

# Annual Report of Volunteer Program

# 2012

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This Report contains background of Volunteer Initiative Nepal, Rationale of the Volunteer program, Statistical Analysis, Program Information, Encounter and Experience, Feedbacks of the Volunteer and some testimonials of volunteers of 2012

Volunteering  
Initiative  
Nepal

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## Background

VIN is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organization. VIN has been working for four years in Jitpur community with the mission of empowering marginalized communities, with a focus on women and children, through enhanced educational programs and community training to promote equality, economic well-being and basic human rights.

VIN has been mobilizing international and local volunteers in its various programs, helping make a sustainable difference and improve the lives of Nepali people in the most disadvantaged communities. VIN has altogether 18 volunteering and 5 internship programs along with the opportunity of volunteering with travel and trekking program or take part in adventure programs regardless of volunteering programs. Majority of the volunteering and internship programs of VIN are community based aiding to community projects of VIN at Jitpurphedi VDC. In addition, VIN also offers other programs such as Teaching English at Buddhist Monastery and Nunnery, Orphanage and International Journalism Internship that are more concerted towards fund raising for community development program. At the same time, such volunteering program gives the volunteers an opportunity to experience a different environment, enhance their skills and serve a different community of monks, nuns, orphan children and so on though they might not be the target group of VIN's Community Development Program.

The objective of VIN to mobilize international volunteers for community development is to use the skills, expertise and knowledge of international people on various sector of development work, which otherwise would be difficult to get from local staffs and local volunteers. VIN provides a platform for general service as well as professional help for international people who want to contribute their time, skill and energy for needy people of Nepal. VIN aims at utilizing the skills of volunteer to optimum so that the community projects as well as the beneficiaries of volunteers' service would benefit most out of the volunteering programs.

## Rationale of the Program

VIN is one of the few organizations currently operating in Nepal whose mission serves to directly empower Nepali youths and promote a greater sense of volunteerism in Nepal. Our programs operate year round and overseas volunteers can be satisfied in contributing to an organization that is working to improve the quality of life of Nepali peoples— with an emphasis on improving education for marginalized groups such as women and children. Importance of the volunteering program would be

- To make a sustainable difference in the most marginalized communities

- Volunteers take part in structured programmes where volunteers have the opportunity to contribute, together with VIN's onsite team, in achieving a lasting difference for their target community's shared vision.
- Overseas volunteers will form part of an already existing local network of volunteers and have the opportunity to fully immerse themselves in Nepali culture and life.
- Through our focus on improving educational systems, volunteers have a unique opportunity to contribute in planning, organizing, and shaping the programs, thereby contributing in a meaningful and rewarding manner.
- To most effectively support volunteer and the local projects we work with, VIN is part of the community, working in partnership with grassroots organizations. We take our work very seriously. We are committed to excellence in everything we do. After all, this is what every volunteer and each local community we work with deserves.

Program fees, excepting operating and administrative expenses while volunteering, will go directly towards supporting VIN's local programs and activities. There is no large overhead to support, or internationally based NGO to which fees are paid. Volunteers can be satisfied knowing that you are directly assisting the local community. No other short-term international volunteer program has such a presence in the community-centered approach toward volunteering abroad.

## **Volunteering Program 2012**

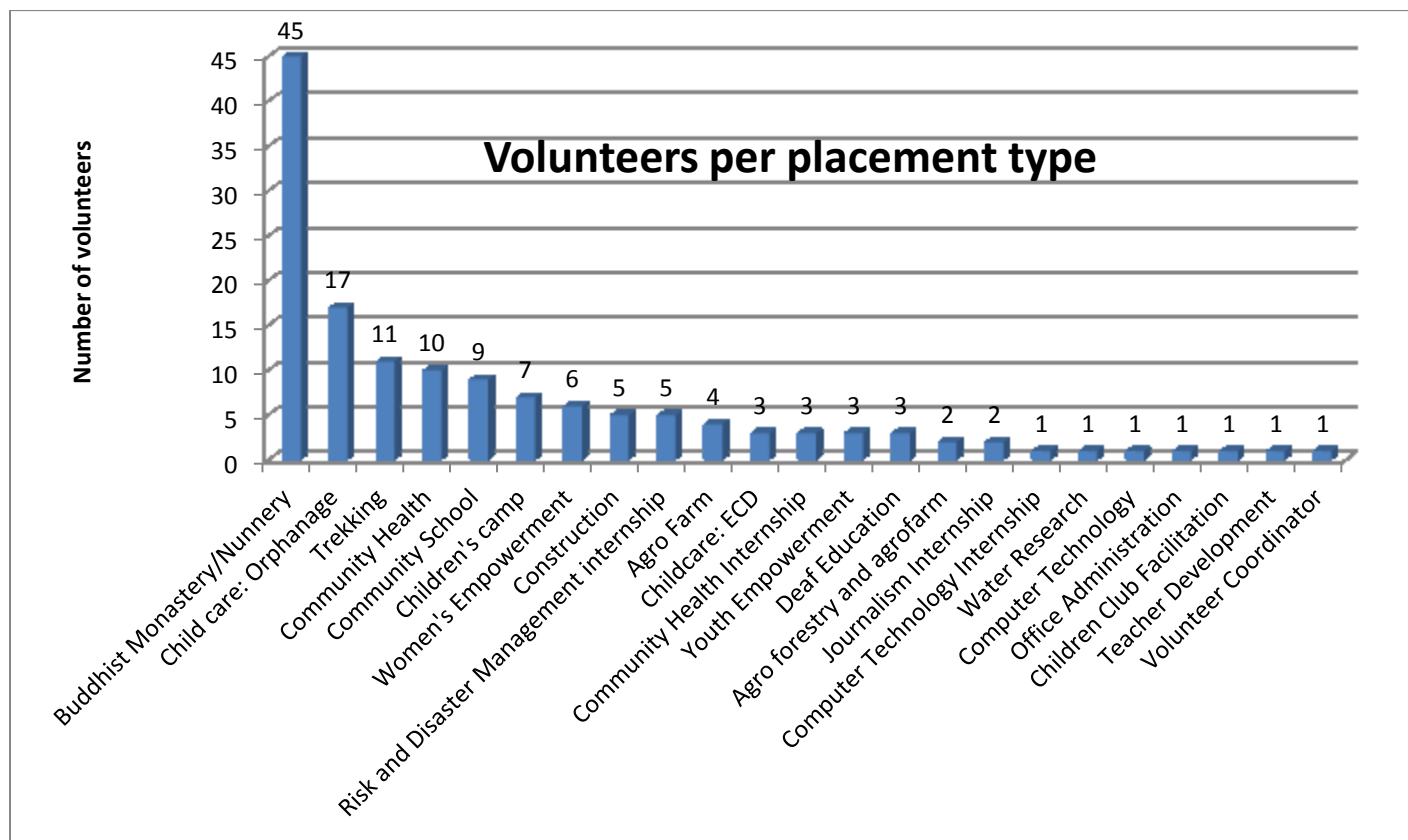
### **Statistical breakdown**

In the year 2012 VIN received 124 volunteers. These were placed in projects over a range of 23 different sectors. The graph below displays the number of volunteer per sector.

By far the most popular placement was in one of the Buddhist Monastery's, with 45 volunteers. The next popular was in one of the orphanages, attracting 17 volunteers.

Note that the graph does not show:

- One placement at a Monastery which was not undertaken.

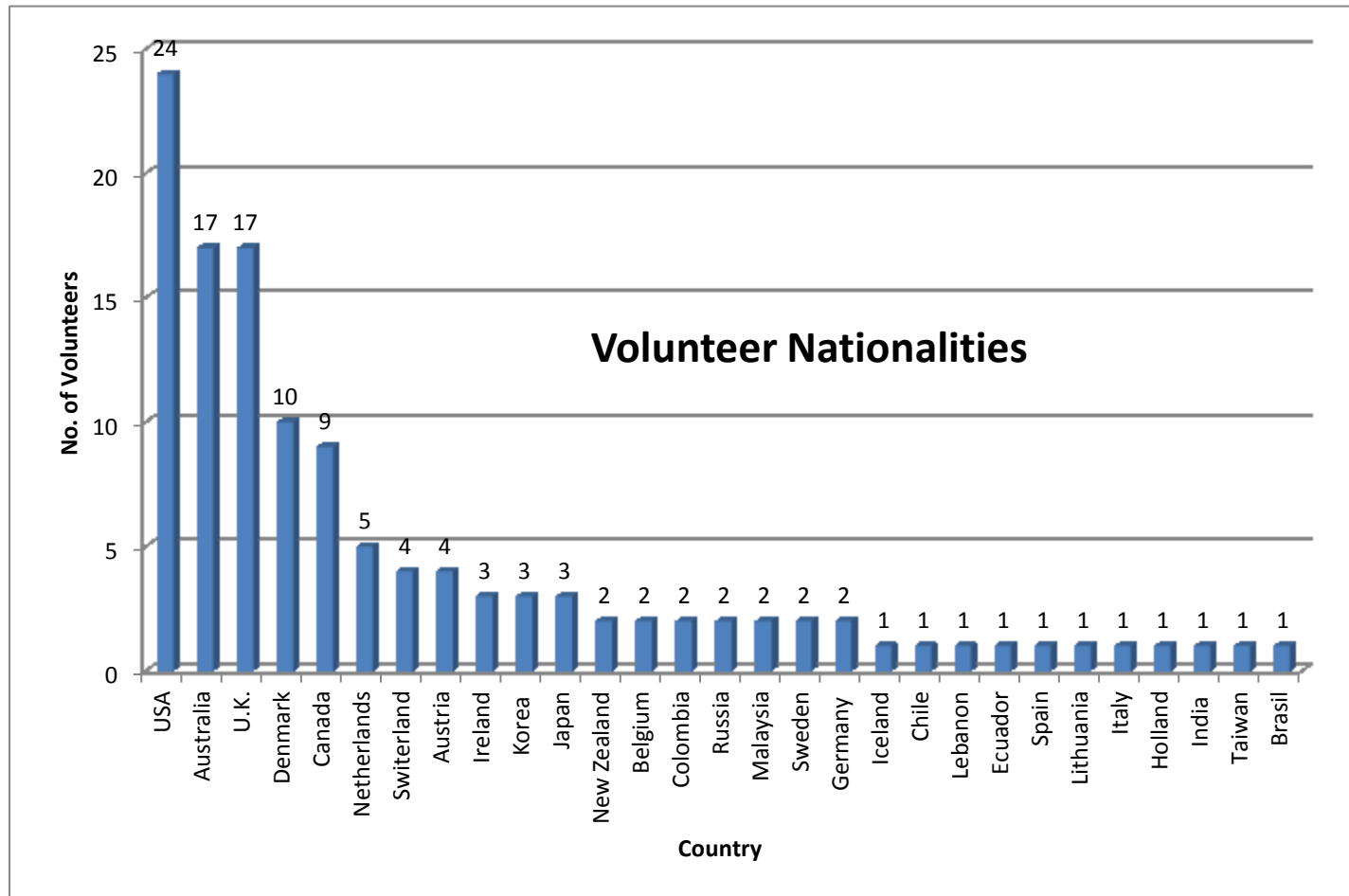


Of the volunteers placed this year, 10 of these undertook internships as part of their own university study programs. These were in the fields of:

Risk	and	disaster	–	5
Community		Health	–	2
Computer		Technology	–	1
Journalism - 2				

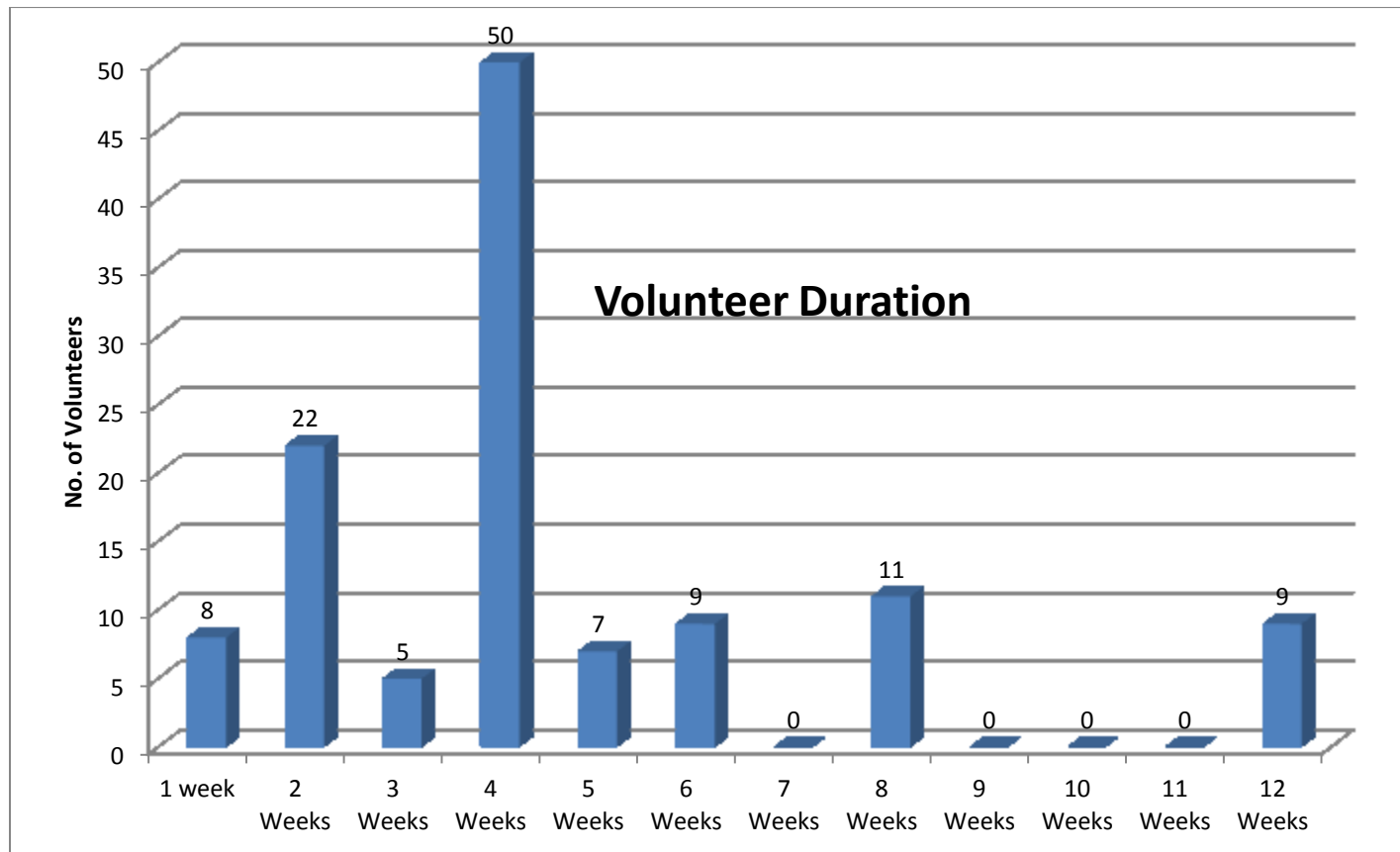
## Volunteer Nationalities

The country with the most volunteers was the USA. This is a change from 2011 when the UK had the most. Surprisingly, Denmark had 10 volunteers, whereas they had none last year.



## Volunteer Duration

The majority of volunteers stayed for 4 weeks.



\*It would be interesting, and useful to understand some more of the motivations for people undertaking a placement with VIN. IE: Are volunteers coming to Nepal primarily to work with VIN, or are they working with VIN only as part of their travel?



## Volunteer Programs

### Teaching English at Buddhist Monastery/ Nunnery:

Teaching English at Buddhist Monastery/Nunnery is an opportunity to exchange each other experience. Its main aim is to make the volunteer's experience the true taste life at Buddhist monastery. Besides, Volunteers are placed to teach English in the monastery and also at the same time they learn many things about Buddhism through practice. Turning to the previous year, 2012, the flow of volunteer were more in this program. Almost half of the volunteer throughout the year were placed in this program. Volunteers from different walk of life came and contributed in their way. Volunteers prepared their lessons of teaching English through games, sports, and different songs.

*"I found it my goal to understand such joy. Why were these simple people so happy and why did I find myself caught up in their joy. Was it the religion, was it the simplicity of life, the interest in helping others or was it their close supportive community."-Dave Nessia, USA, Buddhist Monastery*



### Child Care: Orphanage

VIN has been working with four orphanages i.e. Peace Buddha Child Care Society, Light for Nepal Children Home, Innovative Social Centre and Lotus Children Home. VIN only aim is to develop the children living standard in orphanage from every aspect. Placement of Volunteer in the orphanage would help the children to develop their knowledge, make them hygienically independent and most importantly make some small field trips to bring big smiles on their faces.

There were 17 volunteers in this program in 2012. Comparing the statistical of last year, this year the number has increased by 11. Volunteers have both directly and indirectly made difference in the life of children. Volunteers have also helped some children in long term basis like sponsoring a child whereas some have devoted their time and made their time with the



children worthwhile and memorable. Their presence has made children of orphanage happy as well as knowledgeably prosperous.

Many volunteers faced language as a problem because practically it avoids the listener to understand what the speaker truly wants to express. Not only in orphanage program but international volunteers face this problem in every program. We have conducted different language classes every Friday if any volunteer wants to learn any useful phrases they think is important. This might help the volunteer express what they want to say.

With lots of obstacles and achievements, volunteers have somehow managed to stand up to what the program wants. This is rewarding to both organization as well as Volunteers.

*"I have so many great memories of my time in Nepal and I will never forget the children at LFN children's home. Seeing their happy and excited faces everyday was such a heart-warming experience."- Louise Murphy*

## Base Camp Charity Trek

Base Camp Charity Trek is one of the rewarding programs listed on the list. The trekking is the life time experience here in Nepal. As shared by Volunteers, they start with lots of excitement and a little nervousness and ends with a lot of life changing experience. VIN has been raising money from the Trek. The raised money will help VIN to reach its aim to construct an orphan home, 'Nepal Children Home', which aims to accommodate 50 + orphan and abandoned children.

Looking at the statistical, there were 11 volunteers in 2012. When compared with the year 2011, the number has increased.



## Community Programs

VIN has been working with a marginalized community for last five years in different sectors. VIN has also developed programs for volunteers according to need of the community. Since VIN is focusing on empowering the marginalized group, works and programs for Jitpur Community are designed to fill the gaps of necessity and make the lives prosperous.

## Community Based Programs

### Community Health

Basically, improvements on health issue are one of the pivot works to start the steps for development in Nepal. The people in urban areas may be aware of health and hygiene but the people in rural areas really need some formal education regarding this. Since VIN is empowering the marginalized community, change in this sector is the primary need in the community to grow.



Programs related to Community Health have both volunteering as well as internship. There were 10 Volunteers and 2 interns in the past year 2012. Comparing the numbers of Community Health Volunteer of 2012 to 2011, only two volunteer increased in 2012.

Volunteers involved in this program works both in health camps as well as community to aware the people of community. Volunteers are focused on different activities like assisting the doctor, organizing health campaigns, mobile camps etc. In this way, schools and communities are exposed to local support systems which they can continue to access in the future too. Volunteer's contributions in this field are likely to be very important for the development of community.

Volunteers activities so far:

1. at the health Post
  - Assisting Doctor/ Keeping record
  - Patient Examination
  - Basic Surgery and wound Surgery
2. in Community
  - Aware the people about Infectious diseases through presentations
  - Research on Health Problems which community people may be unknown of
  - Educate the community people on health and hygiene, daily activities that impact their health
  - Health Talks about cervical and uterine collapse to women group
3. Other related places:
  - Knowing the level of the hygiene through survey, visits in school, women groups, and houses.
  - Visiting Schools and talking about basic hygiene with children like washing hand, Brushing teeth, using handkerchief while sneezing etc.
  - Educate people about Waste management and water Purification.

## Children's Camp

VIN's Children's Camp is an extracurricular activity which helps in enhancing the creativity of children and helps them to build proper environment for children to learn from. Since the children of the community are not as much as advance as of children of city, so they are trained in different life skills which will help them to grow and compete.

Volunteers in this program in the year 2012 were seven. There were fewer volunteers in this program compare to other programs like Buddhist monastery or Child care: Orphanage but they were very effective in this program. Volunteers helped in developing the art skills of children and were very productive for both the volunteers and the community.

*"I offered VIN my subject, with I teach in an Austrian highschool, and they liked it. It was a great experience to teach in 5 secondary an 3 primary schools in art, basics of drawing and some creative exercises."*

Marlies Haas



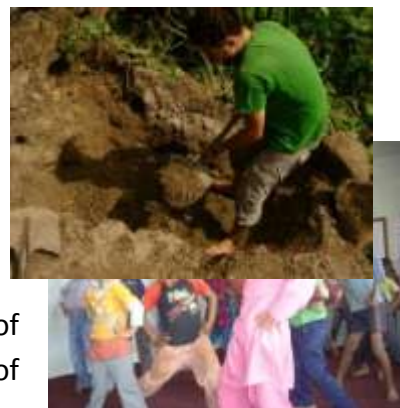
## Women's Empowerment

The status of women in the societies under developed as well as developing country does not equals the status of male. This is one of the reasons why countries like ours are back warded. VIN believes that Women and children are the marginalized group of any community so empowering these groups would bring a positive change in the community. VIN believes that this program would uplift this group and make them confidence enough to go through any situations. Volunteers from different country came to contribute and help in this program. Volunteers in 2012 for Women Empowerment program were 6 in numbers. When we compare to 2012 and 2011, the number of volunteers are same in both the year. This year Volunteers were involved in trainings like life skills, stress management, awareness in Domestic violence etc. volunteers are also involved in the cooperative monthly meetings.

Challenges faced by Volunteers are language problem. All of the working women in the community do not know English language. As a result, the volunteers cannot communicate well which creates understanding problem.

## Construction and Manual work

Majority homes in rural community do not have proper sanitation facilities which lead them to poor health status. VIN designed this program for the betterment of the health status of the community people. This program can be taken as the part of



community health because their objective matches.

Volunteer in this program in 2012 were 5 in number. Comparing the year 2012 and 2011, number of the volunteer are equal i.e. 5. All the volunteers who have been placed in this field are seemed to be happy because they can see a quick result. Their works were productive and they feel very rewarding.

*"Volunteering in toilet construction maybe a hard work, but the smiling faces and the warm 'Namaste' I received each time I arrive in the village is such a reward and a source of motivation. I had really a good time working by team with the men of the families, laughing with women and joking and playing with children."-Pail Bedard, Canada*



### **Risk and Disaster management: Internship**

VIN aims to empower the marginalized community and also educate and aware the people to know about new and pivot topics so that they can be updated. Risk and Disaster management is a very new topic for community as well as a new program for VIN which happened this year. There were 5 interns from Denmark in this program who worked in the community to educate the community people about the risk in their day to day life and also the management of disasters. They focused on prevention measures as well as aftermath solutions. The contribution of Volunteers/Interns in this field is proper and primary because they educated the people about new term.

### **Agro Farm**

VIN's environment and agroforestry volunteer program is one that revolves around giving awareness to the local people on the condition of the environment, or placing volunteers into an agroforestry project set up by a German organization called "Kaule-ev" based in Kaule. VIN believes that the current state of the environment directly impacts one's way of life and general well-being. Therefore, the current environment's well-being is the people's well-being.

Volunteer in this program in this year were 4 in number. Though the numbers of volunteers were less but they found some work that should be corrected like when the farmer uses the chemical fertilizers they should use proper gloves, mask and use scissors to cut the plastics containing the chemical.





## Child Club: ECD

VIN's Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers are set up in rural communities for children of 3 to 5 years of age. These centers work to surround children who belong to marginalized communities, with a friendly learning environment. You as a volunteer may offer your care and support for these children by having VIN place you in one of these ECDs.

There were three volunteers working for ECD centres in year 2012. They worked with the ECD teachers and worked on creating activities that encourage the development of their motor, social, and kinesthetic skills, assisting teachers educate them on various issues such as basic hygiene and maybe even independently teaching the children, giving the local teachers a chance to observe the way you interact with the kids and possibly helping them learn from that. Being a volunteer at an ECD is a hands-on experience that is sure to be rewarding.

## Youth Empowerment

VIN's youth empowerment volunteer program looks to inspire and make proactive the youth of Nepal by integrating them into children's or women's empowerment causes, as well as teaching them life skills. Empowering youth is an important work in marginalized communities. It's a program designed to help youth to work on their community in long term basis.

There were three volunteer in this program in 2012. Volunteer gives training regarding effective communication, teaching English, sets up workshop that gives the youth valuable vocational skills such as CV writing and sessions on problem-solving.



*"I volunteered with VIN for 2 weeks to support the youth empowerment project and it was a fantastic experience.*

*The young people were very friendly and keen to learn and we had great fun together."- Zoe Goddard, UK*

## Other Programs

### Deaf Education

VIN's Working with Deaf and Disabled people volunteer program aims to give the disabled people of Nepal a better shot at quality education. For too long now Nepal's educational system has



neglected the special needs of these kind of people who end up dropping out of school due to the lack of attention that has been given to them. VIN aims to provide deaf schools with volunteers, who may be a part of the advancing literacy program that is being established.

In 2012, there were 3 volunteers in total working for this program. Volunteer's works in the Deaf school, teaching English, and it's an advantage if any volunteer know the sign language.

*"During my time here with VIN I have learned much; not only on a professional level, but also about myself as a person. I have a newfound love for deaf education and the deaf community and I have VIN to thank for that."*

*Jonathan Santiago, USA*

### **Journalism Internship:**

In 2012, there were 2 volunteers working on this program. VIN gives you this opportunity as a career break.

### **Water Research:**

VIN's environment water project volunteer program is a program that centers on the allocation of water within Nepal. VIN aims to designate volunteers the job of investigating and analyzing the system. There were only one volunteer in 2012 in this program.

### **Office Administration:**

VIN's Office Administration volunteer program is fit for volunteers who would like to be a part of the empowerment cause in Nepal, but would rather use their organizational and language proficiency skills within the VIN office headquarters than be in the rural areas of Nepal.

In 2012, there was only a volunteer working on this program. Volunteer of this program worked on utilizing your English skills, correcting and rewriting website content, writing up VIN newsletters that should include updates on VIN program accomplishments and activities, tracking volunteer placements on spreadsheets, handling outgoing emails on behalf of VIN, and overall, being an integral part of the workings of the office, from a day to day basis.

### **Volunteer Coordinator**

The Volunteer Coordinator's main job is to receive the other international volunteers and basically see to it that they are appropriately placed in one of VIN's empowerment programs in accordance with their skills, personality, needs, and the resources available at hand.

In 2012, there was only a volunteer in Volunteer coordinator program.

## Work camp Volunteers

VIN also organized a workcamp for Toilet Construction in August for two weeks. It was organized in the partnership with NDVA. There were 7 participants from Japan-3, Korea-2, Thailand-2 and Nepal-3. The objectives were:

- To construct toilets to the needy households.
- To raise awareness on health and sanitation to community people.
- To promote friendship, understanding and solidarity among local people and international workcampers.
- To develop cultural immersion



The camp members could construct 5 toilets for poor families of Jitpurphedi community.

## Encounter and experience of Volunteers

With the articles and some of the hand written notes of most of the volunteers, it came to a conclusion that the programs of VIN are life changing and have an endless list of new and bizarre experience. The volunteers have encountered a lot of problems and inappropriateness in community program as well as other program which helped VIN in its growth. Also the positive as well as negative suggestions got by VIN through volunteers are equally important to improve.

*"Thank you for picking me to volunteer with lovely kids. It was a lifetime experience for me  
All the very best!"- Shivraj Kaur*

*"You have given me a rich experience to fully be emerged within a Buddhist Monastery. I have  
developed a strong connection to many amazing people and have had a brilliant life  
experience"- Dave Nessia, USA*

*"Absolutely fantastic experience!! Even the disgusting mystery bugs/creatures that I had to deal  
with on Daily basis were worth the time coming here. Thank you." – Dina Salih, Canada*

*"Truly Nepalese experience. No mount everest can provide the warmth and heart welcoming  
experience. All the very best in VIN's visions and every success. Love always"- Yuni Lee, Malaysia*



*"First there was sunshine followed by shower but it all boiled down to the beauty of the people.  
Forever in my heart. Be well Nepal" – David Ian Rogers, UK*

## **Feedback for Organization, Host Family/Monastery and Program**

### **For Organization**

Induction: VIN Introduction

- "Good to understand VIN's vision and ambitions"
- "Great warm welcome..."
- "I felt included in the group"

Nepali Language

- "More attention to pronunciation and more time for pair work might be good"
- "Very useful. Shradha is perfect!"

Cultural Tips

- "Nice that we spend time on this. It is important to know"
- "Would be interesting to hear about Nepali festivals a well"
- "I learnt a lot of things"

Health Tips

- "Nice to have a doctor to tell us this"
- "I already had the vaccinations, I already knew a lot of this stuff"

Sightseeing

This section was rated very positively on most, if not all the forms

The remaining categories (Program orientation, teaching tips) received a wider of ratings, with some reoccurring themes that came up in the comments including:

Program Orientation:

- "I have no clue what I'm doing exactly.."

- “I understood my general role and my daily schedule. I did not know of any work done by past volunteers and I was not clear on my work schedule. (Contract said work Sun-Fri, but I was informed I had to stay in on Saturdays, so I had no proper schedule”.
- “Need to know what past volunteers have done”

#### Teaching Tips

- "Could include more tips and games if there is time"
- "Enthusiastic, provides lots of inspiration"

#### For Host family

Host families have Very Basic Facilities. But the families are really good, warm, friendly and welcoming. They made everything comfortable to live. Food was enough and very good. Separate room was provided for volunteers.

#### For Monastery

- Food: Food was very good and provided adequate amount which was really good.
- Room: Private rooms were provided. Rooms are clean and cozy.
- Other Facilities: Most of the monasteries got very good comments on the facilities as well. Some monasteries do have hot shower, good bathrooms, and proper sanitation system. They provide you a good range of facilities.
- Communication: Language is a problem in every program you choose but in monasteries though some communication are non-verbal but it is easily understandable.

#### Significant achievements

##### In Community Health:

- Ran Mobile Health Camps in different areas like school, wards of Jitpur community.
- Organized Health talks and awareness programs on women health problem in the community.
- Constructed toilets for proper health sanitation

##### In Women Empowerment:

- Trainings on assertive communication, life skills, stress management for women's group
- Awareness on domestic violence

- Assist women with income generation programs
- Promoted education and sanitation among the women's group

In Youth Empowerment:

- Trainings on Project Management

In Child Care: Orphanage

- Education regarding Health and Hygiene
- Teaching English verbally as well as written

In Buddhist Monastery:

- Teaching English through different extracurricular activities like games, sports and songs

## Generalization Drawn from Volunteer Program

In 2012, there were 142 volunteers/interns working with VIN. Buddhist Monastery is the program which had most volunteers in 2012. Throughout the year, achievement of VIN as well as volunteer has an endless list. Some of the significant achievements are listed above in different category.

VIN has not only achieved some goals in year 2012 but also earned substantial suggestion from volunteers to grow. Through some good and bad, VIN now has some goals to be add, mistakes to be correct and networks to grow. Also from the experience shared by the volunteers, VIN is encouraged to make the programs more worthwhile.



## Volunteer Testimonies

"When, in our comfortable country, we are surfing on the web to find a volunteering organization, we expect to find a really reliable one where our commitment (time, Money, emotion) will be the most useful to the people we modestly propose to help.

After 5 weeks of volunteering with VIN, I can now say that I found a good one.

I choose the toilet construction project inside their community health program. In Nepal, each year, thousands of children die after diarrhea, due to the lack of safe water, toilet facilities and appropriate medical care and toilet construction is an almost simple and efficient way to improve the health of a population, especially the children who are more vulnerable.

VIN knows very well this situation and develop in Jitpur Phedi , strong relation with this community. I personally observed how VIN, his staff and his volunteers are appreciated and I

have now the conviction that my modest contribution, helping four families to have a toilet, can make a difference in their daily life.

Volunteering in toilet construction maybe a hard work, but the smiling faces and the warm 'Namaste' I received each time I arrive in the village is such a reward and a source of motivation. I had really a good time working by team with the men of the families, laughing with women and joking and playing with children.

Living in a host family, sharing their daily life(Nepali style), eating the best Daal bhat in Nepal is an amazing and so rich experience the solidarity between the members of this family their smile and joy even when thy work hard and the living condition are difficult will be a source of inspiration after going back at home. We, occidental people are so fast to ask more and more from life and to complaining in our selfish life

And volunteering with VIN was also to be part of a warm and so friendly large family including the direction , all the staff, the host family, the population of Jitpur Phedi and all the others volunteer or different programs.

**Paul Bedard (Canada)**

**Construction and Manual work**

**1 Oct to 4 Nov**

"I originally found VIN online as I was looking for an organization that would allow me to do some volunteer teaching during my time in Nepal. I chose VIN, as opposed to any of the many other volunteer organizations, because it was obvious that the money given for the volunteer programs was going to the investment of other development projects, and not into the pockets of the people working for the organization. VIN is very open about their finances, and will willingly tell you where your money goes and how it is being spent. Since VIN is looking to develop rural Nepali communities in a sustainable, holistic way, as opposed to just blindly donating goods or funds, I decided this was the best organization to support.

Before coming to Nepal and starting to volunteer, I had no idea what to expect. I didn't know what the students or the monastery would be like, and I was open to anything. I had done some teaching and work with children before, but never with children where we didn't speak the same language. I thought that the children at the monastery would be the Western stereotype of Buddhists: relaxed, self-reflective and peaceful. Instead, my students were quite wild, often yelling, running, hitting or spitting. Immediately, I had to change my perceptions of what it would be like to teach them. After working with the children for a while, and setting clear goals and boundaries, I was able to learn how to manage the classroom and effectively teach the students some basics of English they didn't know before.

This experience of teaching challenging children who don't speak English, in a challenging environment where I had to be very independent and seek support on my own, ended up being

very rewarding. I hope to be an educator back in the US, and because of this experience and the challenges it presented, I know that I will be a better teacher. Also the experience of learning about another culture and different ways of life will forever impact me and help me put my own life and privilege in perspective. “

**Maya Barlev, (USA)**

**Buddhist Monastery**

**1-28 Nov.**

“My time at VIN was one of the greatest experiences in my life. As a student of Technical Medicine, my goal was to achieve some clinical experience next to contributing in the public health sector. Assisting the doctor in the health post gave me the expected clinical experience and my time educating children about health related subjects was a great experience too. VIN also placed me at a lovely host family, where I had a great time and it really made me feel like home. Thank you, VIN. Thank you, host family. I will always remember.”

**Tom Konert, (The Netherlands)**

**Community Health**

**1 Oct – 23 Dec**

**For detail visit -** <http://www.volunteeringnepal.org/volunteer-testimonials>