People generally volunteer to do something meaningful and experience a new culture. However, some volunteer-sending organisations may be more concerned with creating a ‘life-changing’ experience for the volunteer, with less focus on the purpose and the needs of local communities.

HERE’S WHAT TO LOOK FOR TO MAKE SURE YOUR TIME OVERSEAS IS SPENT MAKING A GENUINE DIFFERENCE:

**THINGS TO LOOK FOR:**

1. **Track Record**
   - Look for evidence of past achievements and how programs are monitored and evaluated.

2. **Integrity**
   - A growing number of organisations have ceased orphanage volunteering. Find out who at rethinkorphanages.org.

3. **Accountability**
   - Some volunteer-sending organisations recruit volunteers for their own programs; others partner with organisations in the destination country and may not have end-to-end accountability for the project or your safety.

4. **Selectivity**
   - Expect to apply to volunteer and be vetted as if you were applying for a job or university. You should also receive pre-departure support and possibly training.

5. **Credibility**
   - Emotive language like ‘saving the world’ or ‘giving children the love they need’ may be used to recruit volunteers, but it’s not an indicator of quality.

6. **Sustainability**
   - Check there’s a project end date, not a long-term dependency on volunteers.

7. **Learning Opportunity**
   - How will apply your learnings back home? Employers will be interested in evidence of impact, not just the fact that you have volunteered overseas.

**FIND OUT MORE**

rethinkorphanages.org