

BASUNDHARA & BALAJU WOMEN'S LITERACY & EMPOWERMENT CLASSES

KATHMANDU

Jan 2015

Education for women has not been a priority in Nepal and as a result, there are many women who struggle with literacy and numeracy. Recently, small community-run classes have been set up to allow these women to gain some education

The Placement

This is a dual teaching placement for ladies 24 years old and over. Volunteers have the opportunity to teach at Basundhara in the morning and Balaju in the afternoon.

Maximum Number of Volunteers / Minimum Length of placement:

This placement can accommodate up to 2 volunteers at any one time. To be eligible you must be signed up for a minimum of 3 weeks. Priority will be given to those volunteers with the longest placement.

Volunteer's Primary Responsibilities:

- to teach basic English and maths, alongside the local teachers
- to work with the local teachers to introduce them to creative teaching methods
- to create additional teaching materials and aids to be used in the classes
- to create and run workshops hand in hand with the local teachers on such topics as women's health, nutrition, simple first aid, income generating ideas etc.
- to share any teaching materials created with VSN for future use

Number of Students in each class:

Basundhara – c20 registered ladies with an average daily attendance of about 15

Balaju – c6 registered ladies with an average daily attendance of about 3.

Student's Ages:

Each class is different but generally ages range from about 20 - 60 years old.

Class Days/Hours:

Sunday – Friday

Basundhara – 12:00 – 14:00hrs

Balaju – 14:30 – 16:30hrs

There are no set term times as with regular schools. Classes are generally only closed for major festival days.

Teachers:

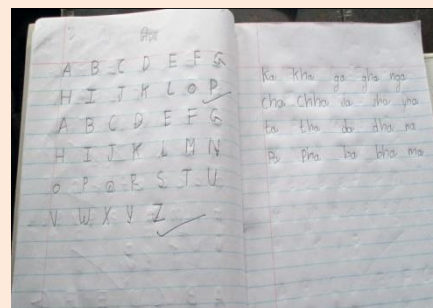
Basundhara – either Indu Aryal or Sariswati Sapkota

Balaju – Neelu Thapa

Class Facilities & Resources:

Each class has a dedicated teaching area and the ladies in both classes have copies of an English textbook, a notebook and pencil.

Both classes are held in a small room in the local community buildings and the ladies all sit on the floor and work off their laps. There is a whiteboard in each classroom.



Learning the English & Nepali alphabets



Basundhara Community Building



Basundhara Literacy Class



Balaju Community Building



Balaju Literacy Class

Type of Resources Needed:

- Whiteboard pens/rubbers
- Flash cards (laminated if possible)
- Educational posters
- Coloured paper, pencils, scissors, glue etc. for making resources and taking craft sessions
- Additional teaching resources such as teaching clocks, globes, giant dice etc.

Note: VSN relies solely on donations for such resources, so please contact us in advance if you are interested in this placement.

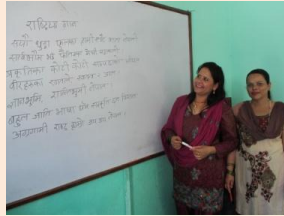
Literacy Class Locations, Transport etc.

Basundhara

These classes have been running for about 3 years

Teachers:

Indu Aryal 9849644164
Sariswati Saptoka 9841702205
Very basic English spoken



Class Location:

The classes are located in the Surya Maya Tamang Community Centre in Shree Tole, Basundhara, a 10 minute walk from your host family. The community class room is directly opposite the Shree Tole arch shown in the first photo below.



Shree Tole, Basundhara



Classroom, Shree Tole



Enter through these gates and cross basketball court to reach classroom

Balaju – Bishnumati Ladies Education Group

These classes have been running for about 3 years

Teacher:

Neelu Thapa 9818229713
Good English spoken



Class Location:

The classes are located in a small community room in Jagriti Tole, Balaju, a 15 minute bus/micro ride from Basundara, around the ring road to the west. The community class room is a 2 minute walk from Balaju Chowk (where you will get off the bus) just behind the Chakrapath Oil Centre Petrol Pump. Walk under the arch on the far side of the petrol pump and the green community building is just down on the right hand side. The entrance to the room is at the back of the building.



Community Building, Jagriti Tole



Balaju Chowk (roundabout)



Chakrapath Petrol Pump

Transport – How to get to the Balaju class from Basundara:

You will need to walk to the main road (ring road) a 5 minute walk from the classroom. Cross the road so you are facing where you came from and take any bus/micro heading around the ring road. Ask for Balaju Chowk (2kms). When you see the roundabout with the red Coke umbrella in the middle, this is Balaju Chowk and the bus stop is just after it. Walk back and take the RIGHT turn at the chowk; just 2 minutes up the road you will see the petrol station on the LEFT . Walk under the arch to the Community building, which will be on your RIGHT.

To return to Basundhara, retrace your steps to Balaju Chowk, cross the road and take any bus/micro asking for Basundhara. Get off opposite to where you boarded the bus earlier and make your way home.

Host Family Location, Accommodation & Facilities etc.

Area Name: Dhapasi Heights, North KTM	Nearest Large Town/City: Kathmandu	District: Bagmati
Distance from Central KTM: Approx 5kms	Main VSN Contacts: Sue 9841730133 – Volunteer Coordinator Kamaal 9851060021 – KTM Placements Officer	

Host Family Location & Accommodation:

Volunteers will live with a host family located in Dhapasi Heights, just outside the ring road, in the north of Kathmandu. All volunteers, unless they chose otherwise, will have their own room. This is an urban homestay, so the level of accommodation tends to be slightly more comfortable than village homestays, with indoor toilet and possible shower.

Shops:

This is an urban area and there are plenty of shops within a 10 minute walk from the host family where volunteers can buy everything from new jeans, washing powder and food. About a 20 minute walk away there are also two large supermarkets – Bhat Bhateni on the ring road and Salways on the way into Thamel, just past the American Embassy.

Health:

There are pharmacies, poly clinics and also Nepali style hospitals within 10 minutes walk of your host family. The main international traveller's clinic is a 10 – 20 minute taxi ride away (3kms).

Communications & Banks:

All Nepali mobile networks work in Dhapasi Heights and there are internet cafes in this area., including one directly opposite where the Basundhara class is held. Alternatively you can bring your own laptop and purchase a local SIM-enabled, plug-in data card from the Ncell centre, located on the road to Thamel, just 2 mins down from Chakraph Chowk.

The nearest ATMS are a 10 minute walk from your host family just by the ring road. Alternatively, there are many banks, ATMs and money changers in Thamel, the tourist area just a 20 – 30min bus ride away (3kms).

Transport to Thamel, Central KTM:

Some buses/micros run directly from Dhapasi Heights to central Kathmandu or alternatively, buses/micros run constantly from Chakraph Chowk on the ring road, a 10 min walk from your host family, from early in the morning to early evening. From the chowk you want to take any bus heading to Ratna Park. For Thamel you need to get off at Lainchour, just past the Standard Chartered Bank on the left, and walk the last 5 – 10 mins.

Essential Equipment / Personal Effects

Below are some essential items you will need to bring with you should you consider this placement. This list is not exhaustive by any means

- Sleeping bag (lightweight for summer months, warm for winter months – you will be provided with bedding)
- Warm jacket , hat, scarf etc. (winter months)
- A set of lightweight waterproofs and umbrella (summer months – umbrella all seasons)
- A pair of sandals or flip flops for indoor use and sturdy shoes/boots for outdoor use
- Head torch and/or flash light plus extra batteries
- Water bottle and water purifying drops such as Piyus (very cheap and easily available in KTM)
- First aid kit including rehydration salts
- Feminine hygiene products (available to purchase in supermarkets) and small plastic bags for disposal
- Toilet roll and hand sanitiser (available to purchase in KTM)
- Ear plugs (if you find sleeping difficult in a noisy environment)
- Camera
- Books, cards, games, iPod/iPad etc to keep you occupied during the evenings, as it gets dark between 18:00hrs – 19:30hrs depending on the time of year
- A mobile phone (unlocked) and charger if you wish to buy a local SIM card
- Teaching materials/ideas

Essential Volunteer Qualities for this Placement

This placement is for those with a passion to share their knowledge with both their co teachers and students and with a desire to help improve the education and lives of Nepal's uneducated ladies.

To succeed in this placement it is essential that you come equipped with the following personality traits and skills sets:

- A passion to pass on your own experience and skills to others, so they learn, grow and share these skills
- An interest in women's education and empowerment
- A desire to help the ladies of Nepal
- A strong work ethic and commitment to your classes
- Happy to run some teacher training classes if required
- The desire to succeed
- A sense of humour
- Patience and perseverance
- To be inventive, resourceful and creative
- To be able to work with limited/minimal supplies – i.e. to be able to create something out of nothing!
- An ability to thrive in an environment where language differences will be an issue
- To embrace a new culture without judgment
- To make an effort with your Nepali in order to increase your communication abilities
- The ability to live and work with little or no privacy
- A sense of adventure (you will be required to travel between classes by local bus)
- To do pre arrival preparation

