Sustainability in Voluntourism Organisations

A Study of Implementation and Effects

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Date: 2015-01-05
Subject: Tourism Studies
Level: Bachelor
Course code: 2TR41E
Abstract
Voluntourism is a relatively new branch of tourism, and is considered to be quite sustainable in comparison to other forms of tourism. By researching how the voluntourists perceive the sustainable effects of the work that they have participated in, this thesis has been able to show how detectable some of these effects are. With the focus on the Philippines, this thesis has also been able to determine that the researched voluntourism organisations seems to be present in the country due to the fact that the help that they provide is really needed. By analysing the content of a number of voluntourism organisations, it has been possible to detect that the effects of the voluntourism work have several positive impacts on the local society. Out of these the main effects are the increased access to education and work for the locals. The thesis has also been able to determine that in order for organisations to be able to optimise their sustainability, they need to work with both economic, environmental, and social aspects.

Keywords: Voluntourism, Sustainability, the Philippines
### Contents

1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 3
   1.1 Keywords ....................................................................................................................... 3
   1.2 The development of voluntourism ............................................................................. 4
   1.3 Sustainability in the tourism industry ......................................................................... 5
   1.4 Research issue ............................................................................................................. 6
   1.5 Purpose ......................................................................................................................... 9
   1.6 Research question ....................................................................................................... 9
   1.7 Objectives .................................................................................................................... 9

2 Implementation of methods ............................................................................................... 10
   2.1 Thesis structure ......................................................................................................... 10
   2.2 Survey ....................................................................................................................... 10
   2.3 Web content analysis ............................................................................................... 13
   2.4 Interviews .................................................................................................................. 14
   2.5 Measurement of sustainability ................................................................................. 16
   2.6 Ethical aspects .......................................................................................................... 17

3 The voluntourists' conceptions .......................................................................................... 18
   3.1 Motivation .................................................................................................................. 18
   3.2 Cultural Exchange ..................................................................................................... 19
   3.3 Expectations .............................................................................................................. 20
   3.4 Information ................................................................................................................. 20
   3.5 Interaction affects the experience ............................................................................. 21
   3.6 Information affects the expectations and the experience ......................................... 22
   3.7 Conclusions .............................................................................................................. 25

4 The Philippines- an example of what is needed and what is given .................................. 27
   4.1 The situation in the Philippines ................................................................................ 27
   4.2 The aid needed in the Philippines ............................................................................. 29
   4.3 The aid provided by voluntourism organisations .................................................... 31
   4.4 Conclusions .............................................................................................................. 32

5 Sustainability ..................................................................................................................... 33
   5.1 Sustainability in the tourism industry ........................................................................ 33
   5.2 Triple Bottom Line (TBL) ........................................................................................ 35
   5.3 TBL in the tourism industry ...................................................................................... 36
   5.4 Economic impacts .................................................................................................... 38
   5.5 Environmental impacts ............................................................................................ 41
   5.6 Social impacts .......................................................................................................... 42
   5.7 Conclusions .............................................................................................................. 44

6 Conclusions ....................................................................................................................... 46

7 References ......................................................................................................................... 52
   7.1 Interviews. .................................................................................................................. 56

8 Appendix – Survey questions ........................................................................................... 57
1 Introduction
This thesis aims to create an understanding of how voluntourism organisations work with sustainability. It will start with a short introduction to voluntourism and to sustainability, after which the research issue, purpose and research question will be stated. Thereafter follows a presentation of the methods that are being used throughout the thesis, both in order to collect data and to analyse it. Following that, a presentation of the voluntourist will be given, together with an analysis of whether the participating voluntourists perceive the sustainability work and the sustainable effects that the voluntourism organisations strive to create. Then, a short introduction to the Philippines will follow, explaining what help is needed and what is given. After that comes a chapter about sustainability and Triple Bottom Line (TBL), which will lead to an analysis of how sustainable the effects of the work that the voluntourism companies conduct are. Lastly, there will be a chapter where the conclusions drawn throughout the thesis will be presented.

1.1 Keywords
The expressions ‘voluntourism’ and ‘voluntourist’ will be used all through this thesis. Voluntourism is defined as a way of travel that includes voluntary work, with one organisation that arranges the whole package. Consequently, organisations who work with selling a travel package that include a volunteer work experience will be defined as a voluntourism organisation. Even though some of the organisations that have been researched do not themselves define their business as a tourism organisation they will be included in this definition, since they fit into the description that have been chosen for this thesis.

The voluntourist is here defined as a person who goes abroad for a combination of leisure and voluntary work, and who travels with an already existing organisation. They are buying the experience to help others and do not get paid for their work. In this thesis there will be a focus on people who have participated in this kind of voluntourism for longer than four weeks, but no longer than six months. This is to ensure that the respondents have gained enough experience to have a reasonably good understanding of the impacts that their work have had in the area where they have been staying, but have not yet come to regard themselves as an integrated part of the local society.
1.2 The development of voluntourism

Voluntourism is a relatively new phenomenon in the tourism industry (MacCannell, 2012; Wearing & McGehee, 2013). In voluntourism, travel and leisure is combined with voluntary work, often in tropical or subtropical areas, and many organisations use these tropical conditions in order to attract more tourists (Guttentag, 2009; Stebbins & Graham, 2004). The modern phenomenon of volunteering abroad began around 1915 (Stebbins & Graham, 2004). According to Wearing and McGehee (2013) the voluntourism industry first started in the early 1990’s, but it wasn’t until after the 9/11 terror attacks in USA and the 2004 tsunami catastrophe in Southeast Asia that it really started growing popular.

Today, voluntourism is one of the fastest growing areas of alternative tourism (Wearing & McGehee, 2007; Guttentag, 2009; Lupoli et al., 2014; Hammersley, 2014; Sin, 2009; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Mostafanezhad, 2013). The constant connectivity that certain parts of the world experience today has also helped increase the popularity and availability of voluntourism, and a quick internet research on the subject results in an abundance of hits (Wearing & McGehee, 2007). On top of that, tourists today are increasingly aware of the negative impacts that tourism might have on a destination, and have started to become interested in sustainable alternatives to mass tourism, such as voluntourism (Sin, 2009; Lyons et al., 2012; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). The focus on volunteering as a part of tourism is a recognition of the negative impacts of mass tourism, as well as a recognition of the need to conserve the natural environment. Recently, much more attention has been paid to the relationship between humans and nature, unlike earlier times when only the well-being of the visiting tourists was of importance (Wearing, 2001). Voluntourism differs from mass tourism in many ways, and is considered to be the more sustainable option of the two. One thing they do have in common is that they impact the residents’ day to day lives (McGehee & Andereck, 2009).

Since the field is relatively new, voluntourism has not yet been placed in a clear category. Some researchers want to place voluntourism in the field of alternative tourism, which is said to be the opposite of mass tourism (Tomazoa & Butler, 2011; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004; Guttentag, 2009; Hammersley, 2014). Others want to label voluntourism as a form of sustainable tourism (Raymond & Hall, 2008; Sin,
2009). However, sustainable tourism is closely connected to, and often counted as a part of, alternative tourism (Wearing & McGehee, 2007; Sin, 2009). Alternative tourism in its turn is usually considered to be a development of ecotourism, and McGehee (2014) argues that there is a vast opportunity to learn from earlier mistakes made during the development of tourism, in order to increase the chance of creating a good sustainable development (McGehee, 2014). According to Lupoli et al. (2014) and Moscardo et al. (2013), one of the most important parts of voluntourism is that it should have a positive effect on the site, and generate cultural exchange as well as an increased understanding between locals and volunteers. Voluntourism should involve an essential feature of sustainability, since one of the goals of voluntourism is to provide a form of travelling that develops the local society, with the main objective of the organisations not being needed anymore (Stebbins & Graham, 2004).

The most common definition of the voluntourist is ”a tourist who for various reasons volunteer in an organised way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment” (Tomazoa & Butler, 2011, p. 2). Voluntourism has also been described as an easy and organised way to travel and at the same time ‘help out’ at the destination, that way easing the conscience of the voluntourist, making them feel better about themselves (Stoddard et al., 2012; Lupoli et al., 2014; Taplin et al., 2014). However, Lyons et al. (2014) deem this as nothing more than a means to buy oneself out of a bad conscience. Voluntourism have also received some critique regarding the fact that the voluntourists take over jobs that could have gone to the local people, and that they often come with a notion of the western way being the only right one (Palacios, 2010; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Zahra & McGehee, 2013; Guttentag, 2009; McGehee, 2014). However, these critical voices also suggest ways to avoid these problems in order to make voluntourism more sustainable.

1.3 Sustainability in the tourism industry
Saarinen (2014) discusses the importance of responsibility and sustainability in the tourism industry, and mentions that ecotourism in general and voluntourism in particular is an important part of this, since they aim to help poorer countries to develop and become self-sustaining. Ecotourism is a type of ethic consumption with
the focus on creating positive effects, both environmental and sociocultural (Lyons et al., 2012; Lupoli et al., 2014; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Hammersley, 2014). These effects, with the addition of the creation of positive economic impacts, are also the criteria for tourism to be considered sustainable.

According to Stoddard et al. (2012, p. 245), sustainable tourism can be defined as “a level of tourism activity that can be maintained over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural, and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place”. Another definition of sustainable tourism is “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”, stated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) (Saarinen, 2014, p. 3). In recent years sustainability has taken a more and more important place in the modern world, and has now become part of everyday life (MacCannell, 2012). Because of this, the people of today have started to become aware of how much humans are affecting the environment surrounding us. With this awareness comes a certain responsibility, and today’s tourists have begun to demand a more sustainable tourism (Saarinen, 2014). Sustainability has come to involve environmental issues as well as economic and social aspects, and together these three aspects are often referred to as the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). All three of these categories need to be accounted for in order to be able to get a good overview of the sustainability of a place or a process. (Hollosa et al. 2012, Saarinen, 2014). However, Saarinen (2014) states that although these three areas are equally important in the sustainability process, there is usually a larger focus on the economic aspects than on the other two.

1.4 Research issue
There is an on-going debate on whether voluntourism is sustainable or not. It is often assumed that voluntourism is sustainable, since the work of the participants is aimed to help the local society or improve the local environment. However, some researchers argue that voluntourism can have the opposite effect. According to Knollenberga et al. (2014), and Mowforth and Munt (2003), there exists a major concern about the negative impacts on the local communities, originating from the development of voluntourism. There is a risk of a slow work schedule, poor quality
of the work, decreased employment, increased dependency of others, neglect of locals, rationalisation of poverty, and changes in the local culture (Knollenberga et al., 2014). As previously mentioned, Cohen and Cohen (2012) notes that the poor seldom get any part of the positive consequences of tourism development, an argument that is supported by O’Dell (2007). According to Smith and Font (2014) and Crossley (2012), poverty may be a part of the destination marketing from a voluntourism perspective, something that can trivialise and commodify poverty. For example, some orphanages have allegedly been built with the sole purpose of making money from visitors’ donations (Eimer, 2013). On the other hand, Zahra and McGehee (2013) claims that the local people can become more proud of their culture and cultural identity after having voluntourists staying and working in their society. In some cases, the locals have even started to care more about their society as a whole, instead of only focusing on their own family (Zahra & McGehee, 2013). According to Woosnam and Lee (2011) and Hammersley (2014) interaction between voluntourists and locals is crucial, in order to give them both a positive experience of the voluntourism work. The potential positive impacts from voluntourism occur when the three groups of hosts, voluntourists and voluntourism organisations recognise that they have a common goal of change, and start to work towards that change. If they work together and see each other as a team, the outcome might become more positive than it otherwise would (Knollenberga et al., 2014).

According to Saarinen (2014), previous research concerning sustainability in the tourism industry is usually focused either on the economic or the environmental aspects, while the issue of social sustainability has received far less attention. This seems peculiar since the three aspects affect each other. The local society and the economy are integrated, and you cannot have one without the other. The same goes for the environmental aspects (Page & Connell, 2009; Hollosa et al., 2012). For example, if one economically sustainable effect is an increased amount of jobs, then more local people will be able to support their families, less people become homeless and malnourished, and more parents can afford to put their children in school (Limcaoco, Consul General; Page & Connell, 2009). It also mean that more people are paying taxes, which usually finances health care, infrastructure and much more, benefiting the society as a whole (Page & Connell, 2009). Wearing (2001) argues that for voluntourism to succeed, the need for a sustainable approach to both social,
economic, and environmental aspects, is of highest value. This is the reason that the subject of sustainability in voluntourism has been chosen for this thesis.

Previous research has also paid most attention to the voluntourists and their motivation for the volunteer trip (Sin, 2009; Tomazoa & Butler, 2011; Lyons et al., 2012; McGehee, 2011), and few has had their focus on the voluntourism organisations and their sustainability work. It seems to be a research gap here, and that is the reason why this thesis will focus on the voluntourism organisations, and only use the voluntourists as a way to measure and analyse how detectable the organisations’ sustainability work is. The voluntourists are still an important part of the research, since they are one of the main tools for implementation of sustainability, making their view of the sustainability work quite relevant.

In some previous research different countries has been used as case studies in the research of voluntourism, mostly Thailand or different countries in Africa (Mostafanezhad, 2013; Mostafanezhad, 2013; Sin, 2009; Kennedy & Dorman, 2009). According to Mostafanezhad (2013) the reason behind this is probably because of how the participating voluntourists view these destinations. Thailand is often seen as an easy, accessible, and not too poor country to volunteer in, while Africa is often viewed as a continent with several countries in dire need of help. One of the goals of voluntourism is to help the areas in need to become self-sufficient. The Philippines has been chosen for this thesis as an example, since they are culturally similar to the West World, have a tropical climate, and have a good economic base. However, they lack the resources to develop because of their problems with poverty and natural disasters.

Since both the popularity of voluntourism and the demand for more sustainable options in tourism are growing, it is important to research the connection between the two. There is a need to investigate if voluntourism organisations are working with sustainable solutions, how they implement this in their work, and what the positive and negative effects are of their work. If they do implement sustainability, there is also a possibility to investigate how they can improve their work in order to accommodate the demand that Saarinen (2014) claims exists.
1.5 Purpose
Voluntourism is said to be a sustainable tourism option. Therefore, the authors of this thesis want to investigate if voluntourism organisations are sustainable. To be able to do this, there is a need to investigate how the organisations implement sustainability in their work. With the help of this investigation, the authors would like to create an understanding of the sustainable effects that the work of the voluntourism organisations has on the local society, and to see if these effects are visible for the participating voluntourists. Therefore, the following question will be used as the main question for this thesis.

1.6 Research question
What are the effects of the sustainability that voluntourism organisations implement in their work?

1.7 Objectives
To be able to answer the research question, this thesis will pay attention to three things. First, the thesis will research whether or not the sustainability work is clearly detectable. This will be done through an e-survey targeting voluntourists, in order to look into how aware they are of the impacts of their work, and if their conception is the same as the organisations’. Second, the thesis will investigate how the voluntourism organisations implement sustainability in their work at a chosen destination. The Philippines will be used as an example, and the attention will be turned to whether the right aid goes where it is needed or not. This will be done by comparing what different stakeholders at the destination say is needed with the aid that the voluntourism organisations provide. This is a way to measure if voluntourism organisations are working with making their development sustainable. Third, there will be an investigation about how the voluntourism organisations work with sustainability, and how sustainable the effects of their work are. This will be done by conducting interviews with representatives from volunteer organisations, as well as analysing the content of webpages belonging to them. To determine the level of sustainability, Wearing’s (2001) criteria list of sustainable voluntourism will be used (see figure 1). Also, TBL will be used in order to determine which areas of sustainability that the thesis will focus on.
2 Implementation of methods

This chapter will present the methods used to collect the data which has been the base of this thesis. A triangulation of methods has been used to increase the validity and reliability of the thesis. The methods used are a survey targeting the voluntourists, a web content analysis applied to the voluntourism organisations’ webpages, and interviews conducted with representatives from different organisations present in the Philippines. A way to measure sustainability is presented, and the chapter ends with some ethical aspects.

2.1 Thesis structure

This thesis has been divided into three main categories; the voluntourists conceptions, the aid that is needed and given in the Philippines, and sustainability. Due to the significance that these categories have had, they have been used as the main chapters in this thesis. These chapters have then been divided into subchapters, with the first ones containing general information and previous research about the subject. Thereafter the empirical findings have been analysed, and each chapter ends in a small conclusion, highlighting the most important findings made in that chapter. Due to this division, it has been natural to also divide the methodology chapter into similar subchapters, presenting the different methods of data collection and analysis in the order that they have been used in the thesis. The conclusion chapter has been laid out in a similar way, where the results of the previous chapters are presented in the order that they have come in in the rest of the thesis. However, there has been no subheadings made there, since the conclusions are applicable on the whole thesis.

2.2 Survey

To get in touch with the participating voluntourists and be able to research how they perceive the sustainability aspects of their work, the authors of this thesis made the choice to create a survey. According to Sirakaya-Turk et al. (2011) and Kumar (2005) a survey should be long enough to cover all the important variables of the research, but it is also important to not make it too long, since this may affect the response rate. This survey included a total of thirteen questions, of which one was open ended and two had the option of developing the answer further. According to Kumar (2005) and Groves et al. (2004), the use of open ended questions can give the researcher a deeper understanding of what the respondent is trying to say, and the
respondents can express themselves more freely than they are able to at the closed questions. The questions were based on previous research, and the authors of this thesis formulated the questions in the way that they believed would best fit into their research and enable them to answer their research question. Using Google Survey in Google Docs, the authors were given the ability to exclude people falling outside the chosen target group at an early stage in the survey, which is why the first few questions were more generally phrased than the following ones. The last three questions were included with the purpose of getting to know some general information about the respondents, including age, sex and what part of the world they came from.

According to Sirakaya-Turk et al., (2011), Gregori and Baltar (2013), and Groves (2004), it is necessary to identify a target population in order to be able to collect relevant data through a survey. The target population relevant for this thesis was identified as people who have taken part in volunteer work in combination with travelling, that is to say, voluntourism. Hammersley (2014) has uttered concern over how too short a period of volunteering might give little or no sustainable effects, since the volunteer and the voluntoured do not have enough time to get to know each other and each other’s cultures. Instead there might be an increased distance between the two groups. Therefore, the choice to limit the target group to only include voluntourists who had been staying at one site for four weeks or longer was made. According to Conran (2011), the voluntourists are often viewed as a means to gain support for local issues rather than being seen as an audience, both by themselves and by the local inhabitants. This might have the consequence of the voluntourist feeling like, and being seen as, an integrated part of the local society rather than a visitor. Since the authors agree with this, the decision was made to put an upper limit of six months stay to further specify the target group. A target age group was not specified, but since the survey was spread via Facebook, the major part of the respondents was expected to be fairly young. This was also the case. Out of the twenty respondents fitting the profile of the target group, eleven were between the age of eighteen and twenty-four, five were between twenty-five and thirty, while four of the respondents were between the age of thirty and sixty-five. All of the respondents were women, and therefore it has not been possible to make any generalisations about the voluntourists as a group.
One way to make sure that the survey reaches a large enough sample group is to make it available online (Sirakaya-Turk et al., 2011; Groves, 2004). This survey was shared in several different Facebook groups focusing on voluntourism or volunteering, since Facebook was believed by the authors to be the best way in which to spread the survey and reach a large enough sample group. There are still people who question the use of Facebook for e-surveys, since they claim that the respondents cannot be representative of a whole population. They also claim that by using social media to distribute a survey, the researcher exclude those who do not have access to the chosen media (Hill et al., 2013; Gregori & Baltar, 2013). In spite of this critique, Hill et al. (2013) still believe that Facebook is a good, easily accessed, and valid media for collecting data, and both Hill et al. (2013) and Gregori and Baltar (2013) claims that, even though the selection of respondents might be a bit narrow, there is no other place where it is possible to get the same proliferation as on Facebook. This social media is also user friendly, and since the respondents often use Facebook on their leisure time they might possibly have more time over to answer the survey, making it more likely that they will answer it at all (Gregori & Baltar, 2013). This supports the choice of Facebook as a suitable way to spread the survey in question.

Before the launch of the main survey, a pilot survey was created and tested on a small group of people, something that is claimed by Kumar (2005) and Sirakaya-Turk et al. (2011) to be an effective way for the researcher to increase the reliability of the survey. The control group then provided their feedback on what they thought about the survey, and some small changes were made before the final survey was launched. The survey was then distributed via voluntourism pages on Facebook in an attempt to reach a satisfying amount of informants with experience to match the chosen criteria. The authors were concerned that not enough voluntourists would be reachable to give a reliable source of information. Therefore, informants were able to share the survey with other people in order to spread it even further. The hope was that this would result in a so called snowball-effect, which would increase the possibility to reach a large enough group of people to give the survey a proper reliability (Sirakaya-Turk et al., 2011; Kumar, 2005). Unfortunately, this was not the case. Even though the survey was distributed for eighteen days, the respondent rate
was quite low, with only thirty-seven respondents in total. Of these, there were only twenty respondents matching the criteria, meaning that they cannot be representative for the general population of voluntourists. However, by using their answers it is still possible to get an idea of how the inclination of the answers could have been, therefore they will still be used in this thesis as a means of measurement. The responding voluntourists were not directly connected to the specific voluntourism organisations that have been examined in this thesis. By not aiming the survey directly at volunteers connected to the researched organisations, the possibility to make any connections between the two and draw conclusions thereof has been lost. To analyse the collected data from the survey, the authors has compared the answers with previous research about the subject. This has made it possible to draw conclusions on whether or not the voluntourists are aware of the effects of their work, and how their experience has been affected.

2.3 Web content analysis
To gather further information about the different voluntourism organisations, the decision to collect information from their webpages was made. The collected data was analysed with the help of web content analysis, which is an approach that objectively analyses the content of the webpage’s text (Krippendorff, 2013). When applied on webpages instead of other texts, such as books or articles, there are some differences to the analysis approach. The first step in the analysis of webpages is to decide what units should be investigated. According to Ackland (2013) the researcher first has to decide what sampling units to examine. In this case the sampling units where decided to be the webpages of Kaya, A Broader View, Projects Abroad and Visayans, which are all voluntourism organisations active in the Philippines. Ackland (2013) then states that some recording units, or keywords, need to be decided, and in the case of this analysis it was decided to use three different words: sustainability, the Philippines and aid. The researcher should, according to Ackland (2013), also decide if it is the content of the whole webpage that is of interest, or if only parts of it should be analysed. Three of the examined voluntourism webpages contained information of several different countries, not only the Philippines. In these cases the focus was aimed at the parts of the webpages that provided information about the Philippines and the projects on offer there. The Visayans webpage only contained information on volunteer work in the Philippines,
so in their case the whole webpage was analysed. Lastly, Ackland (2013) mentions that the researcher needs to decide whether to focus on the manifest content (what is said or written), or on the latent content (what is meant). In this thesis there will be a focus on the manifest content, since there is no wish to investigate the conceptual meaning of the words, but rather to focus on what the text published on the webpages literally say.

2.4 Interviews

This thesis will contain a study of volunteer organisations working in the Philippines, with a focus on their sustainability work. To collect primary data, suitable representatives were contacted for interviews, including voluntourism organisations working with projects in the Philippines, on-site Filipino volunteer organisations, and the Swedish Consul General in the Philippines, Carla Limcaoco. This way, a versatile picture of what is needed and how different institutions work was gained. To choose representatives from the voluntourism industry, the authors of this thesis searched online for voluntourism organisations that were thought to be able to give an insight into the way that they work with sustainability, and who could be able to answer questions on how they work with the distribution of their resources. The authors also had an interest in finding out how the work contributed would affect the local society according to the organisations.

The criteria when choosing the organisations was: a) they needed to offer volunteering projects in the Philippines, b) they needed to have a webpage that gave a serious and professional impression, and c) they had to have a contact email posted on their webpage. With the help of these criteria, eleven different voluntourism organisations were selected. They were contacted via email and asked if a representative of theirs would be willing to answer some questions regarding their work. Some of the organisations agreed to help while others declined the request, usually due to a lack of time or staff, or because they did not consider their organisation to be of any use for this research. Unfortunately, shortly after the questions had been sent out, the second typhoon in a short time hit the Philippines, causing great damage. Understandably, this increased the workload for those voluntourism organisations who had promised to answer the questions that had been sent out, leaving too little time over to be able to answer any questions. Only two
organisations, Project Abroad and A Broader View, were able to send in their answers before the typhoon hit. This is obviously a quite negative result, and therefore the conclusions reached in this thesis are not truly reliable. However, the collected answers have still been analysed, and conclusions have been drawn from them when possible.

To get an idea of what kind of volunteer work that is needed at the destination, two foundations that work on different projects in the Philippines were selected for interviews. Out of these two only one, the John D.V. Salvador Foundation, replied that they were willing to help answering some questions. The authors were also able to get in touch with the Consul General at the Consul General of Sweden in the Philippines, Carla Limcaoco, who was able to answer some questions along the same line as the questions asked to the foundation. The interviews have been analysed by comparing the interview answers from the different respondents with each other. The answers have also been compared to the content of the webpages belonging to the voluntourism organisations. The answers from Carla Limcaoco and Hugo Bänzinger, treasurer of the John D.V. Salvador Foundation, have mainly been compared with the information given on the webpages about the aid that the voluntourism organisations provide, and why that aid is said to be needed. The interviews with the two voluntourism organisations have been analysed in the same way, but have had more focus on the organisations’ work with sustainability and the effects that their work has.

In the case of this thesis, the conduction of interviews via email was decided to be the most suitable, since the aim of the interviews was to enable a comparison of the answers between the different voluntourism organisations, as well as a comparison with the voluntourism webpages. The questions were based on previous research, similar to the base of the survey questions. All of the volunteer organisations were emailed the same questions, asked in the same order. According to Bryman and Bell (2011) this made the interviews structured. Structured interviews often resemble a survey, but have a greater number of open-ended questions than a survey do (Robson, 2011). All of the questions were open-ended, a choice that was made with the hope of receiving informative answers. One disadvantage with conducting interviews over email is that there is no room for spontaneity since the respondents
have a lot of time to think about their answers and how they are expressing themselves before sending the email. There is also no possibility to ask any follow up questions in a direct and spontaneous way, however this was not believed to be needed.

2.5 Measurement of sustainability
For voluntourism organisations to be considered sustainable they need to show a willingness to develop their product with the help of input from the host communities. They should also regard their work as a two-way interactive process, where both local inhabitants and volunteers can gain as much as possible from the experience (Wearing, 2001). Wearing (2001, p. 158) has created a criteria list, which he claims that voluntourism organisations needs to follow in order to be counted as sustainable, as well as being able to increase their positive impacts (figure 1).

Figure 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Generally, tourism products should be culturally and environmentally sensitive.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. The product should be portrayed in promotional material that provides a realistic image of the destination area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ensure benefits of the sale of the product go directly to the host community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organisations that control tourism at a larger scale should share the benefits of tourism with the host community, with opportunities for participation, employment and career paths for the local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The visitor could also be provided with educational/orientation information providing culturally specific guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ethical concerns about the impact of the product mean that operators need to provide the opportunity for the guest’s interaction with the host community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The most appropriate basis for this interaction is to base it on equality and respect for the rights and the wishes of the local population.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Wearing’s criteria list, used to measure the level of sustainability in the tourism industry (Wearing, 2001, p. 158).*
As mentioned in the objectives, this thesis will contain three different ways to measure the voluntourism organisations’ implementation of sustainability in their work. These measurements are also a way to define what sustainability work is. One method used for measurement has been the investigation of how and if the voluntourists perceived the impacts that their work had on the destination, and if their perceived image was consistent with the information provided by the organisations. The purpose of this was to examine if the voluntourism organisations’ sustainability work were detectable for those involved. The second way to measure the sustainability of voluntourism was to look at one destination in order to gain an understanding of what is needed at that place, and then compare this to the help that is given there. This comparison was done in order to determine if the aid given is the same as that which is needed. It will also give an insight into whether the voluntourism organisations are present at the destination solely in order to sell an experience to their customers, or if they have chosen that area to work in because the aid that they provide is needed there. Therefore, the Philippines were chosen as an example.

The Philippines is a suitable example to use in this thesis, since the country is often exposed to natural catastrophes such as typhoons, which are often causing several deaths and orphaning a large amount of children each year. These typhoons also destroy several homes and buildings each time they hit, and even though the Philippines are growing economically stronger, a large part of the country’s vast population is still poor (BBC News Asia, 2014). Lastly, Wearing’s criteria list (figure 1) will be used as one of the methods of measurement regarding sustainability in the voluntourism organisations. The different criteria will be used to analyse how the organisations implement sustainability in their work, and if they do it at all. The Triple Bottom Line theory has also been used, but it has been used as a way to gain a picture of what areas are important to investigate in order to get a viable understanding of the important aspects of sustainability in itself, rather than as a method of analysis.

2.6 Ethical aspects
When contacting people and organisations for interviews it was explained that the answers provided were going to be used in a Bachelor Thesis. To make sure that the
information in the thesis is correct, nothing has been written or quoted out of the original context. This applies both to the interviews and the information provided on the webpages. By conducting interviews via email it has been ensured that the respondents are not affected by the way the questions have been asked, and do not find the authors intimidating in any way. However, not meeting the respondents might have created a form of alienation between the authors and respondents. There has not been any chance to be able to ask follow-up questions, and the body language of the respondents has not been able to taken into account when analysing the answers. Therefore, it has been impossible to interpret the answers in any other way than how they are literally written. However, it should be mentioned that a literally written answer can be interpreted in different ways by different readers. Concerning the survey, the choice was made to let all the informants be anonymous, something that has not been chosen for respondents to the interviews. Since they knew what their information was going to be used for, and did not ask to be kept anonymous, this decision has been made in order to give the thesis a better credibility.

3 The voluntourists' conceptions
This chapter will discuss the voluntourists. It will highlight some of the motivational factors behind the decision to take part in a voluntourism trip, and point out some of the factors that affects the participant’s experience. The answers from the e-survey will here be used to analyse whether or not the sustainability in the voluntourism experience is visible for the participating tourists. The answers will also be used to examine how aware the voluntourists are of the impacts that their work has.

3.1 Motivation
The voluntourist is a tourist who in an organised way undertakes a holiday that involves volunteer work (Tomazoa & Butler, 2011). The voluntourists are often not considered to be tourists, neither by themselves nor by the locals (McGehee & Andereck, 2009). They are considered not to be an audience, but an active part whose presence can help gain support for local issues (Conran, 2011). According to Conran’s study (2011), many voluntourists get involved with volunteering in their home country after their trip is over. Voluntourism has also been described as a simple and organised way to combine vacationing with helping out and alleviating
hardship, thereby easing the conscience of the participant (Lupoli et al., 2014; Taplin et al., 2014).

According to Hammersley (2013) voluntourism is promoted as a way to be involved in development without any previous knowledge. Rather, the voluntourist need to be highly motivated. There can be several different motivational factors behind the choice to participate as a volunteer during a holiday. However, according to Lyons et al. (2012) and Sin (2009), the wish to help out or to contribute to society is seldom the main reason. Instead, the wish to develop personal skills and knowledge are often greater motivational factors, and participants usually expect a tangible outcome from their trip after their return home, such as an increased attractiveness on the employment marketplace (Lyons et al., 2012, p. 370). This argument is supported by McGehee (2012), who mention that self-efficacy can be “both a precursor to and an end product of volunteer tourism” (McGehee, 2011, p. 100).

3.2 Cultural Exchange
An important aspect of voluntourism is that it needs to have a positive impact on the place, and it needs to generate a cultural exchange and an increased comprehension between the volunteer and the voluntoured (Lupoli et al., 2014; Moscardo et al., 2013). Wearing (2001) argues that this is a new way to make tourism activities sustainable, since it facilitates community involvement and cultural exchange. There should be a priority to make the two groups part of an equal system with a mutual relationship (Wearing, 2001). However, there is always a risk that a large social distance between the two groups might increase misunderstanding, prejudice, negative attitudes and stereotyping. One of the easiest ways to avoid this is through interaction, which often leads to an increased tolerance and understanding of each other’s cultures (Woosnam & Lee, 2011). According to Hammersley (2014) another way might be to educate the incoming voluntourists before the start of their journey. She also argues that education can affect the way the participants view their own contribution, putting more focus on their role as facilitators for change, rather than seeing themselves as someone who comes in to do the work for the locals (Hammersley, 2014). She also describes how the volunteers usually interact more with the local people the longer they stay, resulting in a greater appreciation for and understanding of the local culture.
3.3 Expectations
According to Andereck et al. (2012) it is important to understand the voluntourists’ expectations, which according to Hammersley (2014) can be influenced by the information and education that they receive before departure. The voluntourists and their expectations are also affected by preconceived notions, which in turn will affect their experience of the whole volunteer trip. Research has shown that the voluntourists’ satisfaction generally is higher if their expectations are in line with their experience (Andereck et al., 2012). This is something Knollenberga et al. (2014) agrees with, and they argue that false expectations might result in a disengaged volunteer tourist who do not find any meaning in their experience. Many of the voluntourists expect a close and intimate involvement with the local community, something that has been proved to be needed in order to gain a more meaningful experience (Conran, 2011). Andereck et al. (2012) observes in their study that many of the voluntourists wants and expects to be provided with all the information needed by their tour operators before their trip, even though they are willing to take some responsibility for the preparation, and find some of the information that is needed for themselves.

3.4 Information
According to Mostafanezhad (2013) many volunteers wants to work with children, since they consider it to be the field where they can have a large impact and be able to change the future. They also normally want to do their volunteering in a third world country, since they can get the most for their money there, while also making a difference at the destination (Mostafanezhad, 2013). An important aspect of voluntourism is the use of the tourism experience as a means to change the economic and social conditions in the local community, since many places that the voluntourism organisations focus on have a high level of poverty. Having said that, though the voluntourists are often aware of the fact that the area is poor, they are usually not prepared for how the reality will be, or how they will perceive the poverty. Because of this, the voluntourists can sometimes feel uncomfortable after arrival. There is also a risk that the poverty can be seen as something cultural that adds to the authenticity of the place, instead of something that needs to be removed or reduced (Mostafanezhad, 2013).
Mostafanezhad (2013) notes that the voluntourism industry has the opportunity to use capitalism as a tool to change the lives of local inhabitants. If the voluntourism organisations heighten awareness of inequality to their participants they might pay more attention to the problem, and for example choose to eat locally produced food or do their shopping in locally owned enterprises, instead of spending their money in international chains. Hammersley (2013) highlights the importance of educating volunteers before their travel, both to provide the volunteers with a broader understanding of the issues, but also in order to make them reflect on their involvement and the effects that they bring. It is of importance that the voluntourists understand what their role at the destination will be, so that their expectations match the work that they will do. If not, the voluntourists might think that they are there to educate the local people, and are then not aware of the fact that they are needed for manpower and inspiration more than anything else. This usually lead to the participants feeling frustrated and unneeded, and they might question what impacts their work really have (Hammersley, 2013).

3.5 Interaction affects the experience
One of the major parts of sustainable tourism in general, and voluntourism in particular, is the interaction between the voluntourists and the local inhabitants, where cultural exchange can increase the understanding and simultaneously decrease the stereotyping between the two groups (Lupoli et al., 2014; Moscardo et al., 2013; Wearing, 2001; Woosnam & Lee, 2011; Hammersley, 2014). According to Conran (2011), the voluntourists also need to feel involved with the local people in order to feel that their experience has been meaningful. Looking at the answers collected from the survey, this seems to be true. Out of the twenty respondents, fifteen mentioned cultural exchange or involvement with the local people of some sort. This included both the voluntourists who felt that their work had made a difference, and those who did not feel that it had. One person expressed frustration, since the communication with the local people did not work smoothly, as “they did not want to listen” to what the volunteers tried to say. On the positive side, one of the respondents claimed that both she and the people that she worked with benefited from the cultural exchange, and several others talked about inspiration, cooperation and connections with the locals. It does seem like it is not only the amount of
communication and involvement that affects how the voluntourist experience their volunteer trip, but it also depends on how smoothly the communication runs.

3.6 Information affects the expectations and the experience
As Andereck et al. (2012) and Knollenberga et al. (2014) argues, the volunteer’s experience can be greatly affected by what expectations they have regarding their work, and they might feel disappointed if the expectations does not match the reality. Out of the twenty respondents to the survey, two stated that they were dissatisfied with their stay, and that they did not believe that their work had made any difference. Hammersley (2014) mentions that the expectations that the participating voluntourist has is usually affected by what education and information they get beforehand. One of the unsatisfied voluntourists answered that she had received little or no information about what social and environmental impacts the work would have, while the other one claimed to still have no idea about what kind of impact her work had made. The first respondent complained that the locals did not want to listen to what the volunteers were there to teach, and that they did not want the help that was offered. This can be seen as a clear communication problem, where the volunteer could have been helped by receiving more information about the work. One can also assume that this particular project had not “provided the opportunity for the guest’s interaction with the host community” (figure 1, point six) in a satisfying way. Furthermore, the project might not have seen to the wishes and needs of the local population in a sufficient way, making them miss one more of the points in Wearing’s criteria list (figure 1, point seven).

The fact that the first person stated that “we were there to help but the local people were not interested in being helped”, and that “they did not want to listen”, shows that some of the critique directed towards voluntourism is relevant. This person show tendencies to feel that the project that she worked on was there to teach the local people to do the work the right way, something that both McGehee (2014), Palacios (2010), Coghlan and Gooch (2011), Zahra and McGehee (2013), and Guttentag (2009) mentions as one of the main critiques that has been directed towards the voluntourism industry. This attitude is according to Hammersley (2014) important to avoid, and she argues that this easily can be done by informing and educating the voluntourists before they start their volunteer work.
The second person stated that she had “felt kind of useless”, a feeling that probably could have been avoided had she gotten more information about her work and its impacts, since her expectations then would have been more in line with how the reality looked. This in turn could have resulted in the respondent feeling that her contribution would have been more meaningful, making her more satisfied with her experience. She also felt that the work that she had been doing was not the most urgent, and that there instead should have been a greater focus on something else. This might have been avoidable if she had gotten more information about how the project that she worked with affected the whole community, and not only the people that she worked with directly.

However, far from all of the survey respondents were dissatisfied with their work. Sixteen out of the twenty respondents felt that their work made a difference for the local society. Many of these respondents were also mentioning cultural exchange or cooperation with the local people in their answers. Some of the respondents were able to see the outcomes of their work in a very direct way, such as the one person who had been participating in disaster relief after typhoon Yolanda, which hit the Philippines in 2013. Others were not able to notice any clear results, but were still aware of the fact that their presence made a difference. For example, one person said that “my volunteering didn’t make much of a difference, but the economic benefit of me being there did”. This person stated that she had received a lot of information about the economic effects of her work. She had also received some information about the social effects from the organisation that she travelled with, while she had searched for information about the environmental effects herself. Another respondent described how the work that she had been doing was solely to support a local project aimed to help children, in order to enable the project to become independent. She saw herself as a facilitator for change rather than a teacher of change, which is something that Hammersley (2014) claims to be very important in order for the projects to be considered sustainable.

Out of the sixteen people feeling that their work had made a difference, all but two had either received a lot or some information about the impacts of their work or had actively searched for information themselves in at least one of the three sustainability
categories. The voluntourists had received the most information about the social effects, with twelve people getting a lot or some information, and five finding information on their own. Regarding the economic effects, seven respondents had received a lot or some information, while three found information themselves. The environmental effects was shown to be the area where the voluntourists had received the least information, with only seven people getting information from the companies and two finding it on their own.

Voluntourism can be a way to reduce the poverty at the destination, both with the help of the fee that the tourists pay to the volunteer organisations who then distribute parts of it to the different projects, and by the voluntourists spending their money at local enterprises (Mostafanezhad, 2013). This is also something that is frequently mentioned by the voluntourism organisations on their webpages (Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Visayans, 2014; A Broader View, 2014). According to the survey answers, the voluntourists seem to be quite aware of the economic impact that they make. Several of the respondents also mentioned that the projects that they had been working on strived to make the local organisations financially independent, which would be a major sustainable economic impact.

In spite of the fact that not all the respondents felt like they had received enough information about the impacts of their work, the researched organisations all claim to be sending out information about the work before the voluntourists leave their home (Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Visayans, 2014; A Broader View, 2014). According to Ehlers (A Broader View) and Lindberg (Projects Abroad), the organisations provide their volunteers with information, such as orientation guides, before the trip (Ehlers, A Broader View; Lindberg, Projects Abroad). This could be connected to the fifth point in Wearing’s sustainability list: “the visitor could also be provided with educational/orientation information providing culturally specific guidelines” (figure 1). However, it can be assumed that some of this information focus more on the actual work than on the long term impacts. One possible solution to this could be that the organisations not only send out information directly connected to the work that the voluntourists are going to participate in. For example, if they are going to work with children it might only seem relevant to give information about the social impacts, since the environmental and economic ones
might not be of interest, especially if the motivations amongst the tourists are of more egocentric reasons than of wanting to help. However, information about the other areas might increase the voluntourists' awareness of how their participation affects the society as a whole.

As mentioned earlier, Andereck et al. (2012) observe that many voluntourists want the information to be provided to them. Therefore, it could perhaps be possible for the companies to clarify what impacts the work have, thereby increasing the understanding of the importance of the work as well as increasing the feeling of making a difference. This could have the outcome of the voluntourists becoming more aware of the sustainability of their actions, making them improve it even further. This in turn would further increase the sustainability in the whole voluntourism industry. However, it is up to each volunteer to read the material provided, and even if the voluntourism organisations send out sufficient information about the work and what impacts it will have, they cannot force the participants to read it. Based on the available information and answers from interviews and survey, one can only assume that the voluntourism organisations fulfil point five in Wearing’s sustainability criteria list: “The visitor could also be provided with educational/orientation information providing culturally specific guidelines” (figure 1).

3.7 Conclusions
Several of the respondents mentioned the cultural exchange and the interaction with the locals as one of the major parts of their trip, something that shows that voluntourism fulfils point one in Wearing’s criteria list: “Generally, tourism products should be culturally and environmentally sensitive” (figure 1). It also implies that the voluntourism organisations apply point six of Wearing’s criteria list to their work: “Ethical concerns about the impact of the product mean that operators need to provide the opportunity for the guest’s interaction with the host community” (figure 1). One can therefore assume that Lupoli et al. (2014), Moscardo et al. (2013), Wearing (2001), Woosnam and Lee (2011), Hammersley (2014), and Conran (2011) has been right when talking about how the intercultural cooperation affect the voluntourists, and give them a more positive and meaningful experience. They are also right in their assumption that a well working communication between the locals
and the voluntourists is crucial. This is especially visible in the case of the two unsatisfied respondents. In their case, the communication between the voluntourists and the local community had not been working in a satisfying way, making the voluntourists feel like they were expendable and that they were not being listened to.

Based on the answers collected through the survey, the majority of the voluntourists seems to be aware of what impacts their presence has on the destination and the local society. However, a few of the respondents were still not sure of what impacts their work has had, neither economically, environmentally, nor socially. Therefore, it might be a good idea for the organisations to highlight the impacts of the work when they send out information to the voluntourists. This could result in the voluntourists becoming more aware of their actions, and starting to strive to make their efforts even more sustainable in the long term. This in turn would result in the voluntourism projects becoming even more sustainable than they are assumed to be today. Having said that, there is no way to force the voluntourists to read through all the material that the organisations send out, and it is likely that a major part of the voluntourism organisations already provide a large amount of information about the sustainable impacts of their work.

It is clear that the voluntourists are aware of at least some of the impacts that their work has had, even though they are usually more aware of the social and economic impacts than of the environmental ones. Out of the twenty respondents answering the e-survey, only seven claimed to have been provided with some or a lot of information about the environmental and economic impacts of their work. Slightly more, twelve people in total, claimed to have been provided with some or a lot of information about the social impacts of their work. Here, only one person stated that they still do not know the effect of their work. From this, the conclusion can be drawn that voluntourism organisations are in general better on informing their volunteers about the social effects of the contributed work than about the environmental or economic effects. This is something that the organisations could consider adding to the pre-volunteering information, in order to further increase their sustainability work.
The fact that the voluntourists are more aware of the social effects of their work could also be a result of the fact that they usually work closely together with the local population, and can see what social differences their presence creates in a very clear and direct way. The economic impacts are also easily detectable, since they often result in physically visible objects, such as building material or food on the table. For volunteers who are not working directly with environment or wildlife it might be a bit harder to see what kind of environmental impacts their work has, which is why there is a need for the voluntourism organisations to provide this kind of information before the volunteer depart on their trip. Having said that, one can draw the conclusion that the sustainability work that the voluntourism organisations do is detectable for participating tourists. Even though the impacts of the sustainability work have not always been easy to detect in all projects, there is usually clearly visible impacts in at least one of the three areas of economy, environment or social aspects. The most important factor is the communication between the host community and the voluntourists, since that determine both how positive the experience feel for the voluntourists, and how sustainable the volunteer work is deemed to be.

4 The Philippines- an example of what is needed and what is given

Here follows a short introduction to the Philippines, focusing on the problems that the country is struggling with. The chapter also explain what kind of help the Philippines is in need of, as well as what kind of help is already provided by voluntourism organisations.

4.1 The situation in the Philippines
The Philippines is located in Southeast Asia, and consists of around 7000 islands. The country is rich in its biodiversity, with dense forests, coastlines and mountains (UNDP, 2014). It has a rich cultural heritage, and their history of colonial rule has created a mixture of western and eastern influences (Saverimuttu & Varua, 2014). For this reason, their main languages are both Filipino and English, and eighty-two percent of the population are Christians (the Department of Tourism, Manila, 2014).
The Philippines is said to have a resilient economy, and have not been affected as hard as other countries during the financial crisis (UNDP, 2014). Their economy is rising, but the country still has a problem with poverty, with a large number of poor residents (Kendrick & Chua, 2014; UNDP, 2014). Living conditions are widely unequal across different sectors in the Philippines. Even though the economy is rising and poverty is being slowly reduced, approximately thirty-seven percent of the population still lives in poverty, including forty percent of all children (UNDP, 2014; UNICEF, 2014). Most of the poor do not have access to the same resources as others (UNDP, 2014). Almost 1.7 million children are without a birth document, which means that they do not have access to any governmental help with health problems, education, or protection services. Because of this, more children end up on the street in poverty and get vulnerable to abuse (UNICEF, 2014). The fact that the reduction of poverty goes slowly means that the economic improvement has not yet benefited the poor (Kendrick & Chua, 2014; World Bank, 2014). This slow reduction can be explained by the shortage of available jobs in the country (World Bank, 2014). If the poorer residents manage to get any work they are often underpaid, and do not get any protection if they lose their job (Kendrick & Chua, 2014; World Bank, 2014). The service industry is the largest employer, but these jobs are often underpaid (World Bank, 2014). This has resulted in many of the educated Filipinos leaving the country to work abroad (UNICEF, 2014; World Bank, 2014).

Because of its location the country is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, such as typhoons, and these disasters have put millions of people into poverty (UNDP, 2014; World Bank, 2014). In 2013, the Philippines got hit by a typhoon named Yolanda. There was massive damage and several deaths reported, and it is believed that over one million people were pushed into poverty because of it (Kendrick & Chua, 2014). Yolanda damaged both the social and the economic infrastructure, and lead to the collapse of the economy in many local societies. The typhoon destroyed several healthcare institutions, making the poor even more vulnerable to water-carried and life-threatening diseases, since they did not have access to clean water and the sanitation facilities needed (World Bank, 2014). There is a long-term risk that the unemployment that has been a result of the typhoon damage might keep increasing if the damage does not get reconstructed fast enough (Kendrick & Chua, 2014). As a result of this, there is also a risk of an increased number of people living in poverty,
as well as a degradation of the quality of education and health services (World Bank, 2014).

The Philippines is in a position where they have good opportunities for development. The country does have quite an unstable history, with a lot of corruption and political violence (VICE, 2015). However, the country has a strong macroeconomic fundament, and it has benefited from a growth of the East Asian region. According to World Bank (2014) the government seems to think that tourism is a good way to reduce poverty, but the infrastructure is still under development and is creating an obstacle for the development of many eventual destinations that mostly cater to seasoned tourists (World Bank, 2014). Tourism has become an important aspect, both for individuals, the private sector, and the government as a way to earn income. However, according to Saverimuttu and Varua (2014) there is a risk of developing countries becoming too dependent on tourism.

4.2 The aid needed in the Philippines
As previously mentioned, one of the Philippines’ biggest issues is poverty. The World Bank (2014) claims that in order to be able to develop the country in a new direction and reduce the poverty problem, there is a need for investments in education, health, and infrastructure. According to Projects Abroad, Kaya, and the John D.V. Salvador Foundation, one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty is to focus on children and their education. Since many children live in poverty, they have a low chance of obtaining a good education. To change this, these children needs to be educated, and there is an especially large need of teaching them English, since it is one of the native languages. To have a chance of becoming employed and getting a job in the tourism sector or in other professions, a high knowledge of English, both spoken and written, is required (Kaya, 2014; Projects Abroad, 2014). Limcaoco (Consul General) considers education in the rural areas to be one of the most important ways to reduce poverty. She also believes that another important aspect is to work together with the locals to help them get a chance to earn their own living.

Bänzinger (the John D.V. Salvador Foundation) considers working to prepare children for adult life as being one of the largest needs in the Philippines. Since a lot
of children already live in poverty and on the streets, he believes that there is a need for orphanages where children can be loved and learn discipline. The main objective of the work of the John D.V. Salvador foundation is to give children a proper education, that way reducing poverty. Without a high school education it can be very hard for the children to gain employment. Bänzinger (the John D.V. Salvador Foundation) also believes that there is a snowball effect of helping children to get a good education, since the income gained as an effect of the education can be used to provide for relatives, which is one way to reduce poverty in the country. They are also able to put their siblings in school, further increasing this effect (Bänzinger, the John D.V. Salvador Foundation). According to UNICEF, the areas where aid is mostly needed in the Philippines are education, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, health problems and nutrition. Some of these needs are more urgent today than it has been before, as a consequence of the typhoon Yolanda hitting the country in 2013 (UNICEF, 2014). As both UNICEF and World Bank has mentioned, there is a need to prevent diseases to spread, something that can easily be done through the provision of clean water and decent sanitation. To help prevent the diseases from spreading the volunteer organisations has focused their medical and nutritional programs to the most affected areas (Kaya, 2014).

As previously mentioned, several of the respondents pointed out that education is one of the most important means for the Philippines to reduce poverty, since the only way to get a good job is to have good knowledge of English. As World Bank (2014) has mentioned, the slow reduction of poverty is believed to be caused by a lack of jobs. Here it could be argued that voluntourism could have negative impacts since the voluntourists pay to come and work at a destination instead of getting paid. They thereby take up job opportunities that could have gone to the locals instead (Palacios, 2010; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Zahra & McGehee, 2013; Guttentag, 2009; McGehee, 2014). Still, it can be argued that these jobs might not even exist if it were not for voluntourism, since the local company might not have the money to pay an employee. There is also a possibility that the money provided by the voluntourists can enable the local companies cooperating with the voluntourism organisations to hire more people, since a large part of the provided money goes directly towards the projects (Visayans, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Projects Abroad, 2014; A Broader View,
Therefore, the impacts of voluntourism can be counted as being mainly positive concerning this issue.

4.3 The aid provided by voluntourism organisations

The webpages of the different voluntourism organisations put the attention on different things. For example, on Kaya’s webpage there is a main focus on explaining how the work will be executed and why it is needed, while other pages focus more on what field the voluntourists will work with and their possibilities to travel around. This might show a gap in the priority and motif between different organisations. Even though the different webpages use different information to appeal to the tourists, they still give the same image of the country itself. Therefore, it can be assumed that the voluntourism organisations fulfil point two in Wearing’s criteria list: “the product should be portrayed in promotional material that provides a realistic image of the destination area” (figure 1).

There is a wide range of voluntourism programs available in the Philippines. The voluntourist has a possibility of taking part in everything from helping abused women, health care in rural areas, nutrition projects, disaster management, and building projects, to work in orphanages or teaching English to children (Kaya, 2014; Projects Abroad, 2014). As can be seen on Kaya’s, Projects Abroad’s and Visayans’ webpages, there is a main focus on working with children in poverty. The description of these projects usually include quite a lot of information about the projects, what they are needed for, and what kind of difference the volunteer will make. On the webpages, there are a mixture of different child projects on offer, including work with children in orphanages, working with abused children, help children living on the streets, and teaching children in the rural areas. This is in line with what all the interviewed stakeholders have pointed out as some of the largest needs for the Philippines. There seems to be an agreement between all stakeholders that the way to reduce poverty is to educate children living in poverty and give them a way to get off the streets.

As mentioned earlier, the typhoon Yolanda left a great damage, and the aid needed in the country has changed a bit as a consequence. Since the poverty is so extended and has increased even more since the typhoon, the need to rebuild the affected areas has
become urgent. Schools, homes, community buildings, infrastructure, and clinics all have to be rebuilt or repaired, and this is the focus of both Kaya and Visayans at the moment. Their building projects’ main attention is on rebuilding homes for low-income families who lost their livelihood, and repairing or rebuilding rural community buildings. In the reconstruction of buildings they are concentrating on building durable houses, and they are trying to take the flood conditions in the area into account in order to further increase the durability (Kaya, 2014; Visayans, 2014).

Most of the investigated voluntourism organisations have reorganised their work because of typhoon Yolanda, and they have made a great effort to place the projects and the volunteer aid where they think it is needed the most (Kaya, 2014; Projects Abroad, 2014; Visayans, 2014). As mentioned earlier, Kaya has their main focus on rebuilding affected areas, but they also send help to other fields where aid is needed, such as health work and community service. Visayans has cancelled all their original volunteer work and focus only on the most urgent needs, which according to them are building new homes, working with nutrition, help at rural health clinics, and work in community centres (Visayans, 2014). On Monday the eighth of December 2014 another typhoon, Ruby, struck the Philippines. Even though Ruby has not made as much damage as Yolanda, Visayans now also send their volunteers to work and provide aid in the affected areas. Mainly they are handing out food, hygiene kits, water, and material for the reconstruction (Visayans, 2014). This shows flexibility amongst the different voluntourism organisations. Their main focus is to give aid where and when it is needed, and they are willing to redirect their workers and programs when there is a need for it.

4.4 Conclusions
In this chapter it has been discussed if voluntourism organisations give the aid that is mostly needed at the chosen destination. Even though the Philippines is a country with a strong economic growth, they still seem to have a problem with reducing the poverty. According to the different stakeholders interviewed for this thesis, this is the main problem for the Philippines. Since there is a shortage of jobs, and a lot of people lack access to the education needed to gain employment, the people living in poverty have a hard time creating a better life for themselves. In order to be able to help the country develop further, the main focus should be on work with children.
However, since the Philippines is a country often affected by different natural disasters, the major needs can change quickly between different areas and different fields.

The organisations investigated in this thesis have shown an understanding for the help needed in the Philippines, and they are focusing their work where it seems to be mostly needed. On the organisations’ webpages there is a lot of focus on work with children in different areas, even though there are several other projects on offer. Some webpages pay more attention to the voluntourists and their experience than on why the aid is needed. There is a possibility that this focus on the surrounding activities is a way to draw the potential voluntourists’ attention, and make them become interested in a specific destination that is in need of help. The organisations also seem to work hard on being flexible with the aid. Because of the country’s problem with natural disasters the needs might change quickly, and the voluntourism organisations seem willing to change their programmes and promptly move the help to the areas where it is needed the most. For example, some organisations have temporarily cancelled some of their programmes, since there is still a lot of work needing to be done in and around the areas affected by the two typhoons. Due to this flexibility and willingness to change, it can be assumed that the voluntourism organisations work in the area because the aid that they provide is needed there, not solely in order to sell an experience to their tourists.

5 Sustainability
This chapter will begin with a short explanation of what the authors consider to be some of the more important aspects of sustainability. It will also present the theory of TBL, both from a general and a tourism specific point of view. TBL has been the base of determining which parts of the findings that needs to be analysed. The analysis will then be divided into economic, environmental and social impacts, and the effects that the voluntourism work create will be examined.

5.1 Sustainability in the tourism industry
When tourism first started to become popular, the local society was not adapted to take care of the vast amount of incoming tourists. The development was aimed at the
tourists’ well-being and comfort, whereas the environmental, social, and economic impacts on the host community were not taken into account during development (Wearing and McGehee, 2013). This resulted in degradation of the local environment and culture, the local inhabitants’ desires were neglected, sacred ground were exploited or disturbed, and the financial benefits ended up with the international tourism companies rather than with the local community (Mowforth & Munt, 2003; Knollenberga et al., 2014). The consequence of these events was an increased awareness of the need for a more sustainable perspective, which was introduced into tourism development in the early 1990’s (Saarinen, 2014). Mowforth and Munt (2003) suggest that the tourists themselves also became more aware of the problems, and a leisure ethic became prominent when choosing the destination, leading to an increased demand for a ‘greener’ form of tourism. The consequence of this demand was the development of new and alternative forms of tourism, including ecotourism and responsible tourism (Saarinen, 2014). Sustainable tourism has therefore become a way for destinations to market themselves and enhance their competitiveness, thereby preserving the profitability that the tourism industry enjoy today (Stoddard et al., 2012).

Due to the fact that international tourist arrivals are estimated to reach 1.6 million annually by 2020 (UNWTO, 2014) the need for a sustainable development in the tourism business has not disappeared. On the contrary, Saarinen (2014, p. 3) claims that “the need for the idea of sustainability in tourism is now more urgent than ever before”. In 2000, UNWTO started the Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty Initiative (ST-EP), which aims to assist sustainable development projects and to encourage sustainable tourism, that way alleviating poverty (UNWTO, 2014). For development to be considered sustainable it has to meet “the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future” (the Bruntland Commission report, in Stoddard et al., 2012, p. 234). Sustainable tourism can therefore be defined as “a level of tourism activity that can be maintained over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural, and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place” (Stoddard et al., 2012, p. 245). Sustainable tourism has also been defined as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the
needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (UNEP & WTO, in Saarinen, 2014, p. 3) and the World Tourism Organisation (WTO)

Sustainability is something that has become increasingly important today. The environmental element is one of the main aspects of sustainability; however, there are other aspects that are just as important. In the tourism business the economic and the social sustainability plays a just as important part as the environmental element (Saarinen, 2014; Chok et al., 2007; Mowforth & Munt, 2003). In spite of these three elements being equally important, the economic aspects often get valued higher. One reason for this is thought to be the fact that without the economic aspects there would be no possibility to finance the development of the other two elements (Saarinen, 2014). As Mowforth and Munt (2003) mentions, the globalisation of the modern world has led to third world countries becoming a part of the economic interdependency that is internationally present today, something that has contributed to putting more emphasis on the economical elements of sustainability.

5.2 Triple Bottom Line (TBL)
The effects and impacts of tourism can be quite hard to measure, both when it comes to positive and negative ones. One of the largest problems is that there have not been enough attention to measuring the environmental and social impacts, since the tourism industry mostly has focused on the economic impacts (Tyrrell et al., 2012). This has resulted in the development of TBL as a way to measure corporate performance from an economic, environmental, and social approach. It aims to investigate the effects of the organisations’ performance, not just from the organisations’ point of view, but also with a focus on all the stakeholders that are affected by the conducted business, for example the local community. TBL was created because of the increased demand and importance of sustainable development (Stoddard et al., 2012; Tyrrell et al., 2012). The reason sustainability, and therefore TBL, has become so important can be explained through three different happenings: firstly, the detection of the environment’s limitations; secondly, the new technologies and realisation of sustainability; and thirdly, the globalisation of the modern world (Stoddard et al., 2012).
TBL has today transformed into an accounting methodology, where reports are given to help organisations with their future performance instead of focusing on the corporate, social, and environmental responsibility which was the original intention of the theory (Stoddard et al., 2012). There is a risk of companies only reporting their social and environmental effects instead of actually implementing them, in an effort to improve the reputation of the company. One of the reasons for this is that these effects hold very little, if any, economic benefits for the company, but can be an easy and cheap way to improve the company’s image (Tyrrell et al., 2012). Other problems with TBL are that there have been some misunderstandings of what it actually means and how it should be used. It is therefore important to understand the multidimensional nature of the TBL theory (Stoddard et al., 2012; Tyrrell et al., 2012). To do this, a measurement of the different aspects has to be done separately, and the different results then needs to be compared and linked together. To analyse the three aspects together as one would not give a fair result (Tyrrell et al., 2012).

5.3 TBL in the tourism industry
TBL has become regularly applied in the tourism industry, presumably since the tourism industry work closely to the social and environmental resources. It has been argued that the effects of this application are mainly positive, and that they also are facilitating the work for the tourism industry to become more sustainable (Tyrrell et al., 2012). According to McGehee and Andereck (2009, p. 42) this is especially true in the case of voluntourism, since “this form of tourism has the potential to create the ultimate form of sustainable tourism”.

When measuring the economic impacts of tourism, some examples of aspects that are often measured are the number of tourists, employees in the industry, and lodging revenues. These measurements are often focused on the companies’ economic effects, but in the tourism industry it is also important to pay attention to the effects concerning the local inhabitants. In several cases the focus has been set on measuring the economic effects and benefits at the destination, for example poverty alleviation, employment issues or seasonality (Stoddard et al., 2012). One way to increase the economic sustainability in the tourism industry is to ensure that the tourists spend their money in locally owned enterprises. Doing so increases income for the local inhabitants, creates employment opportunities, and prevent economic leakage...
(Mostafanezhad, 2013; Page & Connell, 2009). However, the most direct economic sustainable benefit of tourism is the increased work opportunity for the local inhabitants, which leads to an increased amount of taxes getting paid. This in turn can increase the quality of healthcare, infrastructure, and public safety, benefitting the society as a whole (Page & Connell, 2009).

It is said that the environmental impacts has measuring problems (Stoddard et al., 2012). One reason for this is that tourism effects are often measured in one or five year periods, and the environmental long-term effects take much longer than that before they are visible and recognisable. One indirect positive environmental effect is the financial contribution that tourism creates, since this can contribute to funding environmental preservation and regeneration. On the negative side, there is a lot of pollution connected to the tourism industry, including noise pollution and increased amounts of sewage and waste (Stoddard et al., 2012). One way to ensure that the negative environmental effects do not overshadow the positive ones can be to create tourism products where the environment and the wildlife are in centre. An example of this is the voluntourism organisations, where projects such as building and construction projects, tree planting, animal rescue, agriculture and farming, and coral reef conservation are available for tourists to take part in. These projects aim to increase the awareness of the environment for both locals and tourists, and they often work to promote a more sustainable way of life (Kaya, 2014; Volunteer Abroad, 2014; Visayans, 2014, A Broader View, 2014).

The social impacts contain similar problems concerning measurements as the environmental ones. The social effects are, as mentioned before, much harder to measure than the economic effects, and there is still no extensively accepted measurement for it (Stoddard et al., 2012). It has been argued that the social and environmental impacts are not properly measurable by a quantitative TBL, since they are seldom consistent over a whole community (Tyrrell et al., 2012). Tyrrell et al. (2012) still believes that the TBL is the only way to put the social and environmental effects on equal footing with the economic ones. Some of the issues that are included in the social effects are health issues, education, employment, family effects, change in culture, crowding, and crime patterns (Stoddard et al., 2012). One negative effect that tourism in some cases can create is that the host community start to adapt to the
visitors’ culture, starting to dress, eat and act in a more western way, shunning or losing touch with their own culture (Page & Connell, 2009). One way to avoid this is to include the local inhabitants in the planning and development of tourism, and listen to their opinions and wishes (Page & Connell, 2009; Wearing, 2001). This way the locals can retain more influence over their everyday life, and it might result in them growing more proud of their culture and starting to work to preserve it (Page & Connell, 2009).

5.4 Economic impacts
Tourism can be very beneficial for the local community, since it increases the number of jobs in several different areas of work, both in the service sector, where there is a direct interaction with the tourists, as well as the construction and infrastructure sectors where the tourist seldom meet the worker. The increase in work opportunities also increases the possibility for the local inhabitants to get a job and earn an income, making people “able to take care of their families and live decent lives” (Limcaoco, Consul General). As mentioned earlier, Page and Connell (2009) argues that an increased number of jobs in an area also mean that more people pay taxes. This usually leads to an increased standard of living for the whole community, since the taxes normally go towards funding and improving healthcare and infrastructure in the local society.

As Mowforth and Munt (2003) mentions, the financial benefits of the tourism industries have not always benefitted the local community and the people most in need, but have instead stayed in the corporate world, sometimes being directly exported out of the host country. This is called leakage, and as much as seventy-five percent of the tourism income can be found leaking out of some undeveloped countries (Page & Connell, 2009, p. 396). This is something that a lot of voluntourism organisations seem to work hard to change. For example, several of the organisations use host families to provide food and accommodation for the their volunteers (Ehlers, A Broader View; Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Visayans, 2014). Part of the fee that the volunteers pay to participate goes directly to the host family, giving them a reliable and regular income. Getting this income enable the families to take care of each other, put their children in school, gain access to good
healthcare and live decent lives (Limcaoco, Consul General; Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Visayans, 2014).

According to Yotsumoto (2013), tourism can have an especially positive effect on the situation for the people living in poverty in the destination society. An increased tourism in an area creates a large amount of jobs, opening up the possibility for the poor to apply for a job and gain an income. However, the chances of gaining employment are even better when the person has some education, which is something that several voluntourism organisations focus on. A large part of the projects available include tutoring and teaching, mostly aimed at teaching children (Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Visayans, 2014, A Broader View, 2014), but there are also projects available where the participants teach adults (Visayans, 2014; A Broader View, 2014). As Bänzinger (the John D.V. Salvador Foundation) mentions, when one child gain an education and a job that child become able to provide for their family and put their siblings in school as well. Getting a job usually enable that person to leave the streets and the slum, and increase their standard of living (Bänzinger, the John D.V. Salvador Foundation).

The increased income and access to work and education are very direct economic effects, that have clear and immediate financial results for both the family and the society where they live. According to Yotsumoto (2013) this effect is generally larger in ecotourism than in other tourism areas, something that seems to be true when looking at the webpages of the voluntourism organisations. For example, apart from the money paid to the host families as compensation for hosting volunteers, parts of the fees that the voluntourists pay goes directly to local projects and companies (Projects Abroad, 2014; Visayans, 2014; Kaya, 2014; A Broader View, 2014). This might enable the companies to hire more staff, and in several cases the voluntourism organisations themselves recruit locals, for example to teach the local language to the volunteers (Projects Abroad, 2014; Visayans, 2014). The results are something that can be directly connected to point number three in Wearing’s criteria list, stating that the tourism industry needs to “ensure benefits of the sale of the product go directly to the host community” (figure 1).
Another way to ensure that the economic effects are reaching the local society is when the participating voluntourists spend their money in local businesses, for example when travelling by local bus or taxi, when buying food or souvenirs at the local market, or when participating in different courses run by local teachers (Projects Abroad, 2014; McGehee & Andereck, 2009). Kaya (2014) encourage their participants to travel around in the country after they have finished their volunteer work, in order to spend money in the local communities. This creates what Page and Connell (2009) label as ‘indirect or generated spending’, that is to say money spent by tourists in businesses other than those directly connected to the tourism business. This can be interpreted as contributing to voluntourism creating a long term economic net benefit for the local society, which according to Stoddart et al. (2012) is one way to define sustainability in the tourism industry.

Voluntourism have received some critique concerning the fact that the volunteers sometimes come in and take over the work from the local people, often with the motivation that the western way to do something is the only right way to do it (Palacios, 2010; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Zahra & McGehee, 2013; Guttentag, 2009; McGehee, 2014). To avoid this, the volunteer organisations need to have a close collaboration with local companies and businesses, who knows what kind of help is needed and how to best organise the work. For example, Projects Abroad have employees working specifically with project development. These employees are present at the destination, they have vast knowledge of the local society and what is needed there, and based on that knowledge they find suitable projects for the organisation to work with (Lindberg, Projects Abroad). Ehlers (A Broader View) notes that it is often the location in need of help who choose to contact the voluntourism organisation, and the two then work together to create suitable programs. Lindberg (Projects Abroad) also state that regular follow-ups are being done to ensure that the work is still needed, and that the time spent in the projects results in something meaningful for all involved. This is quite similar to how the John D.V. Salvador Foundation works. Even though the foundation is not a voluntourism organisation they work closely with their local partners to find suitable projects. They claim that “without strong, reliable and trustworthy partners, it is impossible to run projects like ours”.
The work that all these organisations conduct can therefore be directly connected to three of the points in Wearing’s criteria list (figure 1), namely that the company should ensure that “benefits of the sale of the product go directly to the host community” (point three), and “share the benefits of tourism with the host community, with opportunities for participation, employment and career paths for the local community” (point four). Lastly, Wearing (2001) claims that “the most appropriate basis for this interaction is to base it on equality and respect for the rights and the wishes of the local population” (figure 1, point seven), something that is clearly done when including local businesses in the planning of the projects.

5.5 Environmental impacts

According to Kaya (2014) there is an ever-increasing need for environmental volunteering across the globe. One of the largest environmental concerns that voluntourism organisations focus on is the reforestation of the rainforests, (Kaya, 2014; Projects Abroad, 2014; A Broader View, 2014) since around thirteen million hectares of forest is cut down for various reasons each year (Kaya, 2014). This might result in the destruction of entire food chains, which in turn might have consequences in a much larger geographic area, spreading the impacts globally. Deforestation also causes the soil to erode and the deserts to spread, decreasing the amount of farmable land and limiting what kind of crops are able to be grown (Kaya, 2014; Vi-skogen, 2014). By planting new trees the local inhabitants get access to food, fuel and timber, fodder for livestock, finance opportunity and increased fertility in the surrounding ground, resulting in richer harvests. The increased amount of food and work also creates a positive social effect (Vi-skogen, 2014). The planted trees provide shelter from wind and weather, potentially reducing the impacts of storms and hurricanes.

Another aspect of environmental work is the work with the direct environment in which the local inhabitants live, that is to say house building and repairing, or developing and repairing of infrastructure (Visayans, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Projects Abroad, 2014; A Broader View, 2014). This is the area of environmental work where the Philippines is in most need of help at the moment. Since the country is hit by typhoons on a regular basis, the infrastructure and buildings often get damaged (UNDP, 2014). Kaya (2014) aim “to build sustainable accommodation that will house generations to come while taking into account the local flood conditions”,

41
meaning that they adapt the kind of houses that get built so that they can last longer in the environment where they stand. This will probably also make the buildings less vulnerable when the next typhoon hits. Projects Abroad (2014) on the other hand focus on repairing educational facilities so that the schools can open again. This generates several social effects, since the children will have somewhere to be and have something to do during the day, they will keep their education on-going and updated, and the teachers will be able to start working and earning an income again. Visayans (2014) mention how they continuously work to improve the standard of homes and schools, but after typhoon Yolanda in 2013, the focus has been on rebuilding homes. They also describe how the voluntourists’ presence helps, both with the physical labour that they contribute with, and the financial aid that enable the purchase of higher quality material. This in turn will ensure that the homes built can last for a much longer period of time (Visayans, 2014).

All these efforts can be connected to point number one in Wearing’s criteria list: “generally, tourism products should be culturally and environmentally sensitive”, since the repairing and building give both environmental and social effects. Not only does the direct environment and living standard for the people get better, but as the quality of the material used increases, the possibility of the houses not being severely damaged in a new storm also increase. This mean that less material will go to waste, and less material will end up in the ocean after the storms.

5.6 Social impacts
Voluntourism have sometimes been criticised for coming in and taking over the work from the local people, bringing with them the idea of the western world and the western way being the only right answer (Palacios, 2010; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Zahra & McGehee, 2013; Guttentag, 2009, McGehee, 2014). This way of thinking creates a risk of increased stereotyping and prejudice between the volunteer and the voluntoured, expanding the social and cultural division between the two groups (Hammersley, 2014; Guttentag, 2009; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Lyons et al., 2012; Wearing & McGehee, 2013). This is an issue that the voluntourism organisations that have been researched seems to work hard to eschew, and they are using several different approaches. Lindberg (Projects Abroad) mentions that his company usually participate in local projects, where the volunteers take the role as extra staff, instead
of taking the work from the locals. This is also done by other companies, where volunteers fill the positions that the local companies cannot afford to fill on their own (Visayans, 2014; Kaya, 2014). Another way is the previously mentioned host families, which do not only create an economic impact, but also give both the visiting volunteer as well as the family an opportunity to learn more about the other person’s culture. Many volunteers also become friends with their host families, staying in touch with them after the volunteer trip is over (Projects Abroad, 2014). This seems to be confirmed when looking at the survey answers, were several respondents express a wish to keep in touch with both the host families and the local people that they have worked with. This can be connected to the sixth point of the sustainability criteria list (figure 1), where Wearing (2001) state that “ethical concerns about the impact of the product mean that operators need to provide the opportunity for the guest’s interaction with the host community”.

Several organisations also encourage their volunteers to participate in language courses to learn a bit of the local language, which can facilitate the process of getting to know each other and understanding each other’s cultures (Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; Visayans, 2014; IVHQ, 2014). Though not as clear as in some other cases, a connection can still be made with Wearing’s (2001) criteria list, this time point number five: “the visitor could also be provided with educational/orientation information providing culturally specific guidelines” (figure 1). Since the language courses are a way to ensure that the volunteer gain an increased knowledge about the local culture, as well as a way to make it easier for the volunteer to connect with the local inhabitants, these courses can be viewed as “information providing culturally specific guidelines”, further adding to the sustainability of voluntourism.

Another social effect that is created by the presence of the voluntourists is the previously mentioned increased possibilities for children to go to school. In this case the voluntourists can contribute in a very direct way by teaching the children or by building or repairing schools, which are both quite popular and common projects (Visayans, 2014; Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; A Broader View, 2014). When the children have a school to go to they have somewhere to spend their days, and get away from the streets. The most obvious result of having a school to go to is that the children get an education, increasing the possibility to gain employment after
graduation, that way improving their future situations (Bänzinger, the John D.V Salvador Foundation, Projects Abroad, 2014; Kaya, 2014; A Broader View, 2014). Not only does the employment create a way to provide for the rest of the family, but the taxes paid on salaries create several positive effects for the society as a whole, reducing the level of poverty in the country. According to Page and Connell (2009) the money gained from these taxes can be used to finance health care, improving it and making it available to a larger number of people.

5.7 Conclusions
One of the most direct impacts of a growth in tourism in a destination is the increase in work opportunities for the local inhabitants. This leads to an increased number of inhabitants paying taxes, which is usually directed towards improving the overall standard in the society, including healthcare and infrastructure. This is something that the whole population might benefit from, since for instance an increased standard of healthcare often also mean a greater access to it. Earning an income can also ensure that the whole family can be provided for. The family will have food on the table, they will gain further access to quality healthcare, and they will be able to put their children in school. Since having an education vastly increases the possibility to gain employment, putting a child in school usually means that they will earn an income in the future, then being able to help provide for the whole family. This creates a spiral of positive improvement of the living standard for the family in particular and the society as a whole, which is a positive sustainable effect of tourism. This single effect can be connected to two of the points in Wearing’s checklist (figure 1); firstly, “ensure benefits of the sale of the product go directly to the host community” (point three), and secondly, “organisations that control tourism at a larger scale should share the benefits of tourism with the host community, with opportunities for participation, employment and career paths for the local community” (point four). Since voluntourism organisations usually encourage their volunteers to spend their money in locally owned establishments, these two points are even more prominent.

When it comes to the environmental work, the presence of voluntourists have several different effects. Firstly, the volunteers contribute with physical labour, assisting the local companies in their work with rebuilding and restoring homes and communal
buildings. Secondly, their financial contribution enable the local companies to use higher quality material in their buildings, creating a much safer environment for the people living and working in the new houses. This also ensures that the buildings are less likely to be damaged in upcoming storms, resulting in less material ending up in the surrounding seas, meaning that the nature will be less polluted and less filled with rubbish. This also means that less people might lose their homes in an upcoming typhoon, keeping them of the streets and out of poverty. Thirdly, the financial contribution might also enable the local companies to take on more staff, something that contributes to the aforementioned spiral of work leading to education, leading to work. This also means that voluntourism match the definition of sustainable tourism stated by Stoddart et al. (2012, p. 245): “a level of tourism activity that can be maintained over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural, and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place”. It also fits in to the description of sustainable tourism written by UNEP and WTO (Saarinen, 2014, p. 3), since voluntourism “takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts”. This part of the voluntourism business also matches three of the seven points in Wearing’s list of sustainable criteria (figure 1): “Generally, tourism products should be culturally and environmentally sensitive” (point one), “Ensure benefits of the sale of the product go directly to the host community (point three), and “Organisations that control tourism at a larger scale should share the benefits of tourism with the host community, with opportunities for participation, employment and career paths for the local community” (point four).

Voluntourism organisations seems to be aware of the fact that their industry has been criticised for taking the jobs from the local people, and they also seem to work hard to avoid this problem. They work closely with local companies in both the planning and execution of their different projects, making sure that their volunteers fill positions that could not have gone to someone local. This also mean that the volunteers work closely together with the local inhabitants, creating a cultural exchange which is valuable for both the voluntourists and the locals, something that has been mentioned to be one of the most important parts of sustainable tourism (Wearing, 2001; Woosnam & Lee, 2011; Hammersley, 2014). This exchange is even more prominent in the case of host families, where the visiting volunteers live in a local family during the duration of their stay, and get to interact with them on a daily
basis. However, the most prominent social effect that has been found in this research is the increased possibility for children to get an education. Educating children is an effective way to decrease poverty, which is one of the major problems in the Philippines. Therefore, the focus on children and education that the voluntourism organisations have been found to have is one of the most sustainable areas of their work.

Even though the sustainability work usually get divided into the tree areas of economy, environment, and social aspects, there is a prominent connection between the different areas. Economically sustainable impacts, such as an increased amount of jobs, creates major social impacts when the families become able to support each other and pay for education for other family members, who in turn gain a greater possibility of getting a job and becoming able to further contribute to the positive spiral. The increased standard of living that these jobs result in also enable the families to make more sustainably sensible choices when building houses and infrastructure, creating a more environmentally sustainable society. When voluntourism organisations inform their volunteers about environmental sustainability they may indirectly create an increased awareness about this amongst the local inhabitants, making the local society even more sustainable. The conclusion can therefore be drawn that in order to become truly sustainable, the voluntourism organisations cannot chose to focus on only one of the three areas, but need to work with them all at the same time. This is something that the researched organisations seems to be aware of and work actively with.

6 Conclusions
This chapter will highlight the most important conclusions from the previous chapters, and conclusions that apply to the whole thesis will be drawn. Thereafter, a presentation of how well the voluntourism organisations fulfil Wearing’s criteria list (figure 1) will follow, showing whether or not the voluntourism organisations are sustainable.

In order for the voluntourists to feel that their work has made any difference and been meaningful, it is crucial for them to have a lot of cultural exchange with the
local people. This is also an important part of the sustainability work, since it does not only affect how the locals and the voluntourists view each other, but also creates a mutual respect and understanding of each other’s cultures. Without this understanding the differences between the two groups can seem larger than it actually is, something that might create problems when trying to communicate with each other. As established in this thesis, a well-functioning communication between the voluntourist and the local people is necessary in order to make the volunteer projects become as effective and sustainable as possible. It is crucial to include the local society in the planning and implementation of the volunteer projects, since they are the ones who best know what is needed and what the most suitable way to conduct the work is.

One of the easiest ways to improve the communication between the voluntourists and the locals is to provide the voluntourists with plenty information about the work that they will be conducting, and what effects that work will have, before they depart on their trip. This way the voluntourists may have expectations that matches the way that the reality looks, and may become more satisfied with their efforts than they might have been, had they not received said information. By informing the voluntourists about the impacts of their work the organisations might also create a more sustainable way of thinking amongst them. This may result in the voluntourists becoming more aware of their actions, making the stay and work even more sustainable than it already was.

As can be seen in this thesis, it is usually easier for the voluntourists to see the areas of sustainability that are directly connected to the work that they are doing. For example, if the participant is volunteering in a school the social effects may be clearly visible, while the environmental effects are more visible to those working with environmental issues. Therefore, there is a need for the voluntourism organisations to provide information about the effects not immediately connected to the area of work that the voluntourist will be directly involved with. By doing so, the voluntourist can get a better picture of how their work affect the local society as a whole, making them more aware of the sustainable effects. Since the voluntourists are valuable tools that the organisations need in order to be able to implement their sustainability work, it is important that they are aware of these effects. Being aware
of how their work affect the local society might increase the feeling of meaningfulness for the voluntourists, something that in turn may lead to the voluntourists working even harder to increase the sustainability of their work. Therefore, the total sustainable effects of the work conducted by the voluntourism organisations might increase further.

Some of the most prominent effects that this thesis have found voluntourism to have on the Philippines is the increase in job opportunities and access to education. The two have been found to be very closely connected, since having an education severely enhances the possibility to gain employment. One family member having a decent job also enable more of the family members to afford to get an education. This creates a positive spiral, improving the standard of living for the whole family as more and more family members are getting educated and becoming employed. This reduces the poverty in the area, which is one of the major issues that the Philippines is struggling with. The spiral also creates a positive effect for the society, since more tax money get into the community, increasing the standard of infrastructure and health care.

The voluntourism organisations has in this thesis been found to focus their work on the area where help is needed the most. According to several different sources, the Philippines primary need is to reduce poverty, which can be done by working with children, especially through education. Another area where the country is in need of assistance is in their work with reducing the damage made from the typhoons. These areas have been found to be in the focus of the voluntourism organisations. The organisations are sensitive to the needs of the destination, and has shown to be quite flexible when it comes to the distribution of aid, since they seem to be able to change it as the conditions change. This has been shown in the aftermath of the typhoons, when several of the organisations temporarily closed their other programmes in order to focus on typhoon aid and restoration of affected areas. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that the voluntourism organisations are present in the Philippines because they are needed, not only because they want to attract visitors and sell their product.
The examined organisations have all shown clear signs of working both with economic, environmental, and social sustainability, and they seem to pass this on to their volunteers. For example, the presence of the voluntourists create an increased amount of job opportunities, meaning that the family will have an income. This will enable other family members to get an education, further increasing their chance to get a job. The financial impacts that the voluntourism creates also enables the local companies to use material of higher quality, resulting in a safer living environment for the local people. Less people might lose their homes the next time the country gets hit by a typhoon, something that also affect the level of poverty. The voluntourists work and live closely together with the local people, creating a social exchange that might benefit both groups. However, the largest benefit from voluntourism is the increased educational opportunities for the children. Educating children will enable them to gain employment, thereby providing for their families. They will also be able to put their siblings in school, further increasing this effect. When the increased number of employees start to pay taxes, the whole community will experience an increased standard of living. This is an effective way to reduce poverty in the country, meaning that the effects that voluntourism create can be counted as sustainable. There has been quite clear evidence that one cannot focus solely on one of the three areas of economy, environment and social aspects, since they are so closely connected to each other. Instead, in order to keep on becoming more and more sustainable the organisations have to put equal emphasis on all three aspects. This is something that the voluntourism organisations have been found to already work with.

This thesis indicates that the voluntourism organisations are sustainable in their work, since they fulfil all of the points in Wearing’s criteria list of sustainability (figure 1). As Wearing mention in the first point, the examined voluntourism organisations all provide tourism products that are “culturally and environmentally sensitive”, since they work to facilitate the interaction between the voluntourists and the host community, for example by encouraging the volunteers to participate in local language courses. The voluntourists also work closely together with local people, getting to know their culture. Wearing claims that “the product should be portrayed in promotional material that provides a realistic image of the destination area”. All of the webpages investigated in this thesis show very similar pictures.
Therefore, one can assume that they are portraying realistic images. The voluntourism organisations also fulfil point three, since a large part of the fee that the participating volunteers pay goes directly towards financing the different projects. A large part is also used to reimburse the host families for housing and food, giving the families a reliable income. This also means that the voluntourism organisations fulfil point four in the list, where Wearing states that the organisations “should share the benefits of tourism with the host community, with opportunities for participation, employment and career paths for the local community”. The organisations also create employment opportunities when contributing to financing the work of local organisations, which then might be able to afford to hire more staff.

When it comes to point number five of Wearing’s criteria list, the voluntourism organisations provide their volunteers with “educational/orientation information providing culturally specific guidelines”, making them fulfil also this point. However, here it may be some room for improvement, since this thesis have shown that the voluntourists do not always see all the impacts that their work has on the destination. The organisations seem to be better on informing their voluntourists about the social effects of their work than about the environmental or economic effects. This is something that the organisations could consider adding to the pre-volunteering information in order to further increase their sustainability work. The sixth point, where Wearing states that “ethical concerns about the impact of the product mean that operators need to provide the opportunity for the guest’s interaction with the host community”, is one of the most prominent aspects of voluntourism. The volunteers work closely with the local people, and in most cases they even live in local families, meaning that they interact with the host community on a daily basis during their stay. Lastly, Wearing point out the importance of including the local people in the work, as well as the importance of basing the interaction “on equality and respect for the rights and the wishes of the local population”. This is done in a distinct way when the voluntourism organisations include the local companies in the planning and execution of their different projects, something that all of the examined organisations seem to be doing in one way or another.
Not only does the voluntourism organisations fulfil all of the points in Wearing’s criteria list, but they also go in line with how Stoddard et al. (2012, p. 245) describe sustainable tourism, which is “a level of tourism activity that can be maintained over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural, and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place”. The definition of sustainable tourism stated by UNEP and WTO, as ”tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (Saarinen, 2014, p. 3), also applies to the researched voluntourism organisations. Therefore, the investigated voluntourism organisations can be counted as sustainable.
7 References

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IVHQ (2014):
  http://www.volunteerhq.org/why-ivhq [2014-12-09]
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  http://www.kayavolunteer.com/About-Us.html [2014-11-12]


Projects Abroad (2014):

http://www.projects-abroad.se/volontarresor-lander/filippinerna/barn-och-ungdom/ [2014-12-10]
http://www.projects-abroad.se/volontarresor-lander/filippinerna/ [2014-12-10]


7.1 Interviews.


Limcaoco, Carla, Consul General a.h., *Consulate General of Sweden*. e-mail interview, (2014-11-17)

Lindberg, Lars, Program Responsible Sweden, *Projects Abroad*, e-mail interview, (2015-12-15)

Bänziger, Hugo, Treasurer, Member of the Board, *the John D.V Salvador Foundation*, e-mail interview, (2014-11-18)
8 Appendix – Survey questions

Have you ever taken part in volunteer work in combination with vacationing or travelling?

Yes 30 79%
No 8 21%

Where in the world did you go on your volunteer trip?

Asia 16 42%
Europe 2 5%
North America 0 0%
South America 3 8%
Africa 9 24%
Oceania 0 0%

How long did you stay?

Less than 1 month 7 18%
1 - 3 months 17 45%
4 - 6 months 3 8%
More than 6 months 3 8%
What kind of volunteer work did you take part in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with children</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with animals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with health care and/or medicine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with nature preservation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of infrastructure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you get any information about the social effects of your work?

- The organisation that I traveled with provided me with a lot of information: 8 (21%)
- The organisation that I traveled with provided me with some information: 4 (11%)
- I found information about the social effects myself: 5 (13%)
- I did not receive any information about the social effects before I got there: 2 (5%)
- I am still not sure of what the social effects of my work was: 1 (3%)
Did you get any information about the environmental effects of your work?

- The organisation that I traveled with provided me with a lot of information: 2 (5%)
- The organisation that I traveled with provided me with some information: 5 (13%)
- I found information about the environmental effects myself: 2 (5%)
- I did not receive any information about the environmental effects before I got there: 4 (11%)
- I am still not sure of what the environmental effects of my work was: 7 (18%)

Did you get any information about the economic effects of your work?

- The organisation that I traveled with provided me with a lot of information: 5 (13%)
- The organisation that I traveled with provided me with some information: 2 (5%)
- I found information about the economic effects myself: 3 (8%)
- I did not receive any information about the economic effects before I got there: 4 (11%)
- I am still not sure of what the economic effects of my work was: 6 (16%)
Did you feel that your work made any difference for the local society?

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>42%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Please elaborate

- They met a new kind of person, but because of the short time it was hard to start doing anything more lasting...
- We worked with members of the community to establish small enterprises, run community English classes and helped the village women's group so with their finances.
- To spend time with the children/orphans and give them attention was something they didn't get a lot of that the volunteers provided.
- I felt kind of useless.
- I hope it meant something for someone, but since the school I worked at had already been there for 20 years, with super competent teachers, I'm not sure that just by me being there made a huge difference for the local society.
- De ville inte lyssna.
- Improvement of education and in health service.
- People got out of tents and into homes.
- Directly help the org to set up the IT infra they need for long term.
- Inspiration, motivation, exchange with different cultures.
- I worked post Yolanda Typhoon and was able to help in the early stages of recovery. Trauma work, construction, play and learn with kids, cleaning the trash etc etc.
- I was there to support my Peruvian colleagues who are running the project in their own neighborhood for the neighborhood's children themselves. My Peruvian colleagues are independent, with the exception of the financial independence and our occasional advice. We are working together (the Dutch voluntary project coordinators and our Peruvian colleagues) towards their financial independence as well. I advice and support them in becoming totally independent. This is a process that will take an estimated three years. I visit them every year (coming March I will leave again) for at least two months each stay. Our Peruvian colleagues, 'mamás' from the neighborhood and their families have definitely improved their living circumstances as well as their own development. In the past 7 years, the women have become educated (for example they learned to read and write, basic administration, maths), trained, less dependent, and run their own business together. My task is done when they have become financial independent as well. But still then I expect to continue to visit them for my personal relations to them and because I can learn from them and their culture.
- The Children I worked with were really happy to meet people that cared about them.
- My work was worthwhile despite the organisation I travelled with not because of it!
- Both for lions and the children at the orphanages.
- It wasn't social work.
- My volunteering didn't make much of a difference, but the economic benefit of me being there did.
- The support I offered to local workers wows not a job role they could afford to hire for therefore by volunteering I was improving the children's lives by maintaining a role that would not otherwise be available to.
- I felt like I made a meaningful connection with my host family and the women and children with whom I worked and that often this is where much inspiration can come from (meaningful connections).
- I feel that my work did much difference. We shared knowledge and a cultural exchange.
Do you believe that the work you did was the work most needed, or should the focus have been on something else?

- I believe that the project I worked on was the one with the biggest need: 12 (32%)
- I believe that the project I worked on was important, but there were more urgent work that needed to be done: 7 (18%)
- I believe there should have been a greater focus on something else: 1 (3%)

Would you like to elaborate? (Not mandatory)

- Due to my age I was only able to work with children. Working with abused girls or other individuals in need at this particular site yes
- It was after typhoon yolanda and other than the lack of food, re homing people was the most important
- Only when this project becomes independent, our foundation will maybe start up a new project. I can of course see there clearly are more problems in the city, in the country, in that same neighborhood even. However, I still wonder if this is 'our' task. But the way the Dutch foundation works I think is the least 'bad': we just support until they can manage themselves.
- I'm not sure if my authority warrants answering this question as I did: I volunteered and did work at a site that was determined by those that live in the place I volunteered and my [then] non-professional opinion about what change needed to be done is likely not as important as the one of those that reside there.
- It's impossible to "save the world" and difficult to change/develop the society and create economical stabile systems, so it's still good to be there and give the children the attention they need. It's a start.
Concerning the work you did, is there anything you feel could have been done differently to enhance the long term effects?

- no
- Better connection-keeping techniques with those I worked with. (i.e. penpal pairing or setting up of a way to keep in contact more readily with my family/women children).
- more continuity in staff
- -
- No, since I visited a project that obviously had been working and changing peoples lives for more than 20 years.
- I didn't really do anything much useful, but both I and the people I worked with benefitted from the cultural exchange.
- no, all good
- No
- so much I cant write about it allm here!
- yes
- Local government involvement
- better co-ordination within the organisation but it was just post typhoon so slight chaos could have been expected. More leadership needed on the ground, some volunteers really did very little to help.
- No; I am supporting them for the long term and they will step-by-step reach independence so that they completely earn their own income and pay their expenses themselves.
- Better tools were needed. Electric tools would have been much more efficient and less time consuming
- I would keep in touch with my orphans and host family.
- Vi var där för att hjälpa men lokalbefolkningen var inte intresserade att bli hjälpta
- The small groups I worked with in the community were fantastic but the charity that I signed up directly with to do voluntary work was badly run.
I am

Male: 0 (0%)
Female: 20 (53%)
Do not wish to specify: 0 (0%)

Age

Under 18: 0 (0%)
18-24: 11 (29%)
25-30: 5 (13%)
31-40: 1 (3%)
41-50: 2 (5%)
51-65: 1 (3%)
Over 65: 0 (0%)

I come from

Africa: 0 (0%)
Europe: 18 (47%)
Asia: 1 (3%)
Oceania: 0 (0%)
North America: 1 (3%)
South America: 0 (0%)