

frequently asked questions that deserve intelligent responses...

Why travel abroad for mission?

...wouldn't it be better just to send money than travel abroad to be directly involved?

At first glance the answer seems obvious — YES, better to just send money, surely?

However, this misses some of the vital dynamics of poverty alleviation that make a very strong case for saying: NO, it is better to go. People tend not to get involved unless they have a direct link to a specific opportunity to intervene and see tangible results.

- If asked to give money to build houses for homeless Mexican or South African or Eastern European families, most people decline.
- If asked to send someone to be directly and intelligently involved, most people would like to help out.

More than this, personal involvement in intelligent responses to poverty exposes people to what is possible. Through engaging in a project that is truly effective, a person who travels with us becomes conscious of their personal self-indulgence and the chronic needs of others. Injustice ceases to be a mere concept, but something they see and sense and experience.

Our BUILD and PURE trips seek to transform the perspective of those who go. The project in which they participate will completely transform the lives of the families they meet for the long term either by providing the family a home, or by releasing the family from water-borne diseases. And on returning home the trip participants will have gained a new outlook to live life with more justice, more generosity, and more compassion.

Note: in pure accountancy terms, we are investing £2000 in travel abroad for one young person who has most of their earning life still ahead of them. In return, we can reasonably expect to see many times that amount in time and resources given by the young person over their lifetime in pursuit of justice and mercy.

What about the planet?

...how does destroying it with lots of air travel and carbon emissions while providing housing and clean water relief do any good in the long term?

Amor Europe has a sustainability policy which ensures we:

- use 100% green electricity;
- reduce all unnecessary carbon emissions;
- offset all carbon emissions related to travel.

Implementation began in April 2022. By Jan 2024 we became 100% carbon neutral. We use gold accredited standard carbon offsetting programmes.

How do Amor Europe expeditions help not hinder local communities?

We endorse the Oath for Compassionate Service as outlined by Robert Lupton in his book *Toxic Charity*. It proposes six key factors when working overseas in areas of poverty:

1. Never do for the poor what they have (or could have) the capacity to do for themselves.
2. Limit one-way giving to emergency situations.
3. Strive to empower the poor through employment, lending and investing, using grants sparingly to reinforce achievements.
4. Subordinate your own self-interest to the needs of those being served.
5. Listen closely to those you seek to help, especially to what is not being said — as unspoken feelings may contain essential clues to effective service.
6. Above all, do no harm.

Popular criticisms of some charitable work are:

- It does long-term harm to the beneficiaries, makes them dependent.
- It is all about imposing mission upon other people to make ourselves look good.
- It does not listen and learn, but assumes superiority.
- It tackles effects rather than causes.

Our US Partner Amor Ministries has completed more than forty years of continual development in the field of short-term mission, and so linking up with them is a vital element to our authentic altruism. Without them we remain novices and liable to cause as much harm as good. Their proven non-toxic approach includes:

- Decisions are made by empowered and respected local leaders.
- Families are linked into the local churches, rather than to Amor, for ongoing support.
- Families maintain their dignity, having to contribute to the process, and owning the land.
- Local employment is arranged wherever possible.
- Local suppliers are used for materials.

Amor Ministries does the majority of its housing poverty relief in Mexico. It has commissioned long-term impact studies on the Mexican communities into which it has worked, and these studies consistently prove a positive long-term impact that lasts for decades.

I have another question!

Sure, do get in touch with us. We'll be happy to answer any questions you have.

Amor Europe is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales, charity no. 1176567, and in Scotland, charity no. SC054468, office: the Cornerstone Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QR