



MITRATAA FOUNDATION

A friendship that will last forever

Volunteer Program

Overview 2009



www.mitrataa.org



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Congratulations!

- You have taken the first step to what will be an amazing experience that also enhances the lives of others.
- This brochure contains some general information about the volunteering opportunities available with Mitrataa. As we tailor volunteer experiences to the individual and also to the particular needs of the Foundation in Nepal at the time, the information contained here is simply to provide an overview as well as an indication of some of the activities you may be involved with.



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Some of our projects in Nepal...

- Mitrataa has been working in Nepal since 2000 and during that time we have expanded from a child sponsorship program to conducting projects covering many aspects of education focused particularly on women and girls. Some of our projects include:
 - Teacher Training programs conducted through our Model School in Kathmandu
 - Daisy Chains literacy, business training and micro-finance for women from urban poor communities



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Some of our projects in Nepal..

- Child Care Centre in a village just outside the Kathmandu Valley
- IT Education project providing computers and training for government schools in poorer areas
- Dream Centres for children to attend after school to gain 'skills for learning and skills for life'
- Training courses for women working in journalism
- Nepal's first Pets as Therapy program



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What you will be doing

- You may have the opportunity of working in any of these projects or possibly even starting a new initiative. Your specific program will depend on many things including:
 - the length of time you can contribute to the program
 - your professional skills and experience (if any)
 - the needs of the various projects at the time
 - and most importantly, your passions and areas of particular interest!



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What you will be doing

- Volunteers are typically involved in the following types of activities:
 - teaching at our Model School (especially English)
 - teacher training workshops focused on learner centered methods of teaching
 - teaching at drop-in-centres for child domestic workers
 - working in our Dream Centres
 - working with local partners on administrative and/or marketing matters
 - visiting projects such as Daisy Chains and preparing summary reports for the Mitrataa website



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How it works



- The first thing you should do is get in touch with us and tell us a little about yourself and a rough idea of what you are hoping to achieve in undertaking a volunteer program. (We have an easy form to complete to help with this!)
- We will then work with you to come up with a program that is once rewarding for you and beneficial for the people of Nepal.



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Some things to note - time

- Minimum time for a volunteer program is generally 2 weeks and there is no maximum limit - the longer you can stay and share your skills and time the better!
- We feel that you should allow at least 2 weeks to enable you to gain a full experience and also to give you the chance to feel as though you have contributed significantly to the lives of those you are working with.
- Actual timing of the program can be very flexible and most volunteers usually incorporate their work with some of the many tourist activities for which Nepal is famous!



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Some things to note - cost

- Mitrataa is a fully non-profit organisation and as such we rely solely on donations and fundraising activities to carry out our work.
- There is significant planning on our part and also on the part of our partners in Nepal to ensure you have a successful volunteer experience. For this reason we do ask that you make a nominal contribution to the Foundation to help with our costs for delivering a volunteer program for you. The amount we generally request is AU\$500.00. This amount may vary depending on the type of program but the entire amount will be used for costs associated with your work in Nepal and will not be used for admin or other expenses in Australia. (NB. You will be responsible for all your own transport, accommodation and food costs.)
- We are happy to work with you on fundraising ideas to help with this cost.



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Tips when you are in Nepal

- The people and situations you will see are not exhibits, they are 'real life' so please treat them with the respect and dignity they deserve. In particular, take photos only when appropriate and when advised that it is ok eg. it is strictly forbidden to take photos of the children at most orphanages in Nepal unless you have been expressly permitted to do so.
- Because some of the things you will see and the stories you will hear are often tragic and heartbreaking, be kind to yourself and allow yourself time to absorb all that is around you. Please speak up if you feel uncomfortable in any situation or need any help at all in dealing with anything.
- Factors such as pollution, the heat, food quality and water quality combined with the emotional aspects of your visit mean that you will likely tire very easily. Be honest about this at all times and ask for a break, some water or anything else you might need. Don't 'struggle on' if you are not feeling well, it is not worth the risk.



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Tips when you are in Nepal (cont.)

- You may be asked for your email address from various Nepali people during your visit. We strongly advise against you giving anyone in Nepal your email address or any other contact information. If people would like to get in touch with you they can do so through the Foundation. This rule has unfortunately needed to be made to protect visitors to Nepal and our projects, and to also protect the people in Nepal. It is extremely important that you trust our intentions and respect our wishes in this regard.
- Consider the way you dress, particularly when visiting areas outside of Kathmandu. In particular, females should avoid exposing too much skin by wearing for example very low cut hipster jeans with tops that expose the mid-riff. If in doubt, some modesty is the best policy!
- Lastly and most importantly, remember that you are here to have a fantastic experience. So make the most of each day in order that you go home with lifelong and life changing memories. You will get as much out of the experience as you put into it!



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What next?

- Contact us at any of the following email addresses:
 - adam@mitrataa.org
 - bec@mitrataa.org
 - info@mitrataa.org
- Together we will start planning an experience that will change your life forever!



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