

FACE Nepal Volunteer Code of Conduct

Last Update: 28 November 2014

Objective

- This document sets out the responsibilities of volunteers, to ensure they get their most out of their time in Nepal while maximizing their respect amongst the local community.
- It should be read in conjunction with the FACE Nepal Volunteer Handbook, which should be provided to new volunteers in their first few days.

Health and Safety

- Volunteers will need to be responsible for their own safety and take common sense precautions in this developing country.
- In their first few weeks, volunteers should use bottled water, or even better, iodine tablets or other purifying methods. After a few weeks, volunteers may want to drink the local water straight from the pump, but should build up their intake gradually to avoid any stomach troubles.
- Exercise common sense when eating food. Food prepared by your host family is freshly cooked, but be careful when eating food elsewhere, especially meats and fish, food exposed to flies, and street ice creams and lassis.
- Air Pollution can be a problem in the cities, and volunteers should obtain face masks if they will be spending a lot of time in them.
- While the Patihani area is incredibly safe compared to most places in the world, volunteers should still use the same common sense they use at home. Volunteers should not go out alone after dark, and if doing so should always let someone know where they are going.
- Do not go wandering through the rice fields or off the pathways without a local with you. Aside from the very good chance of getting lost, Nepal is a very bio-diverse country and you may run into some animals that you'd rather not run in to. Similar rules apply to bathing in the Rapti or other rivers - if there are no locals doing it- don't do it!
- When travelling in the rural areas, minimize your exposure to malaria by depriving mosquitoes of the opportunity to bite you. They are hungriest from dusk to dawn: during these times, wear repellent and/or long-sleeved clothes (watch out especially for ankles), and sleep under netting. If your host family have not provided you with a mosquito net then ask them for one and notify Shreeram immediately.

Dress

- Volunteers are expected to dress modestly. Full guidelines are given in the volunteer handbook.

Host Family and Mealtimes

- Many guidelines on this are given in the Volunteer Handbook.
- If you know you are going to miss a meal you must inform your host family as soon as possible. Otherwise, they will assume you are coming for meals and thus will prepare you food - which is then wasted when you don't turn up.
- If you are intending to stay away from home for a night, or are going out and will be home late, your host family should be informed as soon as possible. Nepali families will often stay up waiting for the last person to come home.
- You should not have other individuals (especially those of the opposite gender) in your bedroom after the host family have gone to bed, or after about 10pm in any instance. There are many bars and restaurants in the area which Shreeram or other volunteers will show you.
- If you develop a relationship with a Nepali or other volunteer, it is completely culturally unacceptable to have this person round to your room to stay the night, or to go to their house to stay the night. Hotel rooms are available in Ghatgain if you need privacy.
- Guidance on alcohol consumption can be found in the volunteer handbook.

Cultural approaches to planning and time

- Be aware that Nepali approaches to planning tend to be more last-minute and informal than many Western cultures.
Volunteers should approach this with flexibility and patience, and be aware that things do not always work or start on time.
- If a volunteer finds that their program is not starting as quickly as they would like or if there are any issues with their placement programme they must contact Ashok and or Shreeram. Occasionally there are festivals (in particular the long and important festivals of Dashain and Tihar) which interrupt volunteer programmes. Host families will involve volunteers in the traditions of these festivals and they are wonderful cultural experiences. However, volunteers may negotiate time off to explore Nepal during this time or contact Ashok and or Shreeram to arrange participation in another project.
If local help/guidance is unsatisfactory volunteers should contact members of the International Board (details below).

Free Time

- Guidelines about free time are given in the Volunteer Handbook

- You must inform your host family, a member of the advisory board, and the children/adults at your placement location when you will be away from the village and not participating in classes/other parts of your program.
- While undertaking language classes, you must also inform the teacher if you are to miss a class.
- If you don't have contact details for these people, ask Shreeram or Ashok and they will inform the appropriate people.
- While volunteers are encouraged to make the most of seeing Nepal, they should remember that during the time they have committed to FACENepal their first obligation is to volunteer and they should balance their volunteering and leisure time accordingly.

Code of Conduct Breaches

- If the Advisory Board believes that a volunteer is not meeting the expectations outlined in this Code of Conduct and the volunteer handbook, they will provide the volunteer with a written warning.
- If, after this, the volunteer continues to breach the Code of Conduct, then they will be asked to leave FACENepal, and the Advisory Board will decide whether or not any of their program fee will be refunded.
- If the volunteer believes that they are being unfairly treated, or that any member of the Advisory Board, host family, or FACENepal staff is not fulfilling their responsibilities, they should contact the International Board immediately.

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