

# FAQ Mission Visit...

## **WHO CAN COME TO CHIMBOTE?**

Team members range in age from 14 years old to 80+ years old (though we do recommend anyone under age 18 is accompanied by a parent or guardian). It makes a great youth trip, adult trip or intergenerational trip! There's a wide variety of activities during the week, each requiring people with different skills, physical abilities, and talents. Teams range in size from six people to 25 people, though most groups have around 12-15 people. No matter how many people, there are opportunities for everyone to change their lives and change others in the process.

## **WHERE DO GROUPS STAY WHEN THEY COME TO VOLUNTEER?**

Our Visitor quarters are housed within the safe and enclosed compound of Our Lady of Perpetual Help parish in Chimbote. Dormitories are bright and cheerful with comfortable beds, lockers for securing passports and other items. There is a women's dormitory and a separate men's dormitory. There is one family room that is available. All the bathrooms, including the showers, have been newly updated. There is a cost of \$30 per day which includes your night's stay and 3 delicious meals prepared by our wonderful cooks.

## **IS IT SAFE TO STAY IN CHIMBOTE?**

Yes. The safety of our mission work groups is our highest priority. The political unrest reported in the news is contained to certain areas of Peru and has not affected the areas where we work. We put measures in place to always keep you safe. An ACAF staff member will be with you at all times, including driving into surrounding communities, and there is always a night guard where the team stays overnight.

## **CAN WE DRINK WATER IN Chimbote?**

No! Water from the tap in Chimbote or anywhere in Peru is not safe to drink. If someone offers you water, make sure it is bottled/purified. We have gallons of purified water and bags of purified ice available for your team's use during your stay. Also do not share your water in your personal water bottle with anyone on your mission team or with families you are building with.

## **CAN WE FLUSH THE TOILET PAPER?**

No, you cannot flush the toilet paper! The ACAF complexes have modern bathrooms with showers to accommodate your team. Flushing toilet paper is not allowed because of two main problems: the plumbing pipes are smaller in Peru than in the U.S., and the water pressure is low and cannot push the paper through the pipes. Attempting to flush toilet paper will clog and back up the system.

## **WHAT DO WE WEAR & WHAT DO WE BRING TO THE JOB SITE?**

Old clothing that you don't mind getting dirty is suggested for working on construction sites, as well as very sturdy shoes. Protection from the heat and sun is essential. It can get very hot in the spring, summer and fall. You will need a hat, work gloves, sunglasses, water bottle, and sunscreen. If you are able to bring tools like trowels, paint brushes and wire cutters, we are always in need of those items. However, we will definitely provide the tools you need to work. You will be provided with a What To BRING sheet when you register for a mission trip which will give you all the details needed.

## **WILL WE HAVE HELP ON THE JOB SITE? HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT TO DO?**

You'll be working with a crew of our local ACAF staff, as well as volunteers working as "sweat equity" for their own house. Our staff and volunteers are great at teaching U.S. groups what to do, and they'll work alongside you to make sure the job is done right!

## **CAN WE GIVE MONEY DIRECTLY TO FAMILIES IN PERU WHILE WE ARE THERE?**

No. We have found that many families, due to their extreme poverty, tend to share their needs with several teams, and we often find several donations coming for the same need. We ask the families to bring their needs to the FoC or ACAF office so we can assess and evaluate the validity of their requests within the needs of the whole community and other families. If there is a need you can help with, you can make a donation to Friends of Chimbote in the U.S. office, and we will make sure it gets to the family in need.

## **WHERE SHOULD I EXCHANGE MY US DOLLARS**

The exchange rate is consistently changing! What we recommend is to exchange your money at the Lima airport. ACAF can not do money exchanges. If you are running low, they will need to bring you to a bank in Chimbote, but we recommend to do the exchange before you arrive in Chimbote.

## **HOW ARE FAMILIES CHOSEN TO RECEIVE HOUSES?**

Our ACAF social workers are continuously out in the Barrios visiting families and assessing the family's needs. The ACAF Social Workers visit their current living space for an evaluation and interview. To be approved to receive a house, the family must own the land they want the new house built on, and they must be willing to work with the ACAF social workers after the home is built to continue their transformation to get one step closer on the path out of poverty.

## **WHY DOES THE FAMILY HAVE TO OWN THE LAND & HOW DO THEY OBTAIN IT?**

We require families to own the land because this house will be a gift for the family, and if they do not hold ownership of the land, they could lose possession of the property once the house is built. Most of the families have been living in the same area for a long time and are able to build on a small part of land belonging to their parents. Other times, the families just come in from other areas of Peru, find land, and occupy or "sit" on that land for several years until they get squatters rights, which are legal in Peru. Some families buy the land by paying little by little until they own the property.

## **WHAT KIND OF FOOD WILL WE BE EATING?**

While serving in your host community, a variety of meals will be offered, from local cuisine to typical American style food. Our cook teams are trained, highly skilled and are able to adapt to special dietary needs (gluten free, vegetarian, lactose intolerant etc.!) Usually, the food is one of the team's highlights!

## **WHAT IF I'M A MINOR AND I WANT TO GO ON A TRIP?**

Minors (anyone under the age of 18) must complete proper release forms and be accompanied on a trip by an adult over the age of 21 who will be responsible for that individual's well-being.

## **WHAT IF I'M AN INDIVIDUAL OR A SMALL GROUP AND I WANT TO JOIN A TEAM?**

We have a few trips geared towards individuals and small groups. Please call Friends of Chimbote and a representative can visit with you about the availability.

## **WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE COST?**

Other financial pieces of each trip that are not included in the price are: airfare, ministry or construction materials, spending money, or insurance. Each mission trip is customizable! FoC will work with the Mission Team Leader and come up with a schedule and budget that works for your group.

***\*\*\*Any additional question please contact Friends of Chimbote and the staff would be more than happy to answer your questions.***