

## World Orphans Best Practices for Gift-Giving

**Purpose:** Provide a process for church partners to give gifts in a way that facilitates an opportunity to build relationships and serve the partnership. We desire to empower individuals, churches, and communities in ways that honor them as image-bearers of our creator as we work toward healthy poverty alleviation and long-term economic empowerment for those in our programs.

**Pray:** Pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit to honor the partnership in ways that ultimately bring glory to God and honor the individuals being served as image-bearers of our creator.

**Summary:** Over our years of ministry in church partnership, World Orphans has reflected on the topic of gift-giving. We have developed these best practices to speak into this topic based on our research, knowledge, and what we've learned from both good and challenging experiences.

It is a World Orphans best practice to invite the perspective of our international team members and partners into decisions. Regarding gifts from teams, we have learned that a desire to help can sometimes result in unnecessary items being carried to the field and given to our partners. *Please closely review the points in our Visitor & Team Member Covenant for more details.* We have also learned that donations can take away from local purchases or local paid labor, ultimately harming local economies.

### Gift-Giving and Church Partnership

As a way to articulate our focus on God-honoring partnerships, World Orphans has established 10 Values of Church Partnership. As we think through gift-giving, we desire to keep those ten values at the forefront of our mind while we determine the best ways to encourage and support the international church through financial/resource giving.

Capacity issues raise similar dilemmas as dependency, but they focus more on the intent of the US church. John Perkins said, "Acts of charity can be dangerous because givers can feel good about actions that actually accomplish very little, or even create unhealthy dependency. Overcoming an attitude of charity is a difficult task because it requires givers to demand more of themselves than goodwill." Robert Lupton, in his book *Toxic Charity*, warns us of this by saying, "We miss the big picture because we view aid through the narrow lens of the needs of our organization or church, focusing on what will benefit our team the most, and neglecting the best interests of those we serve." World Orphans avoids this misstep by highlighting the work of the local church, empowering our partners, and improving the lives of those we serve.

### World Orphans Economic Empowerment

We believe that economic empowerment is building the capacity of the men and women in our programs to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from economic opportunities in ways that recognize the value of their contributions, respect their intrinsic dignity as image-bearers of Christ, build stronger families, and improve the quality of life for all members of the family.

We believe that family preservation and economic empowerment are undeniably linked. The economic instability of poverty leads to unstable and disrupted families. Empowering men and women economically will create a stronger family, resulting in better care of and opportunities for the orphaned and vulnerable children we serve.

The bottom line is that stronger and more stable families mean stronger and more stable churches, resulting in stronger and more stable communities.

Our current areas of focus are:

- Savings Groups
- Microloans, Literacy Programs, and Empowerment Packs
- Youth Savings & Education
- Skills Training for Women

## Research

The following excerpt was taken from *Helping Without Hurting in Short-Term Missions* by Fikkert and Corbett: *The world's poor are not helpless. Not all poverty is created equal, so what is the appropriate response? There are three categories of response to poverty depending on the type:*

1. **Relief** is a response to some type of crisis (i.e. famine, earthquake, hurricane). Relief work is important and needs to be done well so it would be important to partner up with organizations who have the resources that have been working in this field for years.
2. **Rehabilitation** is getting people back on their feet. The biggest dynamic in rehabilitation is people have an opportunity to work to be a part of change. The idea fundamentally is that people are getting a lot of help but they are doing something to receive that help.
3. **Development** - 90% of poverty in the world is not caused by crises that demand a relief or rehabilitation response. There are deeper, complex issues embedded in both structures and individual lives. Development is looking at those deeper issues and possibilities to bring change in health, education, economic opportunities, etc. It doesn't happen fast. The key issue of development is not doing things for people but walking alongside people and helping them to see their strengths. This is the key more than any other thing. Poverty alleviation isn't just about fixing the material circumstances of the poor. It is about helping them discover that they are image-bearers and have tremendous value as human beings, and that they are called to be a steward of their resources and opportunities. We need to respect that process and not undermine it by taking over.

At World Orphans, we are working to help individuals see the resources in their communities and in their lives. They have knowledge, social networks, and economic resources. We are seeing proof that they can and do save. A key issue is taking the time to identify their resources, mobilize them, and put them into action. Outside resources will be needed often but only to build upon internal resources. Another key aspect of community development is the participation of the poor in their own life change. They are responsible before the Lord to carry this out. We can be there to encourage them and participate when helpful. We need to focus on dialogue. Be a follower, a listener, and a leader for the sake of the poor. Let's celebrate the gifts God has placed in their communities.

### **Common Team Leader Questions:**

- As a team leader, what do you do when your team or church members want to make a donation to the international church partner? How do you shepherd their thought process?
- How do you navigate gift-giving conversations with individuals that honor your church partnership covenant and ultimately honor the church and individuals you are serving?
- As a team leader, what process is the most empowering to the international church if there are remaining trip funds at the conclusion of the partnership trip?
- How do you navigate a team member's deep desire to give—even a sense that God is calling them to give—if the giving is outside these best practices and recommendations?

### **Equip/Participate**

We would like to encourage you, your team members, and church members to prayerfully consider giving in one of the following ways in preparation for your trip or at the completion of the trip. This includes a recommendation for remaining trip funds at the conclusion of your trip.

#### **1 - Donation of Funds**

1. Economic Empowerment
2. Ongoing World Orphans Campaign
3. Other International Church Partner Initiatives
  - a. Example: Wholistic Care conferences, school supplies and fees, medical ministry, etc. Work closely with your World Orphans Church Partnership Director to understand what is priority and what would be healthy and beneficial for the partnership.

#### **2 - Donation of Items**

Work with your World Orphans Church Partnership Director or in-country director to identify items that may be needed by your church partner that the team could bring. Keep in mind it is more helpful to the economies of these countries to purchase items within their country.

### **Post-Trip**

Communicate any funds left in-country on the World Orphans post-trip report when you debrief with your Church Partnership Director. He/She will discuss the process for using this funding.

### **Other Resources to Reference:**

*Poverty Inc.* Video - <http://www.povertyinc.org/>

*Poverty Cure* Video series <http://www.povertycure.org/> (discounted rates available through WO)

*Toxic Charity* by Robert Lupton

*When Helping Hurts* by Fikkert and Corbett