



**Is something better than nothing?
A case study of volunteerism in a
conflict-affected area.**

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Outline

Howard & Burns (2015) frame 'international development' as a *"complex and contradictory setting"* in which volunteering takes place.

- INGO & context
- Availability
- Ability
- Accountability
- What do you think?

INGOs & conflict-affected context

Volunteerism staffing model



Shan State, Myanmar



Availability

“They don't dare to risk their life to come to the border. Even the Shan doctors or nurses will still use technocratic language, and Burmese or English like the expats, not Shan.” Shan leader



Ability

You'll have the chance to bring hope to those affected by conflict and oppression, and **personally be changed** in the process!

"They may have been poor in possessions...but they were rich in something we have lost." Norwegian volunteer



Accountability

“We knew it was remote. We did a tropical medicine course but it didn't tackle low resource environments.” Dr Alison

Our commitment to social justice is indeed predicated on our intent to **do no harm**, to reconstruct a sustainable platform for health improvement, and to assist local providers in these efforts. (Wilson, Merry & Franz, 2012)

What do you think?
Is something better than nothing?



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