

POOR COUNTRIES: RESPONSIBLE HOLIDAYS

TIPS



Not all people who look poor are also poor in other countries. This is due to different income and living standards. At the same time, very few locals will be able to afford holidays. That's why, as a traveler, we should treat our wealth responsibly, not overly flaunting it, and not haggle over every penny, say experts advising to people traveling to poor countries.

One of the common questions is to give or not to give to the local beggars. The tour guide should be able to advise – especially if he comes from the country. He can assess the situation and give tips. **It is very important not to give money to children and not to buy anything from them.** This can encourage their families to keep sending them to the streets as little beggars instead of sending them to school. That's how a vicious cycle of poverty is maintained.

More and more tours are offered focusing on local slums. There are two ways to explore such areas: from the window of a bus or by foot. The latter offers the opportunity to get in touch with people face to face. Usually the guides themselves live in the area and show their favorite places.

Experts recommend asking the organizers how the people were involved in the development of the tours and how they are permanently involved. How is it ensured that the expenses of travelers also benefit the residents? It is also important to ask whether photographing during the tour is appropriate.

The local population of poor countries is often not involved in tourism revenues. Home-made bowls from which we eat soups at restaurants bring money to different people and convey appreciation.

“Compassion is the wrong approach. People are proud of their work, they are artists and live relatively normally, even if it may seem like poverty for us,” Harald Zeiss, Professor of Tourism Management at Harz University, said.

Leading by example is the most important contribution one can make. For example, to drink from reusable bottles to avoid plastic waste – and dispose of unavoidable waste properly.

Especially in southern countries, water is a scarce resource. One should of course enjoy the holiday, but even small measures can do a lot. **Do we have to change the towels every day? Do we have to take a bath in an area where water scarcity prevails?**

The causes of poverty are usually complex and cannot be easily eliminated by money of individuals. Experts suggest supporting local organizations.

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