



Pre-Registration Booklet

2011-12



World's most affordable volunteer program fee

“ 9 Years of Volunteer Abroad Experience
Over 4500 Happy Volunteer ”

RCDP International Volunteer Program

- Fees as low as \$80 per week.
- Your money directly goes to orphanages, local projects, and host families.
- RCDP has turned out 4,500 satisfied volunteers since 1998.
- Thanks in part to the connectivity and communications provided by the Internet, RCDP has gone global, acquiring partners with BTCV (UK), AID Camps (UK) and Yeti (US).
- We have worked with many US- and UK-based volunteer organizations.



Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for inquiring about an RCDP volunteer program in Ghana. We have developed this pre-registration booklet to provide you more information about RCDP and its volunteer programs in Ghana. The booklet also gives some tips to make your volunteer experience rewarding and memorable.

Ghana is a great place for volunteering and travel. Ghana is one of the most successful democracies in Africa and has press freedom and well educated citizens. Ghanaians are also known for their hospitality and visitors to their land are welcomed with open arms and treated as a family member. Our volunteers have described the Ghana volunteer experience as incredible, amazing, and life changing. It is our sincere hope that you too will enjoy our volunteer program in Ghana.

Many volunteer organizations run programs in Ghana. But, RCDP program is completely different than its competitors in many aspects, mostly importantly in terms of our low program fee, its direct allocation to places most in need of help, and program quality. We would appreciate it if you could find time and go over the information in this booklet. If you have any questions after doing so, please feel free to contact us.

Please remember that this booklet is only the start of the wonderful support you'll receive from RCDP. If you decide to join RCDP, we will guide you every step of the way to make sure that your volunteer is experience meaningful, rewarding and has a positive impact where needed in Ghana.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Wishing you a great day,

RCDP International Volunteer Program

GPO Box: 8957, Tasindole Marg -95/48

Kalanki- 14, Katmandu, Nepal

Nepal Tel: +977-14-278305

International: +1-510-542-8201

Email: info@rcdpnepal.org or info@rcdpvolunteers.org

Web: <http://www.rcdpnepal.org> or <http://www.rcdpinternationalvolunteer.org>

Legitimacy of RCDP and Why you should join an RCDP volunteer program



I found out about RCDP on the Internet. How do I know that RCDP is a legitimate organization?

Brief Internet research will confirm the legitimacy of our program. We are registered with the government of Nepal's Social Welfare Council. RCDP has been running volunteer program since 1998. Since then, we have served nearly 4,000 volunteers. You can find hundreds testimonies, photos, and blogs of our past volunteers at http://rcdpnepal.org/about_rcdp/testimonies_nepal.php RCDP has been working with many leading UK- and US-based volunteer organizations. Some of our partners include: Experiment in International Living, US (experiment.org) the British Trust for Nature Conservation, UK (btcv.org.uk) AIDS Camp International, UK (aidcamps.org), Youth Enhancement and Training Initiative, US. If you are still not convinced we would be glad to give you the email addresses of at least 10 volunteers who have joined our program recently.

Why isn't RCDP based in a developed country like the US, UK, Australia or New Zealand?

Yes, our main office is based in Kathmandu, Nepal. But many UK- and US-based organizations run programs through local organization like us in many countries. Just being in the US, the UK, New Zealand, or any developed countries does not make any organization genuine. As we are increasingly in the Internet Age, why can't an organization run a program just as effectively from New Zealand as in Kathmandu?

There are hundreds of volunteer organizations every where. Why should I join an RCDP volunteer program?

In RCDP we aim to offer all kinds of volunteering opportunities to all kinds of volunteers. We don't want affordability to hinder anyone's willingness of serve humanity. Therefore, our volunteer programs are humanitarian missions. We do not run our volunteer programs to make profit or earn money. We do not get external funding. Our program fees are the world's most affordable, starting at fees as low as \$250 per week. We challenge you to find any organization that can beat our program fees.



I found the orphanage to be run very well and the kids well taken care of. I had an excellent time, working with the children on their homework and playing with them after school. I chose orphanage project because I have never been around children before and it was a great personal challenge to work with 28 kids. Thank you so much for everything.

- Stacy Schrader, USA

Legitimacy of RCDP and Why you should join an RCDP volunteer program



1. You directly pay your host families and projects

Except in the Nepal office, where we collect program fees and allocate funding to host families, projects, and our ongoing community projects (two orphanages), you pay all of your money directly to host families and projects. In some countries, you pay our coordinators, who will arrange room and food. Otherwise you directly pay your host families and projects, which makes sure that your money does not go to middlemen or as a profit for company but go directly to people who deserve it. We challenge you to find any other organization that runs program this way.

2. Our services

RCDP feels proud of its efficient communication and prompt delivery of services. RCDP guarantees an efficient and accurate reply to your email within 48 hours. If you send your telephone number, we guarantee that you will be called within 48 hours. From our many years of experience, we have learned the importance of quick communication. Please drop us one email and see how efficient we are!



RCDP have helped in many ways to ease the problems or difficulties that volunteers face. All in all, I had a wonderful time; I have learnt a lot and hope that students and teachers at my school have learnt some worthwhile things from me too.

- Emily Thorn, England

3. Program quality

- Do you believe that by just charging you \$2,000 for two weeks of volunteer program, good-quality services are guaranteed?
- Do you believe that volunteer fees are very high for many US and UK volunteering organizations because of expenses such as salaries, or profiteering?
- Do you believe that many UK- or US-based organizations that run their program through local partners (like RCDP) keep a large chunk of your fee as profit?
- What would you feel when you meet many volunteers from leading UK, US, Australia, New Zealand organizations working in the same orphanages or teaching projects, and living in the same host families, basically getting the same shelter and food, but paying nearly 1,000% more in program fees?

You may associate low program fees with low program quality. This should not be done. Since 1998, we have been running extremely affordable, safe, and yet high-quality programs serving nearly 4,000 volunteers. Please read our testimonies or please ask us for the references of volunteers who have joined our program recently and find the quality of our program. As a humanitarian organization, we aim to grow and serve humanity. This is only possible if we win your trust. Therefore, we want to provide you with the best volunteer experience with the cheapest price possible. When you land in developing countries and when you find everything so cheap, you might wonder where all of your program fee is being spent. With RCDP, payments are directly made to families, to get the best experience and best value for your money.



4. Experienced staff ers/host families and screened projects

When we started our volunteer program in 1998, nearly 100 enthusiastic volunteers from different parts of the world joined the RCDP-Nepal program. In the first year, we understood the importance of having an organized program, dedicated service, meaningful projects, and concern for safety. Ever since then, RCDP has been a respected and recognized name in the field of volunteering. We are committed to maintaining our reputation.

When we develop a new program in a new country, we do not just do it by email correspondence. We travel each country and spend at least one month time recruiting local staffers, visiting many host families and projects. We select a few host families and projects which have worked with or served the volunteers from UK- and US-based organizations. This way, we ensure the safety and quality of the program. RCDP feels proud of our staffers and host families. All of them are socially respected, experienced or worked with international volunteers, and believe in making your volunteer experience wonderful.

5. Flexibility—customized projects

We understand that every volunteer has different needs and expectations. Therefore, in each location, we have developed partnerships with different kind of local projects like orphanages, schools, healthcare centers, HIV/AIDS programs, women's empowerment projects and NGOs working in different areas. Therefore, we can tailor your need and meet your expectations.

We know that some volunteers want to work many hours while some want to travel more. Some enjoy rural areas and some need cities. Some volunteers want to stay in host family for cultural experience while some prefer living with other volunteers in a hostel. Therefore, before assigning any project or host family we carefully read your application, try to understand your needs and expectations, and match the best placement for you.

6. Ongoing Support

From the day we receive your email, we take care of you. We work hard to make sure that you are getting all support. Our support structure is varied.

- When we get your email, we reply within 48 hours
- When we get your telephone number, we call you within 48 hours
- Before you apply, we send you a pre-registration package
- When we get your application, we guarantee placement within four weeks
- Before your departure, our country coordinator will email or call you to answer last-minute questions
- Before your departure, you get a comprehensive booklet
- Our coordinator and staffers come to welcome and pick you up at the airport
- Our coordinator introduces you to the projects and host family, and gives a short orientation about country
- Our coordinator meets or calls you every two week to find how things going
- If you need any help our group coordinators are always there for you



7. Safety first

Like your parents, we are concerned about your safety. Safety is the first priority of RCDP volunteer programs. We ensure your safety in many ways.

- Our pre-departure booklet explains many safety issues
- RCDP places you in trustworthy, screened projects where volunteers from other organizations work
- We screen host families carefully and place you with a host family with high social status and previous experience with volunteers
- Our country coordinator will visit or call you regularly
- We train our staffers, host families, and project workers about the importance of safety
- Our offices are available 24/7 for you
- If you prefer, we guarantee that you will live and work with other volunteers

8. A sense of family and friendship

RCDP volunteer programs are humanitarian missions. The RCDP founder, staffers, host families, project workers and volunteers are all considered to be a family working for the noble cause of serving humanity. Many host families and volunteers develop strong ties of friendship. We recently launched a Facebook website where you can see our growing family. It is our sincere hope that our program will develop a friendship between you and RCDP and help us to grow and better serve communities in future.



I would recommend RCDP for other volunteers looking for a rewarding volunteering experience. My advice would be to make sure you can stay long enough- I have only been here two weeks and if I could do things over again I would stay for two months or longer. There is so much to learn, see and do.

- Maddy Macdonald, USA

9. Our Experience

RCDP has been running its volunteer abroad program since 1998. So far we have successfully placed more than 4,000 volunteers. Nearly 99% of our volunteers were very happy—please ask us for the references of the past volunteers. We offer a thorough, well-rounded, and successful volunteer program which often exceeds the expectations of participants. RCDP volunteer programs are not just a simple volunteer placement services. We aim to offer meaningful abroad programs which include language courses, cultural immersion, volunteer opportunities and amazing travel experience, ensuring that volunteers do not miss out on a single lifelong memory. RCDP programs consist of language and cultural immersion programs, volunteer service projects, and excursions.



Program Overview



Nested on the Gulf of Guinea in the heart of the West Coast of Africa, Ghana is a land with miles and miles of sun-dappled beaches. It is the home of Ashanti, and the land of gold. With its beautiful landscape, lush green palm trees, and many ethno-linguistic groups, Ghana offers some of the best travel experiences of Africa. Our programs in Ghana offer volunteers the opportunity to explore the great land of Ghana while working for Ghanaian children and people through projects focused on teaching, orphanage help, health issues, and other community developments. We invite you to join RCDP volunteer program in Ghana.

Volunteer Locations

All the volunteer placements are in Kasoa which is about an hour and half drive from the capital, Accra.

Start and Duration of Programs

All the programs start every 2nd and 4th Monday of each month. Volunteers can choose to volunteer for 1 to 12 weeks.



I volunteer at an orphanage and it was really a very nice experience. The children were great and I was made to feel at home there. I also felt I was able to make a difference in their lives even if it was only for a short period of time.

- Darryl Lee, USA

Skill and Qualification Requirements

No specific skills and qualifications are required. But volunteers must be 18 or above and should have love and passion for serving poor kids, plus respect the local culture and religion. Volunteers should also be flexible, self-motivated with open mind to learn and serve to the people of new culture and religion. Any volunteer interested in joining the healthcare program needs to submit certification for being a medical student, nurse, doctor, or other medical-field professional. Volunteers without professional medical credentials are not allowed to work in this program because of risks involved.



Work in an Orphanage



Because of poverty, every year thousands of young Ghanaians become orphaned, homeless and have to spend their lives on the street. As of result, the government is unable to provide enough support to help them. RCDP has been collaborating with local orphanages that are operating to take care for these children and providing volunteer to those organizations to help the poor orphaned kids in Ghana.

As a volunteer in an orphanage, volunteers will teach English and other subjects, improve the hygiene of the children by making sure they eat, sleep and wash properly, you'll also play games with them. The staff of the orphanage will help you along and give you valuable insight into your work. You can also help with kitchen work, administrative work, and many of our past volunteers have been involved in fundraising efforts to improve the financial situation of the orphanage. Usually you work 4 to 5 hours per day.

Teaching English

Though English is the official language of Ghana, it's not the first language of many Ghanaians. They only learn English in schools. Due to the lack of skilled and experienced English teachers to groom the children, the young Ghanaians often become incapable of developing the skills required to secure places in good universities. RCDP has teamed up with some schools there in Ghana to help the young Ghanaians providing volunteers in their schools.

You will mostly work as regular English teacher. You can start teaching straight away if you are confident of teaching, or work as an assistant teacher at first and start on your own when you've gained the necessary confidence. You'll mostly follow the official curriculum; however, you can bring in your teaching methods also. You're also encouraged to hold debates and discussions also as this can increase children's ability to comprehend English better.



The staffs in the school were equally kind and arranged activities for entertainment outside school hours. I observed teachers the first day and then taught alone. Before arriving I feared that my presence would be unnecessary in the school; I might be assisting only. I was glad to see however that I was needed while I was there.

- Aisling Marron, Ireland



Health or Medical Project



In many rural places, Ghanaian people die of curable diseases because of the lack of awareness and services and also the number of patients that visit the hospitals and clinic daily as there is shortage of medically trained staff. Join RCDP's healthcare project in Ghana, assist the local hospitals and clinics and treat ordinary Ghanaians.

RCDP-Ghana has teamed up with local healthcare providers and offers volunteers with medical background to help the Ghanaian people.

As a volunteer in a healthcare project, you will assist local doctors and medical staffers in local hospitals or clinics. You may not be involved in a major surgical works but you will involve in treating the patients, applying bandages, checking blood pressure, go on a round with the local doctors, measuring temperatures, etc.

Any volunteer interested in joining healthcare program in Ghana needs certification for being a medical student, nurse, doctor or other medical-field professional. Volunteers without professional medical credentials are not allowed to work in this program because of risks involved.

HIV/AIDS Project



Because of unawareness, HIV/AIDS has become the most devastating problem in Ghana. Each year, thousands of Ghanaians succumb to HIV/AIDS and many innocent people contract the disease daily. RCDP has collaborated with local initiatives to provide care to the victims and spread awareness. Volunteer now in our HIV/AIDS Education project now will be part of this team to educate people against HIV/AIDS.

As a volunteer in HIV/AIDS project, you will work in health clinics and with social welfare organizations. You will participate in their endeavor to educate the public about this deadly disease. You can also assist in the development of educational program, training and seminars for groups like health professionals, students and sex trade workers. Besides this, you can help in screening and report writing too.



Accommodation

Depending upon the project locations, RCDP Ghana offers two types of accommodation: host family and project hostel. The volunteers who work in an orphanage mostly live in the project hostel. Wherever you stay, we assure you clean, simple and safe accommodation. Mostly volunteers will share a room with a fellow volunteer of the same sex. Living is comfortable and all accommodations have electricity and running water. While bedding is provided, we recommend you to bring a sleeping bag, a pillowcase and a bed sheet for those who want to go on a safari.

Food

Whether you stay in a host family or a project hostel, we provide you three local meals a day. The majority of meals consist of thick, well-seasoned stews, usually accompanied by such staple foods as rice or boiled yams.

Language Orientation and Cultural Immersion

RCDP Ghana also offers the optional one-week language and culture program that gives an opportunity to learn more about life in Ghana. This language and culture program is designed for volunteers who want to immerse themselves with their project and complete the work successfully. Through this program, volunteers will learn about Ghana by familiarizing themselves with the language, culture, and heritage of the land. You'll also go sightseeing in Kasoa.



“My host family is lovely. It was an interesting experience to stay in a real home in a host country, seeing how everything works, sitting with the family and joining in the meal, talking and laughing. The experience allows total immersion in to daily life. The food was good and serving generous. My accommodation was really good-comfortable, private and everything I required there. The family was really lovely and made me feel at home.”

- Bronte Prosser



Program Fees – the world’s most affordable

Every year hundreds of volunteers arrive in Ghana to volunteer from UK- and US-based organizations and end up paying up to \$2,500 to volunteer for 2 weeks. Unfortunately, only a small portion of that money actually goes to host projects and host families. The local host projects (orphanages, school, and local NGOs) in Ghana are poor and need external support to run their programs. In our program, you will pay your fee directly to host families and projects up on arrival in Ghana. The program fee is divided into a registration fee (\$259) and a weekly fee.

You will pay your weekly fee directly to the project once you arrive in Ghana, so that you can directly see your money benefiting the project. Please find below the breakdown of costs in a weekly basis:

Proposed Itinerary

Day 1 : Welcome at RCDP-Ghana office, orientation on general issues, and discussion on the week’s events.

Day 2 : Language classes start with greetings and most important everyday phrases and words

Day 3 : Language classes continues

Day 4 : Kasoa Sightseeing

Day 5 : Language classes continue

Day 6 : Language classes continue

Day 7 : Language classes; review and evaluation

1wk	2wk	3wk	4wk	5wk	6wk	7wk	8wk	9wk	10wk	11wk	12wk
\$80	\$160	\$240	\$320	\$400	\$480	\$560	\$640	\$720	\$800	\$880	\$960

* *Additional Fee: airport pickup and transfer to the project or host family: \$75*

* *Optional Language and Culture Orientation: \$250*

What the program fee covers

- Accommodation and food (3 meals a day)
- Support from local staffers
- Orientation
- Customized volunteer placement
- Regular visit or call (1-2 week intervals)

What the program fee does not cover

- Airfare, visa and visa extensions
- Daily transportation (between project and host family, if required)
- Return/transfer to airport, airport taxes
- Any personal expenses
- Mineral water and soft drinks
- Gifts to project staffs and host family
- Laundry, telephone, immunizations



Visas

All volunteers will work on a tourist visa in Ghana. Although you can get a tourist visa upon arriving at the airport in Accra, RCDP suggests all volunteers to apply for a tourist visa at a Ghanaian embassy or consulate. It is your responsibility to arrange your visa and the flight. Please contact us, if you need any further information on getting the visa and you can also find more information in the pre-departure guidebook.

Vaccinations

We suggest vaccinations against public health threats and other communicable diseases. Please refer to CDC website:

wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/Ghana.aspx

Following vaccinations are recommended:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Meningitis
- Yellow Fever (Required)
- Japanese Encephalitis
- Rabies
- Typhoid
- Malaria
- Polio

Safety

The safety of our volunteers is our first priority. There are many layers of support for you in Ghana. You will get support from the country coordinator, project directors/staff, the host family, your embassy, and our Ghana office. However, your main support comes from our in-country coordinator. Our in-country coordinator is a full time position specially created to support and help our volunteers (at any point for any reason).

In Ghana, we work with terrific country coordinators. They are mature, educated, socially respected, and having long history of working with international volunteers.

Communication:

There are plenty of Internet centers in Accra from where you can email or phone your friends and family. You will be able to easily send and receive emails and call internationally. You can also use a mobile phone. If you bring a mobile phone that is SIM card compatible you can get a SIM card and Ghanaian mobile number for approximately \$30 which is great for keeping in touch with other volunteers and also home. You will be guided on this during orientation.





3-Step Application Process:

If you want to volunteer with RCDP International and gain incredible experience of helping grassroots communities thrive, please apply online at www.rcdpinternationalvolunteer.org/apply.php

Please make sure you know which program you are volunteering and how long you want to volunteer before filling up the form. For details, please visit www.rcdpinternational.org

First Step:

Please submit your application using on line application system. A \$50 refundable application fee is needed to apply.

Second Step:

Once we receive \$50, we will immediately forward your application to country coordinator for processing. Our coordinator will visit the project and confirm the placement for you. We will also make necessary arrangements for rooms/foods. Once everything is confirmed and arranged, we will send you a confirmation letter and placement sheet through an email. This process may take up to 2 -4 weeks. Once you receive the confirmation letter, you can start to prepare for the trip as it means you have been accepted in our program. Your preparation includes vaccination, visa, ticket, collecting information about Ghana etc.

Three Step:

Once you confirm your flight itinerary, you will pass the information to us. When you arrive at the airport, one of our staffs will be waiting for you. You will pay the weekly project fee directly in the orphanage in the first day. Then start your project without any worries as we will take care of your every need during your stay.



If you have any questions, please email us at info@rcdpvolunteers.org
RCDP-International Office