

## When money passes hands

### 1. Money is an important part of every friendship, but it doesn't make a good foundation.

- Ideally, a relationship should begin getting to know each other and building trust apart from exchanges of money.
- Money can make a big difference, but relationships are more important in the long run and can lead to longer-lasting effects.
- Consider giving money indirectly, through a trusted third party, so you are not regarded as a source of money.

### 2. Hosting can be expensive.

- It is often a good idea to bring a gift when visiting a host. A person familiar with the culture can guide you in this.
- Hosting can be expensive. For a stay of several days, consider whether there might be some way you can help defray the costs.
- For your African friends to visit your country, you may need to help pay for the trip.

### 3. Global income disparities are enormous.

- Most Westerners have no idea of their wealth relative to most other people in the world. To learn more about disparities, visit <http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/poverty-facts-and-stats>.
- Don't try to buy off your guilt with money or gifts on the spur of the moment. Rather, invest in solutions after doing research and receiving advice.

### 4. Unhealthy donor/recipient patterns need to be broken.

- Americans have developed a reputation as money bags and a soft touch for money. Don't stop being generous, but learn how to be generous intelligently.
- Beggars and their poverty are part of an economic system that creates misery. Rather than give money to beggars directly and thus further the broken system, invest in another system that relieves poverty. For example, you might invest in a program that teaches employable skills to poor people.

### 5. Don't assume that people are taking advantage of you.

- Before you get offended, consider that there might be a cultural explanation for a use of money that you are not accustomed to.
- A friend from the local culture can often explain the uses of money within the culture, and tell you if someone is taking advantage of you.
- If anything about an exchange of money needs to be talked about, such as stipulations for its uses, do so before the exchange, not after.

### 6. View price bargaining as a type of relationship.

- The customer should avoid two extremes: don't be viewed as a fool for not bargaining enough, and don't be viewed as a mean-spirited for speaking with disrespect just to get a lower price.

For more detailed information, see: Maranz, David. African Friends and Money Matters. Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2001.



These principles were developed by africanising - building relationships with effective grassroots African organizations. [www.africanising.org](http://www.africanising.org)