

Investing in Barbados' Social Infrastructure



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A New Way To Think About Philanthropic Giving

The Caribbean region has rich cultures and histories of giving and sharing, which even today help to improve the quality of island life and environment. As a professional advisor to generous people and families, and a curious philanthropy researcher, I wanted to better understand the giving landscape in Barbados, where I grew up, but more broadly across the Caribbean. So, I spoke with more than 30 of the region's most generous givers and summarized what I learned in, 'A Portrait of Affluent Giving in the Caribbean: Experiences, barriers, and the future of philanthropy'. Visit www.caribbean-giving.com to learn more. Insights from these philanthropic leaders indicate there is a new way to think about giving in Barbados, that strengthens its social infrastructure.

The philanthropic community in Barbados is diverse. It includes nationals who have created or inherited their wealth in the region, but is enriched by people from the diaspora, and by non-nationals who have chosen to make the Caribbean home. In my study, non-nationals reported that their involvement in charitable activities helped to open doors to new social connections and networks, which helped them get settled and better understand their new community. Generous people in the region demonstrate high levels of volunteerism and, importantly, 60% of these philanthropists plan to give more over the next 3 years.

My research found that much of this giving is directed to immediate and pressing needs spread across education, health, and poverty relief. This includes the provision of school supplies, food hampers, emergency supports, and the myriad impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Responding to the needs of others is a deeply human impulse and is especially poignant on a small island. We can also think about giving to initiatives that address the root causes of critical issues and making philanthropic investments that build resilience and capacity within community organizations for the long term. Some have coined this a move from charity to change.

Social infrastructure broadly refers to a community's systems, relationships, and structures, which include social, economic, environmental, and cultural assets. Barbados has demonstrated to be a vibrant place for economic investment – philanthropic investment is also necessary.

Charities and non-profits are under-

resourced assets in Barbados. They tend to be volunteer-run or otherwise have limited staffing and precarious project-based budgets, which can limit the scale and results of their work. Philanthropic giving to support paid professional leadership and core operational capacity can be both stabilizing and transformational, and my research found that more of this type of giving is needed. ASPIRE Barbados was established to help build the capacity of local organizations, to enhance their impact but also their ability to attract donors who then give with greater confidence.

Investing in social infrastructure is also about collaboration, with a shared future vision. Canadian residents in Barbados, Virginia Shaw Hutchinson and Les Hutchinson, became aware of gaps in the provision of health care to children on the island. In response, they established The Shaw Centre for Paediatric Excellence, to advance paediatric training, research, and policy advocacy. It represents a partnership between the LesLois Shaw Foundation, the Government of Barbados, the Centre for Global Child Health at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, the SickKids Foundation, the University of the West Indies and the Barbados Community College. Their gift bridges sectors and is helping to solve systemic challenges for long-term impact.

There is a new way to think about philanthropic giving in Barbados. We can invest in its social infrastructure and create a stronger community, together.

To learn more about affluent giving in the Caribbean, visit www.caribbean-giving.org.

A Checklist for Giving Well in Barbados

Barbados is a beautiful and vibrant country that benefits from the generous giving of those who care about the island - helping to bridge social gaps, inspire creativity and learning, safeguard the natural world, and create a more resilient society. If Barbados is your new home, or home-away-from-home, here is a checklist to help you give with purpose and impact:

Decide what and who you will give to

What issues are important to you and reflect your values? Are there new causes distinct to Barbados that resonate with you, such as a newfound love for the sea? Take time to research organizations, get recommendations from local colleagues and advisors, and meet with community leaders to better understand the needs and solutions. Involve your family - it's a great way to better understand your second or adopted home. Or make a donation to the Barbados Community Foundation, or established service clubs that regularly undertake community development initiatives. Barbados also has a generous culture of helping individuals and families in need directly, which you may be invited to support.

Consider what you will give

Set a budget for your annual giving on the island, then decide how you wish to allocate it between organizations or areas of interest. Consider making fewer but larger gifts to focus your impact. In addition to financial donations, are there other ways you can support the issues you care about? Can you share your expertise, harness your network, host an event, or serve on a non-profit board? Considering your time, talent, treasure, and ties, helps you leverage more of your assets for good.

Determine how you will give

In Barbados, most donations are given by cheque or bank account transfer, with larger gifts made by wire transfer. Giving by credit card is not widely available. If you are giving from income or charitable assets on the island, you can easily give directly to any organization. Similar to other countries, only gifts to registered charities are eligible for charitable tax incentives in Barbados, but the incentives vary depending on the charity and whether it is a personal or corporate donation. Please seek professional advice for updated information about Charitable Tax Incentives for Giving in Barbados.

If you want to make donations from income or assets held abroad (including those in a private foundation or donor advised fund) that are allowable or eligible for charitable tax incentives in

that jurisdiction, seek professional counsel on the best approach. This may include giving to entities that also hold registered charity status in your home jurisdiction or have international affiliates (e.g. The Salvation Army or Red Cross) or giving to local organizations through reputable charity intermediaries such as Charities Aid Foundation or The King Baudouin Foundation.

Be an engaged partner

Get to know your charitable partners on the island, commit to their success, and help them solve problems. And let them know what you need in terms of accountability and updates on their work. Giving and delving into the local community is a wonderful way to deepen your connection to the island and its people and make your life richer too.

Students of The Schoolhouse for Special Needs celebrate Independence Day

