



Global Ministries Giving Guidelines for International Travelers

Probably, people will ask you to help them out.
Truly, the need is great and the resources are scarce.

Chances are high the economy of the country you are visiting has deteriorated. You might even feel compelled to put your hand in your pocket, even if you are not asked. If you are asked to provide financial assistance and/or are moved to help out in a particular situation you encounter, **please think first on these things...**

® **Be aware that as a guest in a host church you are the receiver, not the bearer, of gifts.**

Learn to accept the hospitality and friendship of your host graciously. Be open to the many gifts they offer you ~ their insight to the Christian faith, their strength in adversity, their joy in living. Your willingness to receive what they have to offer you is the highest compliment you can pay them.

® **No matter how great the need may appear to be, do not let the impulse of the moment prompt you to offer assistance.**

Your visit is not meant to be an occasion for establishing direct financial links between you or your group and a local individual, institution, or congregation. Global Ministries works with our international partners to establish healthy and helpful means of sharing resources. What we as North Americans may intend as a spontaneous expression of generosity on our part ~ we who have so much ~ may be demeaning to those who do not have our abundance. Your host, like most people in other cultures, will highly value your willingness to learn about them and understand them. An open, friendly and humble attitude will be more appreciated than a thoughtless display of your abundance.

® **Respond courteously without making a commitment at any time.**

Do not promise something you cannot deliver, then or in the future, to get out of an embarrassing situation. The person making the request probably does not expect an immediate response from you. Furthermore, some conversation about the circumstances prompting the request may be in order with some general expression on your part of understanding and sympathy regarding the need. You may want to say that you would like to talk with some other persons about this ~ your group leader, some

host church leaders, a Global Ministries staff person, a missionary, etc.

- ® **Always consult with someone who knows the local situation well about the request(s) you may receive, or regarding any monetary gift(s) you may be moved to give.**

Visitors must be very careful about selective generosity. A gift to a particular person, group, or congregation can create difficulties for the local church or community leadership. Most of all, in a situation where the economy has deteriorated, you might be disempowering the people by solving an immediate problem that is the product of a larger economic problem for which they need to find alternatives. You may also unintentionally be promoting a dependency on external assistance. Moreover, those who request assistance may not be those who most need assistance. Some people are better at, and more willing to request help than others. Partner churches and programs usually know who is in most need in their midst, and have priorities for the use of any assistance that may come their way. Once you are home, if you wish, the Global Ministries Resource Development Office will work cooperatively with the respective Area Office in channeling any monetary gift you would like to make, in such a way as to avoid any hint of disempowerment and/or dependency.

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There are many opportunities for special giving through our church, including giving to the situation you have visited overseas. To make a special gift to support future delegations and experiences of this nature, or to contribute toward other ministry initiatives, please contact...

GLOBAL MINISTRIES RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

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Global Ministries, a common witness of the Division of Overseas Ministries,
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ