SNEHALAYA VISITORS MANUAL

www.snehalaya.org
Contents

Please refer to this guide in the lead up to and during your placement. We offer practical information and some insights into what to expect and how to prepare for a successful trip.

1. General Information
An introduction to volunteering for a mission led organisation, the team player mentality and how preparation is everything.

2. Preparing for your trip
This section talks you through the practical steps to prepare before heading off to your placement. Practicalities on where to focus your research, to budgeting, fundraising, getting the necessary health checks and documents ready for your trip. Consider this a MUST DO section.

3. What to bring
This section takes you point by point over what items have to make it into your suitcase and why. Packing for a remote placement in a rural part of a developing country is very different to packing for a holiday. If you don’t bring it you might not be able to shop for it as easily as you can back home.

4. At the airport
An explanation on your arrival at the airport covering the immigration counter, money exchange and transport.

5. While on Campus – correct conduct
Information on what is expected of you and how you can plan to be a great asset to our beneficiaries and staff during your stay. We recommend you look it over and refer back to it right before travelling.

6. Transport
Snehalaya is located in rural India and transport is basic and limited, so we’ve listed the best ways for you to get around.

7. Everything you need to know about life on campus
This section is detailed to be an ‘Idiot’s Guide’ things do change and our staff are there to support but this handy section will be valuable for you to refer back to while on your placement. If you or anyone on your team have any questions or queries send them here first. Consider it our FAQ section.

8. After your placement
We encourage you to help grow our organisation after your placement, and hope your experiences will help you decide to stay on and become an advocate of our work and the causes we fight for.
1) GENERAL INFORMATION ON SNEHALAYA

MISSION LED
Snehalaya means ‘Home of Love’ and is an Indian NGO that has been running for nearly 30 years. We are a cause driven organisation that seeks to improve the lives of the people we serve. We support rights to education, healthcare and freedom for Women, Children and LGBT people who are at high risk of abuse and neglect, and are forced to live in exclusion and isolation without being granted their basic human rights. We offer protection, shelter and an opportunity to find a safe exit point from poverty and abuse cycles.

VOLUNTEERING
Is one of the most rewarding ways to learn about a cause and apply some of your skills for good. International volunteering is also a great way to explore new countries and cultures too. This manual will help prepare you to get the most from your experience volunteering with Snehalaya in Maharashtra’s biggest district – Ahmednagar.

TEAM PLAYERS
Any charity will tell you their strongest asset is their team comprising of staff, supporters, and volunteers, along with donors to form the backbone of Do-ers and Enablers every organisation needs to keep their operations striving for real change. Challenges and obstacles are all part of working for non-profit, so it’s no wonder the market is full of amazing individuals who work with grit, innovation and real passion. We don’t offer bankers wages but our non-financial rewards speak volumes. Our Head Office is in the thick of our programmes and you will have very privileged access to the heart of our operations living and working ‘on campus’ learning what daily life is like for both beneficiaries and staff alike.

PREPARATION
Being thrown into any new environment with unfamiliar customs and new codes of conduct can feel very different to your life at home. Add working and unavoidable human hardship into the equation and it can get complicated quickly. Therefore, we feel being prepared is really important both practically and physically as well as mentally.
2) PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

a) RESEARCH US ONLINE BEFORE YOU TRAVEL
Please take a look at our latest campaigns and review our portfolio of project work. Think which of our projects appeal to you and what skills you have to assist with these can be transferrable office based as well as field work skills. Visit www.snehalaya.org

b) FOLLOW US

We are @snehalaya & @snehalayauk across all social platforms except YouTube where we are @snehalayango. In following us you can Check-In, mention and share your posts during your visit. This really helps if you are using social to fundraise during your trip to your friends and family.

c) FUNDRAISE BEFORE YOU COME
Whether your educational establishment is supporting your trip or you are fundraising for yourself it is important that you can cover the costs of your volunteering. We recommend using JustGiving to create a fundraising page, get tips and hints and share your goals with your friends, family and on social media.

d) BUDGET FOR FLIGHTS AND OTHER EXPENSES
All volunteers processed by Snehalaya UK are self-funding, meaning volunteers are responsible for all travel and living expenses to/from and during their placement. We charge a nominal amount for your food, accommodation, drinking water and transport between projects during your stay, we can also advise and support with booking accommodation, food and transport before and after your stay.

e) PREPARE YOUR ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS
Please find a list of all essential documentation for your trip that you are responsible for obtaining in time and sharing with us when needed. This MUST be shared by email to joyce@snehalaya.org at least 72hrs before departure from your home country. We will confirm all is in order for you to travel. Failure to provide essential documents prior to departure could result in cancelling your placement.

- VISA COPY
- POLICE CLEARANCE CHECK COPY (DBS IN UK)
- INSURANCE COPY
- NEXT OF KIN DETAILS
- PASSPORT COPY
- PASSPORT PHOTO (JPG COPY)
- PREEXISTING HEALTH CONDITION DECLARATION

Further Information on your Essential Documents
• **VISA** You will need to arrange your visa before you arrive in India. Most countries are allowed to apply for an eVisa for shorter stays and tourist visas. You are expected to arrange your own visa and where possible should apply for a visa that allows you to volunteer; volunteers should check at Indian Embassy how long the maximum stay with eVisa is. UK volunteers staying less than three months are required to apply for an entry visa. (If you are intending to stay longer a different visa process is required, this can be arranged according to your length of stay.) In the UK, you apply through VFS Global for other countries please check your local visa requirements. On request Snehalaya will arrange for a letter of invitation and provide address details that you will need to submit with your visa application. Visas are valid from the date of issue but please allow at least one month for obtaining the relevant documents from us to support your application.

• **POLICE CLEARANCE CHECK COPY** We ask all people staying on campus and exposed to our beneficiaries to provide a current and valid certification they are fit to work around children and hold no criminal record. This is known as a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in the UK where they cost £25 and can be applied for online in 2 weeks. Please provide an equivalent if you are from another country.

• **INSURANCE** Please have valid travel and medical insurance for your trip and make sure you give us a copy for the duration of your stay.

• **NEXT OF KIN DETAILS** Any guests staying with us need to provide details of a contact in the event of an emergency.

• **PASSPORT/VISA PHOTOCOPIES & PHOTOS** Please bring 2 photocopies of your passport and Indian VISA with you. We also recommend 4 recent photos of yourself (digital jpgs on a white background with no head gear is accepted too).

f) **DO YOUR HEALTH CHECKS**
You can check the [current health situation in India here](#) by typing in India. However, we highly recommend you visit your local doctor or a travel clinic like STA well in advance of your departure to seek the latest advice about travelling to India. Some booster vaccinations need to be administered up to 6 weeks before travel.

Health Checks that may be required:

• Typhoid and Hepatitis A vaccinations are strongly recommended and must be done a minimum of two weeks before travel.
• Tetanus and Polio vaccines must be current.
• Diphtheria is strongly recommended but required three months before travel. If you received the standard childhood vaccinations in the UK you should have had this vaccine.
• Malaria - is not currently a risk in Ahmednagar but it is in in some other areas of India. Please ask your local doctor or travel clinic for advice for other destinations.
• Longer visits may mean you require other vaccinations such as Hepatitis B, Rabies and Japanese B Encephalitis. Please ask your doctor or travel clinic for advice for longer trips.

g) **PRE-EXISTING MEDICAL CONDITION?**
• Please let us know
• Ensure you have adequate travel insurance.
• Ensure your medication is legal in the country you are visiting – your country embassy can advise.
• Carry your medication in the correct bottles and packets.
• Carry a doctor’s letter and a copy of your prescriptions if possible.
• If you use an inhaler, please ensure you have enough to take with you. You may find you need to use it more often as the conditions may be very hot and dusty.

h) LANGUAGE
Marathi is the local language and most of our staff and beneficiaries also speak Hindi and varying degrees of English.

Tip – Why not download a Hindi or Marathi app today and learn some basics?

Here are a few useful phrases to start you off:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hello/goodbye</th>
<th>namaskar</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>ek</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please</td>
<td>krupaya</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>don</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>Danywad</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>tin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>ho</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>char</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>nahi</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>pach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My name is ...</td>
<td>Maze nou ... ahee</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>saha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your name?</td>
<td>Tuze nou ahee?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are you?</td>
<td>tumhi kase aahat?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>aath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you speak</td>
<td>tumhala English</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>nou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English?</td>
<td>yeta ka?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>daha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you eaten?</td>
<td>Tumhi jevelan kaa?</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>shambhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>donshe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3) WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING
India’s heat makes it essential to take a range of lightweight clothing, including a hat for protection against the sun. Cotton clothing is best as it breathes better. Most of the time you’ll want to wear flip-flops or sandals but you may want to bring shoes or trainers for the visiting the slums and farm.

Please be sensitive to our local culture and bear in mind that our children will see you as a role model. We are working hard to raise them with certain attitudes and values and dressing appropriately is a very large part of this. Please respect this by bringing and wearing the right clothes that are clean and in good condition – ripped jeans and holes in clothes are frowned upon.

Women – avoid figure hugging clothing and even though you’ll see local women revealing their midriff, it is not appropriate for you to do so. Hemlines must be below the knee, please do not wear low cut tops, they should be loose and cover the shoulders and if possible the elbows too. A cotton scarf is handy for covering your curves and can double up as headgear to keep you cool.

Men - aim for the ‘smart/casual’ look with long shorts or preferably trousers and smart t-shirts or short sleeved shirts.

FIRST AID KIT

It may be useful to take a small, home-made first aid kit with these items:

- plasters
- antiseptic cream
- antiseptic wipes
- antihistamine cream for bites and stings
- antihistamine tablets (if you suffer badly from bites)

MONEY

There are plenty of ATMs in Ahmednagar accepting foreign cards. There is no foreign exchange in Ahmednagar. It is possible to exchange money at the bank but this is a long and tedious process so should be for emergency use only. Please ensure you exchange any cash before you arrive. Please also bring cash to cover your first few days as we cannot guarantee a visit to the ATM immediately.

MOBILE PHONE

Indian SIMS are cheap and local call and internet charges are very cheap by western standards. Wifi on campus is limited to office hours and not available in your dorms. We therefore recommend you ask about roaming data plans. If you want your own SIM you should buy before you arrive on campus.
Tip – To buy your own SIM you will need copies of your passport, visa arrival stamp and two passport-sized photos.

LAPTOP & OFFICE ITEMS

If you are going to need access to a computer while undertaking your volunteering, please bring your own laptop. Check the Indian plug (image below) before you come and, in case you need it, don’t forget to bring an adaptor. Also bring a pen drive and all your ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS section in WHILE IN THE UK. A note pad and a few pens is a good idea too.

ACTIVITY PLANNING

With over 200 children living at our Rehab Center you may wish to bring some group activity materials to offer as a shared pastime. Arts, crafts and sports are always popular. You may also want to bring playing cards, books and films to help you unwind in the evenings.

SNACKS

Water bottle / Cordial to flavour our filtered water / Noodles or biscuits and snack bars. A visit to the big bazaar (supermarket) is also a possibility. This is similar to the western version of a supermarket and has plenty of snack and cold drink options for you.
4) AT THE AIRPORT

IMMIGRATION COUNTER
After landing at Mumbai airport you will move towards the immigration counter. Here you will be asked to fill-up a Disembarkation card and for this you need to have with you Snehalaya’s address. Be aware that you might be asked for the reason of your visit to Ahmednagar.

Before proceeding the immigration clearance you will be required to present valid travel documents, such as passport and visa (if applicable). Make sure your passport is duly stamped before you leave the immigration counter.

MONEY EXCHANGE
Right after you pick up your luggage and move towards the exit you will see there are a number of foreign exchange counters. We advise you to change some money there, and leave the airport with Indian rupees. Please not that once you leave the terminal you won’t be allowed back in, make sure you have completed everything you need to before stepping outside the doors!

TRANSPORT FROM AIRPORTS
We expect volunteers to make their own travel arrangements to reach Ahmednagar.

There is a pre-paid taxi booth outside Mumbai airport terminal as well as an Uber booking desk. The pre-paid taxi booths inside are private companies that charge substantially more. You can pay for your taxi ride to your hotel in Mumbai here at Indian (not tourist) rates and will be given a voucher which you should present at the taxi rank. There is also a pre-paid taxi booth for Pune which is half way to Ahmednagar and from where you can catch a connecting bus or train. You will be expected to pay any road tolls required.

We can also arrange for our local taxi company to send cars and drivers to pick you up from your chosen location. Charges are made per kilometre. An example, a pick up from Mumbai costs around Rs 7,000 (£75) per car (up to six people). If you wish to travel to Snehalaya alone, or with less than six people, and this option is too expensive for you, please contact joyce@snehalaya.org who can provide more options.

5) WHILE ON CAMPUS

WELCOME INDUCTION
A full induction will take place at your arrival on campus which holds our Hospital, Long Stay Shelter (aka Rehab Centre for 250 children), Earth Studio (Pottery & Textiles) and our thriving Head Office, there is even a gym and our guest houses and canteen.
You will then receive a full induction visiting all of our projects within our city after which you will be able to discuss where your skills fit best and you will be of greatest use to the organisation. Please be aware of your own limits as to which areas you can help in, it would be irresponsible of us to allow an unqualified person to counsel our children or administer medical treatment!

While we will do our best to give you access to your areas of interest we also need to ensure you are benefitting the organisation so it may not always be realistic to send you to a particular project. We will work with you to ensure your time is used effectively on a personal project but please be aware that there is always a lot going on and this may take time, please be patient. Don’t worry, you won’t be bored - there is always plenty going on with the children!

REGISTERING YOUR VISIT ON ARRIVAL
You are required to register with the local police within 24 hours of your arrival to Snehalaya. This is an online process which will be completed by our staff who will require copies of your passport and visa with arrival stamp (scanned on arrival). Please look over the ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS section.

WELCOMING YOUR INPUTS
Before leaving you will also be asked to ‘report’ on your placement and present your findings to our staff. We will also ask you to complete an evaluation form - what met and went beyond your expectations, the highs, the lows, what you’re taking away from the experience and how you would describe it to others.

YOUR MISSION
You should set out with a clear programme devised in partnership with our volunteer coordinator, especially designed to cover your areas of interest and your goals. Having this programme in place means you should know your objectives. Our Indian staff are very accommodating and want to help but are also incredible busy and work very long hours, please be as proactive as you can and use their time wisely. Be prompt, be professional, ask questions, give solutions, be a team player, if something is not going to plan or as you expected or you feel you would benefit from changing your programme please speak to your main Indian contact and email joyce@snehalaya.org.

RESPECT OUR STAFF
Our staff on campus comprise of live-in caretakers and 10-6pm office staff and national volunteers. An appointed member of office staff will be available and receptive to your needs/queries on top of their regular duties. If something seems unclear or if you need clarification on something to proceed in your work, please do ask the appointed person and report back to your group where relevant.

Please be considerate. As a busy organisation our staff have a lot of responsibilities but always go out of their way to help and always say yes! Please keep individual and group requests simple and to a minimum and try to deal with your social and personal needs yourselves first.
OBEY THE RULES
Here are a few considerations we have to remind you of to ensure you have an amazing experience without impacting negatively our staff and beneficiaries. It can be a hugely emotional spending time with our beneficiaries, life changing and tough all at the same time. Please think of your role as one to ‘support development’ and not ‘fix’ the situation. Life has already been hard on the people we support and they are extremely vulnerable and easily influenced. They may not have had exposure or experiences to the lives most of us have had. They need consistency, routine and respect, thanks for working with us here:

- BE PUNCTUAL (EVEN WHEN OTHERS Aren’T)
- BE PATIENT (OUR STAFF DEAL WITH LIVE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS)
- BE A ROLE MODEL (YOU WILL BE SEEN AS ONE BY OUR KIDS)
- DRESS APPROPRIATELY
- NO SMOKING OR CONSUMING ALCOHOL OR MEAT PRODUCTS WHILE ON CAMPUS
- NO BENEFICIARIES IN ROOMS & NO TREATS/FEEDING (IT AFFECTS MEDICATIONS)
- DO NOT SHARE OR LOAN POSSESSIONS TO BENEFICIARIES (THEY WILL BE CURIOUS)
- NO LOITERING IN THE OFFICE (USE THE DOME AS A COMMON ROOM)
- BE PROACTIVE
- DON’T LEAVE CAMPUS WITHOUT LETTING US KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING

We will require you to read our code of Conduct before arrival and will ask you to sign a register to say you have done so and agree to abide by our rules to safeguard our beneficiaries.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO RULES - We appreciate you will want to capture your volunteering experience on photos and videos, however we hope you also appreciate we are bound by a duty to safeguard our beneficiaries. It’s OK to take photos of our beneficiaries for your own personal memories but please consider the backgrounds of the people you are photographing/filming and be respectful. For more detailed information about campus relationships, general behaviour and photography and its use in social media please check Appendix 1 – Volunteer Code of Conduct on page 19.

CLIMATE
It’s hot and dusty which keeps the humidity down except approaching and during monsoon season.

SUMMER is April to June. Daily temperatures reach over 40 degrees.
MONSOON season is June to August. Short bouts of heavy rain and high building humidity.
AUTUMN is September to November, the rains stop and it’s back to around 30-35 degrees.
WINTER is December to February with temperatures staying around 25-30 degrees, dropping in the evenings, you may need a jumper.

GENERAL HEALTH ADVICE
Doctors visit our hospital three times daily so medical help is never far away. We also have a huge network of health professional that support our work so in emergencies we will ensure you are seen as soon as possible.
• Drugs - bring some basic medication such as paracetamol or aspirin but keep them in their original packaging.

• Mosquitoes - although not dangerous in this area, bites can be extremely uncomfortable bring insect repellent and creams and treatments for when you get bitten. Be wary at dawn and dusk and wear clothes that protect you at these times.

• Stomach Upsets - are common partially due to the change in diet, heat and occasionally because of the water. The drinking water at Snehalaya is filtered and is safe if boiled but you may want to stick to bottled water. Just in case you suffer an upset stomach bring Immodium or something similar and rehydration salts such as Dioralyte. Other precautions, especially if you are prone to stomach upsets are to avoid ice in drinks and to be extra hygienic (e.g. washing your hands often, not sharing water bottles, use antibacterial hand gel frequently).

• Staying cool and hydrated – this is crucial. Make sure you take adequate precautions against the sun and drink plenty of water at least 3 litres a day. It is easy to be complacent about heat and sun especially when sunshine is a rare treat. Please do be vigilant at all times particularly if you are doing physical activity outside. Use sun screen of at least 20SPF, apply regularly and wear a hat.

**Tip:** This re-hydration drink helps your body absorb the water more easily and can be made simply - add half a teaspoon of salt and 3 teaspoons of sugar to a litre of water.

• Speak Up - If you feel unwell there is sufficient access to professional medical help, please don’t try to struggle on – let us know. If you suffer from any unusual or persistent symptoms in the weeks after you return, please see your doctor for advice.
6) TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT IN AHMEDNAGAR
Company vehicles are a limited commodity at Snehalaya. We have 2 company vehicles with drivers. Transportation between our projects and within Ahmednagar is included in your overall daily charges whilst volunteering, however availability is limited and restricted for work related travel.

TRANSPORT (Local)
- The school bus leaves twice a day (Mon-Sat) and can also be used for free to shuttle you to town for work or personal visits.
- Cabs are available via www.olacabs.in like UBER for those with data plans.
- Auto rickshaws can be flagged down for sole use (Rs 150-200 per trip) or shared with other commuters (Rs 10-50 per person) – agree a price before getting in. Snehalaya’s campus is clearly signposted and we recommend when travelling alone you get a slip with the address of where you want to go written down in Marathi.

DAY TRIPS
If you would like to arrange a day trip or other transportation you will need to use and pay for our local taxi company. As an example our recommended day trip to Ellora Caves will cost around Rs 3,200 (£32), any entry fees and food costs will be additional.

GOING TO TOWN
Big Bazaar Supermarket, ATMS, Cafes, Fruit Market, Restaurants – Ahmednagar City is 15 minutes away and has it all!

We are always happy to accommodate requests to visit the supermarket and treat yourself to an outside meal. However please consider the priorities of our staff, if you want to eat out please give us as much notice as possible so we can arrange transport.

While the dangers in Ahmednagar are minimal, regardless of your age or travel experience you are a guest of Snehalaya and we take your wellbeing and safety seriously. Therefore, we would appreciate you letting us know when you are leaving campus and would advise against going out alone until you have been with us a while and know your way around. We also ask that you not go out alone in the evenings, please take someone from Snehalaya with you.
7) EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LIFE ON CAMPUS

WIFI - This is available in and round our Rehab Center office and is not always reliable. Please bear in mind that our admin staff use this network and try to limit your access to essential use only and where possible outside of office hours. The code is: admin@321.

FOOD & ACCOMODATION - Unless agreed separately we expect you to cover the cost of your food, bottled water, accommodation and transport whilst volunteering with us. This is currently charged at around £17 per day payable in advance via a bank transfer or on departure in cash.

DINING TIMES
Breakfast 07:00
Lunch 13:00
Snacks 16:00
Dinner 19:00

Sunday breakfast is at 09:00 and lunch is half an hour later.

All meals come with spice and are taken in the main dining hall at the same time as the children. All meals are vegetarian. There’s always plenty of extra made available too so you won’t go hungry. Our kids are taught not to waste food, please only take the amount of food you wish to eat, you can always go back for more, and wash your own plate after finishing your meal. You will also be provided with bottled water during your stay, if you need more just ask.

Tip – Put squash or put limes in your water bottle if you aren’t used to the taste of ‘filtered’ water.

Breakfast comes with tea or coffee and can be anything from 2 minute noodles or spicy fried potato in a bread roll, to flattened spicy rice, a type of couscous or a packet of biscuits - always a surprise!

All other meals generally consist of rice, dahl, chapatti and vegetable curry. Occasionally meals are prepared by groups of children. As it is logistically difficult to take them out for meals this dinner is intended to recreate a dining out experience and is usually served outdoors and accompanied by music – a real event!

EATING IN YOUR ROOM - Your room is equipped with a fridge and tea and coffee making facilities. If you feel the need, a trip to the supermarket can be helpful to pick up snacks and cold drinks. This is recommended if you can’t handle spice with every meal, you may also want to consider bringing breakfast bars and any snacks that can be made with boiled water from your home country. Cordial is also popular with our filtered water having a strong flavour. Please do not eat your snacks outside of your room, our kids get limited treats themselves and don’t want to see you tucking into a bar of Cadbury’s. It may be difficult but please also refrain from giving our children sweets and snacks – unless you have enough for all 250 of them!
ACCOMMODATION - Accommodation is in our two blocks of guest houses on campus near the school and near the canteen, which each sleep up to three people, with bedding and towels provided. The guest houses near the school have air conditioning. TV and a fridge as well as a small balcony with a rope to dry your clothes on. There is no WIFI in the rooms.

WC ETIQUETTE - Western style toilets and toilet paper is provided in all rooms. As Indians use water instead of toilet paper the sewerage system is not designed to accommodate it, please dispose of your toilet paper and sanitary products in a bin instead of flushing. As Indians do not use toilet paper they also do not offer anything from or eat with their left hand which is viewed as impolite.

Tip – Always offer your right hand when giving a gift, especially of food!

WASHING & WATER SUPPLY - Your room also has a shower, sometimes there’s even hot water. Maharashtra suffers serious droughts so the water is occasionally switched off to conserve it. If you have no water it may be worth checking to see if the handle that controls the water coming into your room (located on the wall outside your bathroom) is facing horizontally. Passing children use these to step down from the veranda inadvertently switching off your water supply. Please be considerate when bathing, flushing or using water and always make sure your taps are fully switched off.

Tip - Use your bucket to collect the water while you shower to use if the water is switched off for flushing the WC

NOISE IN THE NIGHT - We are based in an industrial part of town so there will be machine noises late into the night, along with the horns of passing trains, barking dogs and our security guard’s whistle letting would be intruders know he is there. There is also an army bombing rage a few miles away so don’t panic if you hear explosions! Light sleepers may want to bring ear plugs!

LAUNDRY - We don’t not have any washing machine facilities for guests. You will be provided laundry detergent to do your own hand washing and there is a washing line on your balcony. If you really require it, we can arrange for your laundry to be sent outside for a small charge.

DISPOSING OF RUBBISH – Generally all rubbish is burned. Please collect your own rubbish in your room and request for it to be disposed of. Be aware that children will be curious about what treats you have in your room so please do not use communal bins. Please also collect your empty water bottles and return to the dining hall, these are given to the children as water bottles.

REHAB CENTER – CHILDREN’S SCHEDULE
School 09:15-14:15
Rest time 14:00-16:00
Recreation time 16:00-18:00
Prayer time 18:00
Followed by ART medication
Recreation time 20:30-22:00
Bedtime 22:00
PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV & AIDS - Nearly half of our children at our Rehab Center and many of our outreach beneficiaries have HIV or AIDS. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) attacks and destroys T-cells, an integral part of the body’s immune system, meaning those infected are less able to fight off infection. As it also attaches itself to the body’s DNA so that every time the immune system is called into action, the attached HIV is also activated, further weakening the system through the destruction of more T-cells. When an immune system is severely damaged, with the T-cell count dropping below 200, HIV leads to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) leaving the body unable to fight infection.

We provide all of our HIV beneficiaries with free anti-retroviral drug treatment (ART). This medication stops the production of HIV in the body through block receptors which stops the HIV from attaching to the DNA. Those receiving ART are able to live a relatively ‘normal’ and healthy life as long as it is administered properly, at the same time every day and at least one hour prior to meals.

It’s incredibly unlikely you are at risk of contracting HIV from our beneficiaries, you and the infected person would have to be bleeding profusely for the virus to be transmitted. Our children know their diagnosis and to seek medical attention if they are bleeding. In the unlikely event that you have broken skin and come into contact with HIV infected blood wash the area immediately with soap and water and alert one of our staff who will help you seek any medical attention required.

THE CHILDREN

They love having visitors and will want to spend as much time with you as possible as will you! Please follow some simple guidelines to ensure their wellbeing and remember you are a visitor in their home.

Please don’t give individual treats or favour one child over another. This causes rivalry and is unfair on the children not receiving them.

Please do not allow children in or around your room.

Please take care of your possessions, if you chose to allow children to use your items it is at your own risk and we cannot take any responsibility for any items that are lost or damaged.

Please do not swap phone numbers, emails, social media profiles or any other personal information with children. If you make a connection and want to follow the progress of the children you have met you can do this via Snehalaya staff and our regular updates from our projects.

Please do not organise activities without the prior approval of our staff.

If you wish to arrange a treat for the children, please discuss this with a member of staff who can advise on the best options available that will benefit all of our children equally.

Please do not promise you will return again to visit unless you are seriously committed to a date to do so. Our children remember your promise and when it is broken it can upset them and renew feelings of abandonment.
THE ANIMALS

We have a few domestic pets and a few non-domestic visitors! The stray dogs ‘live’ with us an see off other strays that try to move in and are quite docile however please be aware that dogs bite, even the domestic ones, keep your distance otherwise you may need a series of eight rabies injections!

8) AFTER YOUR PLACEMENT

SHOUT OUTS - We know you are going to have a unique experience and hope that you will want to shout about the inspirational projects, staff and beneficiaries you will get to know during your visit. Help us spread the word by using social media to let people see what you are doing, experiencing and feeling. Remember to give a shout out to us @snehalaya and @snehalayauk or use #hashtags to speak to other NGO’s and social change players.

STORY TELLING FOR US - We also have a story telling form on our Globalgiving Page and we strongly you to help us with our marketing material by using your time there to find and note a heart-warming or heart-breaking story that shows a journey either in our organisation, in our beneficiaries or in you our volunteers.

SPREAD THE WORD - Share your experiences with others, the feeling you have you will wish you could bottle it up and sell it to others to turn them onto this kind of work. Give it a go, a passionate person is capable of far more than anyone else.
STAY IN TOUCH - If you would like to continue your journey into the developing sector with us, we support lasting friendships and occasionally offer placements in our UK Office for British residents.

Thank you for choosing Snehalaya – we know you will have an amazing time!
Appendix 1 - Volunteer Code of Conduct

This code of conduct needs to be followed by all volunteers at all times. The code of conduct is designed to keep both children and adults safe and protected. Following the code of conduct ensures that volunteers will also protect themselves from any false accusation of abuse that might be made against them.

If you have any questions or think a child may be at risk or has been harmed, please talk to one of our volunteer coordinators immediately.

Psychological Relationships

- Recognize that as an adult you exercise greater power over children all the time. The onus of showing fair and sensitive behaviour lies on you.
- Use appropriate and respectful forms of communication. Do not discuss a child’s background or problems in front of them.
- Leave disciplining to staff. Corporal punishment of any kind cannot be used and if you do this you will be asked to leave and may face criminal prosecution.
- Do not favour one child over another or discriminate against children on basis of age, sex, caste, sexual orientation, belief etc.
- Children, especially adolescents, might be attracted to you, handle such situations sensitively.
- Be aware of your actions, good intentioned actions can be intrusive and intimidating towards the child.
- Do not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse. And be aware that your words or actions can have this effect without the intention too.
- Always treat children in a manner that is respectful of their rights, integrity and dignity, consider their best interests and do not expose them to, or place them at risk of, harm.
- Do not counsel any child one-on-one or in a group unless you have been specifically asked to do so by an authorised Snehalaya staff member. Do not use physical/verbal abuse with children, women/staff.
- Do not eat or drink anything (other than water) in front of the children that they are not having. Please make sure you dispose of any wrappings of food and drinks somewhere where they won’t be seen by the children.
- Do ask for permission to give gifts or treats to the children, before even mentioning this to the children
- Please be aware that eating and drinking at particular times of the day interferes with our beneficiaries’ medication. Please do not share anything with them without permission from an authorised member of Snehalaya staff.
- When you have permission to give gifts or treats, only give them out if you have something for everyone present
- Do follow directions of staff when given.
- Do try to avoid showing sadness or pity for the children’s circumstances in their presence, as to them this can feel humiliating. They want to celebrate their life with you instead.

Physical Relationships

- Use physical contact only when necessary and avoid physical contact while alone with the child. Physical contact should be limited to shaking/holding hands and a hand on a shoulder.
• If you are sick in any way, however minor, please do not make any contact with our beneficiaries. What may be a small discomfort to you could be potentially life-threatening to some of our beneficiaries.
• Do not spend the night with children or a child.
• Do not take a child or group of children to your guest house.
• Do not form romantic attachments with staff, women and/or children you may meet through Snehalaya.
• Do not engage in any sexual activity with anyone under 18 years of age, or with any of Snehalaya’s older beneficiaries.
• Do not do things for children of a personal nature that they could do for themselves, eg dressing, washing, etc, if they are unable to do them themselves, a staff member should be notified.
• Only go into a dorm if you are invited there by the children themselves and no one in the dorm objects, these are the children’s bedrooms, and do not enter a dorm for children of the opposite sex, even with an invitation.

Information and Images

• Ensure that if you are asked to work with any Snehalaya data that you are briefed on our data protection policy by a member of Snehalaya staff.
• Do respect the confidentiality of our beneficiaries at all time in your communication with others.
• Do not share material created for/by Snehalaya/at Snehalaya with other people / organizations without the explicit permission from Snehalaya.
• Do not make any contact with the beneficiaries outside the purview of the organization. This would include the following:
  a. Meeting Snehalaya beneficiaries outside the confines of the organization without the prior knowledge or consent of the organization and its child protection team.
  b. Adding Snehalaya beneficiaries to your social networking sites such as Facebook, Orkut, Google Plus, etc.
  c. Adding Snehalaya beneficiaries to your blogging and micro-blogging sites such as WordPress, Blogspot, Twitter, etc.
  d. Adding Snehalaya beneficiaries to your messaging and chatting tools such as GTalk, Yahoo Messenger, Skype, Facebook Chat, Blackberry Messenger, Whatsapp, etc.
  e. Exchanging telephone numbers and email addresses with Snehalaya beneficiaries for the purpose of calling, mailing, texting, etc.
• Do not identify individuals by name, status, location in your own communications or when commenting on others information.
• Survivors of sexual exploitation, gender-based violence or abuse are not to be identified as such.
• An individual’s status as a person living with HIV, TB or any other serious health conditions must not be revealed.
• An individual’s engagement in socially marginalised or criminal activities must not be identified.
• Do not take/record photographs, videos, audio of Snehalaya staff, beneficiaries, and people from the local community in the centers or in the community without explicit permission from Snehalaya and after signing our photography policy. Distribution of any such media files, if any; is strictly forbidden and bound by confidentiality.
• Comply with local traditions or restrictions when taking photos of people, objects or places.
• Gain verbal or written consent before taking photographs.
• Respect a person’s right to refuse to be photographed. If you sense any reluctance or confusion, refrain from taking the photo.
• Not misrepresent the individual, situation, context or location of the photo.
• Absolutely no payments or any other form of compensation are to be provided to subjects in exchange for their photo or consent.
• Care must be taken in photographing people in times of crisis. Do not exploit an individual’s vulnerability at times of trauma or grief.
• File labels must not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.
• Photos should support an accurate and balanced understanding of Snehalaya’s projects.
• Identifiable images of individuals should not be used to illustrate sensitive subject matter in such a way as to indicate that the individual is connected with the issue.
• Position the camera so that faces and other unique characteristics cannot be seen.
• Gain written consent to use real names and locations in situations where disclosure could result in harm. Otherwise, remove detailed personal information such as names and locations in captions or any other associated documentation.
• Do no harm. Individuals or groups may be put at risk of reprisal, violence or rejection in their communities as a result of exposing their identity or personal story through the publication of their image.
• Photograph all people with respect and dignity. Special care and compassion must be exercised with vulnerable subjects.
• Photos of individuals should illustrate autonomy and dignity of person.

Social Media

• To protect our beneficiaries, we request that you do not share any images of them via your own social media. We will give you an opportunity to compose messages to post from the official Snehalaya accounts which you are then free to add your own personal messages to (following the guidelines above) and share from your accounts.

Possible Abuse

• Do not abuse and/or exploit a child or act in any what that places a child at risk of harm.
• Do report malpractice to your contact person or someone else in the organization in case you are witness to the same.
• Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns and/or allegations of child abuse.
• Identify and avoid potential situations that may lead to behaviour being misinterpreted, such as spending excessive time alone with a child and physically handling a child, perhaps to offer comfort.

General Behaviour

• Do dress modestly: Women – wear loose clothes covering everything from shoulders down to at least half way down the calves. Men – full length trousers and shirt/T-shirt without inappropriate messages/images on them.
• Do not wear shorts, sleeveless tops, etc. to the field offices.
• While with children keep away from drugs, alcohol and tobacco of any form.
• Do not use foul language or slang.
• Respect the surroundings – do not indulge in littering, spitting, defacing plants and the physical environment in any way.
• Do be mindful of use of cell phones and other gadgets in the office and in the field/ in the presence of children and staff and do not allow the children to play with them.
• Do be alert during your visits to the community and mindful of your belongings at all times. Keep your valuable out of sight, even within your own room.
• Please be punctual at all times, even when others are not.
• Keep regular contact with your agency supervisor/contact person.
• Do specify your interests with respect to areas of work to your contact person.
• Do try to get a deeper understanding of the issues dealt with through Snehalaya’s work so that you may be better equipped to spread awareness on these issues on your own steam.
• Do specify whether you will need a letter of appreciation etc at the end of your volunteer period.
• Do make sure you take responsibility for the tasks assigned to you.
• Do feel free to suggest ideas/ plans/ proposals/ changes that you may think appropriate/ beneficial so that the team can consider it.
• Do be aware that helping with reporting is a mandatory task for all volunteers.
• Do not use office computers or internet/ telephones/ printers etc. for personal use.
• Do carry your own water when you are out and about.