



VOLUNTEERS
build-educate-change

Traveling Volunteer Information

Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity and is intended to promote goodness or improve human quality of life. In return, this activity can produce a feeling of self-worth and respect. There is no financial gain involved for the individual. Volunteering is also renowned for skill development, socialization, and fun. Volunteering may have positive benefits for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served.

-Wikipedia.com

Expectations of Volunteers

Before the project: Put your team first. We want to be your friend! Sign up for Facebook and join your team page. We need you to; reply promptly to emails, respect deadlines, turn in documents in a timely fashion, and please do not make special requests for travel or accommodation. Make payments on time. Read the FAQ's page.

During the project: Put your team first. Understand once on the ground there are no timelines, the plan will change regularly. We need you to be flexible, be respectful, follow team leader instructions, work hard but don't over exert yourself. Communicate. Above all "*go with the flow*" this is the developing world folks get used to saying with a smile, "No Problem"...

After the project: Stay in touch! You're a veteran volunteer now and part of the BTCV family. Join or start a chapter in your town. Utilize social media sharing photos and stories. Read the e-newsletter and share your experience with others. Invite BTCV to speak in your community at schools, clubs, civic groups and churches. Doing this from home will spread our mission of improving education opportunities.

Volunteer Team



Your team will be a diverse mix of people ranging in age, background, career, education, geography and talents. Our volunteer age ranges have been from 13 to 85 years of age. Volunteers have traveled from multiple countries to participate on projects. One of the most important and rewarding aspects of volunteering on one of our teams is the lifelong friendships that we have seen develop among volunteers. You will see this first hand on your project as the veteran volunteers from past projects reunite for another great project.

Travel



Travel to our projects is **LONG!** Travel in project countries is often uncomfortable by western standards and rugged. Your team will travel to remote parts of the world that range from 16 hours to over 30 hours in travel alone. You will often cross multiple time zones. Modes of travel for our teams have included, planes, boats, buses, trucks beds, trains, tuk-tuk's, ox carts, motorcycles and even hiking. In travel on our projects you will likely sleep overnight in a transit station such as an airport or train depot. If difficult

travel is an issue for you please consult with BTCV prior to signing up with any project so that we can recommend the best project option for you.

Lodging



One of the most variable aspects of our projects is where we sleep, eat and shower. Teams have stayed on mats in mud huts with no electricity or plumbing, rustic jungle cabins, bush buildings, and rustic guest houses. We advise team members to bring a sheet and pillow case on most of our projects both for travel and lodging.

Bathrooms



Some lodging facilities have private bathrooms, some use communal bathrooms with stalls. Some facilities will have western toilets others will have Asian stand over toilets and some will only consist of a hole in the ground. Showers will be private but will not have hot water. We advise team members to bring a travel towel and toilet paper.

Food & Water



The food from project to project will vary greatly. Typically meals will have rice, beans, vegetables, fruit, and meat prepared in a local style. You will be provided with three meals per day. You will be given as much bottled water as you can drink daily. Because of a variable meal schedule plan to always have a snack with you like a granola bar. Our hosts will work hard to provide the best possible food they can but remember they don't always eat three times per day so the meal schedule is always flexible and we are always grateful and respectful. If you have dietary restrictions you must contact BTCV in advance of your project to address this. BTCV is not responsible for individual special meals so please plan accordingly. We are a family on site and eat family style as a group it's a wonderful time for building community. If you don't feel that you are getting enough calories daily by eating all of what is provided by our hosts tell your team leader. The food is the culture... soak it in and enjoy.

Work



You are signing up to volunteer as a general labor alongside paid local skilled trades. Jobs range from mixing concrete by hand with shovels, digging trenches, moving brick, unloading trucks, hammering, sawing, and various other tasks. We advise team members to begin exercising daily now in preparation for the physical tasks associated with your project. If you have medical issues that will prohibit your construction ability please first consult with your physician and then BTCV prior to signing up with any project. Volunteers will be assigned tasks daily by team leaders be prepared to follow instructions and stick with your task.

Community



A big part of going on a project is encouraging the community to utilize the education opportunities being implemented. This is done by developing relationships within the community and returning to our multi-phase projects over and over. Projects always have time for getting to know the community, learning, and of course some fun and games. To help develop community start thinking about your "Education Story" each of us has been impacted by education be ready to share your story on this trip.

Questions

If you have further questions please take time to first review the FAQ's page on our website, www.bethechangevolunteers.org. If you cannot find the answer to your question on the FAQs page please contact us at info@BTCV.us

From the DOC

Welcome, you are joining the ranks of veteran volunteers who have served all over the world from North America to the Pacific Islands, from the exotic nations of Asia to the warm heart of Africa, and deep in the Amazon jungle. Your project is education focused your mission is to share your "education story" with the community so that they will be inspired to learn. Our expectations for volunteers are high and we are confident that you will rise to the challenge of working in the developing world. Take time to prepare yourself mentally for what you will see and physically for the great work you are about to do. We thank you for your investment in this cause and look forward to hearing about the new chapter in your story.

Be The Change!

Grant Venable

Grant Venable
Director of Change