



Volunteer Policy

SABUJ SANGHA

2011

Volunteer Policy

Mission

To attract high quality individuals to add energy, enthusiasm and technical expertise to our organisation

Introduction

Volunteering has always been at the centre of Sabuj Sangha's work. As an organisation, we understand that volunteers are an asset and can bring a range of skills and experience to an organisation that may not be otherwise available. Volunteers to Sabuj Sangha bring a great amount of enthusiasm through their work and offer invaluable exposure to different cultures and backgrounds. We greatly appreciate the support and assistance that volunteers can bring.

Sabuj Sangha aims to attract high-caliber volunteers from a range of backgrounds, to assist in the implementation of organisation aims and objectives. Volunteers should be committed to Sabuj Sangha's vision of an egalitarian society where people will enjoy equal rights and access to equal opportunities.

As a host agency, Sabuj Sangha agrees to:

- Treat all volunteers with respect and in a fair manner
- Be open and honest with volunteers around expectations and operations
- Support volunteers as much as possible throughout their placement during their placement
- Provide all necessary details of placement to volunteers
- Communicate regularly with volunteers
- Provide any provisions possible for volunteers
- Deal with and complaints and/or grievances in a fair and efficient manner

Volunteers will not be paid for their work and are responsible for covering their own costs for the duration of their stay.

This document is designed to set out the organisations expectations of volunteers and to clearly define procedures when working with volunteers.

1. Volunteer Profile

Sabuj Sangha has two categories of volunteer, Professional and Non-Professional.

1.1 Professional

Professional volunteers are generally qualified individuals with a number of years work experience looking for a different challenge. Professional volunteers with relevant qualifications and expertise can work in the followings area:

- Education
- Health (including doctors, nurses, midwives and health managers)
- Social Work
- Community Mobilisation
- Engineers (water, environmental, civil)
- Business Management
- Advocacy
- Fundraising
- Marketing and Communication
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Natural Resource Management

1.2 Non-Professional

Non-professional volunteers will typically be recent school or college graduates. The typical age profile of non-professional volunteers would be 18-30. They can work in the following areas:

- Education
- Coaching
- Administration
- Documentation
- Multimedia

Suitable placements for volunteers will be arranged by the Volunteer Coordinator through regular communication with the potential volunteer. Sabuj Sangha is not in a position to accept volunteers under the age of 18 unless they are associated with a sending organisation which Sabuj Sangha is a partner of.

2. Recruitment

2.1 Independent Volunteers

The recruitment of independent volunteers will be done mainly through our website and Facebook page. In addition to this, word of mouth from past volunteers will be a valuable form of recruitment. The process of recruiting independent volunteers is as follows:

1. Contact made by volunteer
2. Information pack and application form sent to volunteer
3. Completed application sent to Sabuj Sangha
4. Application reviewed by Director, Volunteer Coordinator and relevant Programme Manager.
5. If applicant is suitable, contract, Child Protection Policy and Volunteer Charter sent to volunteer.
6. Signed contract returned to Sabuj Sangha
7. Deposit paid to Sabuj Sangha
8. Final amount paid to Sabuj Sangha prior to start of placement
9. Volunteer begins placement on agreed date

2.2 Sending Organisations

Sabuj Sangha will look to partner with volunteer sending organisations to receive individuals and groups on a regular basis. When partnering with a sending organisation, it is essential that the sending organisations values and principles are a similar fit to our own, ensuring that the partnership will benefit everyone concerned. An agreement will be made with the sending organisation in relation to volunteer contracts, policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities and safety and security prior to receiving any volunteers.

3. Preparation

Volunteers should prepare adequately for their placement. By prepare we mean:

- Read up on all aspects of Sabuj Sangha via the website and any other materials provided to you.
- Make yourself familiar with all aspects of the placement.
- Understand the context of where you will be working.
- Understand the culture of India and prepare yourself adequately.
- Read up on Development and the many challenges that it poses.
- Ensure you are fit and healthy prior to travelling.
- Ensure you have consulted a doctor and have all the necessary medication required for the whole duration of your trip.
- Ensure you have adequate medical and travel insurance.
- Set realistic expectations of what you would like to achieve.
- Think about possible challenges you may encounter and how you would overcome them.
- Make sure your passport is in date and you have the right visa.

Sabuj Sangha will do everything possible to aid volunteers in their preparation by providing relevant information and documentation relating to the organisation and their placement.

4. Participation Fee

Sabuj Sangha requests that volunteers cover the expenses borne by Sabuj Sangha for their placement. This fee will vary greatly depending on the location and area in which the volunteer will be placed as well the facilities provided by Sabuj Sangha. For this reason, the fee will be agreed with volunteers on an individual basis as per their placement and

requirements. A deposit (20% of fee) will be paid by the volunteer two weeks from the acceptance of their placement. This deposit will be non-refundable.

Given that individuals have to make a significant personal and financial investment to volunteer, Sabuj Sangha will keep the participation fee at a minimum and the participation will be designed to cover only costs bared by the organisation.

5. Volunteer Payment and Expenses

Volunteers are responsible for covering all living expenses that occur while on placement including accommodation, food, travel etc. Sabuj Sangha should not bear any costs with respect to receiving a volunteer. Volunteers will not receive any payment with respect to their contribution and services to Sabuj Sangha.

6. Fundraising

Volunteers are encouraged to fundraise to cover the cost of their placement. However, all money raised through fundraising should go to the organisation. Volunteers are allowed to fundraise to cover their participation expenses such as flights, accommodation and travel but should not use fundraising to cover day to day living expenses outside of their placement such as food, travel, social activities and holidays. Any money raised above their participation fee should be donated to Sabuj Sangha.

7. Visas

Volunteers are responsible for obtaining their visa and ensuring that they have the relevant visa and that it is valid for the duration of their placement.

8. Placement Logistics

Sabuj Sangha will try it's best to support volunteers around their placement logistics.

- a) Accommodation - For rural placements, accommodation will be provided for volunteers (where possible) at our residential campus in Nandakumarpur. For urban placements, accommodation may be provided for individuals but it will not be possible to provide accommodation for groups. In this case, volunteers will have to find their own accommodation but Sabuj Sangha can help in this aspect.
- b) Food - For rural placements, food will be provided for volunteers at our residential campus in Nandakumarpur as there are limited options in the area. For urban placements, volunteers will be required to organise their own food.
- c) Travel - It may be necessary for volunteers to travel to their placement. This will be organised by Sabuj Sangha but the volunteer will be responsible for covering the cost.

9. Safety and Security

Sabuj Sangha treats the safety and security of volunteers as highest priority and will do everything possible to ensure that the volunteer is safe at all times. However, while every effort will be made by Sabuj Sangha to ensure a volunteers safety and security while on placement, volunteers should ensure they have prepared adequately for their placement and have taken the necessary precautions for working in their assigned location. The volunteer is obliged to abide by the following guidelines:

- a) Preparation – volunteers are responsible for ensuring they are adequately prepared for their placement and have taken the necessary safety and security precautions both prior to their placement and while on placement.
- b) Insurance – volunteers are obliged to obtain their own insurance for the duration of their placement. Details of their insurance should be provided to Sabuj Sangha.
- c) Next of Kin – volunteers are obliged to provide Sabuj Sangha with details of their next of kin. Volunteer should discuss their placement with relevant next of kin.
- d) Fitness to Travel – volunteers should ensure that they have consulted a suitable doctor prior to departure to ensure they are fit to work in their assigned placement. Any medical conditions should be shared with Sabuj Sangha.
- e) Vaccinations/Medication – volunteers are responsible for ensuring they have received the necessary vaccinations prior to departure. Volunteers should also ensure that they have the necessary medication for the duration of their placement.
- f) Embassy – volunteers should register with their relevant embassy on arrival in India. During the placement, the volunteer should obtain the necessary information and advice for their Government with respect to political and security issues in India.

10. Cancellation

Sabuj Sangha acknowledges that a volunteer's circumstances may change with out prior notice and that, with no notice period, a volunteer may have to cancel their placement due to unforeseen circumstances. Volunteer should inform Sabuj Sangha in writing if a placement has to be cancelled.

In the case of a volunteer having to leave their placement early due to unforeseen circumstances, Sabuj Sangha will provide any support possible to volunteers.

11. Confidentiality

Volunteers are required to treat as confidential all information coming in to their possession during the course of their placement with Sabuj Sangha and to ensure that such records are kept absolutely secure at all times. Depending on their role, volunteers may be dealing with confidential information about people and this type of information is only to be discussed with team members that are actively involved in the project.

Volunteers should note that they may not make written or verbal communications of any nature with persons outside Sabuj Sangha (in particular donors or media) or address any group on matters pertaining to your Sabuj Sangha's work, or on the operations of Sabuj Sangha, without obtaining the prior written approval of Sabuj Sangha.

12. Termination of Volunteer Placement

Sabuj Sangha is committed to protecting its interests and those of its staff, volunteers and beneficiaries. Sabuj Sangha reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's placement at any time in advance of the end of their placement if circumstances require it. Sabuj Sangha will have the automatic right to terminate a volunteer's placement and all agreements with Sabuj Sangha in the event of the following:

- a) The organisation finds that a volunteer has not fulfilled their obligations after a previous warning to do so and after a reasonable opportunity to comply;
- b) A volunteer's behaviour, in the reasonable opinion of Sabuj Sangha, is causing danger, distress or significant difficulties for anyone at their placement, including staff, beneficiaries or fellow volunteers.
- c) A volunteer has continually refused to carry out the reasonable requests of the organisation.
- d) A volunteer is discovered to have been dishonest or failed to give complete information in any communications with or documentation provided to Sabuj Sangha or has acted in such a way that your actions are likely to bring the organisation into disrepute;
- e) A volunteer is found to have been involved with illegal substances or engaged in any criminal activity during the period of their placement or are discovered to have been convicted of any offence prior to starting your placement, the details of which have not been disclosed to us.

Accordingly, Sabuj Sangha reserves its right to initiate its corrective action policy to provide a mechanism for managing instances of misconduct by any volunteer, should they arise, in an appropriate and fair manner.

13. Emergency Procedure

In the event of an emergency, Sabuj Sangha will do everything in its power to obtain all relevant information and advice from the appropriate sources for necessary action. Volunteer are expected to liaise with Sabuj Sangha and follow any directions given by the organisation to ensure their safety.

14. Child Protection Policy

Sabuj Sangha will supply volunteers with a copy of its Child Protection Policy. Volunteers are obliged to make themselves familiar with all aspects of the policy and agree to abide by the terms set out in said policy.

15. Complaints Procedure

Should a volunteer have any grievance or problem whilst on placement, they should raise the matter with the Volunteer Coordinator or the respective Programme Manager. In the event that, the problem cannot be resolved at this level, it will be brought to the Director and Governing Body if required. Sabuj Sangha will do everything possible to overcome any issues raised to ensure that a volunteer has an entirely positive experience while volunteering with the organisation. All complaints will be treated as confidential.