

HOW TO MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF YOUR SERVICE

Have you ever reflected after a service project and wondered how you can provide service to your community in a way that creates longer-lasting and more impactful change?

Consider the following metaphor: *Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day; teach a person to fish and you feed them for a lifetime.* You can and should apply this concept to that which you do with your CKI club!

Sustainable service projects empower people, can be engaged with on a recurring basis, and have a continued impact long after a member's direct involvement. This is possible when you address the roots of an issue, which are deeper than what immediately meets the eye.

Consider the following example: Food insecurity is a symptom of poverty. Its roots include a lack of education, high prices of food, unemployment, etc. It is common to give someone a sandwich, but this is a temporary bandage that does not address the deeper roots. This person would be better served in the long-term if your club partnered with a local homeless shelter to start and tend to a produce garden; this person would then have to pay less for food.

When planning sustainable projects, ask yourself the following:

1. What is an issue facing my community?
2. What is at the root of the issue?
3. How can that root be addressed?
4. How does my club feel about this? (Teamwork is key!)
5. Who can we partner within the community?
6. Is funding necessary? Where will that come from?

Additional examples of sustainable projects include tutoring programs for children, renovating schools, or even a recycling awareness campaign. You don't have to create a project from the ground-up, either; there are existing groups in your community who already work to address the root cause(s) of an issue you've identified, and you just need to reach out and see if they could use the volunteer-power of your club members.

It is vital to remember that you cannot plan or implement a project like this alone. It must be informed by members of the local community and be prioritizing their needs, which should be identified through research and by utilizing the "CKI Community Analysis." Your project must also be aligned with and informed by the interests of your club members. They will be engaging with this project for— hopefully— years to come! Tasks to carry out this project can be delegated among club members in a way that creates opportunities for everyone to grow as servant leaders.

There are many people outside of the Kiwanis Family who would be thrilled to sponsor the plans of a CKI club, financially and otherwise. A stable community partnership can also guarantee the longevity of your project; you just need to look for them! Contact community establishments— from local nonprofits to related government agencies— and ask for their support to make your club's project a reality.





A sustainable project can also become your club's Signature Project, and an effective marketing tool to grow your club. Does your club have a Signature Project? Something that you are known on campus for doing? When a prospective member asks about the kind of service you do, you have this recurring and meaningful project ready to highlight.

All projects that your club executes will not be sustainable in nature; when operating with a limited capacity, after all, giving a person a fish is better than letting them starve. The intention behind this guide is to serve as a tool to begin developing your capacity for long-term community development, and to that end you are encouraged to serve your community while elevating your consciousness surrounding *how* you do it.

