

Volunteer's Guide Book to *Your aid* funded *Buddhist Library Cambodia Project (BLCP)*

Volunteers for Dental clinics, please read both Sections A & B.

Volunteers do not need to pay *youraid* or *BLCP* any fee to secure a volunteering position. Please apply through our website www.youraid.org.au

Section A - Information for all volunteers.

1 What is *Buddhist Library Cambodia Project (BLCP)*?

- Buddhist Library Cambodia Project is a non-profit organization registered with the Ministry of Interior of Royal Government of Cambodia in 2007. BLCP implements 3 main projects in 4 provinces; Kampot, Kampong Speu, Takeo and Kep in Cambodia.
- **The main projects:**
 - 1- Building Rainwater tanks in Primary and Secondary Schools.
 - 2- Providing dental care and treatment for children, teachers and monks.
 - 3- Conducting of English, Computer, Non formal and Chinese classes & providing library facilities.

2 What is *YourAid*?

Your Aid is a Australia based not-for-profit public benevolent institution, which is established to be, and to continue as a charity. *Youraid* is registered as a charitable organization in Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC). www.acnc.gov.au

Youraid aims to pursue the charitable purpose of providing effective support and financial assistance overseas in Asia to enable its in-country partner organizations to develop the local community.

Buddhist Library Cambodia Project is the main partner and the recipient of financial assistance of *Youraid*.



3 Where is *BLCP* head office located?

BLCP's office is located in Kampot province, office # 27Eo, Phum Sovansakor, Sangkat Kampong Kandal, Krong Kampot. Kampot is a quiet and beautiful town in the southern coast approximately 150KM from Phnom Penh, which is becoming a popular tourist destination.

4 How can I volunteer and what skills are required?

We welcome volunteers from all over the world and you can always find a fit for your skills.

- Dental skills (either as a dentist, dental assistant, or dental nurse)
- Teaching skills - Qualified teachers particularly those with English as a Second language qualifications, and computer teachers or fluent English speakers who can assist in our English classes.
- Volunteers with management skills who can assist in our office.
- Volunteers with computer skills (Excel, Word, PowerPoint etc)
- Volunteers with fund raising skills and events management to help us at Sydney office.
- Experience in volunteering or working with children is not essential. Even if you have no specific skills besides enthusiasm and a desire to help, please contact us. Willing and enthusiastic helpers are often required.

5 What is the policy of *YourAid* and *BLCP* on working with children?

Both Youraid and BLCP are committed to the protection and safety of children and have a zero tolerance policy to any behavior that harms children.

6 Do I need a Police Clearance Certificate?

Yes. We require a valid police check for the year in which you will be working. We accept the equivalent to this in other countries such as the 'working with children check' and 'background check'.

BLCP is seeking volunteers who are able to spend 2-3 weeks working in the organization. This is flexible, particularly for education, rainwater tanks and dental care.

7 What happens after I apply through *Youraid* website?

Your application will be directed to the relevant BLCP volunteer coordinator in Cambodia. Once your convenient days are confirmed, you will be asked to provide the police clearance certificate. Once everything is finalized BLCP Country Manager in Kampot will confirm your time for volunteering.

8 Do I need to obtain a visa before I arrive?

Passport holders of most western countries can purchase a visitor visa valid for 30 days on arrival at Phnom Penh and Siem Reap airports. You need to have one photo and a valid passport for 6 months. The cost of a visitor visa is US\$30. You can also obtain visa online. Please visit Cambodian Department of Immigration website.

9 Do I need to have vaccinations before I arrive?

Make sure you visit your local doctor at least 6-8 weeks prior to your departure date to ensure you can get any required vaccinations and also ask for a small supply of tablets to assist with any digestive issues you may encounter.

10 What are the general health tips?

Cambodia is very hot and humid during February to July. You can get very dehydrated, especially if you are not used to the heat so you need to ensure you drink lots of water each day.

Do not eat salads or any raw food from local stalls as they are washed with tap water. Some western restaurants wash their vegetables with bottled water, we recommend always to ask first. Do not drink tap water, always drink either boiled water or bottled water, after checking that the seal has not been broken. Be careful when you choose to eat Khmer food, our staff will show you best and safe places to eat it when going for lunch during working week.

12 Do I need a travel Insurance?

You are highly advised to obtain a travel insurance although medical costs are relatively affordable in Cambodia. However, it will be extremely costly in the event of an emergency where evacuation becomes a necessity to neighboring Thailand or Vietnam. A GP visit at private hospital named Sonia Kill hospital costs you US\$17.

13 How do I reach Kampot?

The best option is to fly to Phnom Penh. If you have a **late flight**, the best is to spend the night in Phnom Penh and our staff will arrange a taxi for you. The taxi fare for 150KM journey from Phnom Penh to Kampot is US\$40. However, if you prefer, you can catch an AC Ibis bus from Phnom Penh. If you travel by road it is possible to reach Kampot via borders from Thailand and Vietnam. Visa restrictions apply and therefore check with your travel agent.

14 What are the best accommodation options in Kampot, Kampong Speu and Takeo?

There are a number of accommodation options from simple backpacker rooms to very comfortable guesthouses. Prices are ranging from around \$7- \$18 per night. If you would like your own bathroom and AC unit you will pay around the \$14 -\$18 price mark. Remember, inclusion of AC makes a big difference in room rate.

Kampot Riverfront Rikitikitavi Guesthouse is highly recommended and the co-owner (Dominic Price) is a member of the local BLCP board. They give our volunteers a discount at 35USD a night. Email: denise.ruygrok@gmail.com Web: www.rikikititavi-kampot.com

Mea Culpa is a comfortable guest house and located just 100M from Kampot river and located next to a beautiful pond. Cost between \$20 - 25. Email: meaculpakampot@gmail.com Tel: 012 504 769

Kampong Speu: the options there are more limited, since the province is not really touristy, but we recommend the following guest house.

Peng Ly guesthouse: Tel: 016 876 786

It's fairly basic, but it has a good price/quality ratio and the family that runs the place knows our organization and staff and is always happy to look after our volunteer's needs.

15 Where are *BLCP* English, Computer and Chinese classes held?

The classes are held after school hours in 40 primary schools in Kampot, Kompong Speu and Takeo provinces. Most of the schools are close to the main town, however, some are in distant areas. Our staff will assist you to reach some of these schools.

16 What is the typical day of work in our education project?

A typical day for volunteers is 9am-12pm at the BLCP office, assisting with tests and marking and also any additional administration work that is required. Then from 2-4PM you will be asked to prepare your lessons/ games/ activities for that afternoon's class. From 4.30-7.30PM the English classes are in session so you will be at one of the BLCP supported schools.

BLCP also operates the mobile library service and volunteers are welcome to join and help with reading aloud to the children, drawing and also time for a song or game. The mobile library leaves at 7.30 AM and returns around 11.30 AM.

Preparation before you arrive: It is very helpful to be familiar with the books the teachers and students use in our English classes. You can find information about these on the New Headway website.

17 Where are the water tanks located?

BLCP has built water tanks in 900 of the 1136 primary and secondary schools in the 4 provinces. If you wish to visit some of those and see how our program to provide water for every classroom works, our staff will assist.

18 How do I get around in *BLCP* project area?

BLCP staff can assist with arranging transport and put you in contact with a reliable tuk tuk driver. The transport costs are around \$10 per day and paid directly to the driver. This is a great way to travel as you experience the beautiful countryside and sights, sounds and smells of Cambodia as you travel.

19 What are the other general information?

Currency and Exchange:

The local currency is the Riel (4000 Riel = 1 USD), however, almost all goods and services can also be paid with US dollars. Credit cards are accepted at major hotels, the larger restaurants and souvenir shops. Traveller's cheques and currencies other than US dollars are accepted only in major banks. There are few ATMs available in Kampot town.

It is best to carry US Dollars in small notes, from US\$1 to US\$20s. You will only be able to change US\$50s at banks and other larger institutions as smaller retailers will not accept bigger notes due to the concern of forged notes. When you are in Cambodia, you can make your purchases in USD and will get your change, sometimes in Riel, other times in USD or both.

Mobile phones:

Some phone services cannot achieve connection in Cambodia. SIM cards for local networks can only be purchased by Cambodians with their ID card. You can ask one of the local staff to help purchasing one. You can also get a Tourist SIM cards at Siem Reap or Phnom Penh airport. We recommend "Smart card", they have good service for good price. Free WIFI is available in many of the local restaurants.

18 What are the places of interest in Cambodia and Kampot?

- **Siem Reap**, you can enjoy the Temples of Ankor, allow 1 day travel and 3 days sight-seeing.
- **Sihanoukville**, 2 hours from Kampot. It's a really touristy beach holiday destination. There is plenty accommodation and restaurants to choose. From there you can organize trips to:
 - a) **Rabbit Island** for outdoor camping experience or day trips.
 - b) **Koh Rong Island** for spending the weekend or day trips (this is the most busy Island, the main bays is mainly for people that want to party and has many options of pubs and restaurants.
 - c) **Koh Rong Samloem**, is next to Koh Rong but is a more quiet option and there you also have different bays to choose from.
- **Kep**, 30 mins from Kampot for seafood dinner and stroll along beach.
- **Kampot**, has cookery classes at the Jasmine restaurant (just tell them you are a BLCP volunteer and it can be arranged for you), Kayaking, caves to explore, Bokor Mountains, Pepper fields and more.
- **Kampong Speu**, well this is not a touristic destination but here you can see the traditional Cambodian way of living and explore the different villages and rice plantations around the area. You can also visit the market and go for dinner by the river side. Accessing **Phnom Penh** from there is really easy (1.5 hours), if you want to spend your weekend there and explore the Killing Fields, National Museum, Royal Palace & Silver Pagoda, Central and night markets and many other things.

Security Precautions:

Although Cambodia has had periods of political and social upheaval, it has now regained its stability and rebuilt its image internationally. Security is generally good while travelling within the capital city and for travel to most of the provinces during daytime. However, care must be taken, for example:

- You should not ride on a Moto-taxi or Tuk-Tuk with a bag over your shoulder which could be grabbed by someone on another motorbike.

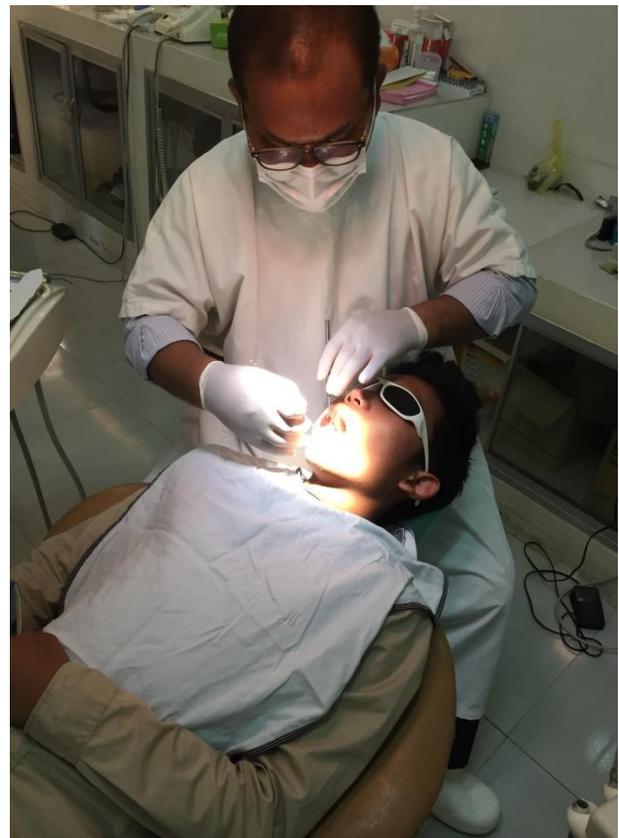
Section B – Information for Volunteers of Dental Clinics

19 Where are the Dental Clinics located?

- Our main clinic is in Kampot province, called CDC (Cecilia Dental Clinic). It has three chairs and is located 3 hours (by car) from Phnom Penh.
- Our second clinic is in Kampong Speu Province, called KYC (Kim Yon Clinic for Children). It has three chairs and is located 1.5 hours from Phnom Penh.

Since this is a newer clinic, we need volunteers here the most, as there are more new children that are waiting to be treated (over 2000).

- The mobile clinic. Once a month, for a week, we visit a different school located in what we consider remote areas of the Kampot Province (over 90 min. drive from Kampot City).



20 Can I work in Both Clinics?

Both places have great staff they will be more than happy to have you, but the experiences are really different.

If you are looking for a full Cambodian experience, Kampong Speu is the place to go because there are no tourists and western food is less accessible, but you can still find some. On the other hand, if you want a mix between Western and Cambodian and also have access to group or solo tours, then Kampot is for you.

If you are staying for more than a week you can always experience both!!

21 I am a dentist. What documents are required?

You need to send us your current dental registration from your relevant Dental Board.

22 Can I bring along dental consumables to donate to the clinics?

Yes, your donations are highly appreciated. You will be issued a receipt for your donation.

- GICS, composite, fluoride, instruments, anaesthetics, anaesthetic needles, gloves, masks, and ledermix and else. Please, all supplies should be good date of expiration period. These are consumables that we need the most so they will always be helpful.
- If that is too complicated and heavy to carry, but you would still like to make a monetary donation instead, you can always make it directly at any of the clinics or at our website.

www.youraid.org.au

23 How can I get excess baggage allowance as I bring dental consumables?

If you need excess baggage allowance please email Dr. Cecilia So or Dr. Kim Yon, they will send you a template letter. Complete the excess baggage allowance letter template and contact your airline. They usually give an allowance of 10-15 kg of excess baggage for volunteers. Carry this letter with you in case your luggage is checked by customs. Do not give into giving under the table money if you are threatened to do so at customs. Contact our local staff if you have any problems.

If you are traveling with a Low-cost airline, for example, AirAsia, Tiger Air and others, they usually do not accept this letter.

24 What do I need to bring with me?

- **Two pairs of shoes.** One for inside the clinic, and another for outside as the outside is quite dusty and we would like to keep the clinics clean. Wearing crocs or similar shoes would be comfortable in the clinic. Bring shorts and T- shirts, you can bring scrubs, but it might be hot for you and end up wearing cooler clothing.
- Bring your loupes if you are used to working with them.
- If you will be going away with the mobile clinic we recommend to acquire a headlight, you may be working in a classroom with only natural light. A cheap headlight will do.
- Please bring boxes of gloves in your size and kind of your preference (powdered or non-powdered, nitrile, latex free etc.)

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