



As organisations involved in international volunteering, we recognise that:

- Global peace and social justice are founded on constructive relationships between nations, communities and among individuals.
- Respect, reciprocity, trust and mutual responsibility are key elements that form the basis of constructive relationships.
- International volunteering is a uniquely effective avenue for the creation of constructive relationships between nations, communities, individuals and across cultures.
- International volunteering, when based on human to human relationships and mutual exchange (the sharing of oneself, reciprocal learning, an exchange of skills, ideas and the ability to be humble) can be a catalyst for practical achievement in tackling shared development challenges. Thus, contributing in practical ways to the creation of a fairer, more caring and socially just world.
- The opportunity to engage in international volunteering and cooperative work is a privilege. The openness and hospitality of host communities should always be acknowledged and valued as it is a core foundation for such exchange to occur.

We share a belief in some underpinning values and principles

- The communities that volunteers work with are the most appropriate people to make decisions about their own development.
- Sustainable development encompasses the social, spiritual, cultural and economic well-being of people.
- Sustainable development involves the use of all resources for the benefit of future as well as present generations.
- Issues of international volunteering and development can not be considered separately from social justice and peace, human rights and a sustainable environment.

We, who share these beliefs and come together in FORUM to promote effective international volunteering commit to:

- Treat fellow FORUM Members both in public and in private with respect, honesty, dignity and courtesy;
- Accurately represent its purpose and practice and cost structures to FORUM and all stakeholders;
- Use factual and accurate information in any donor or public publications, media releases, research papers or other representations;
- Act with integrity at all times;
- Oppose and not knowingly be a party to any corruption, oppression or exploitation of the local host organisation, community or country.
- These principles and the dignity of people portrayed in images must be respected in all promotional and fundraising activities.

As agencies involved in international volunteering, we affirm that:

In the spirit of solidarity and reciprocity, the objectives of volunteering programs are to:

- Contribute experience, expertise and support to hosting

organisations, institutions and communities in their own efforts to genuinely participate in the decision making and implementing of ideas that directly affect their lives and the future of their communities.

- Provide direct and sustained people-to-people linkages which go well beyond purely transactional or instrumental relationships.
- Enable volunteers to learn about and be enriched by the world's diversity while expressing their own commitment and solidarity in essentially practical ways. Encourage and support local volunteering.

And accordingly commit to:

- Ensuring that working alongside and sharing skills with partners in response to their expressed needs, is fundamental to all volunteer assignments.
- The development of programs and volunteer placements that are relevant and respectful of host communities' needs and wishes.
- Ensuring that volunteers have the appropriate personal qualities, motivation and skills and are appropriately prepared to make the most effective contribution during their placement.
- Providing appropriate support and adequate preparation to volunteers and host partners to ensure the successful completion and sustainability of their joint undertakings.
- Encouraging returned volunteers to share their experiences, learnings and commitment within their communities upon return and to become active in the global struggle for social justice.
- Collaborating with other international volunteer and cooperative organisations who share a commitment to the development and facilitation of programs based on values of equity and social justice.
- Actively participating in national and international opportunities such as International Volunteer Day, celebrated on 5th December – that provide opportunities to advocate for the contribution that volunteers make to peace and development.
- Reflection, evaluation, sharing good practice and key learnings as integral part of our organisational advancement.
- Be resource-wise and cost-effective.
- Work towards positive and sustainable outcomes as a result of volunteering and cooperative exchange efforts.

Name of organisation:

Name of signatory representing the organisation:

Position of signatory representing the organisation:

Signature:

Date:

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