



TOOLKIT | Volunteer Literacy

Traveling and volunteering overseas can be a rewarding and positive experience for all involved, but doing it responsibly requires some careful homework and research.

<p>Questions to ask yourself before you volunteer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I have the skills and experience needed to do this job?• Would I be allowed to do this job in my local community?• Could a local volunteer or paid staff member do this job rather than me?• Do I understand the local culture and language, and am I willing to learn before I go away?• What do I want to get out of it? Is this about me or the people I want to help?• How am I perceived by the local population? Is what I'm doing culturally appropriate?• What happens when I leave? Am I empowering local communities or creating dependence on international volunteers?
<p>Questions to ask a volunteering organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would you place inexperienced/unskilled volunteers like me in orphanages? (If the answer is yes – keep looking!)• Do you work with local partners to plan and implement your projects?• Do you have programs that help families stay together such as education, health, social outreach?• Will you provide training before I go?• Will I have to fundraise? If so, are you a registered charity with financial statements?• Do you carry out safeguarding checks for volunteers who work with children?• Can I see your child protection policy, and can you tell me how it's put into practice?• Can I talk to people who have volunteered with you in the past?

*These questions have been informed by the Lumos Foundation's [#HelpingNotHelping](#) resources that were developed in collaboration with the [International Citizen Service](#) (ICS).