



**INSTITUTE FOR FIELD RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS**  
**VOLUNTEER ABROAD PROGRAM**

**Final Evaluation Form**

Name:

Date and Country of Volunteer Program:

**Please rate the following as 1--poor, 2--good, 3--very good or 4-- excellent:**

USA Staff	<u>4</u>
Airport pick up	<u>N/A</u>
Cultural immersion	<u>4</u>
Food	<u>4</u>
Accommodation	<u>4</u>
Host Family	<u>4</u>
Volunteer Project	<u>4</u>
Field staff	<u>4</u>

**Please summarize your about volunteer experience (please attach extra sheet if necessary) with IFRE.**

*see attached*

**What was the best part of your humanitarian volunteer program?**

*The kids!*

Do you recommend IFRE program for others (please circle) (i) Yes (ii) No

Can we pass your e-mail to interested potential volunteers?? If yes, e-mail:

*Laurajsetigman@gmail.com*

## Volunteer Experience

Quite an amazing experience! I arrived to lots of kids greeting me sweetly "Namaste Didi" (Didi means big sister). Their excitement in greeting me made me feel immediately welcome. The 2 other volunteers were very nice and gave me a lot of information regarding how things were run and the flow of the day. I was challenged to learn 60 new names and also figure out who were girls and who were boys. Their hair was short or shaved because of lice. This freaked me out at first but then I remembered that lice would not kill me, and decided not to worry about it (I never got it anyway). The kids are very clean, and the young ones are bathed daily by the aunts.

I loved the village setting of the orphanage. Being at a place that is working toward self-sustainability was incredible. They have a well that supplied fresh water ( I drank this water everyday with no stomach problems). They grew grains for the cows. The cows were milked every morning and supplied milk for yogurt and cheese. Solar energy equipment was being given as a gift by the German embassy. The meals were amazing and nutritious. The food consisted of natural healthy grains, rice, beans, vegetables – nothing was packaged or processed and there was so much less environmental impact compared to the American diet.

One food that was a rarity for the kids was fruit. I assume it is to keep the cost of feeding 70 people as low as possible. I started to buy fruit once or twice a week and it was definitely appreciated. It cost around \$5 to get fruit for 70 people. That is possibly two days wages in India, but a lot easier for the western budget. When I bought candy for the kids, I noticed that the candy wrappers created waste, so I preferred buying fruit to keep with the healthy environment.

The volunteers had the job of taking the younger kids for a few hours in the morning for nursery school. This was a bit chaotic, only knowing a little bit of Hindi. I would have liked to have been more prepared with the language as well as with a notebook full of games, art projects, songs and any other activities. The week of language and sightseeing before volunteering was great and I highly recommend that as well! I learned a good base of Hindi.

The kids loved listening to and playing games on my ipod. They also loved playing board games and doing art projects. I would have liked to have taught them more English. I also wish I stayed longer than three weeks. The experience was so very meaningful and I hope to do it again soon.