Working abroad as a volunteer for a few months can be both a great experience and a way to improve your intercultural competence and job skills.

Susi: Have you made any holiday plans, Adam?
Adam: Yes, I have. I’m thinking of going on a volunteering holiday for the summer.
Susi: A volunteering holiday?
Adam: Yes. You travel to some far-off country for a few weeks and work there as a volunteer.
Susi: Doing what?
Adam: Oh, all sorts of things: helping in an orphanage, for example, or building a school, or something to do with wildlife conservation. I’m still looking at various options.
Susi: That sounds interesting! But isn’t it quite expensive?
Adam: Not really! They usually pay for your accommodation and food, and you get to see a new country!

Susi: Hi, Adam! Have you booked your volunteering holiday yet?
Adam: No. To be honest, I’m having second thoughts.
Susi: Why’s that?
Adam: Well, if I go and help build a school in Angola, say, I might be taking work away from the locals. I wouldn’t want to do that.
Susi: Yes, that’s true. And if you work in an orphanage for a few weeks, you might break a child’s heart when you leave.
Adam: Exactly! I also read about a voluntourism organization the other day that was shown to be a scam. There are good organizations out there, but you have to do your homework and weigh up the pros and cons.

Susi: Wow, Adam! You look well. Have you been on holiday?
Adam: Yes. I’ve just come back from my volunteering trip. Remember?
Susi: Oh, yes, of course. So, where did you end up going?

Adam: To Romania.
Susi: Romania? I thought you were going to, say, Peru or Cambodia or somewhere exotic like that.
Adam: No. I decided I’m not cut out for exotic places and I wanted to do something I am good at. So I looked nearer to home and found a volunteering project coaching football. It was great!

EXERCISE
Evaluation: Make a table to show the pros and cons of voluntourism. Think about the volunteer and the place they work in. Write in your notebook. An example has been done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It might be a scam.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANSWERS

Pros

- Opportunity to travel
- Some programmes may pay
- Less time in a local community
- More gainful employment
- More work experience
- A new country
- A new language
- New experience
- A new culture

Cons

- Opportunity to travel
- Some programmes may pay
- Less time in a local community
- More gainful employment
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In fünf Schritten zum Studium, Praktikum oder Sprachkurs im Ausland: „studieren weltweit – ERLEBE ES!“ liefert die wichtigsten Informationen, Organisations- und Planungshilfen für einen Auslandsaufenthalt während des Studiums. Schau dir die Infos jetzt schon an und lass dich von Correspondents - Studierende, die weltweit live von ihren Aufenthalten berichten und Tipps geben - inspirieren!

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