“Asking Hard Questions about the Impact of International Service Learning”

(Robin D. Crabtree, Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education: Vol. 31, 2007)

Discussion or Reflection Activity – during field experience

Share the attached short article with your program participants toward the end of your international service experience. Use the questions below as a guide for a group reflection to explore topics including: impact made, lessons learned, future engagement, so what – now what.

Some possible questions for discussion or as a prompt for a reflection paper:

- Initial thoughts/reactions?
- What impact has this experience had on you?
- What impact has this experience had on the community you engaged with?
- What does it mean to be in “solidarity with the most marginalized in the new global order”? How will you continue to seek and create this solidarity after this experience?
- How have you been changed by this experience? How will this experience continue to transform your learning, attitudes and actions?
- Do you feel pity, sympathy or guilt? What actions do these feelings inspire, and how do you respond?
- How do global relations with developing countries support our lifestyle and privileges?
- Do our relationships with institutions, communities, and people in global education and service learning partnerships reproduce or disrupt historical and inequitable power relationships between rich/poor, 1st world/3rd world, urban/rural, educated/not formally educated, etc.?
- What does it mean to build solidarity and justice? Did you/we do this in small ways during our experience? How can and will you/we continue to strive for these goals? What one or two actions will you commit to moving forward?