



Volunteer Program

Honduras Appendix

Bridges to Prosperity

Updated October, 2008

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INTRODUCTION

Zoe and Riccardo Pacciani moved to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in May, 2007, to kick off the Bridge Building program in that country.

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After arriving for the first time in Tegucigalpa, you'll spend the first few days becoming acquainted with Zoe, one of our interns, or one of the engineers she is training that work for our NGO partners. In Tegucigalpa, you will purchase food/water and supplies for your first trip to the bridge site. Once you're prepared, you'll travel with either Zoe, our intern, or one of our partner engineers or community techs to the site. To reach the bridge sites in Honduras will require 3-6 hours of traveling from Tegucigalpa. You will either travel in a vehicle owned by B2P or one of our NGO partners, or by bus. When you arrive at the community, you'll meet the community and review the current state of the bridge under construction with your escort. You and your escort will set up camp either next to the bridge or in the closest town (sometimes the bridges are a half mile or more from the nearest town). Over the next day or two, your escort will make sure that you know what the schedule of work is, what is to be built, and make sure that the materials needed are on site. When you are comfortable with the escort leaving, and have a good working relationship with the village/municipality leaders and workers, you may be left to carry on alone while your escort goes onto another bridge site. You will also be given several ways to contact both the B2P team in Tegucigalpa or our NGO partners. You may need to call one of these contacts from time-to-time to get construction questions answered, or to report a labor or material shortage issue.

After being on the bridge site for 5 or 6 days, you will be encouraged to take a break by traveling to the nearest town with a hotel and hot showers. There, you will be able to restock your supplies, see the sites, and relax. If you need to travel back to Tegucigalpa for any reason, this is okay. You are your own boss! But, volunteers are encouraged to stay on-site as much as possible during their stay. Thereafter, this 5-6 days on-site and 2 days off cycle continues until it is time to head home.

When you visit the nearest town, you will find internet cafes, that will allow you to check in with your family and friends. Also, there is cell service in most of the larger towns, and this coverage does extend out a ways into the country. You may be able to rent a cell phone while you are in Honduras, so that you can call without traveling all the way into town. Also, depending on the bridge site you work on, some of our bridge site communities have both cell coverage and internet. But, most do not.

We also encourage volunteers, if they can afford it, to spend one extra week after they volunteer to be a tourist. There are several options. Our favorite is flying to Roatan, which is a Honduran island located in the Caribbean. It has lots of hotels and bungalows, many of them very reasonable (\$30-150 per day). <http://www.roatanet.com/> You can also make a side trip to Tikal in Guatemala <http://www.tikalpark.com/> (this is spectacular), or head to Belize to do some diving. <http://www.scubadivingbelize.com/04.html> We do not recommend the Mayan ruins at Copan. Tikal is 100 times better.

HISTORY AND CULTURE...

HISTORY

Christopher Columbus landed on the mainland near modern Trujillo in 1502 and named the country Honduras ("Depths") for the deep waters off its coast. Conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived in 1525, and left six months later to return to Spain. During the period leading up to the conquest of Honduras by Pedro de Alvarado, many indigenous people along the north coast of

Honduras were captured and taken as slaves to work on Spain's Caribbean plantations. It wasn't until Pedro de Alvarado defeated the indigenous resistance headed by Çiçumba near Ticamaya, that the Spanish began to conquer the country in 1536. Alvarado divided the native towns and gave their labor to the Spanish conquistadors in repartimiento. Further indigenous uprisings near Gracias a Dios, Comayagua, and Olancho occurred in 1537-38. The uprising near Gracias a Dios was led by Lempira, who is honored today by the name of the Honduran currency.

During the colonial period, Honduras came under the control of the Captaincy General of Guatemala, and the towns of Comayagua and Tegucigalpa -- today's capital -- arose as mining centers.

Honduras, along with the other Central American provinces, gained independence from Spain in 1821; it then briefly was annexed to the Mexican Empire. In 1823, Honduras joined the newly formed United Provinces of Central America. Before long, social and economic differences between Honduras and its regional neighbors exacerbated harsh partisan strife among its leaders, bringing about the federation's collapse in 1838-39. General Francisco Morazán, a Honduran national hero, led unsuccessful efforts to maintain the federation. Restoring Central American unity remained the officially stated chief aim of Honduran foreign policy until after World War I. In 1888, a projected railroad line from the Caribbean coast to the capital, Tegucigalpa, ran out of money when it reached San Pedro Sula, resulting in its growth into the nation's main industrial center and second largest city. Traditionally lacking both an economic infrastructure and social and political integration, Honduras's agriculturally based economy came to be dominated by United States companies, notably United Fruit Company and Standard Fruit Company, which established vast banana plantations along the north coast. The economic dominance and political influence of these companies was so great from the late 19th until the mid 20th century that it coined the term banana republic. During the relatively stable years of the Great Depression, authoritarian General Tiburcio Carías controlled Honduras. His ties to dictators in neighboring countries and to U.S. banana companies helped him maintain power until 1948. By then, provincial military leaders had begun to gain control of the two major parties, the National Party of Honduras (PNH) and the Liberal Party of Honduras (PLH).

In October 1955, after a general strike by banana workers on the north coast in 1954, young military reformists staged a coup that installed a provisional junta. Capital punishment was abolished in 1956, though the last person to be executed was in 1940 (The current PNH presidential candidate Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo wants to bring it back). There were constituent assembly elections in 1957 which appointed Ramón Villeda as President, and itself becoming a national Congress with a 6-year term. The PLH ruled during 1957-63. The military began to become a professional institution independent of politics, with the newly created military academy graduating its first class in 1960. In October 1963, conservative military officers preempted constitutional elections and deposed Villeda in a bloody coup. These officers exiled PLH members and governed under General Oswaldo López until 1970.

In July 1969, Honduras was invaded by El Salvador in the short Football war. Tensions in the aftermath of the conflict remain. A civilian president for the PNH, Ramón Ernesto Cruz, took power briefly in 1970 until, in December 1972, Oswaldo López staged another coup. This time round, he adopted more progressive policies, including land reform. López's successors continued armed forces modernization programs, building army and security forces, and concentrating on Honduran air force superiority over its neighbors. During the governments of General Juan Alberto Melgar (1975-78) and General Policarpo Paz (1978-83), Honduras built most of its physical infrastructure and electricity and terrestrial telecommunications systems, both of which are state monopolies. The country experienced economic growth during this period, with greater international demand for its products and the increased availability of foreign commercial capital. In 1979, the country returned to civilian rule. A constituent assembly was popularly elected in April 1980 and general elections were held in November 1981. A new constitution was approved in 1982 and the PLH government of Roberto Suazo assumed power. Between 1979 and 1985, under John Negroponte's appointment as U.S. diplomat from 1981 to 1985, U.S. military and economic aid to Honduras

jumped from \$31 million to \$282 million. Honduras agreed in exchange to become a base for an estimated 15,000 Nicaraguan Contras, providing logistical and intelligence support, and joining the U.S. military in joint maneuvers. Negroponte himself supervised the construction of the El Aguacate air base where Contras were trained (they also used Lepaterique, where Argentinian *Batallón de Inteligencia 601* was training Contras). Between 1979 and 1985, U.S. development aid fell from 80% of the total to 6%, then picked up steadily thereafter.

As the November 1985 election approached, the PLH could not settle on a presidential candidate and interpreted election law as permitting multiple candidates from any one party. The PLH claimed victory when its presidential candidates collectively outpolled the PNH candidate, Rafael Leonardo Callejas. José Azcona, the candidate receiving the most votes (27%) among the PLH, assumed the presidency in January 1986. With strong endorsement and support from the Honduran military, the Suazo Administration ushered in the first peaceful transfer of power between civilian presidents in more than 30 years. Suazo, relying on U.S. support, created ambitious social and economic development projects to help with a severe economic recession and with the perceived threats of regional instability. Honduras became host to the largest Peace Corps mission in the world and non-governmental organizations and international voluntary agencies proliferated.

In November 2001, the National Party won presidential and parliamentary elections. The PNH gained 61 seats in Congress and the PLH won 55. The PLH candidate Rafael Pineda was defeated by the PNH candidate Ricardo Maduro, who took office in January 2002. On November 27, 2005 the PLH candidate Manuel Zelaya beat the PNH candidate and current Head of Congress Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo, and became the new President on January 27, 2006.

ECONOMY

Honduras, the second poorest country in Central America (Haiti is lowest) and one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, with an extraordinarily unequal distribution of income and massive unemployment, is banking on expanded trade under the US-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and on debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. The country has met most of its macroeconomic targets, and began a three-year IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) program in February 2004. The economy relies heavily on a narrow range of exports, notably bananas and coffee, making it vulnerable to natural disasters and shifts in commodity prices, but in recent years has experienced a rapid rise in exports of light manufacturers. Growth remains dependent on the economy of the US, its largest trading partner, and on reduction of the high crime rate, as a means of attracting and maintaining investment. Honduras currently receives about \$500 million in annual foreign aid, and it is believed that approximately 20-30% of its economy comes from earnings and wages sent home from Honduran immigrants working in the USA. The average Purchasing Power Parity per capita in Honduras is \$3,100. For the USA, this figure is \$44,000, almost 14 times as much.

The country was devastated by Hurricane Mitch in 1998, which killed about 5,600 people and caused approximately \$2 billion in damage.

MEDICINE AND VACCINATIONS

Please consult the website of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>. You will most likely need to take an anti-malarial drug (chloriquine is recommended for Honduras) during your entire stay.

VISAS AND PASSPORTS

<http://www.emb.com/>

<http://www.embassy.org/embassies/>

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1229.html.

Entry and exit requirements: No visas are needed to get into Honduras for the vast majority of nationalities including Americans and EEC passport holders. Upon arrival, a 30 day visa will be granted automatically and this can be easily extended for a small fee.

For more information concerning entry and exit requirements, travelers may contact the Embassy of Honduras at 3007 Tilden Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone: (202) 966-7702; or a Honduran consulate in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Phoenix, and San Francisco. The Honduran Embassy's e-mail address is embassy@honduras.emb.org, and interested individuals may visit the Embassy's website for additional contact information through <http://www.embassy.org/> or <http://www.state.gov/>. For tourist information or suggestions, please contact the Honduras Institute of Tourism at 1-800-410-9608 (in the United States), at 1-800-222-TOUR (8687) (within Honduras only) or visit their website <http://www.hondurastips.honduras.com/>. The Honduran Ministry of Tourism's website is <http://www.letsghonduras.com>.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The safety of our volunteers' is of the utmost importance to us. We care about our volunteers and want to do everything in our power to keep you safe during your trip. Nonetheless, there are dangers and risks that you need to be aware of in every country.

LONELY PLANET HONDURAS RECOMMENDATIONS

Pages 305 and 306 from the January, 2007 edition of *Lonely Planet: Honduras and the Bay Islands*.

Honduras has a very high crime and violence rate, though the vast majority of travelers experience no problems. Pick pocketing and petty theft are most common, and assault is possible. Take ordinary precautions, like not wearing flashy jewelry, not walking around with your camera out, or pulling out a wad of cash. Tegucigalpa and especially San Pedro Sula are the worst places for street crime; the downtown areas of both are fine during the day, but less-so after dark. Consider taking a cab when it gets late. If you are mugged, do not resist.

In general, small towns are much safer than big cities. Watch yourself on the north coast, especially on the beach: avoid leaving items unattended and do not walk on the beach at night. It seems to be a favorite tactic of thieves to wait in the trees along a deserted stretch of beach, especially after dark, and wait for someone to happen by.

MORE SECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS AND REAL TIME UPDATES

- I. The Embassy Regional Security Office (RSO) sends out info on crime threats. Once established here, you can register with the Embassy to get these bulletins.
- II. U.S. State Department – http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1135.html. Read this website *before* your trip, and check it every week during your trip.

- III. Warden System – You can also sign up with the Embassy to receive US volunteer citizen warnings for a specific area.

PEACE CORPS HONDURAS RECOMMENDATIONS

This section includes safety tips from the Peace Corps office in Honduras. Honduras has the largest network of Peace Corp Volunteers in the world. We highly recommend that you get in contact with the Peace Corp Volunteer closest to your bridge site. For, they will have very up to date information on security issues. You can find out who is closest to your site, by contacting:

- I. San Pedro Sula
- a. This city has the highest crime rate in Honduras, and we encourage volunteers to avoid it as much as possible. If you do choose to visit the city, please follow these recommendations.
 - b. Do not walk at night, even in a group. Call a taxi: Radio Taxi (557-9147 and 557-9172)
 - c. Trusted Accommodations:
 - i. Los Molinos B&B (556-6004 and 987-5775) - Located 9 blocks away from the City Mall, toward the mountains in a neighborhood called Villa Eugenia, which is basically a residential area. (Lps. 380.00)
 - ii. Apart-Hotel Monte Verde (556-6222) - Located behind the City Mall (Lps. 767.00)
 - iii. Hotel El Almendral (556-8989) - Located behind the City Mall (Lps. 767.00)
 - d. ☒The following establishments are off limits in San Pedro Sula:
 - i. Confetti's Discotheque
 - ii. Kawamas Discotheque
 - iii. Mantras Discotheque
 - iv. El Fogoncito Restaurant
 - v. Hotel La Gran Rosa
 - vi. Consider any place known in San Pedro Sula as "below the line" (referring to the train railroad tracks) as an Off Limit area. This is where most serious crimes occur. Unfortunately, many bus stations connecting Tela, La Ceiba and Puerto Cortés are in this area. If you must pass through this area, use a taxi; don't attempt to walk! It is extremely dangerous, and most pickpockets carry weapons. Volunteers should limit their visit to locations in what is known as the "Zona Viva," except the places listed above.
- II. Tegucigalpa
- a. Do not walk at night, even in groups. Call a taxi (radio taxi numbers: 225-1555, 225-4346 and 232-2352)
 - b. Trusted Accommodations:
 - i. Hotel Guadalupe 2 (238-5009) - Located in Barrio Guadalupe, Avenida Juan Manuel Galvez, Primera Calle. This hotel is situated three blocks away from Peace Corps Honduras Office.
 - ii. Grasshopper Hostel (234-2002) - Conveniently located across from the airport in Tegucigalpa. (www.grasshopperhostel.com)
 - iii. Hotel Honduras Maya: (220-5000) - Located a few blocks away from the Peace Corps Office in Col. Palmira.
 - c. The following establishments are off limits in Tegucigalpa:
 - i. Bars around the Boulevard Juan Pablo II, including Rock Castle
 - ii. Bikers Bar, located in Boulevard Morazán

- III. National Parks
 - a. Hike with a tour guide. Do not go by your self or in small groups.
 - b. If you are to visit the Rio Plátano Biosphere in La Moskitia, we recommend that you do it in the dry season (For this area, the dry season is late January to the end of May).

- IV. Beaches
 - a. Tela, La Ceiba, Bay Island, and Cayos Cochinos are popular; however, many incidents have taken place at these locations. Triunfo de La Cruz in Tela has a history of violent crimes committed against tourists in general.
 - b. To minimize the risk of incidents, follow these recommendations:
 - i. Avoid isolated beaches, especially after dusk.
 - ii. Avoid using ATM machines if you are alone or in a small group.
 - iii. Transportation can be a challenging experience at night. Make arrangements to get a ride back to your hotel, since frequently there is no service at night.

- V. General Notices on Criminal Activity
 - a. Robberies by criminals on motorcycles (usually two men on one bike) have been a common problem throughout Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. There have been incidents of men on a motorcycle grabbing bags and/or purses from men and women, robbing from and/or carjacking stopped vehicles with an open driver's window, harassing women that are walking on the streets and sidewalks, and robbing security guards of their weapons. Situational awareness is critical to not becoming a target.
 - b. Carjackings - Several Peace Corps groups and foreigners have been carjacked in Honduras. To minimize the risk of being carjacked, follow these recommendations:
 - i. Try not to drive a vehicle full of goods driving on isolated roads. If you have to do this, try to arrange a police escort. This is not unusual in Honduras, and local mayors should be able to help make arrangements. Police should not be paid for this service. If you do feel the need to pay them, do so with food and accommodations. Two policemen in uniform should be sufficient. It's best if they can bring their own patrol vehicle; however, in many cases this not possible.
 - ii. The road between Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, especially between La Barca (close to San Pedro Sula) and Siguatepeque, has a higher rate of carjackings. Do not travel on this part of the road later than 3:00 p.m.
 - c. Roads - The following roads are off limits for Peace Corps Volunteers:
 - i. E-Zone East: Road from Salamá, Olancho going north to Olanchito, Yoro.
 - ii. E-Zone East: Road from Silca going East towards San Francisco de la Paz, passing through the communities of Manto and Guarizama.
 - iii. E-Zone North Coast: Road from Bonito Oriental, Colón to Iriona.
 - d. Bus stations – These areas are highly populated with pickpockets and purse snatchers. To avoid pickpockets:
 - i. Use a lock or a simple paper clip to avoid having your bags opened without notice.
 - ii. Have your bags in site at all times.
 - iii. Stay inside bus stations. There are usually guards indoors, so predators do not attempt to go inside.
 - iv. Take a taxi right outside the bus terminal. Walking around with a backpack or luggage will attract unwanted attention.

Strategies to reduce the risk/impact of theft:

- Know the environment and choose safe routes/times for travel

- Avoid high-crime areas per Peace Corps guidance
- Know the vocabulary to get help in an emergency
- Carry valuables in different pockets/places
- Carry a “dummy” wallet as a decoy

Strategies to reduce the risk/impact of burglary:

- Live with a local family or on a family compound
- Put strong locks on doors and keep valuables in a lock box or trunk
- Leave irreplaceable objects at home in the U.S.
- Follow Peace Corps guidelines on maintaining home security Strategies to reduce the risk/impact of assault:
- Make local friends
- Make sure your appearance is respectful of local customs; don't draw negative attention to yourself by wearing inappropriate clothing
- Get to know local officials, police, and neighbors
- Travel with someone whenever possible
- Avoid known high crime areas
- Limit alcohol consumption

CLIMATE

Honduras has a dry and a wet season. The dry season is from December to May in most of the country and is the best time for volunteers to visit.

The following is an excerpt from the 2007 edition of *Lonely Planet: Honduras and the Bay Islands*:

“The temperature in Honduras does not change dramatically by the season, perhaps 5°C throughout the year. Instead, the temperature is entirely dependant on the elevation. For instance, the mountainous interior ranges from 16°C to 20°C, and is a little warmer in the dry season. Tegucigalpa, at 975m, has a temperate climate, with temperatures between 24°C and 29°C during the day in the dry season (they're a bit cooler in the rainy season). The coastal lowlands on the Pacific and Caribbean sides are warmer and more humid year-round. Their temperatures range from 28°C to 32°C in the dry season; they're about 3°C cooler (and more comfortable) in the rainy season.

In general, the rainy season in Honduras runs from May to November in the interior and from September to January along the north coast and Bay Islands (with a chance of severe storms any time of the year). Heavy rains can cause flooding in the mountains, and both can cause serious damage and impede travel. Hurricane season is from August to November; direct hits are uncommon, but are devastating when they do. Travelers should take evacuation orders very seriously.”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT HONDURAS

<http://www.countrywatch.com>

On this site, you can learn anything from what time it is in Tegucigalpa to how to convert from the dollar to the lempira. Just click on Honduras and go from there.

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations>

Visit this site for general travel advice about almost any country in the world.

<http://www.state.gov>

The U.S. State Department's website issues background notes periodically about countries around the world. Find Honduras and learn more about its social and political history.

<http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/official.htm>

This site includes links to all the official sites for governments worldwide.

<http://geography.about.com/library/maps/blindex.htm>

This online world atlas includes maps and geographical information, and each country page contains links to other sites, such as the Library of Congress, that contain comprehensive historical, social, and political background.

<http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation/info.asp>

This United Nations site allows you to search for statistical information for member states of the UN.

<http://www.worldinformation.com>

This site provides an additional source of current and historical information about 228 countries.

ONLINE ARTICLES/CURRENT NEWS SITES ABOUT HONDURAS

<http://www.honduras.net>

A Honduran Web portal with a variety of resources

<http://www.marrder.com/htw>

Online version of Honduras This Week, an English-language weekly newspaper

<http://www.hondudata.com>

General information about Honduras (in Spanish)

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

1. Acker, Alison. Honduras: The Making of a Banana Republic. Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 1989.
2. Alvarado, Elvia. Don't Be Afraid, Gringo: A Honduran Woman Speaks From the Heart (The Story of Elvia Alvarado). New York: HarperCollins, 1989.
3. Amaya Amador, Ramón. Prisión Verde (Green Prison). Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Editorial Universitaria, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras, 1987. (In Spanish)
4. Berryman, Phillip. Inside Central America: The Essential Facts Past and Present on El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985.
5. Guzman, Juda. Memories of a Central American. New York: Vantage Press, 1988.

FOOD AND DIET

Although a wide variety of food is available in Honduras, beans, rice, plantains, and tortillas are the standard fare (plato tipico) throughout the country. Medium-size and large communities have markets that sell fruits, vegetables, meat products, milk, cheese, and grains (including soy and soy products). Volunteers who live in smaller communities, however, may only be able to purchase basic foods such as noodles, canned goods, and rice and may have to travel to nearby markets every week to purchase perishables.

Vegetarians are able to maintain a healthy diet in Honduras. However, it may be difficult to maintain a strictly vegetarian diet when you live with a family during pre-service training. Families cannot be expected to change their regular diet to meet your needs.

ELECTRICITY

Honduras uses USA standard electricity and plugs.

TRANSPORTATION

Volunteers in Honduras will often use public transportation, even though it can be time-consuming. In a major population center, there will be regular buses from your site to the capital. Smaller communities may have only one bus a day, so you may have to depend on a minivan “taxi” or truck for transportation. Any travel at night is also highly discouraged.

All Volunteers should be prepared to walk regularly, sometimes long distances, to communities within their area.

MORE ON GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

For such a small country, Honduras has a wide variety of temperatures—ranging from 60 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the lowlands to 40 to 90 degrees in the mountains. In general, the western region is relatively cool, while the southern and eastern regions are moderate to hot in the valleys and colder in the mountains, especially at night. The tropical coasts and large valleys can be very hot and humid. In most parts of Honduras, the rainy season lasts from June through November. You should come prepared for all types of climates.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Most social activities revolve around family or community events and religious holidays. Hondurans are very hospitable and often invite Volunteers to their homes for meals and family celebrations, which are a great opportunity to build ties of trust and sharing. You may encounter more traditional gender roles than exist in the United States. While men have freedom of movement, women may be unable to leave their homes unaccompanied after dark. It is not common for women to jog in Honduras, and those who do never jog alone.

In some parts of Honduras, people abuse alcohol, and in other areas, alcohol is prohibited. It is important to moderate alcohol consumption because heavy drinking puts you at unnecessary risk and can impact negatively on your and other Volunteers’ reputation in the community.

PROFESSIONALISM, DRESS, AND BEHAVIOR

To be effective, Volunteers must be respected by the communities in which they work. You should be prepared to be a role model throughout your service. When Volunteers find themselves unable to gain and maintain the respect and confidence of their communities, it is often due to the Volunteers' failure to meet community standards of behavior. Hondurans are fairly traditional and conservative, especially in smaller villages. Your community is likely to hold you to relatively higher standards because you are a B2P Volunteer.

Dressing appropriately can enhance your credibility, since it reflects your respect for the customs and expectations of the people with whom you live and work. Inappropriate dress, like inappropriate behavior, is something that can set you unnecessarily apart from your community. Until you become well-known by Hondurans, your dress will be an important indicator to them. From the biggest city to the remotest village, you will be judged, especially initially, on your appearance.

You may find that some clothing that is considered appropriate for Hondurans is not considered appropriate for you.

If you have a tattoo, it is best to keep it covered. Tattoos are often associated with gang affiliation. A new anti-gang law was recently passed authorizing police to perform searches on people who are considered to be probable gang members. (Though gang tattoos are of a specific nature, you need to be aware of this Honduran reality.)

Hondurans like to dress well and to be neat and clean. Honduran businessmen do not normally wear suits and ties, so male Volunteers can wear a short-sleeved, button-down shirt or nice polo shirt and khakis or nice jeans in professional settings. Casual clothing can be worn at home and in nonformal situations. Low-cut necklines are not appropriate for women, but sleeveless blouses and dresses are fine, especially in coastal areas and certain valleys. Do not bring any military-style clothing (i.e., olive green or camouflage), which Honduran customs officials reserve the right to confiscate.

On the bridge sites, it is recommended that you wear long cool khaki pants and short or long sleeve work shirts, such as an older polo shirt. T-shirts are not recommended. You may also find that wearing shorts will get you some strange looks.

HEALTH ISSUES IN HONDURAS

Malaria is endemic in almost all of Honduras, so taking anti-malarial medication is highly recommended for Volunteers throughout their stay. Bites and scratches by rabies-carrying animals can also be life-threatening, so pre-exposure and post-exposure rabies vaccines are also recommended. Mild to severe viral illnesses like dengue fever (including hemorrhagic dengue) are also threats to health in Honduras. You may also contract parasites during your service.

Existing skin conditions like acne and eczema often worsen in Honduras because of the climate. Sun-aggravated and fungal skin conditions are fairly common. Solar keratosis, a precancerous skin condition, can be acquired from prolonged exposure to sun without adequate protection.

Honduras has the highest rate of HIV/AIDS infection in Central America, and the disease is a growing problem. Abstinence is the only certain choice for prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STDs.

For complete travel recommendations, go to the CDC site mentioned earlier.

MEDICAL KIT CONTENTS

Ace bandages
Adhesive tape
American Red Cross First Aid & Safety Handbook
Antacid tablets (Tums)
Antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin/Neomycin/Polymycin B)
Antiseptic antimicrobial skin cleaner (Hibiclens)
Band-Aids
Butterfly closures
Calamine lotion
Cepacol lozenges
Condoms
Dental floss
Diphenhydramine HCL 25 mg (Benadryl)
Insect repellent stick (Cutter's)
Lip balm (Chapstick)
Oral rehydration salts
Oral thermometer (Fahrenheit)
Pseudoephedrine HCL 30 mg (Sudafed)
Robitussin-DM lozenges (for cough)
Scissors
Sterile gauze pads
Tetrahydrozoline eyedrops (Visine)
Tinactin (antifungal cream)
Tweezers

POSSIBLE ISSUES FOR FEMALE VOLUNTEERS

You should be prepared for unwanted attention from Honduran men simply because you are an American woman. American women are sometimes perceived as being "easy" because of stereotypes portrayed on American TV shows and movies aired on Honduran television. It is very common to receive stares, comments, or requests for dates or sex on the street and in other situations. In addition, women often are not taken as seriously as men in their jobs and may not receive the respect that is readily given to both American and Honduran men. In Honduran culture, a woman is viewed as either a "mother" or a "daughter." Therefore, if you are not married, you may be treated like a daughter or a child instead of a grown woman.

Honduran women have very specific, traditional roles (i.e., they generally do not work outside of the home), which some Hondurans may think female Volunteers should adopt.

Working with men can be difficult if they refuse to believe a woman is capable of work other than cleaning the house or raising children. Working with women can be difficult when they cannot understand why a woman would want to do anything that is not "women's work." Honduran men also have specific roles, and machismo, or manliness, is considered very important. Men are expected to be dominant in almost all aspects of society; they are expected to smoke, drink, pursue

women, be strong, and be willing to discipline their wife and children. Thus male Volunteers who do not drink, smoke, or like to pursue women openly may get teased or chided for not being manly enough. Both female and male Volunteers will need to learn strategies to handle these situations. Keep in mind that the B2P Director in Honduras is female. And she commands a great deal of respect from Honduran men. So, talk with her on what her strategies were to gain this respect.

POSSIBLE ISSUES FOR VOLUNTEERS OF COLOR

African-American Volunteers may be viewed as less professionally competent than white Volunteers. They may be called *negrita*, *trigueña*, or other words that distinguish them as dark-skinned. Although these terms are not necessarily derogatory, Volunteers may initially feel demeaned by them. In addition, Hondurans may not believe you are an American, thinking you must come from the north coast of Honduras or the Bay Islands, which have a heavy concentration of Garifuna or black Caribs.

ELECTRONIC TRANSLATORS

Not sure if you all knew there were now "Star Trek" type translators for sale. They are expensive, but probably well worth it for those of you that have limited language skills.

<http://www.ectaco.com/Spanish-items/>

Also, remember, when you purchase something like this, it is fully tax deductible, just as your trip expenses are. Also, should any of you wish to purchase one, but have no use for it after your trip, B2P would be willing to purchase it for 1/2 the price you paid for it. We would then re-sell it to the next round of volunteers.

Note: Much of this appendix has been draw or copied from the US Peace Corp website.