



# WORKCAMP INFOSHEET

Welcome to Volunteers For Peace Vietnam (VPV)!

<p><b>BẢN ĐỒ ĐƯỜNG ĐI ĐẾN PEACE HOUSE</b> <b>MAP TO GET TO PEACE HOUSE</b></p> <p><b>Meeting Point:</b> Peace House ■ inside COMA 6 Building Tây Mỗ Commune – Tu Liem District – Hà Nội. Telephone: +84 43 7652719 Feel free to contact us if you need help. Mr Hoang: +84 989898896</p> <p><b>FOR TAXI DRIVER / DÀNH CHO LÁI XE TAXI:</b></p> <p>Nhà Peace House nằm trong Trụ sở Công ty COMA 6 Trên đường 70, cách ngã tư Tây Mỗ khoảng 800m Bên tay phải theo hướng đi về Văn Canh / Nhôn.</p> <p><i>Đây là tình nguyện viên nước ngoài sang làm từ thiện. Xin vui lòng giúp đỡ. Cảm ơn!</i> <i>This is an international volunteer coming for the good. Please help. Thank you!</i></p>		<p>Project: Ha Cau Orphanage Camp Code: VPV23 - 10 Time: 02/08 - 14/08/2010 Meeting point: 10:15AM at Peace House (see the map). If you arrive late or have problems on your journey you should contact Mr. Huan: +84 1693.591.753 Mr. Khiem: +84 915 002.027 If you know you will arrive late please let VPV know in advance. Departure: 14/08/2010</p> <p>How to get to Peace House</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From the airport: Get a taxi to Peace House (COMA 6). It costs 15 - 20 USD (Don't pay highway tax if the driver asks you to do so. It is included in the price)</li> <li>2. You can also take a public bus (yellow bus Number 07 at the far right corner of the parking area). It costs 5.000 VND (0.3 USD) and then take a taxi from the bus station in Hanoi to Peace House. This costs 10 USD.</li> <li>3. If you are in Hanoi already, take a taxi (about 10-12USD) or xe-om (motorbike taxi - about 4USD).</li> <li>4. If you need us to arrange a pick up, please send us details of your flight by email a few days in advance and pay for the taxi.</li> </ol>
<p>Volunteers</p>		<p>10 volunteers</p>
<p>Language:</p>		<p>English</p>

## About the project:

1. Ha Cau Orphanage is a small orphanage which accommodates 60 orphans from former province of Ha Tay. The orphanage was founded in 1997 with the support of Asia-Euro charity foundation and group of French benefactors. The age of children ranges from 4 to 18 years old. The centre pays for their school, accommodation and food. After school time, children would help to make some kind of handicraft which helps to add up to the limited budget of the Orphanage.

There are some local group of volunteers coming over to help the children with their study. International volunteers were sent by VPV since 2007 to help kids improve their English learning.

The orphanage lacks a stable financial support that leads to the hardship of living condition of all the children. There are occasional individual sponsors and organization but those are not enough for the increasing expense of the orphanage. We are also writing some raising fund projects to support the orphanage in their time of difficulty.

Children all come from very poor background but they are smart and obedient. There are so many excellent students and many of kids of the centre graduated from Universities and live independently now. It is great to do something for the orphan on this special occasion. The "Tet" or new year holiday.

2. Vietnam Friendship Village finds itself 15kms away from downtown of Hanoi. This is a charity project run by international committee for Friendship village of Vietnam, a fund raised to help victims of chemical war in Vietnam .

Founded in 1998 by the idea of an American veteran, the village was opened for disabled children whose parents are the veterans infected with the Agent Orange, the toxic chemical used in American war.

Friendship Village is a 'campus' housing up to 120 children and 40 veterans. The children aged 0 to 18 suffering from mental or physical disabilities are helped in any of three ways, depending on the extent of their disability.



1. Rehabilitation: This consists of physical therapy, orthopaedic surgery (Galvanic electrolysis, ultrasound, laser acupuncture...), and backbone relaxation treatment and in providing for and assisting the children with the use of aid equipment.
2. Education / Vocational training: This consists of special education, integration education, vocational training such as sewing, flower making, embroidering and computer using.

3. Upbringing / Looking after: The children are well looked after by staffs that are disciplined and efficient. The job requires high level of responsibility and self discipline. The Centre receives financial mainly from International Committee for Friendship Village, the Government of Vietnam (recently) as well as NGO's and the occasional businessman. Though receiving assistance from various sources, there are still a constant need of help in infrastructure and finance.



## Accommodation:

Volunteers will stay in the centre, sharing the large room with the other volunteers.

There are mattress and but you need to bring your bed sheet and sleeping bag. A mosquito net is also essential.

The facilities are basic, but there will be a kitchen, a fridges and a TV for all volunteers.



Bathrooms with hot water and toilets are available. VPV arranges a cook to prepare meals for volunteers but the group need to help her in a rota. If you are vegetarian, please let us know in advance but anyway, don't expect many dishes except vegetable, tofu and eggs.

You could wash your clothes with your own detergent or use laundry service at Peace House.

### Work description:

The workcamp is just right before the most important festival in Vietnam. It is New Year holiday or "Tet" holiday. It would be compared with X-mas in the Western countries. It is officially three days but in reality, people would celebrate one week at least. This is the most wanted festival for kids as well. Tet is best occasion for new clothes, gifts, lucky money, and all sort of good food. The festival is for family reunion. People visit their relatives; go to pagodas together with family. Even people live abroad try to come home on this occasion.

Volunteers will together with staff make "Chung cake", square sticky rice cake which is believed the most typical and indispensable dish of this festival in Vietnam for children of the centre. If time is still available, we will help to decorate the rooms of kids to welcome a new year. This would be a lot of fun then.

Please bring some stationery or any materials that would be helpful for this if you can. Some renovation would be done by volunteers such as cleaning, clearing the site. So, you also need to bring working clothes, shoes, and gloves. We are going to make Chung cake for children in both Ha Cau orphanage and Friendship Village. We plan to do first week at Friendship Village and then Ha Cau in the second one. Friendship Village is 2kms from Peace House where the group is going to stay and Ha Cau is 7kms away. So, we just stay at the same place but work at two different locations.



At the same time, volunteers can work in the rehabilitation room where handicapped children come to do exercises and have physical therapy. There are nurses and people from family taking care and helping kids but the presence of volunteers always bring great enjoyment to them all. Imagine how boring it is to practise kind of same thing every day with the same equipments and same people. You may not have background and skills on physical therapy but you would bring smiles, encouragement to disadvantaged kids who are striving day by day for a better future.

The classrooms for special education such as retardation class, basic education for deaf and mute children, the vocational classes where children learn to sew, do embroideries, make flowers, learn to use computer... are open for your initiatives. Working with kids here requires a lot of creativity and we can't fix to do a certain thing for one group.

Again, be advice that it is hard to work with disabled children and you may not see the result in two week s but keep in mind that what we are doing has special impact on children and local staff. Our former volunteers often use pictures, balloons, drawing, clay, games, CD and music to teach dancing.



Finally, some of our volunteers did help children to take bath every day, feeding them at meal time. This would not be an easy thing to do but you are encouraged to challenge yourselves simply because it is a real experience working with the disadvantaged people. Our former volunteers assume that it was the most rewarding of all.

### Special days in workcamp

#### Vietnamese Day:

A glance at Vietnamese culture with local volunteers' performance music, fashion, games and dance, cultural talks, etc).



International Day: A chance for international volunteers to introduce about their culture. Please bring photos, pictures, traditional costumes, or anything to use for your presentation. If possible, international volunteers prepare typical dishes from their home countries (volunteers bring ingredients)

- Dinner with a local family - a chance for cultural learning through family setting - can be arranged but it should be confirmed from time to time.
- Weekend Excursion: A visit to a cultural or historical spot. This might be done with bicycles or buses.
- Farewell: There will be farewell with the local village and among workcamp group. Prepare any games or 'crazy' activities to make the farewell night memorable.
- Mid-term and Final Evaluation plus everyday feedback session where necessary.



## Free time & leisure:

Coming to Vietnam means that you are to experience a slow-paced life. We start working early in the morning but have very long break at lunch time. Here at the centre, children get up about 6:30, breakfast at 7:00 and be at the class at 8:00 (winter schedule). Lunch at 11:30, have a nap till 13:30 and start the afternoon at 14:00. Volunteer will follow this schedule. Please, prepare yourself for this hard timetable.

Free time at lunch break, the evenings and weekends should be used for leisure activities within the group or with children. It can be used to build up a strong relation with the other volunteers and then again with the local people. Please bring ideas for games and entertainment! The project site is a remote area without many choices for leisure but the group would together go to downtown in the evenings or just visit the countryside around. Host of places for visiting such as silk village, flower village, ceramic village which are not too far way. There are some local pub with lots of special (weird though) drink such as snake wine, gecko wine, bee, scorpion and all sort off animal would be with rice wine. You could hang around in your free time to a local market nearby, try to bargain as a local. Don't be offended if they just stare at you on the street or at the local market. Many of them have never seen a foreigner in their life. Some even touch you arm if you are the white.

Shops and small stores that sell some essentials open all day long. Volunteers can have soft drink from there but be aware of using ice because your stomach may not be compatible to the water outside. We have internet at Peace House but in case it is not working, the internet cafes are in walking distance. The nearest banks, post offices, supermarkets, pharmacies located are about 6kms away as said. But you should not worry about it. There is a small post office where you can call home and our staff who travel to and fro town to work daily at the centre would help to send your post card in town.

Our Volunteers often travel around to Hanoi at the weekend or together go to Halong Bay. There is a national park in the area and lots of natural attractions which are still not well-known as tourist places but worth visiting if you wish to admire the undisturbed nature . You could easily go to the other popular places around such as Mai Chau, Perfume pagoda, Hoa Lu-Tam Coc or even go to Sapa within the weekend.

VPV has a small social budget for group which the leader could use to organise some group activities. During the weekend, If volunteer stay at the weekend, we provide food but sometimes, volunteers cook themselves because our cook need to have days off also.

Important! Leisure time spent with the other volunteers is central to the international volunteer experience. Therefore, volunteers are expected to participate in the group based leisure activities and are requested not to arrange personal trips away from the project at weekends or during the evenings.



### What to bring:

- Sleeping Bags, Sleeping mats, mosquito net
- Waterproof coat and trousers
- Strong leather/steel toe-capped boots for work
- Layers of warm clothing (they might get wet!)
- Swimming costumes
- Games/recipes/music from home
- Energy, enthusiasm and an open mind!
- Toys, books, candies, materials to work with kids

### Healthy and safety:

#### Insurance

Volunteers need to have their own travel and medical insurance. Please, make sure you have got adequate insurance coverage before joining workcamp.

#### Health

There are very little health problems to be expected. The village has hygienic conditions and we will prepare the food in the camp. A small hospital is never far away in case of emergency. However, we strongly advise you to visit a doctor and dentist before your departure and check your vaccination status. Check WHO website at [www.who.int](http://www.who.int) or CDC website at [www.cdc.org](http://www.cdc.org) to get updated information.

#### Safety

Though Vietnam is one of the safest countries in the world, you should still pay enough attention to your belongings. On the other hand, be very careful with the traffic, especially when you cross a street

#### Weather

Vietnam has a very diverse climate because its land mass stretches over many degrees of longitude and its terrain varies from low lying coastal plains to 4,000 meter mountain peaks. It is understandably varied from bitterly cold to unbearably hot, and a whole lot in between. It is cold in January in Vietnam. The temperature is averagely about 16 Degree Celsius but sometimes, it may go down to 12 or 10. Moreover, high humidity makes it much chillier even the temperature is not too low. Please, bring enough warm clothes. If you travel to the other parts of the country, please, check weather forecast because there may be a big difference between the regions.

### Visa & Airport:

#### Visa

Usually you need a visa to enter in Vietnam. Tourist visa is normally for 1 month with possible extension for another month. Check with the Vietnamese Embassy in your country or this site [www.vietnamstay.com/service](http://www.vietnamstay.com/service) for more information.

#### Airport

Terminal: The nearest terminal is Noi Bai (Hanoi) Airport.

Custom: Custom service at the airport has becoming easier and faster. However, you should be patient if it goes more slowly and in other countries. You will be required to fill in the arrival form. After passing the custom, you should keep this form along with your passport. You will have to show it when you leave Vietnam.

Money Change: Remember to get some Vietnam Dongs at the airport as it would be more convenient to pay for your taxi or buses. You can withdraw by ATM or change your national currency at the banks there (Exchange rate: 1USD = ~16,000VND, 1EUR=~21,000VND).

### Communication

There is no internet connection at the centre but internet cafes are in a walking distance. It is cheap (3000 - 4000 VND/hour) but sometimes rather slow and may not have Japanese, Korean or Chinese language packets.

If you want to use your mobile phone, you should buy a Vietnamese SIM Card for around US\$7 (100.000VND) with which can receive outside call or send SMS internationally. Calling internationally by mobile phone is pretty expensive and you will soon run out of your call credit.

### Travel

From meeting point, Volunteers travel to project site by local bus VPV arranges public bus to and fro but volunteers pay for their travel at the weekend and their leisure activities during the workcamp. If you travel alone, make sure that you agree the price with taxi driver or motorbike driver in advance.

### Participation fee:

Participation fee of EUR170 is requested to pay to VPV for food, accommodation and other project related expenses. VPV is a non-profit, voluntary organization with no external support, so we need your fees to organize and prepare workcamps and other related activities.

Please have this money with you at the meeting point. You can also pay by local currency (VND). There are many ATMs at the airport and in the city. We cannot accept traveller's cheques. Please prepare the money and pay on arrival.

### Emergency contact:

In case you are late to the meeting point or your family need to call you. Please use these numbers:

VPV office: +84 37652719

For further information, please, don't hesitate to contact us:

Mr Hoang: [workcampvpv@gmail.com](mailto:workcampvpv@gmail.com)

Mr Phuong: [phuongdon@vpv.vn](mailto:phuongdon@vpv.vn), [dontphuong@yahoo.com](mailto:dontphuong@yahoo.com)

Mr Cuong: [nguyendoancuong@gmail.com](mailto:nguyendoancuong@gmail.com)

More information about VPV, please, visit: <http://www.vpv.vn>

Thanks for joining us and have a beautiful volunteer time!