to work set hours and are these expectations clear?
- How embedded is the project in the local community?
- How well conceived is the project?
- What are the organisational values? Are the aims and objectives of the project clear?
- Is there **transparency** of financials, local economic flow into local communities, and ways for community to connect? Clearly outline **who benefits and how**.
- Is it adding value to the local community?
- Has the community been consulted? Does the project have local support?
- How well organised is the project by the organisation? What support and frameworks are in place for the project and community?
- Marketing and promotion: Does the organisation and project fairly reflect the community and the issue?
- Is the project properly resourced with staff?
- Will voluntourists receive training and support?
- Transparent financials: Where is the money going? (From both the sending and local partner organisations)
- Will the project disrupt the day-to-day activities of the local organisation or school/centre?
- Are there safety and emergency procedures in place?
- Are there policies and/or codes of conduct in place to ensure the safety of voluntourists and the community including safeguarding vulnerable people and the dignity of the local people?

SECTION 4: ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Voluntourism activities can positively contribute to community development but it is vital that every type of activity considers specific factors that can enhance local benefits. This section presents best practice guidelines for voluntourism activities in the APEC region.

High-Risk activities

Three voluntourism activities are highlighted as high risk with a significant likelihood to cause harm. These are: volunteer work with children, medical/healthcare, and animal welfare activities. Key guidelines for volunteer work with children are outlined in Table 8 on the following page.

Box 5 (page 47) provides a brief discussion of issues with voluntourism activities in orphanages and volunteer work with children. Further information for all stakeholders to consider is included in Appendix 3. Only skilled long-term volunteering in children’s residential care should be permitted. Organisations must be encouraged and supported to transition away from this form of voluntourism. Even in cases of high skilled and longer-term volunteering with children in residential care, volunteers should provide a support role to in-economy staff to mitigate attachment issues and to ensure that care continues to be provided by local people.

“We have volunteers that ask us about orphanages and if they can visit schools and we have to tell them no, but a lot of the time they do not understand, so the education of the volunteers themselves is important.”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Table 8: Key Guidelines for volunteer work with children

Activity	Key Guidelines
<p>Volunteer Work with Children</p>	<p><u>DO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make police checks/criminal background checks mandatory for voluntourists ✓ Conduct reference checks for voluntourists ✓ Comply with all government legislation and regulation permitting to working with children ✓ Create comprehensive policy outlining how the organisation will safeguard the rights of children and other vulnerable people. (See UNICEF rights of the child on page 72) ✓ Adopt a child protection policy when working with children and promote this to voluntourists and locals ✓ Work with local partners to implement their own policies with regards to child safety and protection ✓ Communicate policy to all staff and voluntourists and enforced ✓ Apply zero tolerance to exploitation, including physical, sexual and emotional violence ✓ Prohibit the use of company facilities and networks that can be used for child exploitation ✓ Mandate and provide mechanisms for safeguarding children within the economy ✓ Be accountable for the people who you put into contact with children through your organisation ✓ Create a code of conduct for voluntourists who work with children. For example, Never be with a child alone ✓ Train staff on policy including how to recognise and report child exploitation ✓ Train staff and develop skills required, support existing staff in their roles, move away from intimate care to roles focused on education, entertainment, sports ✓ Partner with child protection charities and organisations <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Promote orphanages or residential care centres or children as tourist attractions ✗ Have unskilled and short-term voluntourists work with children in residential care/orphanages ✗ Market children as tourist attractions ✗ Have voluntourists work with children unsupervised ✗ Have voluntourists be a primary caregiver ✗ Have voluntourists replace local staff

Box 5: A note on voluntourism with regards to orphanages and residential care

Several of the world's largest voluntourism sending organisations have recently announced they will stop volunteering activities in orphanages. Many other large sending organisations involved with voluntourism also communicated that they had stopped activities in orphanages despite demand. The Australian Government launched an awareness raising campaign which discourages any form of short-term, unskilled volunteering in orphanages. Through the Smart Volunteering campaign, Australians are encouraged to be: an informed volunteer, a child safe volunteer, and a prepared volunteer.

While in some cases volunteer activities in orphanages are required to support operations, evidence is mounting on the harm done to children in residential care; in particular, with short-term voluntourism placements in these centres. Risks to children when working in residential or institutional care include:

- Issues with emotional attachment and abandonment
- Sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking, and
- Encouraging growth of the 'orphanage business'.

There is strong evidence to suggest that the voluntourism industry is fuelling the growth of orphanages, with some being set up as tourist attractions, funded by voluntourism. In Nepal, research shows that up to 80% of children in orphanages have one or more living parent.

International organisations are supporting the transition of children from large-scale residential units to community-based care. It is recommended where possible to support global efforts in this transition and there are several organisations that can assist with

Further resources and information – protecting children

Australia's Smart Volunteering campaign: The Australian Government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), has guidance on volunteering overseas and discouraging any form of short-term, unskilled volunteering in orphanages available at <https://dfat.gov.au/smartvolunteering> . A downloadable brochure with a checklist is included on the website.

The Code: a membership organisation focused on the protection of children in the tourism industry, with a specific voluntourism policy. www.thecode.org

Child Safe: a global movement protecting children and youth around the world.

—Tips for travellers. <http://thinkchildsafe.org/7-tips-for-travelers/>

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

—Child Safe Asia. <http://thinkchildsafe.org/>

Friends International: provides an international process for reporting child abuse. www.friends-international.org

*An extended list of research and resources is in Appendix 3.

In terms of human health and well-being, there is significant potential to do harm in voluntourism medical and healthcare related activities. Guidelines for medical/healthcare related voluntourism activities are outlined in Table 9.

Table 9: Key guidelines for medical and healthcare related voluntourism activities

Activity	Key Guidelines
<p>Medical/Healthcare</p> 	<p><u>DO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have voluntourists with appropriate skills and experience relevant to the task ✓ Have informed consent of people you are treating, including parental/guardianship consent for children ✓ Address an identified healthcare issue/need with skilled voluntourists ✓ Conduct background checks and attain references ✓ Be aware and sensitive to varying cultural norms around healthcare and administration ✓ Have relevant policies in place to protect vulnerable people <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Have unskilled/unexperienced voluntourists ✗ Provide treatment to people (adults or children) without their consent ✗ Assume a need for medical care without evidence or inquiry to support

When done well, medical and healthcare activities can help to advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all. This can include experienced voluntourists providing healthcare education to remote communities. Case 14 presents an example of best practice from an organisation called Global Brigades who exist to empower volunteers and under-resourced communities to resolve global health and economic disparities.

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Case 14: Best practice example medical and healthcare - collaborative working to improve public health

Global Brigades is an international not-for-profit sending organisation that mobilises medical students across the world and sends them to under-resourced communities to provide skilled medical assistance as well as education around public health. The projects are fully funded by the organisation, and the students work with local governments in the implementation of projects. The communities are highly involved in planning for long-term sustainability, including the formation of committees to oversee projects and plan for longer-term sustainability of the initiatives; for example, linking to long-term sustainable development goals of ensuring clean water and sanitation.

The organisation employs 100 full-time staff around the world, and 300 temporary staff. These local staff develop the programme, coordinate volunteers, and follow up with the community and track impacts. The organisation has a clear vision, mission statement and values. The organisation has mobilised 20% of the currently enrolled medical school students in the United States to under-resourced communities to teach about the importance of public health. The organisation has treated over 1,000,000 patients in the last ten years.



SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Voluntourism programmes that revolve around volunteer–animal interactions need to maintain high standards of animal welfare including a strong stand against animal cruelty and exploitation. Guidelines for voluntourist work with animals are outlined in Table 10.

Table 10: Guidelines for Voluntourism Animal Welfare Activities

Activity	Key Guidelines
<p>Animal Welfare</p> 	<p><u>DO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have an animal welfare policy in place based on the Five Freedoms (see Box 6) ✓ Ensure voluntourists are trained in appropriate interaction with animals ✓ Have skilled staff on-site to supervise and train voluntourists ✓ Have a safety plan in place when working with animals ✓ Sign up to a credible set of guidelines to ensure animal welfare and publish commitment in marketing materials ✓ Set out guidelines that align to animal welfare standards that work for your organisation including supply partners ✓ Work with reputable NGOs or local initiatives to identify projects and ways voluntourists can help to support existing reputable projects ✓ Link to animal welfare charities and organisations ✓ Conduct risk assessment for the animals and the voluntourists and plan accordingly ✓ Comply with all government legislation and regulations relating to working with animals ✓ Commit to non-breeding ✓ Partner with animal welfare charities ✓ Communicate the demand for sound animal welfare practices to local partners and communities ✓ Ensure that your plans include safety around animals ✓ Promote commitment to animal welfare and partnership with reputable charities in marketing materials <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Keep animals in a manner that causes them pain or distress

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Case 15 provides an example of best practice from POD Volunteer, a voluntourism organisation whose animal welfare activities focus on elephant care in Thailand. POD Volunteer partner with RIGHT-tourism, an organisation which focuses on animal welfare in the tourism industry.

Case 15: Best practice example animal welfare - partnering with wildlife charities to ensure animal welfare

POD Volunteer is an award-winning voluntourism organisation that offers activities relating to elephant care in Thailand. The elephants have been rescued from the logging industries or from exploitative tourism and volunteers are needed to support the running of the sanctuary. A clear outline of what the role entails is provided, including day-to-day tasks, why volunteers are needed, and the working hours required. Comprehensive support is provided for the volunteer before, during and after their placement. Volunteers work alongside local teams in caring for the elephants and providing general maintenance. POD is a member of several ethical tourism organisations including Tourism Concern UK and also partners with RIGHT-tourism, an organisation focused specifically on animal welfare in tourism.

The 'Five Freedoms' outline five aspects of animal welfare under human control and have been adopted by professional groups including veterinarians and various major international organisations associated with animal welfare. Box 6 (on the following page) outlines the Five Freedoms and best practice in voluntourism activities.

Further resources and information – animal welfare

Born Free Foundation: an international conservation and animal rights organisation based in the UK, which has mechanisms to report instances of animal abuse.

— Travellers' Animal Alert initiative (reports and photos of animal suffering).

www.bornfree.org.uk/TAA

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries: a non-profit organisation that supports animal sanctuaries, rehabilitation centres and rescue centres.

www.sanctuaryfederation.org/gfas

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Box 6: The Five Freedoms of animal welfare

Animal welfare refers to the state of an animal. When developing a programme that involves the care of wild animals, an animal welfare policy should be based around the following internationally recognised ‘Five Freedoms’.

- **Good feeding:** 1. Absence of prolonged hunger. 2. Absence of prolonged thirst.
- **Good housing:** 3. Comfort while resting. 4. Thermal comfort. 5. Ease of movement.
- **Good health:** 6. Absence of injuries. 7. Absence of disease. 8. Absence of pain induced by inappropriate management procedures.
- **Appropriate behaviour** 9. Expression of social behaviours. 10. Expression of natural behaviours. 11. Good human–animal relationship. 12. Positive emotional state.
- **Protection from fear and distress** 13. Absence of general fear/distress/apathy. 14. Ability to seek privacy/refuge. 15. Absence of surgical or physical modification of the skin, tissues, teeth or bone structure other than for the purposes of genuine medical treatment/manipulation/sedation.

Ways to meet these Five Freedoms include:

- Disease prevention and veterinary treatment
- Appropriate shelter
- Nutrition, and
- Humane handling.

Other Common Activities

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 focuses on ensuring inclusive and quality education for all, as well as promoting lifelong learning. Access to English and Mandarin can be routes out of poverty, providing people with vital skills in business and in tourism in particular.

Assisting teachers by providing support of a native speaker in foreign language classes can add significant value to local communities. Voluntourists can support teachers in large classes and assist with administration and teaching. When linked well to existing educational frameworks, voluntourism can provide additional support to schools to provide quality education. Guidelines for voluntourism teaching activities are outlined in Table 11.

Table 11: Key guidelines for voluntourism teaching activities

Activity	Key Guidelines
Teaching	<p><u>DO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Link teaching activities to the school curriculum ✓ Add value by <i>supporting</i> local teachers ✓ Complete background checks on voluntourists ✓ Have skilled voluntourists, with teaching qualifications or experience ✓ Have a plan in place for voluntourist teachers to ensure continuity of teaching ✓ Have a timetable for voluntourist teachers to work in with so as not to disrupt the school day ✓ Comply with and add value to the government school curriculum ✓ Have relevant child protection policies in place <p><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Replace local teachers × Disrupt the class × Repeat the same thing at a low level for children × Have voluntourists teaching on their own

“Schools in more affluent areas levy a fee to hire Native English Teachers for their schools. People with money send their children to after-school tutorial lessons to learn English. English can be a route out of poverty, leading to careers in commerce or tourism. A pass in English is mandatory for university entrance. Thai teaching is still conservative. A concentration on the technical aspects of English makes the lessons on a par with the Latin lessons of my school days. Volunteers can make English fun. A quote from a Thai teacher: ‘The children love volunteers’ lessons. They are now hungry for English.’ ”

– NGO

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Small-scale infrastructure projects can add value to communities and help to improve vital services such as public health. Providing clean water and sanitation infrastructure is a tangible benefit that voluntourism can facilitate. Sixty per cent of the world’s population does not have access to a toilet, and the cost of poor water and sanitation in developing countries is estimated to be \$260 billion a year. Approximately 1.8 billion people use drinking water contaminated by human waste. Voluntourism can assist with providing access to water and sanitation to advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Guidelines for voluntourism community infrastructure activities are outlined in Table 12.

Table 12: Key guidelines for voluntourism community infrastructure activities

Activity	Key Guidelines
<p data-bbox="204 728 400 875">Building Community Facilities and Infrastructure</p> 	<p data-bbox="518 728 571 757"><u>DO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="518 770 1270 801">✓ Ensure that there is a genuine need for infrastructure <li data-bbox="518 824 1161 855">✓ Ensure that the project is not taking local jobs <li data-bbox="518 878 954 909">✓ Have skilled local supervision <li data-bbox="518 931 1238 963">✓ Have a safety plan in place and a safety-led culture <li data-bbox="518 985 1374 1061">✓ Have voluntourists provide labour that is safe and non-skilled; for example, painting <li data-bbox="518 1084 1366 1160">✓ Have a local supervisor aware of and committed to the safety plan <li data-bbox="518 1182 1385 1258">✓ Comply with all government legislation and regulations relating to construction <p data-bbox="518 1281 639 1312"><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="518 1335 1369 1366">✗ Have voluntourists work on construction beyond their skill set <li data-bbox="518 1388 1206 1420">✗ Have the project take paid jobs from local people <li data-bbox="518 1442 1366 1554">✗ Build infrastructure without a plan for its use and resource, particularly schools/medical centres. When they are built, are there teachers and doctors to staff them?

Case 16 provides an example of how voluntourism can provide basic community infrastructure and generate a positive contribution to remote communities.

Case 16: Best practice example of voluntourism in community infrastructure activity - tangible outputs that make a difference

Several voluntourism organisations work to improve health by addressing basic needs. For example, some organisations include volunteers who are trained in how to install bio-sand water filters and to show locals how the filters work and how to fix them.

Sanitation projects, such as compostable toilets, can make a positive difference to public health. Some voluntourism organisations provide compostable toilets to communities, providing both the financial support to build them and volunteer labour and education focused on how to use and maintain them.

World Expeditions focuses on responsible travel, providing voluntourism in the form of supplying healthy stove tops for families in remote Peruvian villages. According to the World Health Organization, the inhalation of indoor smoke is linked to pneumonia in children, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer and low birth weight in babies. Voluntourism funds go towards the cost of healthy cook tops, and voluntourists work alongside the locals to install the stoves. The volunteers also stay in local homestays to experience indigenous culture, such as weaving demonstrations and learning about local approaches to farming. World Expeditions employs local guides and staff, and together they identify a need and discuss priorities. A project scoping document is completed, and in collaboration with the community, the voluntourism programme is planned. The projects are funded by travellers and local volunteers from the community work alongside the travellers during the project. A local tradesperson is employed as a supervisor and oversees the project from start to finish. The supervisor is also able to be consulted should any maintenance be required in the future.



World Expeditions – Healthy Stove project, Huilloc Village, Peru

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Conservation is the proper management of a natural resource to prevent its exploitation, destruction or degradation. Conservation is an activity and focuses on efforts to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment. Key guidelines for voluntourism conservation activities are outlined in Table 13.

Table 13: Key Guidelines for voluntourism conservation activities

Activity	Key Guidelines
<p data-bbox="204 600 448 674">Environment and Conservation</p> 	<p data-bbox="491 533 544 562"><u>DO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="491 584 1273 658">✓ Link activities to government and local conservation and environmental protection plans <li data-bbox="491 680 1241 710">✓ Support existing reputable projects run by local NGOs <li data-bbox="491 732 1337 806">✓ Use less-skilled voluntourists as research assistants for easy tasks such as counting species or simple measurements <li data-bbox="491 828 1374 902">✓ Engage with and respect local indigenous culture and their links to the land and sea <li data-bbox="491 925 1347 999">✓ Ensure local communities are engaged with and supportive of the initiative <p data-bbox="491 1021 608 1050"><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="491 1072 1310 1146">✗ Develop tourism in fragile environments to the extent that it causes harm – consider carrying capacity

Conservation activities can help to raise awareness and support initiatives that advance the United Nations sustainable development framework aiming to protect the planet (Sustainable Development Goals 13, 14 and 15).

Case 17 provides a best practice example where voluntourists contribute to conservation initiatives in the Philippines.

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Case 17: Best practice example of voluntourism conservation activities - sustainable conservation project: balancing community and volunteer interests while achieving conservation outcomes

Voluntourists pay to participate in a conservation research project on sea turtles in the Philippines with Jura Turtle Project. The project requires a third-party agreement via the local National Park agency and the traditional owners. Research is guided and informed by strict wildlife ethics requirements and research guidelines. Traditional owners are engaged in the process and this includes an opportunity to be trained in undertaking the research and delivering cultural tours. The organisation uses a local operator for accommodation and food, thus supporting the surrounding economy. In turn, the operator provides assistance to support the research through discounted or free accommodation for the research team.

Voluntourists receive detailed information and training on the turtles and work alongside trained naturalist guides and researchers. Strong safety standards are adopted through the experience, as well as guidelines around interacting with wildlife, to ensure integrity and a quality experience that leaves a light footprint.



SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

The World Economic Forum recently reported that access to skills is a key driver of progress. Voluntourism can provide an avenue to build capacity and skills as well as access to international networks and expertise. Key guidelines for voluntourism skills development and training activities are outlined in Table 14.

Table 14: Key guidelines for voluntourism skills development and training activities

Activity	Key Guidelines
<p data-bbox="204 589 451 696">Skills development and training</p> 	<p data-bbox="496 517 544 546"><u>DO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="496 568 1289 640">✓ Have voluntourists with appropriate skills and experience relevant to the task <li data-bbox="496 663 1321 734">✓ Provide well thought out and articulated needs analysis; i.e. aims and objectives and skills needed <li data-bbox="496 757 1193 786">✓ Link voluntourists' skills to the appropriate project <li data-bbox="496 808 1374 837">✓ Spend time verifying skills and matching to appropriate projects <li data-bbox="496 860 1043 889">✓ Look for soft skills such as personality <p data-bbox="496 934 612 963"><u>DO NOT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="496 985 1310 1014">✗ Provide people who do not have experience to be mentors <li data-bbox="496 1037 1329 1066">✗ Provide people that do not have the expertise to give advice <li data-bbox="496 1088 1310 1160">✗ Provide people who do not have the softer skills needed to interact and form relationships with others

To enhance business performance, productivity and optimise yield from local farming, one example of best practice relates to training and skills development for coffee farmers in Peru (Case 18). Another award-winning best practice example (Case 19) relates to skills training for a rural tourism programme in Vanuatu.

Case 18: Best practice example of voluntourism in skills development and training activities - skilled voluntourism solving a problem for organisational acceleration

Having well-planned projects and skilled volunteers can accelerate the success local businesses and help to solve problems. Moving Worlds has a thorough written process for identifying local needs and solutions, including clear objectives. They then match appropriately skilled volunteers to the community.

Coffee farmers in Peru were missing out on money in the supply chain by having to subcontract the roasting of beans before they were sold to the United States. The organisation provided support for a solar roasting facility and skilled volunteers to address a knowledge gap. The aim is to upskill Peruvian farmers and broaden their knowledge on the ideal consumer coffee bean roast profile, and how to achieve this. The farmers now roast their own beans and ship directly to the United States, quadrupling their income.

SECTION 4: VOLUNTOURISM ACTIVITIES – KEY GUIDELINES

Case 19: Best practice example of voluntourism skills development – Vanuatu Rural Tourism Initiative

Vanuatu is an archipelago of volcanic islands in the South Pacific Ocean. Eighty per cent of the population live in rural areas and survive on subsistence farming, using traditional methods. Tourism in the outer islands of Vanuatu is relatively undeveloped. An initiative was developed to increase tourism to the outer islands. A number of short-term (up to four weeks) and long-term (one year) volunteers were integrated into the programme. Overall programme management was supported by long-term management and provided oversight to the recruitment of the volunteers as well as the activities that were undertaken.

The activities supported by volunteers were specific and designed as key elements of a broader programme of support. Volunteers were recruited to meet specific needs based on their skills as well as their cultural awareness, willingness to commit their time, and their suitability to work in remote communities. Volunteers were engaged to support and deliver programme activities including tourism training (tour guiding, bookkeeping, food hygiene), marketing (web and brochure development, trade marketing) and environmental management.

The Vanuatu Rural Tourism Programme adopted an integrated approach to ensure the sustainable development of the ecotourism sector in Vanuatu. This approach incorporated product development, marketing, training, community awareness and the establishment of standards for eco-lodge operators. Outcomes included retention of local culture via a cultural tourism product, which has led to the retention and revival of local cultural traditions. In addition, ensuring that visitors enjoy as much of the local culture as possible is one of the quality standards established by operators under the programme. Training by voluntourists in tour development and tour guiding supported this outcome. Training to locals provided by voluntourists increased skills and led to SME income to grow to US\$95,000 per year. It also diversified the economy away from logging to more environmentally sustainable outcomes, with tourism conservation programmes being set up.



Local tour guides trained by voluntourists – Tanna Island, Vanuatu

SECTION 5: GOING FORWARD

The international and domestic voluntourism market is growing rapidly, with concerns raised by the sector and other key stakeholders about the rising number of firms involved in an increasingly fragmented industry. With few regulations or standards in place, there are instances of unethical behaviour that put the whole industry at risk and have significant ramifications for host communities. While a number of useful resources and guidelines exist for some stakeholders, awareness of them is sparse and uptake uneven. A sending organisation commented during the research that informs this guidebook that the key for the voluntourism industry now is to grow in the ‘right way’.

“Voluntourism opens up the world a little bit more – there is so much bad out there, it gives the opportunity [to] appreciate others a bit more. But the industry needs to grow in the right way.”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

As the industry becomes more competitive, there is growing pressure on firms to return a profit and to market new products and experiences. These intensifying competitive pressures make it increasingly challenging to balance community and voluntourist interests. An urgent change is needed to prioritise and privilege the aspirations and needs of both the community and the voluntourist. This includes actively facilitating cultural exchange. As one sending organisation commented:

“Create bridges between the two [community and voluntourist], not just money. The best thing that can happen is a relationship, a connection – the world becomes smaller. We live in a time where people ... we all need to spend more time thinking about humanity and things that are happening in the world. Voluntourism brings a face and name to issues.”

– Voluntourism sending organisation

A concerted effort is required from all stakeholders to rise to the challenges that face the voluntourism sector and this will require a fundamental shift in the way much of the industry is currently developed, managed and monitored.

An emerging trend is seen in the shift from ‘helping’ to ‘learning’, with a greater focus on voluntourists connecting at a deeper level with local communities, sharing world views and skills, and exchanging knowledge and ideas. Placing a focus on cultural exchange and learning about communities and *then* helping in small and meaningful ways is a positive trend which can advance best practice in a sustained fashion. This facilitated learning about

SECTION 5: GOING FORWARD

development issues, local projects and initiatives as a *primary* activity, with a secondary focus on voluntourism activities, can help to bring about a more sustainable form of voluntourism in the long term.

With growing international scrutiny on voluntourism as an industry, there is a positive relationship between the high-profile (mostly negative) reporting in the media and voluntourists being more aware of the legitimacy of the experience. This awareness needs to be coupled with active shaping of demand, by providing education for voluntourists before they depart on what constitutes best practice voluntourism and how they can be responsible when participating in activities.

Being a responsible voluntourist relates to being reflective, honest and critical about motivations behind going on a voluntourism trip, and being realistic about what value they can contribute to a project. Sending and host organisations have responsibilities to manage voluntourist expectations and can do so by seeding messages in various networks to influence all actors in the voluntourism chain. There is a need for demand to be shaped by effective and authentic marketing of the experience and to ensure the voluntourist has a quality experience that encourages good ‘word of mouth’ dissemination of the important best practice information.

Staying On Track

There are large gaps in the information surrounding voluntourism, with a notable lack of robust data around voluntourism impacts – social, economic, and environmental. In particular, there is a lack of data around community evaluations and attitudes of local people towards voluntourism and its related outcomes. For policymakers, it is a challenge to evaluate the social and economic impacts of voluntourism without the provision of market statistics at a local and government level.

There is a need for all stakeholders to learn from one another and work towards improving outcomes from voluntourism. This involves regularly sharing best practice and exchanging information across organisations, and requires greater collaboration and networking between organisations to exchange information. Information exchange is not only for the industry to know what best practice looks like but **also for communities and voluntourists**, thus empowering them to connect to organisations and initiatives that represent responsible voluntourism.

“Good data is what we lack most in understanding the voluntourism sector, without it we will struggle to measure the longer term outcomes and impacts felt by both communities and tourists alike. Its also vital to remember that we must translate this data into meaningful and usable tools to assist in enhancing the sustainability of this important form of tourism”

– Researcher

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To ensure stakeholders stay on track with voluntourism and maximise the positive outcomes it can bring to local and indigenous communities, there is a need to:

- Collect effective time series data through surveys, interviews and other tools. This data needs to be drawn from visitors (satisfaction, spend, etc.), businesses (employment profiles, levels of local engagement, skill profile of clients) and also from community members themselves.
- Evaluate programmes using the types of data outlined above. This involves formal (objective impact reporting) and informal (regular conversations and reflections).
- Regularly practise self-assessment, including critical reflection by voluntourists as well as sending and host organisations.
- Provide community feedback mechanisms to better understand how local people are tolerating voluntourism, and the benefits (or challenges) it brings.

With the growing evidence of harm caused by voluntourism, there is an urgent need for government monitoring of high-risk activities; in particular, with children and vulnerable sectors of the community. There is also a need for government monitoring of activities relating to medical/healthcare and animal welfare.

It is important to note that there is growing urgency in efforts to prevent short-term unskilled volunteering with children in residential care/orphanages. Policymakers and voluntourism organisations must support the transition away from this type of voluntourism, including raising awareness among voluntourists of the harm it can cause.

Voluntourism can bring connection and exchange across cultures plus essential resources to support local initiatives. Significant opportunities exist to strengthen the outcomes of the industry in a way that can benefit all stakeholders through improved knowledge sharing (information, skills/expertise, case studies), better networking and coordination, and through better programme development, monitoring and management.

There are opportunities for greater networking and collaboration within the industry to share best practice and information. For governments and communities, there are opportunities to be active in the evaluation of programmes and enable the evolution of the industry to support inclusive growth in the APEC region. There is also a role for the APEC TWG in raising awareness of voluntourism, with both its pros and cons, across all stakeholder groups. There are opportunities to link voluntourism to existing local and government initiatives by identifying local areas and projects most in need of voluntourists. This could, for example, take the form of an online portal with links to local projects in the APEC region requiring voluntourists. This portal could also house existing best practice voluntourism resources and toolkits.

To ensure 'quality' voluntourists are recruited for local programmes, there is a role for everyone to play in shaping demand. This requires the industry to take a proactive stance on re-defining narratives; for example, from 'Poor countries need Western help' to 'We can all learn about the world and help each other'. This includes a way for voluntourists to know what best practice is, both for themselves and for the organisation they select, and a central place (portal) for voluntourists to identify verified best practice operators who have community evaluations as part of a quality assurance process.

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For voluntourism to contribute to inclusive growth in the APEC region, there are opportunities to link to tourism operators and accommodation providers with sustainable practices, by shopping at local markets and sourcing food locally.

With the growing commercialisation of voluntourism activities, the balancing of community and voluntourist interests is a critical challenge for the coming years. It is vital that this complex and multi-faceted industry is managed effectively to ensure benefits are maximised and risks are mitigated.

A world-leading researcher, who has been studying voluntourism since it began some 20 years ago, noted that although there are complex issues around the management of the industry, the people-to-people benefits make it worthwhile.

“The opportunity to change the world. The only way we’re going to get out of the mess, is consensus making, exchange; if we do not have ways for real human people to people exchange, things won’t change. It does sound dramatic but it is also true. It is chocked full of imperfections but we’ve got keeping plugging away.”

– Researcher

All voluntourism stakeholders have a role to play in ensuring voluntourism ***is managed well*** by applying the five cross-cutting principles and activity-specific guidelines presented in this best practice guidebook. By focusing on the key themes of community empowerment; partnership, trust and relationships; sustainability; continuous improvement and evaluation; and do no harm, we can truly move towards unlocking the great potential that voluntourism has to create meaningful outcomes for all stakeholders.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Most Prevalent Activity by APEC Member Economy

APEC member economy	Types of Voluntourism Programmes/Activities						
	Building community facilities	Teaching	Skills development and training	Medical/healthcare	Animal welfare	Volunteer work in childcare	Environmental/conservation
Australia	11	4	8	8	21	0	20
Brunei Darussalam	2	3	0	1	1	0	1
Canada	4	2	1	0	5	0	7
Chile	5	13	2	4	1	8	1
China	11	35	6	7	19	9	2
Hong Kong, China	5	8	8	1	4	0	4
Indonesia	11	15	9	10	20	4	7
Japan	12	10	6	6	2	2	6
Korea	6	11	6	4	1	1	2
Malaysia	13	12	4	3	19	1	11
Mexico	11	15	8	8	10	9	9

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New Zealand	3	7	5	0	7	0	17
Papua New Guinea	7	4	5	5	3	0	2
Peru	23	29	15	23	13	18	20
Philippines	15	14	12	13	5	8	13
Russia	5	13	9	6	3	5	7
Singapore	4	7	8	5	11	0	5
Chinese Taipei	6	8	5	1	1	1	1
Thailand	26	55	39	20	46	25	19
United States	8	5	8	1	11	0	2
Viet Nam	17	35	16	20	9	21	9
Total	204	305	180	146	212	112	165

Key: The three most prevalent activities for each APEC member economy

SECTION 5: GOING FORWARD

Appendix 2: Top Sending/Servicing Organisations in the APEC Region

Name of the organisation	Type of organisation	Number of APEC economies where the organisation sends voluntourists
Go Abroad	Private	19
AIESEC	Non-profit	19
Go Overseas	Private	18
One World	Private	17
Working Abroad	Non-profit	16
Year Out Group	Non-profit	16
Frontier	NGO	15
Help Go Abroad	Private	15
Travellers Quest	Private	14
Go Volunteering	Private	14
Responsible Travel	Private	13
Volunteer World	Private	12
Go Eco	Private	10
United Planet	Non-profit	9
Volunteer Travels	Private	9

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International Volunteer HQ	Private	8
Kaya Responsible Travel	Private	8
Students Go Abroad	Private	6
Projects Abroad	Private	6
Global Volunteers	Non-profit	5
Volunteering Solutions	Private	5
Globe Aware	Non-profit	5
Global Leadership Adventures	Private	4
The Great Projects	Private	4
A Broader View	Non-profit	4

SENDING AND HOST ORGANISATIONS

Further Resources and Information — Sending and Host Organisations

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES): International Voluntourism Guidelines for Commercial Tour Operators. <https://issuu.com/ecotravel/docs/voluntourism-guidelines>

Pepy Tours: provides an operator self-check guide.
<http://www.travelersphilanthropy.org/resources/documents/VOLUNTOURISM101self-checktool.pdf>

Dóchas: The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations (NGOs), involved in development and volunteering overseas. <http://www.dochas.ie/>

— An illustrative guide to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages.
<http://www.dochas.ie/code-conduct-images-and-messages>

— Resources and Tools for NGOs. <http://www.dochas.ie/knowledge-hub/resources-and-tools-ngos>

Comhlámh: a member and supporter organisation for global development. It provides several resources related to communication, education and best practice in volunteering. <https://www.comhlamh.org> Comhlámh – Guidance on social media for voluntourists – http://www.dochas.ie/sites/default/files/Social_Media_Resource_FINAL.pdf

— Good Practice Guidelines for Development Education in Volunteering – A set of guidelines for sending agencies seeking to strengthen their development education with their volunteers. <https://issuu.com/comhlamh/docs/good-practice-guidelines-for-develo>

— 11 Principles of Good Practice in Volunteering for Global Development.
<https://www.comhlamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/CoGP-2016-Edition-Final.pdf>

Concord: a European NGO confederation for relief and development.

— The European Code of Conduct on Images and Messages relating to the Third World.
<http://concordeurope.org/2012/09/27/code-of-conduct-on-images-and-messages/>

Save the Children: a charity that promotes children's rights, provides relief and helps to support children in developing countries.

— Principles for the use of images in marketing.
https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/global/reports/Save_the_Children_Image_Statement_Principles.pdf

Knowhow non-profit-hub: A resource for recruiting volunteers and writing position descriptions. www.knowhownonprofit.org/people/volunteers/recruiting/writing

Volunteering Portal (Victoria, Australia): Information for volunteers and organisations.

— Tips for designing volunteer roles. <http://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/manage-your-volunteers/planning-volunteer-programs/creating-volunteer-roles>

Volunteer Now: As Good As They Give – a booklet for managing and motivating volunteers. <http://www.volunteernow.co.uk/fs/doc/publications/workbook3-managing-and-motivating-volunteers-2013.pdf>

Mind: Train volunteer projects coordinators about wellness and strategies to promote it. www.mind.org.uk/media/436308/Training-resource-Building-resilient-communities-final.pptx

Year Out Group: Providers: YOG Member's Charter. <http://www.yearoutgroup.org/about-us/our-members/providers-yog-membership-information/member-s-charter/>

European Voluntary Service (EVS): Accreditation Guidelines. http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/library/evs-accreditation-guidelines_en.pdf

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC): GSTC Industry Criteria for Tour Operators. <https://www.gstccouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-industry-criteria-for-tour-operators/>

Fair Trade Volunteering: Criteria for volunteering. <http://www.fairtradevolunteering.com/criteria.html>

Learning Outside the Classroom: Quality Badge. <http://lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/>

International Organisation for Standardization: ISO/TC 228 Tourism and Related Services. <https://www.iso.org/committee/375396.html>

NSPCC: Charities are experts at reporting how money is spent. www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/organisation-structure/how-your-money-is-spent/

Volunteer Today: A tool for measuring volunteers' impact. www.volunteertoday.com/PDF/Measuring_the_Difference.pdf

Institute of Fundraising: The Code of Practice provides advice about accountability and transparency. <https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/guidance/accountability-and-transparency-guidance/>

VOLUNTOURIST

Further Resources and Information – Voluntourist

Learning Service: Education and resources for responsible voluntourism.

www.learningservice.info

— Essential Reading. <http://learningservice.info/library/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Essential-Reading.pdf>

Pod Volunteer: Volunteer Code of Conduct. <https://www.podvolunteer.org/policy/code-of-conduct>

Year Out Group: Plan Your Gap Year, Questions to Organisations.

[http://www.yearoutgroup.org/plan-your-gap-year/vital-information/ \](http://www.yearoutgroup.org/plan-your-gap-year/vital-information/)

PEPY Tours: Pre-departure Check List. <http://pepytours.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/prechecklistPT1.pdf>

Tourism Concern: has developed the Gap Year and International Volunteering Standard (GIVS). <https://www.tourismconcern.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/International-Volunteering-Report-web2.pdf>

Ethical Volunteering: An ethical volunteering guide (supported by Comhlámh, Tourism Concern, Mondo Challenge, Quest overseas). <http://new.ethicalvolunteering.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/ethicalvolunteering.pdf>

Comhlámh: a member and supporter organisation for global development. It provides several resources related to communication, education and best practice in volunteering. <https://www.comhlamh.org/>

— Volunteer Charter – 7 principles encouraging good practice in volunteering. <https://www.comhlamh.org/volunteer-charter-2/>

— Thinking on volunteering? A step-by-step guide – issues to consider. <https://www.comhlamh.org/issues-to-consider/>

— What Next Leaflet – A resource for returned volunteers. https://issuu.com/comhlamh/docs/what_next_leaflet

— Coming Home Training – A handbook for volunteer sending agencies. https://issuu.com/comhlamh/docs/training_handbook_final

— Coming Home Book 2014 – a resource and guide for the returned volunteer. https://issuu.com/comhlamh/docs/comhlamh_coming_home_book_print

UNWTO: Tips for a Responsible Traveller. http://www.tourism4development2017.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/tips_web.pdf

Moving Worlds: Tools and resources to help you volunteer your skills around the world <https://movingworlds.org/international-volunteering-resources>

COMMUNITY

Further Resources and Information – Community

Responsible Tourism Partnership: Taking Responsibility for Making Tourism More Sustainable – the Cape Town Declaration made at the International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations 2002. <http://responsibletourismpartnership.org/cape-town-declaration-on-responsible-tourism/>

Moving Worlds: A free planning template and comprehensive resource for project planning and ensuring community needs are well articulated and for facilitating a collaborative planning process.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LSv1T451IKBmm9hQPMMe7GIGrnWESRh4fHoY9XE5ckTY/edit>

GOVERNMENT

Further Resources and Information – Government

Responsible Tourism Tanzania: An accreditation scheme. http://www.rttz.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/RTTZ_Standardsdownload-1.3.pdf

British Standard Institution: A guide to the British Standard for adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom (BS8848:2014). <https://www.bsigroup.com/LocalFiles/en-GB/consumer-guides/resources/BSI-Consumer-Brochure-Adventurous-Activities-UK-EN.pdf>

UNWTO: Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. <http://ethics.unwto.org/content/global-code-ethics-tourism>

ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Further Resources and Information – Protecting Children

The Code: a membership organisation focused on the protection of children in the tourism industry, with a specific voluntourism policy. www.thecode.org

UNICEF: The United Nations Children’s Fund provides several resources relating to business principals and the rights of children, including research evidence, and business assessment tools.

— Children’s Rights and Business Principles.

www.unicef.org/csr/css/PRINCIPLES_23_02_12_FINAL_FOR_PRINTER.pdf

— Children’s Rights in Impact Assessments: A guide for integrating children’s rights into impact assessments.

www.unicef.org/csr/css/Children_s_Rights_in_Impact_Assessments_Web_161213.pdf

— Children’s Rights in Policies and Codes of Conduct: A tool for companies.

www.unicef.org/csr/css/Children_s_Rights_in_Policies_26112013_Web.pdf

— Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism: Elements to help create and implement a code of conduct to protect children.

https://www.unicef.org/lac/code_of_conduct.pdf

— The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. [www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/UN-Convention/Save the Children](http://www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/UN-Convention/Save_the_Children):

a charity that promotes children’s rights, provides relief and helps support children in developing countries.

Save the Children: Policies, procedures and guidelines to protect children.

<https://www.savethechildren.org.ph/about-us/who-we-are/our-policies>

— Code of Conduct.

https://www.savethechildren.org.ph/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/85539/Save-the-Children_Code-of-Conduct_Feb-2015.pdf

Better Care Network: a network focused on volunteering and child protection with free guidelines and research evidence. <https://www.bettercarenetwork.org/>

— Guidelines on the Deployment of Volunteers Working With Children Abroad.

http://www.bettercarenetwork.nl/content/17382/download/clnt/51944_Guidelines_volunteering_with_children_abroad_BCNN.pdf

— Williamson, J. & Greenberg, A. (2010). Families, Not Orphanages.

<http://www.bettercarenetwork.org/library/particular-threats-to-childrens-care-and-protection/effects-of-institutional-care/families-not-orphanages>

ECPAT: a global network of civil society organisations exclusively dedicated to ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

— Guidelines for preventing the sexual exploitation of children.
www.ecpat.net/sites/default/files/cst_faq_eng.pdf

Learning Service: Information for volunteers on orphanage tourism.
<http://learningservice.info/videos/video-4-orphanage-tourism/>

Volunteernow: Information for organisations on safeguarding children.

— Information on staff training and policy development in safe guarding children.
<http://www.volunteernow.co.uk/training-and-standards/safeguarding-vulnerable-sults-a-shared-responsibility>

Friends International / Childsafe: Ways to protect children including an international process for reporting child abuse. <https://friends-international.org/childsafemovement/>

Australia's Smart Volunteering campaign: The Australian Government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), has guidance on volunteering overseas and discouraging any form of short-term, unskilled volunteering in orphanages available at <https://dfat.gov.au/smartvolunteering> . A downloadable brochure with a checklist is included on the website.

Further Resources and Information – Animal Welfare

Born Free Foundation: an international conservation and animal rights organisation based in the UK, it has mechanisms to report instances of animal abuse.

— Travellers' Animal Alert initiative (reports and photos of animal suffering).
www.bornfree.org.uk/TAA

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries: a non-profit organisation that supports animal sanctuaries, rehabilitation centres and rescue centres.
www.sanctuaryfederation.org/gfas

Birdlife International: a global partnership of conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity. www.birdlife.org

The Marine Conservation Society: a non-profit organisation which support the protection of the seas around the United Kingdom and the creation of well managed marine protected areas. www.mcsuk.org

Campaign Against Canned Hunting: a wildlife charity and public benefit organisation which works to secure a ban on captive breeding of lions for the canned hunting industry.
www.cannedlion.org