

Decolonise IVS: Organizational Self-Assessment Tool



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To support International Voluntary Service (IVS) organizations
toward Decolonial Mutual Understanding

INTRODUCTION

DECOLONIAL ENGLISH

This document's inconsistencies in the spelling of "decolonization/decolonisation" and other words and expressions is intentional. Diverse spelling reflects the fact that in decolonial thinking and action - and in this very project - involve participants coming from a variety of backgrounds, often non-native English users, and involved in questioning anglicism as a colonial legacy itself. Editing for 'consistency' would silence and erase the diverse and inclusive participation that is critically needed by the decolonial movement in order to be successful.

Hopefully, you can value this choice of inclusive representation, and consider the mild disruption in your reading-flow as disrupting a pattern of domination! ;).

As International Volunteering Service (IVS) organizations, we work together from all time zones and latitudes as if we are sitting at the same table. And yet we are surprised sometimes when we really just don't understand each other, when something seems to be standing in between us.

- What kind of historical, geopolitical, relational dynamics of power could be playing out between our communities, sending and hosting organisations, partners, networks and funders?

- **If we find any colonial residue lingering in there, poisoning our best intentions, are we ready to face it?**

- **Are we ready to decolonise IVS?**



The “**HOW questions**” of this self-assessment tool are intended to offer, indeed, questions rather than answers. **Your answers will never be wrong:** they just act as prompts to create **a common language** that you can use in conversation with your partner organizations – both operating in formerly colonizing or colonized context* and in between – **so that you can better understand each other.**

This **decolonial mutual understanding** will serve as the **foundation for compensatory and reparatory collective action.**

In other words, while working towards decolonial mutual understanding, we have to know as best as we can **what went on in the past and how that past informs what is going on now.** This way we can strategize together how to **repair and compensate for past and current harms, and never repeat them again.**

context* ... not country?
This tool refers to “context” rather than “country” to hold space for whatever situation you operate in: colonists make “countries” appear and disappear from the map, changing names and boundaries.
You define your here and now!

ON DEFINITIONS

This tool avoids providing strict definitions of colonialism, colonization, settler colonialism, slave trade, coloniality, anti-colonial resistance etc. because we invite you to share the organizational and inter-organizational knowledge you have.

The resources’ list at the end is for you to start afresh or complement your knowledge – feel free to contact us to add resources at secretariat@ccivs.org .

RECOMMENDATION OF USE

Imperial colonialism has been going on for centuries, so let's manage our expectations, as decolonizing is going to be **a long-term process** too: the point is staying on it, rather than chasing its end - spoiler alert, there is no end ;) !

This is why you may want to pace yourself in trying out this tool:

- **First**, do the **self-assessment within your organization**: reflect together as a team, take notes, highlight the points that are more interesting and important - those that would best inform your partners about the context you work in.
- **Then**, have a **bilateral conversation or meeting with each of your partner organizations** - especially if the collaboration is just starting, or if it is challenging - with the explicit aim of understanding each other more in a decolonial sense (**see the email template that we prepared below for you to get in touch**).

Keep in mind that **there are no correct answers to any of the questions**: they are meant to inspire conversations and reflections, and **it is up to you to decide how deep you want to go and what you want to share** or not.

Also ... bring in as much fun as possible!

Use colors, take dancing breaks, play music in the background!



#RESOURCES

Additional material #1: Email template to invite Partner Organisations

Hi!

We just tried out this Organizational Self-Assessment tool from a CCIVS' project called "Decolonise IVS". It took us [***this much time***] to do it, in [***x***] sessions where [***these people, add names and roles***] participated together.

We thought it was helpful for us because it allowed our team to reflect on [***fill the blank and specify***]/to start a conversation about [***fill the blank and specify***]/ to discover that we didn't have an agreement on [***fill the blank***]; and to build together a common language and understanding about difficult topics like [***colonialism/ privilege/ intersectionality/ race/ gender /class / inclusion/ diversities/racism/sexism ...***].

Since we've been working as partners for [**insert years**]/we are now starting to collaborate, how about you let us know if you try this out in your team too, even just the first part? We could then have a [***call/meeting***] and see how we can improve our communications and our projects ahead of the coming season.

Let us know!

Best,

[***Your name, your organization***]

P.S. We are affected by the global digital divide in the following ways, so let's be mindful about that while we plan our future meetings:

- These are the times and days of the week and times in which our electricity and Wifi is more reliable: [**fill the blank and specify - *Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun***].
- These are the platforms for collaboration that work better for us: [***fill the blank and specify***]. And these are the ones we CANNOT work with for financial/security/political reasons: [***fill the blank and specify***].
- We need/can provide access to software/hardware: ex. We have a paid Zoom account to hold meetings for longer than 40 minutes; we can't currently afford a data plan for the organization, so some of us are sharing their personal or professional ones/ we have ***these many*** international data sim cards or portable hotspot we can mail to you; our monitor/router broke and we can't currently replace it; we have received a new laptop as a spontaneous donation but the charger has a British plug and we can't find an adapter; we have access to [***x***] software licences but can't quite use it, has anyone among you ever used it?

CONTENT SUMMARY

PART 1

PART 1 is about DECOLONIZING WITHIN & IN BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS, while operating in formerly colonial contexts, formerly colonized ones, or a mix of the two. This part includes:

- HISTORIES: 5 How-questions to reflect on the colonial and anti-colonial origins of today's privileges and disadvantages;
- PRIVILEGES/DISADVANTAGES CHECK: an organizational privilege/disadvantages check with yes-no questions to position your organization in this discussion;
- ACTIONS: A set of 3 How-questions to start a deeper decolonial reflection in your organization.

PART 2

PART 2 - Is about DECOLONIZING IVS PROJECTS, existing and future ones. This part includes:

- INTRODUCTION
- CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES: A color/symbol-coded tab highlighting the four cross-cutting issues to be considered at every stage of an IVS project (spoiler, in alphabetical order): community involvement, compensatory and reparatory logic, gender norms and roles, and Nature/climate justice.
- DECOLONIZE PROJECTS: A set of 9 dedicated how-questions with examples to decolonize every stage of IVS projects: planning (i.e. needs' assessment, volunteering activities, logistics and pre-departure), project implementation (i.e. housekeeping, core volunteering activities, conflict transformation and leisure) and project evaluation.

PART 1: DECOLONIZING WITHIN AND BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS

HISTORIES

This section addresses historical and current issues that often remain unspoken, so that you can identify the key aspect your organization needs to work on to decolonize. Once again, don't be discouraged if you find the questions below somehow difficult: there are no right or wrong answers!

- What was each member of your team taught in school about colonialism in the context where they received their education?
- Take a look together at the 3 or 4 key ideas/phrases/concepts you were taught about colonialism in school: whose "truths" are/were those? Who is/was benefiting from those concepts or hiding certain aspects or perspectives?
- What have you discovered about world history since leaving school that has inspired you to question more?
- What kinds of colonialism or anti-colonialism receive more time and attention in the books/media/stories?
- How do you think colonial history influences the values and practices in your context and of your organization? (this is the key question that encourages you to connect to the next section, the Organization Privilege Check, to point at the links between the current privileges and disadvantages, and their history)

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIVILEGE CHECK

Along the lines of individual privilege checks (more on this below), a free, open access and editable "Organizational Privilege Check" was created on 13/10/2022 by activists of Service Civil International (SCI). The intention was to provide a quick and easy way for organizations to introduce themselves and the context they operate in among each other. The Decolonise! IVSproject has built upon this tool to support organizational transformation in a decolonial sense.

You can:

- Copy all or part of the checklist to use it.
- Agree in advance with a partner organization to share it bilaterally
- Share with partner organizations via email or during a meeting/call
- Use it individually within a team in your organization and then confront your answers: perceptions are always different ... and making differences visible is the beginning of making understanding possible :)

HOW TO USE: add Y/N next to each statement, leave an empty line below each statement to clarify/specify/comment/added info/examples

Ex. "I love apples" Y
Only red ones, though.

STRUCTURE AND DECISION- MAKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have been active for more than _____ years - We agreed to have an organizational constitution/statute - We are structured in a horizontal/non-hierarchical/democratic way - Every person in the organization has the chance to take part in the discussions and have their voice taken into account in the decision-making - We can rely on a good number of committed volunteers - Our projects can go on regardless of international volunteers' participation - Our offer to incoming and outgoing volunteers relies on existing grassroots initiatives - We can organize training (including pre-departure, on arrival, final evaluation workshops) for most of our volunteers.
LEGAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have the opportunity to register our organization legally without negative consequences - Outgoing volunteers from our organization can easily get a visa - We have the possibility to support incoming volunteers with their visa applications - We have sufficient human resources to navigate legal and bureaucratic opportunities and obstacles

FINANCE & ASSETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have the opportunity to receive funding from our national government. - We receive funding from a variety of sources: membership, volunteer fees, institutions, grants, donors, etc. - We can afford to employ paid staff if needed - We have or could have a bank account - We own, rent, or can use an office space/suitable places to hold our activities - Our financial situation is stable - In our context there is a reliable infrastructure for electricity/plumbing/internet/sanitation/ heating & AC facilities - We can provide free accommodation for volunteers - Our organization is not isolated from transport/health facilities/markets - We have insurance for accidents/household/damage for the office/ organization - We have access to tax-exemption (either through our registration as non-profit, through our donors, or otherwise) - We operate in a context that is economically stable (add relevant information about currency stability, neighboring countries and inflation)
POLITICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We work in a context that has a strong, active and critical civil society - We work in a context where it is safe to talk about “peace”, “human rights”, “sex/gender/sexual orientation”, “environmental justice”, “labor rights” ... - Talking about politics or our values does not threaten our access to registration or funding - We work in a context that has freedom of speech (public meetings, websites, social media ...) - Civil society organizations in our context are not under state surveillance - We can safely associate (rather than compete) with other like-minded organizations - We operate in a context that is politically stable - We can easily approach parliamentarians or policy makers with our advocacy asks - In our context, there are independent advocacy platforms, such as youth councils or NGO networks, that are recognized and consulted by the government

GREAT! You’re done with this part!

INDIVIDUAL PRIVILEGE CHECK

Individual privilege checks inspired the creation of a similar tool for organizations and, sure, individual staff or activists and volunteers can decide to try them out too, even in a group setting. Buuut ...

*****WARNING!!!*****

Individual privilege checks should be done **anonymously** because, for example, **you don't want people to "come out"** in front of others such as colleagues, bosses, teachers or classmates. Especially important in the decolonial sense, is **not to make any minority or marginalized group or individual responsible for educating others about their experiences of oppression, on top of already having to live and deal with oppression.**

HOW TO HANDLE ANONYMITY: deciding in advance not to ever disclose personal "scores", or writing them down on a piece of paper and tossing it in a box for a facilitator to then report them verbally or collect them on a board for group discussion.

Examples of individual privilege checks in English:

* BuzzFeed India privilege check
(https://www.buzzfeed.com/soniathomas/how-privileged-are-you?bffbndia&utm_term=4ldqpgp#4ldqpgp)

[the context of reference in the examples below is Euro-American]

* BuzzFeed privilege check (<https://www.buzzfeed.com/regajha/how-privileged-are-you>)

* BuzzFeed second attempt: "Invisible privileges" ex. My house is free of pests.
(<https://www.buzzfeed.com/stephenlaconte/how-privileged-are-you-quiz?bfsorce=bfocompareon>)

* White privilege [pdf] ex. I was never discriminated because of my skin color
(https://nationalseedproject.org/images/documents/Knapsack_plus_Notes-Peggy_McIntosh.pdf)

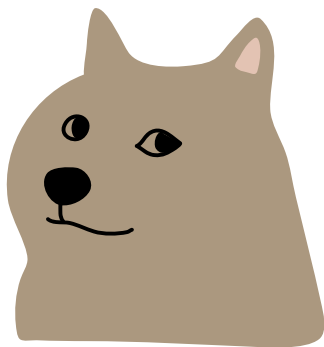
* Cis-privilege ex. I am ok with the sex I was assigned at birth.
(<https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2011/11/list-of-cisgender-privileges/>)

* Heterosexual privilege ex. I can walk hand-in-hand with my partner.
(<https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2012/01/29-examples-of-heterosexual-privilege/>)

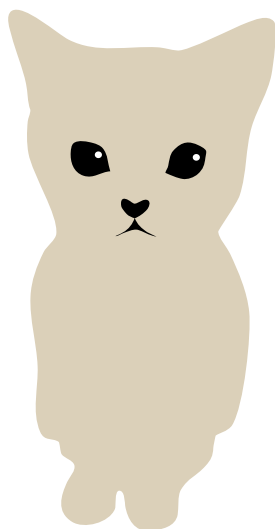
* Male privilege ex. I can dress how I want and not worry it will be used as a defense if I am raped.
(<https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2012/11/30-examples-of-male-privilege/>)

* Christian privilege ex. I can expect to have time off work to celebrate my religious holidays.
(<https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2012/05/list-of-examples-of-christian-privilege/>)

THREE QUESTIONS TO START A DECOLONIAL CONVERSATION

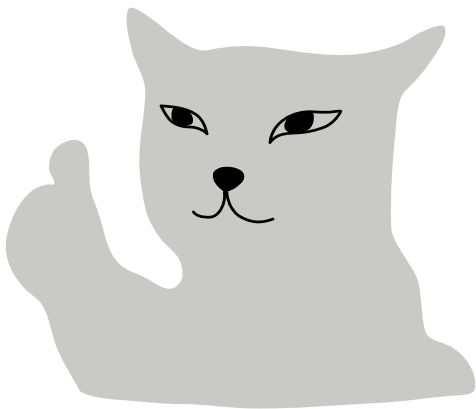


When you are in partnership with another organization (inside or outside of the IVS network), how do you strive to understand each other's contexts (cultural, political, institutional)?



When you host or send volunteers, how do you ensure that you and the volunteers are aware of the history of colonialism, colonization/settler colonialism, coloniality, and past/present anti-colonial resistance in the departure and arrival context?

If you are hosting and sending volunteers between a formerly colonial context and a formerly colonized one, how are you considering with your counterpart every possible opportunity to reverse the hierarchy and return recognition and resources?*



If your answer to all three questions was “...”, “Oops! We don’t!” or “Oops! We never had the chance to talk about it” ... Well, now you know and THAT’S GREAT!

Here starts your chance to do so!

* (e.g. The formerly colonial context often offers the chance to research colonial and anti-colonial history in well-resourced libraries, offices and on paid working hours. Those resources can be shared to support partners in formerly colonized contexts.)

PART 2: DECOLONIZING IVS PROJECTS

INTRODUCTION

If you made it to the second part ... you're the best! 🏆

By now, you may have found that a lot of the damage done by imperial colonialism has to do with the creation and (often violent) imposition of **a power structure, i.e. a hierarchy of places and people**. Some places and people were placed at the bottom of the hierarchy and pictured as lacking power, resources, knowledge, initiative and value; others were put at the top and called powerful, wealthy and valuable. This hierarchy is still visible in today's world system, whose dimensions have been named as "**Imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy**" (hooks, 2013). Those descending **from men-made, wealth-seeking, lighter skinned** empires and their allies also tend to dominate the organizing and progress of non-decolonized volunteering programs, resulting in a similar **hierarchy of empowerment among volunteering organizers and participants**.

This section's questions provide support in **keeping in mind this hierarchy**, and seeing as many chances as possible to **turn this hierarchy upside down**, in a collective effort to **repair and compensate** for the damage done.

In this part, the invitation to organizations is to continue the conversation and revise their practices by:

- **Sharing and agreeing on a common language** to talk about and get familiar with all the dimensions of the colonial power structure (class, caste, gender/sex/sexual orientation, race/color, physical and cognitive ability, nationality/ethnicity/language, religion, age, species* ...), and with the way these dimensions intersect and oppress in conjunction, a.k.a. Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989).
- **Placing participants that are marginalized and oppressed by the colonial power structure at the center:** indigenous communities and individuals, racialized people, ethnic and sexual minorities, people with disabilities and neurodivergent people, ...

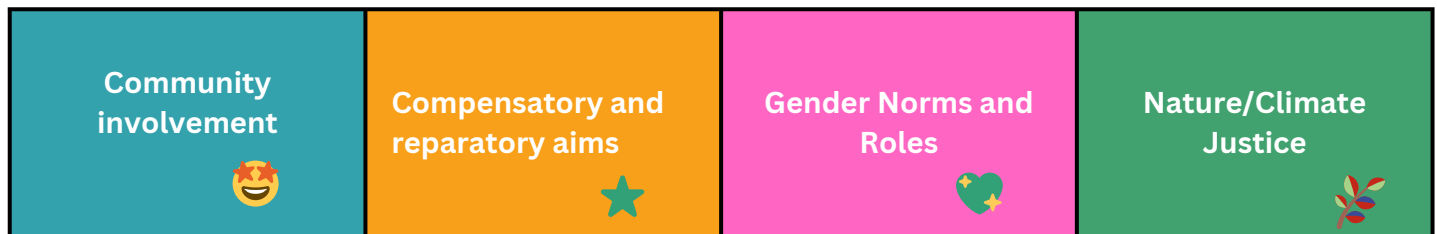
species*

The dominance and abuse of Nature and non-human animals is also a legacy of the colonial power structure that can be addressed in our programs as a climate-change feature, see below "Nature/Climate Justice".

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

In elaborating the following questions and examples, we kept coming back to four **cross-cutting issues that should be taken into consideration in every aspect of planning and implementation**. We color/symbol-coded them as follows, and the first example will include a few brief explanations for the ways they could be addressed and a “this will help you decolonize because ...” highlight to get into the mood!

But “ways” are potentially infinite: this tool cannot provide you with the ultimate answers. It is your task to practice **spotting the issue, and then be creative with your solutions and sense-making! :)**



Gender norms and roles should be discussed and negotiated in marginalized contexts by local organizations, local communities and volunteers, rather than by organizations and volunteers from formerly colonial and neo-colonial ones.

Well-intentioned gender-affirming volunteers embodying and using Western-generated terminology like LGBTQIA+ in societies with homophobic and transphobic laws need to be aware that **homophobia and transphobia was actually a colonial import!** For example, there is a direct correlation between maintaining cis-hetero-patriarchal regulations and belonging to the Commonwealth, and therefore having previously been under British rule.

Indeed, **activists in formerly colonial places are re-appropriating their own pre-colonial gender-inclusive language and practices** showing - for example in this [four minutes' video](#) on pre-colonial gender fluidity, that there are many different ways to talk about gender diversity, which is exciting! (more resources in Resources)

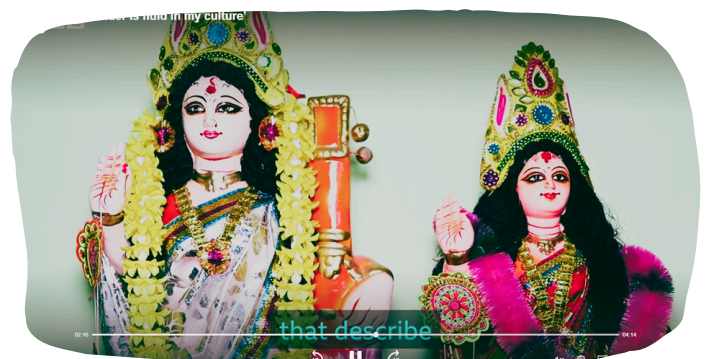
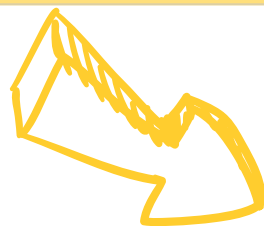


Photo credit: BBC

DECOLONIZE IVS PROJECT PLANNING

1. DECOLONISE NEEDS AND RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

How does your organization investigate the needs and resources of a certain community before organizing an IVS project? 🤗🌟❤️🌿

Example:

The community intends to start /renovate/maintain a 🤗COMMUNITY GARDEN 🌿 and share a first draft of a resources/need list to be negotiated with the local and the sending organization.

RESOURCES	NEEDS
Seeds [local, non-GMO, last year's] 🌿	[❤️a mix of] 10 international volunteers plement the community 🤗 in:
Land & water & sun 🌿	Seedlings maintenance 🌿
Knowledge of local plants 🌿	Fixing one side of the fence
Fencing materials 🌿	Translating the local gardening handbook 🤗
Gardening tools 🌿	Organizing the yearly harvest festival (harvesting and cooking food) 🤗🌿❤️🌟
4 young volunteers from the community 🤗	Gardening tools: list the ones missing to be provided by the volunteers or organization with more access and resources 🌟

RESOURCES	NEEDS
1 long term volunteer already on site	
3 community members managing an outdoor kitchen with a volunteer kitchen team 	
The local school gym to accommodate volunteers	
2 cars and 4 bicycles 	

This will help you to decolonise because:

1. You will **not “reinvent the wheel” or make the project depend on volunteers’** presence.
2. You will **make space for the recognition of existing indigenous knowledge** rather than disregard or erase it.
3. You will **participate rather than compete or interfere with existing local initiatives and processes or local professional life:** ex. unskilled volunteer doing skilled job for free in place of paid community members; volunteer in training that acquires professional experience in the community who unknowingly or otherwise serves as a “free guinea pig” for the volunteer to practice on

2.DECOLONISE VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES

When your organization and the community plan the project activities, how do you aim at creating an environment that is conducive to the inclusion of community members and volunteers who are disadvantaged by the power structure? 🌟🌟🌟

Example:

Monday

🤗 Local volunteers or community members participate in the project, lead orientation activities, and share ground rules

Tuesday:

🤗🌿 community garden visit, led by community leader or project participants (for safety) & local plant expert lesson

Wednesday:

❤️ Local and international volunteers from 2 mixed groups, one for fencing, the other for seeding & kitchen team

Thursday:

❤️ 2 mixed groups, one for harvesting, the other to organize the harvest festival

Friday:




🤗❤️🌿★ Visit to nearby market for festival essentials & the harvest festival

3. DECOLONIZE LOGISTICS

A) How are the priorities and preferences of marginalized communities and volunteers taken into consideration so that activities don't disrupt their livelihoods? 🤗❤️

B) How can you insert as many elements as possible into activity planning to reverse and dismantle every dimension of the colonial power structure? ★

Examples:

<p>TRANSPORT</p> 	<p>FOOD</p> 	<p>ACOMMODATION</p> 
<p>Volunteers use locally available public transport. And if water sourcing in the community happens on foot, the volunteers will join the community on foot.</p>	<p>The use of locally available food is prioritized. The community directs food preparations according to its own standards, including possible exceptions declared by the volunteers in advance (dietary restrictions, religious rules, allergies, intolerances ...).</p>	<p>Volunteers are staying with host families, or share communal spaces (careful with religious affiliation). Co-living rules can be negotiated upon arrival (anonymously or not) so that personal needs are heard, respected and appreciated. Volunteers are from a diverse set of backgrounds and share co-living spaces.</p>

4.DECOLONIZE PRE-DEPARTURE

<p>FINAL CHECKS</p>	<p>PROMOTION</p>	<p>VOLUNTEER'S SELECTION</p>
<p>How are marginalized participants involved in final checks of the project?</p> <p>Ex. 🤝 The anonymous community input is invited on a shared online document or in a final community meeting.</p> <p>The LTV received a detailed project information pack and is empowered to look for more information from credible sources.</p>	<p>How do you make sure that images and the vocabulary used in promotional materials turn the colonial hierarchy in your context upside down?</p> <p>Ex. 🤝 Photos centralize community members as the main actors.</p> <p>The stories in promotional materials focus on the resources or knowledge of the local initiatives.</p> <p>❤️The images do not reproduce harmful gender norms.</p>	<p>How are volunteers selected locally and internationally through a diversity and inclusion logic that dismantle the colonial hierarchy?</p> <p>Ex. 🤝 Local volunteers are given opportunities to participate.</p> <p>🌿If local action and resources are sufficient, we do not have to spend jet fuel unnecessarily.</p>

Implementation

5. DECOLONIZE HOUSEKEEPING

How do the accommodation facilities at our disposal take care of the needs and aspirations of nature, the community and the local/incoming volunteers?



Additional guiding questions:

- Room allocation: **how are rooms allocated, with what criteria?** 🇺🇦
- Duties and Responsibilities: **how are working teams made and duties allocated?** 😊❤️
- Division of labor: **how are cleaning duties shared amongst the host family members or co-living volunteers?** 😊❤️

6. DECOLONIZE CORE VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES

How does this project put Nature, community-driven systemic change, and the volunteers at the center? 😊★❤️

Additional guiding questions and examples:

Project Design

How are the **knowledge, resources and skills of people that are marginalized in the colonial power structure put at the heart of project design?** ★

How do the core activities **take care of the needs** of both the **community, volunteers** and **Nature?** 😊❤️★🌿

Working Materials

How are working tools chosen, distributed and used? 😊★❤️🌿

Are **locally sourced** and **traditional indigenous tools** given **priority and recognition?** 😊★❤️🌿

Ex. **Community-provided tools** and those brought by volunteers upon the community's request are put together for **all participants** to negotiate **how they are distributed and used.** 😊★❤️

Division of Labor

How are **duties and responsibilities allocated**? How do you **devise strategies** so that **no one is left behind**? 🤗❤️⭐🌿

Ex. The organizers from **the community**, and the **sending and hosting organization** schedule regular checks in with all participants – daily house meetings, mid-term evaluation, regular calls ... – on their satisfaction with the **division of tasks and responsibilities**, and **the general pace and progress of the project**. 🤗❤️⭐

7. DECOLONIZE CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

When you are put in the position to mediate a conflict...

How do you approach the conflict from a point of view that uncovers the colonial power imbalances (which might e.g. bias whose side of the story we are accustomed to believing)? 🤗⭐❤️

Additional guiding questions and examples:

How do you highlight **unhealthy or unbalanced relationships** brought to light by this conflict?⭐

Ex. Someone **taking advantage of their own privileged position in the hierarchy** mentioned above to act against someone else who is in a position of disadvantage, marginalization or minority. 🤗⭐❤️

Despite how uncomfortable it is to acknowledge, how do you **check if your own personal bias or the personal bias of someone else involved** is connected to colonial values, priorities, or worldviews? 🤗⭐❤️

Ex. Is it easier to believe the side of the story from the one with more structural power, one that looks, talks or acts as the people that hold the microphone on TV (proximity to whiteness, to hegemonic masculinity, flaunting wealth, holding degrees...etc.) rather than the community elder who is sharing plant knowledge? ☺️

How do we offer interventions that encourage power shifting or powersharing? 🤗❤️⭐🌿

Example: The volunteer is on the phone all the time and the Host Project Representative is disappointed in their lack of focus on the community garden tasks. Maybe they made assumptions about the volunteer's knowledge of gardening or their willingness to do manual labor based on their skin color. Maybe the volunteer is using the phone to translate all the conversations because they don't understand. We can clear up such misunderstandings when we open lines of communication towards decolonial mutual understanding. Often the power needs to shift so that the volunteer can have more of a say in what tasks are suitable for their background and skill set, or they require additional support in translation.

- How best can we make volunteers stay engaged so that they don't end up using their digital devices during work time? How much is it ok for the volunteers to spend time using their phones? And for what purpose? And how to solve the conflict it generates?

8. DECOLONIZE LEISURE

How do you guide volunteers and community participants to select leisure activities that are in line with the four cross-cutting issues highlighted from the start? 🤗❤️⭐🌿

Additional guiding questions and examples:

How do you **make leisure time Nature-friendly?** 🌿

Example: Suggest activities and **hobbies according to the seasons and to the natural availability like community-led nature and city walks to observe and understand the environment.** 🤗⭐🌿

How do you **promote locally available activities created and/or directed by the surrounding community?** 🤗

Example: Volunteers try to participate as much as possible in **community life**: they try the local food and its preparation even during days off and ask to participate in events, hobbies and activities that are available in the neighborhood (e.g. local handicraft workshops to make eco-friendly souvenirs).. Sharing of interests, teaching each other and learning together to play games, and if possible, including, family members or friends of the project staff to enlarge the experience and to strengthen the network around the project and community.

If you organize leisure activities for participants, **how do you provide space for critical reflection on activities and consuming habits that reinforce colonial paths or to highlight anti-colonial resistance?** ⭐

Example: Rather than individually organizing shopping marathons, or joining “poverty porn” activities (such as “slum/favela tours” and “plantation visits”) participants take a group hike at a special nature park and are guided by a **group of local land stewards** or **climate justice activists** (😊🌟🌿❤️) who have been involved in protecting it. Decolonising human-nature relationship with curiosity and critical thinking.

Evaluation

Ideally, **feedback from all** (community, project, host family, volunteers, sending and hosting organizations, etc.), **focused on diverse criteria** (communication, work, leisure, cultural adaptation, the mode evaluation itself), **and regularly** (beginning, middle, end) **would make our projects most responsive and for the greater good of everyone involved.** However, the lack of access to various kinds of resources tends to create limitations.

In any case, we want to be attentive to **how the structural power dynamics that have been highlighted so far - regarding class, race and ethnicity, gender, sex and sexual orientation - affect which voices, views and practices are taken more seriously.**

How have you considered whose worldviews, values, methods and priorities, and are shaping your view of “effectiveness” or “ineffectiveness” during the evaluation of a project? 😊❤️🌟🌿

Additional guiding questions and examples:

How are **marginalized volunteers and communities** given space to influence what kind of questions are asked or how evaluations take place? 😊🌟

How is the data collected (or the types of questions asked, etc.) also useful for the community, and who among the community members (or is it primarily serving a funder)? 😊
🌟🌿❤️

Example: at the community garden, there are feedback channels in place to collect information from multiple sources, and use both written (anonymous) and verbal (exchange to build trust) so that no one takes the feedback personally and lessons learned are gathered for the community, the volunteers, and the organizers. **These lessons learned feed directly into the next plan of action.** 😊🌟🌿❤️

This self-assessment tool was crafted through the collective efforts of the Decolonise Project Consortium partners. Gratitude extends to each contributor whose input made this endeavor possible.

REFERENCES

Books

Social media accounts and publications

@decolonialatlas

Videos

Explaining privilege to all ages: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRiWgx4sHGg&t=103s>

Podcasts

It's a Continent - African history podcast (English) <https://www.itsacontinent.com/>

The role of colonization in establishing the gender binary in South Asia (check available languages)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7d-POEW5Uw>

Tools

ICYE Anti-Racism Toolkit for IVS (English and Spanish) <https://padlet.com/icye/anti-racism-toolkit-for-international-volunteering-s9e547nzf1qo5hok>

Non-academic articles

“African sexuality and the legacy of imported homophobia” (<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/about-us/news/african-sexuality-and-legacy-imported-homophobia>) Describe the relationship that exists between countries that belong to the Commonwealth, and therefore have previously been under British rule, and countries that still have homophobic/biphobic and/or transphobic legislation in their constitutions.

Academic articles

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-021-01460-w/figures/2>

This portal <http://www.africagbt.org/> is a project that aims to give visibility to information, statistics and news on gender and diversity rights violations in Africa.

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