



Predeparture Program Guide

UDAIPUR, INDIA

2017

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FSD VALUES

At the center of the internship experience are the core values, vision, and mission that make FSD the organization that it is. We ask that as an FSD participant, you understand and remember these tenets throughout your time abroad, in order to make your program a meaningful experience for both you and the communities in which you serve.

MISSION

FSD achieves community-driven goals through asset-based development and international exchange in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

VISION

FSD envisions a world where all people have the opportunity and capacity to direct economic, social, and environmental resources toward sustainable outcomes that improve lives and communities.

CORE VALUES

- **Start with Assets, Not Problems:** We take an asset-based approach to development work. We begin by listening to the priorities set by our community-based partners at our international program sites. We then identify and utilize existing assets and capacity to address those priorities.
- **Motivate Community Ownership:** We partner with leaders, organizations, and stakeholders committed to change, action, and social justice. We stress community ownership and participation before launching initiatives, especially in our volunteer programs.
- **Generate Enduring Results and Impact:** We ensure the outcomes of our support have long-lasting benefits for our partners. We think hard about how to participate appropriately and effectively in development, and on how to become redundant so that our initiatives outlast our involvement.
- **Focus On The Site Teams:** We are headquartered in California, but our International Site Teams direct our programs across Africa, Asia, and Latin America on the ground, 365 days a year. These teams build partnerships based on trust, respect, efficacy, and alignment with an asset-based approach.
- **Build Capacity:** We strengthen the skills, competencies, and abilities of the leaders of our community based partners and of our students and professional volunteers. We educate and train, facilitating the sharing of best practices across all of our stakeholders to support our partners' priorities.
- **Be A Bridge:** We relentlessly build a network of students, professionals, and passionate advocates for our community-based partners to access. We connect this network of assets and volunteers with the work of our partners through our international exchange and grantmaking programs.
- **Change Perspectives:** We share our experiences and learning about the complexities of development with friends, family, and colleagues. We promote cultural exchange and sensitivity, encouraging a reflective approach to navigating cross-cultural issues, confusions, and tensions.
- **Promote Reciprocity:** We operate on our founding principle that producing strong community outcomes must be the priority. We base all partnerships, strategies, and decisions on the Fair Trade Learning concept that we must be ethical and reciprocal in our planning, implementation, and outcomes.

LETTER FROM FSD

Congratulations again on your acceptance to the Foundation for Sustainable Development's program! For many of you this experience will spark a lifelong interest in development. For others, it will be a chance to gain insights into other cultures that can only be obtained through direct experience. For all of you it will be a chance to make a lasting impact on people and communities in your host country, and an opportunity that will make a lasting impression on your life.

Many challenges await you. It is likely that the most difficult obstacles you face will not be the ones that test your technical skills or knowledge. More often it will be the difficulty of gaining the cultural competencies necessary to do successful work in a community. It will be learning to see the problems facing a region from the eyes of a community member rather than through the eyes of an outsider. Remember that culture, community, and language should guide your work as much as your own knowledge.

During your program you will represent both yourself and FSD in your community. Many people in the region that you will work in have had very little experience with people from outside their country. As such they will develop opinions of you and the work of FSD through their interactions with you or what they hear about you. We ask that you take your visibility into consideration when you make decisions about your actions in your host country.

It is the intention of FSD to provide you with a broad support network to best position you for success, but at the end of the day, it is your effort that will most influence the success of your experience with FSD. You will need to take initiative and put yourself in situations that stretch your comfort levels. You will have to work within cultural contexts that can cause extreme frustration. Many other challenges await, but at the same time you face these challenges you also have an incredible set of opportunities. Go into the experience with the willingness to listen and learn. You will find that through this willingness you will increase your ability to give to your community.

This guide has been developed to help make clear what FSD expects of our interns and volunteers and what you can expect of us. We look at your internship or volunteer program as a partnership. It is our hope and belief that clear expectations are the foundation for a solid working relationship. Please read this guide thoroughly; it contains information that is crucial to the success of your experience and our partnership.

Above all, you should feel comfortable contacting us at the US based headquarters if you need any additional support or have any questions.

Good luck!

FSD STAFF ROLES

Program Director: FSD's program directors are local experts in the field of community development. Their experience and strong community ties make them a great resource to support you in your in-country project work. The program director develops and maintains FSD's relationships with our host organizations and is heavily involved in the process from the time you apply to FSD to the end of your term of service.

Program Coordinators: Your program coordinator(s) provides ongoing support to you, FSD's host families and our partner organizations. During the application process, they advise the program director and San Francisco staff about your placement. Once you're in the field, they serve as a bridge to the local culture and language and as lifeline when culture shock inevitably sets in. They are also available to advise you as you develop your program workplan.

Program Officer: FSD's program officers coordinate the work done at FSD sites in different regions of the world. They manage program logistics and design, corporate and university partnerships, and programmatic issues. Program officers are also your U.S. based emergency contact.

FSD Headquarters Contact Info

- Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. PST
- General Inquiries: info@fsd.org
- Office Phone: 415-283-4873
- Emergency Phone: 415-828-8414

SAFETY & SECURITY

The safety and security of our program participants and staff is our first priority. Our safety and security protocols meet international standards and have been developed over 20 years of operation, and from the practical experience of our staff. We have rigorous and conservative safety and security procedures, including triaged security measures for students (such as restricted travel, curfews, and buddy systems) should any emergent or potentially emergent event occur. Every site has an emergency evacuation plan (supported by our travel insurance partner) that identifies safe houses, on-call transportation, and provides a variety of options for moving participants out of unsafe areas via land and air routes.

For each site, we have identified physicians, health centers, and hospitals for routine and emergency care that meet standards of care for foreigners, including the locations of and contact for relevant embassies and consulates. These procedures are supported by duty officer training of our support staff in San Francisco who monitor an emergency call line 24/7. But the most critical components of our safety and security system are our local staff, who are also on call 24/7, and our network of community partners at each of our program sites. Our local staff have the best knowledge regarding the potential of local events to become critical, and they have a network of community members to turn to for safety information.

While working abroad, there is always a potential risk that emergencies may occur, and we have experience dealing with a variety of issues, from localized civil unrest and natural disasters to total evacuation of programs. The US office is in constant communication with our program sites through a variety of communications channels, including biweekly phone calls and reporting on each participant, and we also monitor international media for emerging events.

All of our program sites are in safe areas. However, similar to the US, certain common-sense safety measures must be taken. These will be reviewed extensively during orientation, when every participant receives a safety briefing. We emphasize that the most important ways to stay safe are to exercise good judgment, to have a strong network of local contacts, and to have an awareness of the potential for harm.

FSD will do its utmost to provide a safe environment and a responsive support system to you throughout your experience. To ensure a safe and successful experience for everyone involved, we depend upon our staff to serve as a barometer of the local political, social and economic climates, and to use that knowledge to maintain a safe and secure environment for FSD participants. We depend on our participants to act prudently and be receptive to instructions and suggestions regarding safety and security.

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FSD RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure a safe and secure host community. Our host organizations and programs are run by FSD staff and trusted colleagues who live locally and often have years of experience with FSD. While the political climate varies by location and timing, we feel that partner organizations provide us with a good barometer of the climate in relation to the safety of foreign volunteers.
- Inform you about safety and security in your host community through materials like this predeparture guide. We equip you with the information and tools to be aware of the realities of your host community, to avoid situations that would put you at risk, and to manage these situations should they arise.
- Send you an electronic proof of insurance card.
- Direct you to a preferred medical facility in the case of an emergency.
- Support you logistically and emotionally through any medical or emergency situation.
- Contact your emergency contacts in the case of a major emergency.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Learn about the history and current events of your host country and community.
- Secure all recommended vaccinations.
- Secure legal and visa requirements for your stay.
- Follow the directions of your site team and host family.
- Register with the US State Department or equivalent.
- Avoid volatile or risky situations. Travel with someone you know, and avoid being out alone after dark.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Walk purposefully and act as though you know where you are going.
- Notify your site team of any incidents of harassment, illness, accident, or any other serious event as soon as possible.
- Review your insurance coverage to determine whether you want to purchase an enhanced package. FSD program insurance ensures that adequate support is available to you in the case of a major emergency. There is a US \$250 deductible for which you are responsible. The illnesses and medical issues you are more likely to encounter may require medical consultations and prescriptions. Beyond taking all necessary precautions to prevent illness and accidents, please plan financially for these types of expenses. Hospitals and clinics may require payment up-front for services; please bring cash and/or a credit card (Visa or Mastercard) for emergency medical expenses and seek reimbursement directly from the insurance provider. FSD is not responsible for medical fees.

HEALTH PREPARATIONS

As an FSD participant, it is your full responsibility to identify and take all necessary health precautions prior to, during, and following the program. Please start your health preparations early, as some vaccinations must be taken as far as eight weeks or more before departure. Providing detailed medical advice is beyond the expertise of FSD so it is very important to consult the resources below as well as medical professionals such as your doctor or local travel health clinic.

Topics to talk to your doctor or local health clinic about:

- Anti-malarial medications and mosquito repellent
- The symptoms of the most common illnesses contracted by travelers, and the appropriate treatment
- Medicines and supplies for preventing and treating common illnesses and maladies like (but not limited to) diarrhea, dehydration, sunburn, food poisoning
- Yellow Fever
- Typhoid Fever
- Dengue Fever
- Altitude Sickness
- Nutrition (especially for those with dietary restrictions)

What happens if I get sick?

For serious illness that may occur during your program, there are public and private clinics and hospitals available in most areas. If you should become sick, please alert the FSD site team and your host family immediately and they will ensure that you receive appropriate medical care. Udaipur is home to several very good hospital facilities and well-trained, sensitive doctors are easily found.

HEALTH RESOURCES

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Recorded information about health risks and precautions for international travelers: 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747)

Traveler's South Asia Region

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/indianrg.html>

Malaria Hotline

404-332-4555



VISA INFORMATION

The recommendations provided here are subject to change at any time. Indian visa requirements have been known to change suddenly without our knowledge so please keep that in mind when reading the below instructions. As an FSD participant, it is your full responsibility to secure the appropriate visa and ensure the full legality of your stay in the host country during the program. To do so requires consultation of resources above and beyond the information provided by FSD. Please check with your visa processing center or an Indian consulate or embassy for the most current information.

As of March 2017, you will need to apply as a nonpaid volunteer, which requires an “employment visa” (but that is also subject to change so please check). The sponsor for your visa will be a local organization that partners with FSD (not FSD itself), but we will provide you with the required documentation that has to be signed by them. Please refer to the website of your country of citizenship, such as the US State Department, to understand the process for getting an India visa. That should direct you to the proper Indian websites to apply. In the US, the Indian Embassies outsource their visa applications to a company called Cox & Kings Global Services (CKGS). Also note that your visa takes effect from the date it is issued; e.g. if you get it a week before departure, that week is counted, even if you have not entered the country yet.

Please apply for your visa as early as possible. Four-week delays have happened, and non-Indian citizens cannot enter India without visas. You should become familiar with the visa application process even before you receive the documentation you need so that you understand the requirements. Once you are ready to apply, inform FSD about the documentation you need. Also know that your legal ability to travel outside of Udaipur before, during and after your program may be limited. Please check with your visa processing center before making any such plans.

Note that in our experience, CKGS and the Indian Embassies in the US are not very accessible and can be difficult to get clear answers from. Therefore, you might want to consider applying for your visa through a third party company, such as Travia, who strive to make it quicker and easier, dealing with the embassies on your behalf. If you have Pakistani heritage, it is unfortunately very difficult to obtain an Indian visa. You’ll need to apply at least 5 months in advance and please notify FSD as soon as possible so that we can expedite collecting your documentation for your visa.

VISA RESOURCES FOR US CITIZENS

INDIA - US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/india.html>

COX KINGS GLOBAL SERVICES (CKGS)

<https://www.in.ckgs.us/>

516-206-1483 / 646-589-0088



PACKING & LUGGAGE

RECOMMENDED PACKING LIST

Clothes

- Several pairs cotton underwear and socks
- Light waterproof jacket & umbrella (if coming in the rainy season, May-Nov)
- Long-sleeved top(s) (to fend off mosquitoes, protect from sun/use on a cooler evening)
- Warm sweater or jacket (for the cooler months Nov -April)
- Pants/capris (1 to 3)
- Slacks/light dress pants for men's work attire (1 to 3)
- Skirts, knee-length or longer for women (1 to 3)
- Leggings for women (1 to 3)
- Nice low/no-heeled footwear for women to wear to work
- Light sports attire if you are interested in sports, running, hiking, etc
- Multiple shirts appropriate for work, leisure, travel
- At least one nice outfit for special occasions
- Sneakers and sandals ("nice" footwear optional)
- Modest sleepwear
- Hat and sunglasses for sun protection (baseball caps are the norm for guys)

Health and Hygiene

- Handwipes or anti-bacterial hand lotion (some restrooms will not have running water)
- Your medications, in their original containers, with a copy of your prescriptions
- Personal hygiene products—soap, shampoo, toothpaste, tampons, floss, etc. (These can be purchased locally to save room in your luggage, but you should pack travel sizes to use until you can go to the store the first week.)
- Strong insect repellent and Calamine lotion or other itch-relief cream (you will get bitten by insects at some point during your stay)
- Antibiotics for travelers' diarrhea
- Contact lens solution and eye drops (prohibitively expensive in-country)
- Feminine hygiene products (sanitary pads are widely available, tampons are not)

Practical Supplies

- Sturdy travel water bottle
- Travel alarm clock
- Towel (Families may not have them, and they are useful for beach days)
- Medium-sized pack for day and weekend trips
- Flashlight/headlight (power outages are relatively common)
- Earplugs (notably if you have trouble sleeping with noise)
- Lock for luggage (can also be used at lockers in hostels)
- Money belt (around the waist is more secure than around the neck)

- **Documents and Money**

- Airline ticket
- Passport
- Vaccination booklet
- Insurance Card
- Visa or Mastercard
- Photocopies of all documents
- Cash (US \$100 is good to begin with)
- Small gifts for your host family (optional)

LUGGAGE FAQ

What kind of luggage should I bring?

Don't overdo it—pack lightly so you can travel more easily and store your bag in small places. Remember that clothes can be bought fairly cheaply in Udaipur (custom shirts for around \$7, full sets of women's clothes called salwar kameez for around \$15). Think in terms of a backpack, duffel bag, or moderate-sized suitcase and a daypack. Bags with shoulder straps are preferable to suitcases because they're easier to carry.

What should I bring in my carry-on luggage?

We recommend that you carry all valuables (money, credit card, passport, identification, immunization booklet, insurance card, etc.) and a complete set of clothes (change of shirt, pants/full-length skirt, underwear) in your carry-on luggage in case your checked bag is temporarily lost or delayed. NOTE: JetAirways weighs carry-on luggage. The website does not indicate the weight limit, so be mindful of how heavy your carry-on is and be prepared to shift items to your check in luggage when checking in at Mumbai or Delhi.

What documents should I bring?

You should bring your passport, vaccination booklet, insurance card, copies of your airline ticket, and list of FSD contacts in-country. It is also required that you bring five Xeroxed copies of your passport and visa. During the program, keep the originals and one copy safe in your suitcase and keep another copy on your person at all times. The other three copies are required by the in-country staff and will be collected during orientation week.

What are some items especially difficult to get in Udaipur?

Tampons with applicators, bar/solid deodorant, hand sanitizer or hand wipes, panty liners, and dental floss. It is also advised that you buy a converter and adapter for your electronics before you leave your home country.

CLOTHING FAQ

HOW ARE CLOTHES WASHED?

Host families will wash all of your clothes except for your undergarments and clothes that bleed colors (most Indian clothes are cotton with natural dyes that bleed a little every time you wash them and must be hand-washed) which you must wash yourself. Some families have washers but all clothes are line dried. Underwear should be dried out of public view.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

India, especially Rajasthan, is still quite conservative, and this is especially true for women. In order to respect local culture, clothing that volunteers bring from home should be conservative (no revealing, skin tight or low-cut clothing). Long, cotton trousers and full length skirts are preferable; however, female volunteers will need to purchase clothes and have outfits called salwar kameez made in India that will be both fashionable and culturally appropriate. Many participants find that they prefer to wear leggings with their kurtas instead of salwar pants which is acceptable. Women also wear dupattas which are long scarves that are worn to cover the upper body. Men may also purchase fashionable and inexpensive Indian clothing. It is also important to note that Rajasthan can get quite hot in the summer reaching temperatures of 120 degrees. Locally made Indian clothing is generally better suited to deal with this heat than anything available in other countries.

On the job, women generally wear salwar kameez sets which consist of loose pants tied at the waist or leggings, a printed top that reaches down to the knees (kurta), and a scarf (dupatta) around the neck for modesty. Female volunteers should expect to wear these salwar kameez sets daily (especially when traveling to nearby villages). This is a very affordable option as women can have salwar kameez sets tailored to fit from scratch material for as little as 800 Rs (US \$15.00). Men should expect to wear full pants and decent shirts (polo shirts will be more appropriate). Men can have pants and shirts made for 300 Rs (US \$6.00).

At home or when going out in the city, any clothing is fine, but again, it would be safer to stay on the conservative side so as not to attract unnecessary attention. At home, interns will be able to dress casually, but it is important to maintain respect for your host family by not wearing any clothing that may be overly revealing.

WHAT TYPE OF CLOTHES SHOULD I PACK?

Bring some lightweight clothes and a warm layer for varied temperatures. In the winter months, people usually dress in layers (since the daytime still stays relatively warm and nights can become significantly colder), wearing socks and

shawls to keep warm. Keep in mind that darker colors are easier to keep clean, and that your clothes will endure a lot of wear and tear from being washed by hand. Also consider clothes that will breathe in the heat and dry quickly.

IF I AM LIVING IN OR VISITING A RURAL AREA WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

All of the accommodations in rural areas are clean and hygienic, but very basic. Participants staying overnight should expect bucket showers and Indian-style toilet facilities. Participants should therefore bring extra hygienic supplies (hand sanitizer, hand wipes, etc). Rural areas will have electricity, but often experience power cuts, usually during working hours; a headlamp or flashlight and extra batteries can be very helpful.



ELECTRONICS

SHOULD I BRING MY LAPTOP?

Generally, it is recommended that interns bring their own laptop when possible. Computers are frequently used at work for doing research, writing reports and proposals, and designing materials. Most host organizations have limited computers for staff and one is not always available for intern use. It is unusual for host families to have computers at home. It may also be a good idea to invest in a cheap USB drive. These are an excellent way to cart around your documents: email, print or fax them from an internet cafe. It is recommended that if you bring a laptop or netbook that you back up your files, install anti-virus software, and install any programs you may want to use while abroad before leaving.

Taking a laptop entails the risk that it could be lost, stolen or damaged. FSD is not responsible for your possessions.

SHOULD I BRING MY SMARTPHONE?

Smart phones are becoming more common, but you should generally not use them openly in public, especially in rural areas where they are rare or crowded urban areas where they can get snatched. They automatically advertise your wealth and set you apart. Keep your phone or other valuables hidden and secure as much as possible.



FOOD & WATER

Can I drink the tap/well water?

NO. Do not drink or brush your teeth with the tap water. You are only to drink filtered water (generally referred to as “AquaGuard” or “Aero”, after the most common filtration system), or water that has been boiled.

What is typical food?

Breakfast is light and usually consists of roti (Indian bread), chai (milk tea), and possibly fruit or biscuits. Lunch is more substantial and will include a subjee (vegetable dish), roti, and possibly a dal dish (lentils). Dinner will, again, consist of a subjee dish, dal, roti or chaaval (rice), and some sweet (of which there are a wide variety in India.) Snack foods include namkeen (a spicy, dry mix of nuts and crunchy, fried nuggets) and biscuits (cookies). Please note that most meals will include mirchi (or chilli) but you can ask your host family to add none or only a small amount of chili to your meals.

What do most people drink?

Chai. Expect to be offered sweet milk tea several times daily. Fresh fruit juice and coffee are also commonly available at home. Alcohol is not usually consumed at home and volunteers should not bring alcohol into their homestays. Wide selections of bottled sodas are readily available and are generally safe to drink. Local favorites also include yogurt based Lhassi, fresh sugar cane juice, and a variety of fruit smoothies. These are widely available from numerous street vendors. While they are generally safe to drink they should be approached with a degree of caution.

How vegetarian-friendly is the local cuisine?

India is home to some of the tastiest vegetarian cuisine. Finding vegetarian food will not be a problem. Vegan food is rare, however, and will need to be explained at restaurants or with your homestay as it can sometimes be confused with vegetarianism.

What foods should I avoid?

To prevent parasites and diarrhea, you will want to eat lightly the first week and stay away from milk and cheese that has not been pasteurized. Avoid uncooked food, street vendors and restaurants that have not been recommended by the FSD Site Team. Do not eat fruits or vegetables that have been washed with water unless they are peeled or the water was treated beforehand. When eating leftovers, be sure to reheat them thoroughly.

Can I eat fresh fruit from street stands, and trees?

In India you are likely to encounter an abundance of fresh fruit. As a general rule, if you can peel it, you can eat it! Avoid peeled fruit served on the street unless you watch the vendor peel it.

How should I express my preferences, or turn down unsafe food that is offered to me?

Your host families will be notified of what you can and cannot eat or drink, but be both aware and respectful of the situation – never put yourself at risk, but please be diplomatic in expressing your needs. It is often difficult to turn down food, as people feel that visits are incomplete without some kind of food or drink; either take just a little of what is being offered, or say that you are afraid of getting sick and would like to just have water. You should feel comfortable politely mentioning to your host family your food preferences. Also please advise your family in advance if you do not plan to be home for a meal.

Are there any US-style restaurants?

Chinese food, pasta, and pizza are available in some restaurants, but as a rule these foods are not quite what one expects coming from the West! This is not to say that there are not a plethora of fabulous Indian food options, but you will often find that home cooked food is better than restaurant food.



COMMUNICATION

Staying in touch with your family and friends back home is important. You'll be eager to share your experiences and accomplishments while gaining reassurance and comfort by communicating with them. Here are some ways in which this will be possible during your stay in India.

What is the best way for friends and family at home to reach me?

Email and cellular phones are the most reliable ways to be in touch with your friends and family at home.

Realize that phone communication is often interrupted by bad weather, local technicalities or overloaded circuits, and sometimes lines are cut in the middle of a call. Please ensure that your friends and families are aware of this with the understanding that it is best not to schedule international calls at exact times.

Where can I make and receive phone calls?

Upon arrival, you'll be provided with and responsible for a basic, loaner cell phone to use in-country for safety and convenience. You'll also have to register the rechargeable SIM card (requires a passport size photo so bring those if you have extra), which the FSD site team will assist you with. Local calls are very cheap but roaming, out-of-state, and international calls are more expensive. Calls received, however, are free (even for international calls) when you are in your service area. If your current cell phone uses SIM card technology and is "unlocked" or "tri-/quad-band" it may also be adaptable to an Indian network but you should check with your local provider to ensure this before departure.

While rare, interns can also purchase 100 Rs. or 200 Rs. calling cards that last 20 or 40 minutes respectively and can be used from a landline. Long distance telephone access is obtained through privately owned telephone booths, which are often marked with a handy yellow "ISD/STD" sign.

Is there access to internet and email?

Most participants will purchase an internet stick (\$40-50) that plugs into a USB port of your laptop that will provide you with internet. You will need to purchase internet credit as well depending on how much you use.

Udaipur is well stocked with internet cafes, especially in the Old City and Sardarpura areas. Many stores feature broadband connections, although they are generally not as fast as connections in the US and are subject to frequent power

cuts. Many internet cafes now offer computers with webcams, making keeping in touch with family and friends back home an increasingly easier process.

Word of caution on internet use: Participants are welcome to use internet for work purposes, appropriate blogging, or keeping in touch with friends. However, it can be tempting to get sucked into the world wide web to distract from culture shock or discomforts of being away from home. We advise that you try to “unplug” as much as possible, though, in order to better adapt to your surroundings, integrate with the community, and remain present during your experience. You will often better appreciate your time when you are connected with the people and environment around you rather than your computer or smart phone.

Can I receive packages from the US?

To receive mail, please have letters sent to your name, care of the local FSD office. It costs Rs. 20 (\$0.50 USD) to send a standard letter from India. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery. It is wise not to send or receive packages or valuables due to the uncertainty of the postal system. If a loved one wishes to mail you a package from abroad, make sure they use FedEx, DHL, or another well-known private courier (otherwise, your package is liable to be opened en route.)



MONEY

How much cash should I bring with me?

You should plan on bringing about \$200 USD in cash when you arrive, an ATM card (with a Visa or MasterCard logo), and a credit card for emergencies. You can exchange money at the airport or upon arrival in Udaipur. Most ATMs in India will only accept 4 digit pin numbers so make sure your account is accessible with a 4 digit pin. Also be sure to notify your bank and or credit card company that you are traveling abroad as to avoid unnecessary cancellations or holds.

How much money should I plan on spending in country?

FSD covers all of your necessary expenses, including room and board, in-country transportation, mid-term retreat, orientation and debriefing sessions, a \$300 USD seed grant for your work-related activities with your organization, and so on. Other in-country expenses you may come across that are not covered by FSD could include an internet stick/modem that plugs into your laptop's USB port (\$30 USD), with internet credit (around \$10 USD per month for personal use), and traditional clothing (around \$50 USD). Keep in mind, you may also want additional money for entertainment, snacks, books, gifts, newspapers, weekend excursions, additional transportation, and health emergencies. A good guideline budget is \$3 USD per day or \$100 USD per month. Bring more if you plan to go out often, buy gifts, or travel after your program ends. Never carry a large sum of cash or your passport in public; if you must, please do so with caution. Bring only what you need for the day and use a nondescript bag to carry books or papers. Do not wear expensive sunglasses, watches, or jewelry, and dress modestly. Keep your valuables locked in your suitcase at home.

How can I get cash?

ATM machines are recommended because they are available, secure, and offer a good rate of exchange. Traveler's checks are not recommended: they do not offer a favorable exchange rate and are not widely accepted. Do not exchange money with street dealers; banks or exchange bureaus are much more secure.

Are credit cards accepted?

Credit cards are only accepted in more expensive shops and restaurants. Bring Visa or MasterCard since they are the most widely accepted.

What is the local attitude towards bargaining?

Bargaining is part of the culture and expected at local markets and the handicrafts in India are as outstanding and unique as they are affordable. You should bargain

for nonfood purchases made at the market (as a foreigner, local sellers will without a doubt charge you higher prices). A meal out will cost you between 30 and 100 Rs, a tempo (local shared transport vehicle) ride will cost you up to 50 Rs. one-way to your destination, and a rickshaw ride with friends will cost between 10 and 50 Rs. each. You can also bargain for food at the market, especially fruit and vegetables. The FSD site team will talk to you more about appropriate prices and bargaining during your orientation.

Monetary Unity & Exchange Rate

Monetary Unit:

Rupee

Exchange Rate:

The current exchange rate is approximately 65 Rupees to the US Dollar, but check it again before you leave.

TRANSPORTATION

Which flight routes are recommended?

American and European carriers are recommended for the international portion of your flight. Please try to choose a flight with the shortest and most comfortable layover and which will arrive in time for the group pickup. If your itinerary has a long layover, it's preferable to have it in a European city or Dubai rather than in India as Indian airports tend to be lacking in facilities. Flights to Udaipur arrive only from Mumbai or Delhi. Both cities are adequate transit points, so either can be used.

How far is the orientation site from the airport?

The Udaipur airport is approximately a 20 minute taxi ride to the orientation site.

If I cannot meet the group for the scheduled pickup how do I get to the orientation site?

It is very important to contact your site team to coordinate your arrival if you cannot meet the group for transport. They will be able to give you important direction and tips to help ensure your safety and comfort. It is fairly easy to catch a taxi from the airport if you arrive late but, again, please contact your site team for details. Please note that participants arriving outside of the set pickup time are responsible for their own transportation and other additional costs.

What do I do if I have an overnight layover in-country?

You will be responsible for booking your own hotel and arranging for all transportation and additional costs. Please contact your in-country site team as they can help you coordinate your stay and may be able to provide recommended hotels and transportation services.

Are there any other tips for arrival?

The site team will send you important arrival information one week prior to your start date. This will have the site team's contact information; please keep this information on you at all times so if you are delayed or have any questions you can easily contact them. If you are not able to arrive on the specified start date or if you will be arriving earlier, make sure to contact your site team.

IN-COUNTRY TRANSPORTATION

What are the most common modes of transport and are they expensive?

Taxis and auto-rickshaws are very common and can take you anywhere in Udaipur. Tempos are like large rickshaws and have set routes and you can choose when to get in and out. Tempos are simply the cheapest way to get to most parts of the city. Udaipur also has a reliable but confusing public bus system that is very inexpensive. The site team will provide participants with a basic orientation to these different forms of transportation. Private taxis can be hired to take you to destinations outside of Udaipur, though buses provide a cheaper alternative. Trains are also a popular mode of intercity transportation.

Is it safe to go out at night?

You should not walk around after 9 p.m. or travel after dark. If you are planning on going out with friends, please let your host family know well ahead of time and plan on being home before 9:30 p.m. Consult with your host family about safety information specific to your neighborhood, plan ahead, and be cautious.

The FSD Site Team will talk to you more about safety and travel during your orientation. Keep in mind that public transportation stops after 9 p.m.



HOMESTAY IN INDIA

Interns will stay with a host family for the duration of their stay in India. They will have their own room with an attached bathroom. All homes have electricity, running water, indoor plumbing, and access to clean drinking water. Host families range in size from a single woman with no children living at home to a large household with children, aunts and grandparents. In some homes, interns will use squat toilets and take bucket baths. Host families may be Hindu, Jain or Muslim in religion. They tend to be very socially conservative and some do not allow non-vegetarian food, alcohol or smoking in their homes. When interns spend time with their host family and adapt to the family's practices and schedules, most become a welcome part of their adoptive family. All of our host families are eager to welcome FSD interns into their homes and share their Indian culture.

One of the most rewarding, challenging, and meaningful experiences during your time in Udaipur is likely to be the time you spend living with your host family. Host families offer the rare opportunity to truly integrate yourself into the local culture and build meaningful relationships that will last long past your stay. The families who host FSD participants are carefully selected and offer their homes out of a genuine sense of generosity and the wish to learn about another culture. Your host family will view you as a member of the family and treat you as such. We hope that you will feel equally at home with your family but we ask that you never forget you are a guest in their home. Please always be respectful of their rules and help out the best you can.

What will my host family provide?

Your family is required to provide you with a private room, three meals a day, purified water and weekly hand-washing of your clothes, not including undergarments. Toiletries, towels, and shower sandals are not provided.

What are the living accommodations like?

Living accommodations may be basic by U.S. standards. Electricity often isn't available for short periods of time. Due to water shortages, bucket showers are the norm. You will become accustomed to a fair amount of night sound, including traffic, animals, and radios. Earplugs can help. Ants, mosquitoes, lizards and occasionally spiders and small rodents can creep into the house. Your family can help prevent these unfortunate visitors, so let them know if you see something.

Will a mosquito net be provided?

A mosquito net will not be provided in most cases but are only necessary when

staying overnight in rural areas. These can be purchased cheaply in-country if needed.

How are families structured in India?

Indian culture is centered around the family unit, and families are generally very close-knit. Many people live in joint families, with several generations living under the same roof. FSD families in Udaipur are usually middle to upper class. The men in these families often own businesses (usually family businesses) or are employed by companies in Udaipur. Some of the women in these families stay at home taking care of the children and the home, some get involved in their own small entrepreneurial adventures, and others have jobs teaching or working for NGOs.

Do I need to help out with chores?

We ask families to treat you as another member of the family, which means you will pick up after yourself, keep your area neat, and help out with the cooking and cleaning as appropriate.

Is it safe to bring and store valuables at my host family's house?

There is no need to bring many valuables. We require that you keep items of value locked in your luggage at all times. While all of FSD's host families are personally known to the FSD site team, this is extremely important because friends, relatives, and household staff are often in and out of the house. However, there have been incidents when a participant thought something was stolen only to find that he or she had misplaced it. This kind of "scandal" is hard on the host family, who take great care to protect you and your things. If something of this nature does happen, please speak with the FSD site team immediately before speaking to your family.

What language should I expect at home?

While FSD families are relatively comfortable with English, Hindi and Marwari are the primary languages spoken in the home and with friends. This will be a great opportunity to improve your language skills!

What are standard meal times?

Lunch is at midday; however breakfast and dinner are served a bit earlier than you may be used to, generally because people both arise and go to bed earlier. Family members often eat at different times. Many families watch the news during lunch and dinner. Don't be surprised if the family serves you before or after their own meal.

How should I tell my family that I'd like less food, or different kinds of food?

Don't be shy about asking your family for particular foods or the amount of food you want to eat. Vegetarian food is always available. You should tell your family

what you do and do not like to eat. Politely ask your family for food to be less greasy or salty, to put salt on the side, mention that you like fruits and vegetables, or ask to be given more or less food.

How much time should I spend with my host family? What should we talk about?

One of the most rewarding, challenging, and meaningful experiences during your time in country is likely to be the time you spend living with your host family. You will learn a great deal about country through the people who live there, so cultivate a habit of listening and observing, rather than merely hearing and seeing. Ask questions and share your perspective. Be sensitive to the feelings of others and embrace the different viewpoints, lifestyles, experiences and company your family provides. Host families are eager to get to know you and learn about your life, so be ready to talk about your interests, culture, family and plans. We encourage you to share pictures and stories from your life at home.

How often should I check in with my family?

You are entrusted in the family's care and just like your own family, and they will worry about you if you don't check in. Please advise your family in advance if you do not plan to be home for a meal, and notify your family in advance of any weekend excursions you take other than those in the scheduled program.

Can I have visitors come over to the house?

Please advise your family before you invite anyone to the house, especially someone of the opposite sex. Overnight guests are NOT appropriate and are unacceptable during the program. Protect your family's safety and privacy. Do not give out their home number. Remember: Even though you will be treated as part of the family, you are still a guest in their home and must be respectful of their rules.

Will I receive my own set of keys?

You will receive your own keys to the house so that you are free to come and go as needed. Note that your family will likely also have a key and may enter to tidy up, so keep your space clean!

Can I go out at night?

Yes, but with caution and preferably not alone. If you do make plans to go out at night, please advise your family of your transportation, who will be accompanying you, your return time, and arrangements for getting home and into the house. Remember that it is difficult to find transportation after 8 pm so it is your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements to be home before this time. Please also remember that it is inappropriate to return home intoxicated, so if you plan on drinking, please do so in moderation. Exercise good judgment: as anywhere, it is best to go out with family members, coworkers or friends that you

meet. Simply being a foreigner draws extra attention to you and puts you at higher risk for harassment or theft.

How should I handle requests for money?

FSD program fees subsidize all of your room and board expenses, so there is no need for you to discuss money with your family. They should not ask you to borrow money and if this happens, tell them it is against your program rules to lend money. If children ask for money, gently remind them that it is against the rules, and let your site team know about the incident.

What types of gifts are appropriate to bring for my host family?

We suggest that you bring small and modest gifts for your host family as a token of goodwill and gratitude for their hospitality after you stay with them. Ideas include: souvenirs of your hometown, state or university, chocolates or other candies, inexpensive watches or jewelry, school supplies for the children, etc. It is possible to purchase small gifts in country too, but regional gifts are special. Your host family will also greatly enjoy seeing pictures of your hometown and family. Use your imagination!



REFLECTION ON INDIA

By Hanes Motsinger

I have now been here 75 days. For those 75 days I have been working with the Centre for Women's Studies, a small department of a local university that is working to empower women throughout the tribal blocks of Rajasthan surrounding Udaipur. I have now been here 75 days. I have spent 75 days getting up around 7:30 in the morning, having breakfast with my wonderful host mother, and walking out the door by 9 am to ensure that I make it to work by 10 am, the time the Indian work day begins. I walk down the stairs of my apartment complex, wave good morning to the security guard who I've become "buddies" with that works at the grocery store in the bottom of my apartment building, and mentally prepare myself for the never-ending beeping of motorcycles, government buses, and auto rickshaws that whiz through the narrow roads of Udaipur. I take a 15-20 minute refreshing morning walk (mornings here are cool, though days are hot) to Court Chariya where I catch the "big rickshaw" or tempo to take me all the way to work in Pratap Nagar for 5 Rupees.

The first 75 days have been humbling, infuriating, educational, enjoyable, hysterical, frantic, and hectic, tiring, and the list could go on and on and on. I spent the first two weeks reading research project after research project in hopes of understanding the mission and previous projects of CWS. I spent the next month and a half losing hope that I would make any meaningful contribution to my host organization and the larger community

Finally, upon having every urge to cry and pull my hair out as we were unsuccessful time and again at coming up with a sustainable project (however small), my boss asked me if I would develop a nutritional toolkit. "Nutritional toolkit?", I said. I inquired about what this meant, and the only response I was given was "you know, like a scale and a thermometer and a few medicines and feminine hygiene projects that we can distribute at future health workshops and trainings." To me, this sounded like aid, first aid, and not sustainable development. This wasn't our collective goal. This wasn't going to assist in the long term betterment of livelihoods for these village women. What to do? What to do?

Then it dawned on me. They were asking me for a nutritional toolkit. They obviously had some concern for the "nutrition" of village women, although our definitions of "nutrition" may be slightly different. I realized that wait a second, the Centre for Women's Studies has done research on the impact of male migration on women and families and on the prevalence and conception of abuse

against women in tribal communities (among others), but the organization had no information regarding the nutritional status of women and children in the surrounding communities.

Since presenting the idea to my organization to undertake a research study on the nutritional status of tribal women and families and the nutritional divisions that may exist between men and women, class and caste, I have started spending my everyday in the field with one of my fellow co-workers as my all too valuable translator. The hour and a half haul to Gogunda (the tribal block I am working within) via government bus is absolutely nerve-wracking, but one of those experiences that makes this adventure all the more exciting. We speed through winding, bumping roads and fly off our seats if we are so unlucky as to get stuck in the back of the bus. We clench our teeth and hold on to our seats for dear life as brakes aren't used here, only blaring horns that say "get out of the way or we will run you over!" (said jokingly, kind of!) We walk, walk, and walk some more from hamlet to hamlet as transportation through the expansive villages is pretty much non-existent. We eat lunch with locals and as I can't speak the language, the village women and I smile at one another and laugh at our inability to talk. Somehow through the laughter, we sometimes begin to understand each other, if only just a little. We sometimes receive incredible responses to our survey and feel as if the end result is going to be fantastic, and other days we want to run quickly back to the bus stand as responses are nothing short of vague and unclear. This is just how it goes...

I have realized that although I may not finish the surveying of 100 women as I had hoped, my time here still will be a success when it ends on December 18th. If I only finish 50 surveys, write a theoretical research report, but know that I have positively impacted the life of at least one individual while also being given the greatest learning experiences about life, and work, and persistence, and the importance of hope and faith in this world of sustainable development, my time in Udaipur, India will have been worth every single second. This work is hard. This work is challenging and often infuriating. This work makes you laugh and it makes you cry. It makes you want to pull your hair out and run into the middle of a forest just to scream at the top of your lungs for 20 minutes. It makes you so incredibly happy and excited, and it builds your patience like nothing else possibly could. It takes you on the greatest ride of your life. This place. This project. These people I have encountered. My host mother and my host organization. They have been my teachers. They have been those that have enhanced my understanding of myself, of this life, of this world and of this thing we call "sustainable development". I suppose in the end, we can laugh... cry... scream... and confidently say, "It was all worth it!!!!!"

CULTURAL PRACTICES

For the most part, you will gain insight into Indian culture through your own experiences, but here are a few common questions that are likely to arise:

How important is punctuality in Indian culture?

The concept of time is very flexible in India and Jodhpur is a very laid-back city. Patience is a virtue because punctuality is difficult to come by. Depending on the people you are with or the organization you work with, things often do not happen until much later than planned. Please come prepared to cope with this cultural difference with patience, flexibility, and a sense of humor. At the same time, FSD participants are known for their professionalism and punctuality so while you should be flexible to adapt to others, make sure to arrive at work on time as it may inspire your colleagues to do the same! If you feel a need to adjust your work hours, ask the site team first.

How do people in India feel about privacy?

The definition of personal space is very different from what you may be used to. The concept of needing to be alone and needing space that is just yours is often considered odd, and aside from your room, there are very few places where you won't be bombarded by the general loudness of life here. People often crowd together especially when riding public transportation or attending outdoors fairs and festivals. Indians are also very personal people. They will ask questions that seem nosy or too personal, and it is not considered rude (you can do it too and it is alright).

How do people in India greet and say goodbye to each other?

The most common greetings are “namaste” or “namashkar” said with palms together in prayer position at chest height. Namashkar is more formal and respectful, whereas namaste is a more informal greeting and is more frequently used. They both mean “I bow to you.” These greetings are used throughout the day and can be used to signify either hello or goodbye.

What are some common non-verbal gestures and body language to know?

Affection is very rarely displayed in public and you should always refrain from hand holding, putting your arm around another, kissing, etc - this type of affection is not condoned by society. It is common, however, to see men holding hands in public and you should be aware that this is an accepted expression of nonsexual friendship.

Are there customs surrounding eating that I should be aware of?

Most Indians rarely use utensils to eat and instead eat with their right hand, using only the tips of their fingers. The left hand is never used because it is reserved for toilet duties. If possible try to use only your right hand at the dinner table. It is understood that you are foreign to these customs and are not held to the same expectations, but efforts to adjust to their culture are always appreciated. When in doubt, observe those around you to learn the nuances surrounding meals.

Are there any customs I should be aware of when visiting someone's home?

It is common for guests to take off their shoes before entering a home. It is customary to offer food to guests when they come visit (at home, at the office, anywhere). Volunteers will often find themselves in situations where they do not want to eat or drink anything, but are being forced to. The problem is that people often take it personally if you try to refuse, even if you go about it in a diplomatic manner. The best option is simply to try to say no, but then agree to eating or drinking just a small amount.

How are children treated in country? Is it common for children to be reprimanded physically at home or at school?

Since India is such a family-oriented culture, children are the center of attention in most families and are very well taken care of. Disciplinary measures vary from household to household, but in school physical reprimands are commonplace. Teachers and principals will strike unruly students as this is widely accepted form of discipline.

How are animals treated in country? Do people keep pets?

You should expect to see cows, donkeys, goats, water buffaloes, and dogs roaming the streets. Both dogs and cats as pets are extremely rare, and often dogs are strays that live on the streets. Though some are friendly, you should keep in mind that dogs are often mistreated and can tend to be more aggressive than what you're accustomed to. Take caution when around all animals, though cows and the like are very tame.

What place does religion have in country?

Religion plays a major role in the lives of most Indians. Approximately 82 percent of the population is Hindu, 12 percent is Muslim, and the rest is comprised of Christians, Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhists. Social structure, political affiliation, and cultural norms have been heavily influenced by these religions throughout India's 5000-year history. India has an incredibly rich religious history and since Indians are generally very open about their religious beliefs don't feel shy about asking questions regarding customs, festivals, beliefs, gods, etc. In fact most Indian take pride in their religious heritage and appreciate the opportunity to share their

beliefs with others.

What are the rules for visiting a religious or sacred site?

Always dress conservatively, and remove your shoes before entering. Also know that it is offensive to touch someone with your feet and to touch a carving of a deity.



MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

An important part of ensuring you have a positive experience in India is to manage your expectations from the very beginning. Remember that you are arriving to learn and be a small step in the overall sustainable development process. It is normal to feel lost and perhaps even without purpose at the beginning. Our suggestion is to follow the 3 Ps:

BE PROACTIVE

- Good relationships lead to good projects, not the other way around. Take the initiative to begin to form relationships in your organization and with other people that you meet in India.
- Your supervisor will often not give you specific tasks. You may feel you are without direction. Take a moment and think of something you can be doing or working on. Think of possible obstacles and solutions in advance. Accept that you may have more free time than you are used to; relax and do something for you.

BE PERSISTENT

- You may need to ask for things you need more than once. You are your own best advocate. Even if it takes a few tries, don't give up on asking for what it is you need.
- Things may not work out on the first try (or second, or third, etc). Analyze what did and did not work and try again.

BE POLITE

- No matter how frustrated or confused you are, always be polite. Remember that you are not at home and that rash reactions can often offend. Learn a few stress management techniques and see which works best for you. Learn the difference between being firm and being rude.

Development is often a painfully slow process. Take the time before you arrive to mentally prepare yourself for a different pace of life and work. Keep in mind you may need to change your definitions of productivity and success. Even small accomplishments and projects require significant amounts of time. Be prepared to be frustrated at times; adjustment and adaptation can be difficult, especially at first. If you ready yourself for these realities before you arrive, the process will be easier once here.



WORKPLACE FAQ

What is the general perception of work in country?

People do work very hard, either in the office, with partner organizations, or in the field, but the general attitude towards work is different than volunteers may be used to, as work is frequently intermingled with socializing with coworkers and chai (tea) breaks.

What is a typical work schedule in India?

Like many parts of India, Udaipur works on a six-day workweek with Sunday being the only day off. Some organizations, however, have the second Saturday of each month off. While this may seem quite intense, the working environment in the NGO sector is generally quite relaxed. Offices open around 10 am after a leisurely morning and full breakfast, lunch is usually taken around 1 or 2 pm either with coworkers at the office or at home, and people leave the office for home around 5 or 6 pm. National holidays occur frequently. Your work schedule will be determined after meeting your supervisor in country, as each organization works on different time schedules.

How is personal initiative viewed? Is it appropriate to voice my opinions?

Initiative is encouraged and in many instances a necessity at work. According to former intern Maggie Jacoby, “Have as clear an idea as possible about what you want to get done. Don’t wait for work to be assigned to you; actively seek out ways in which you can be useful and helpful. Even if it is only that you have a better grasp of written and spoken English, find ways to utilize these skills at your organization. More importantly, suspend all your Western notions of how things should, and will, work. If you come in expecting efficiency and quick changes, you’ll only get frustrated.” You should always feel that you can share your ideas and opinions, as creativity is always encouraged. But be prepared to adjust to the Indian work culture and not place strict expectations about timing and efficiency on those around you.

What are common practices for socializing with colleagues?

Expect to get to know your colleagues well as office teams spend significant time around each other (given the six day work week!). It is most common to socialize during work hours, however, on occasion colleagues see each other outside for coffee or dinner.

RACE, SEXUALITY, & GENDER

How you interact with others (and they with you) will initially have a lot to do with preconceptions. You'll feel more comfortable once the inevitable "getting to know you" period is over, but keep some cultural norms in mind:

RACE AND ETHNICITY

In India, you may not encounter the same level and/or kind of awareness and sensitivity surrounding race relations and conceptualizations of heritage as you may be accustomed to finding in the U.S. If you have dark skin or features associated with an African heritage, for example, people may refer to you as "Negro/a." If you have fair skin, people may refer to you as "Angrez." In most cases, these names are not necessarily derogatory terms; many people use them simply because your skin color or features are unusual or intriguing within that context. Some might also make assumptions that your ethnic background and where you live are the same. For instance, if you have a Chinese background, they may assume you are from China. This is not meant to offend, but is due to a lack of awareness about diversity. In some cases, it may be valuable to engage the people you meet in a conversation about the specificity of your heritage.

SEXUALITY

Sexual orientation is not a topic that is openly discussed in India. Please realize that in India homosexuality may not be regarded with the same understanding or sensitivity, as you may be accustomed to. Do your best to take this into consideration when discussing such issues with your host family or other members of the community. While homosexual relations between men were decriminalized in India in 2009, there is still a lot of discrimination and harassment towards homosexuals. The Indian Supreme Court reinstated a law criminalizing homosexuality in 2013.

GENDER

As a foreigner, you are going to attract attention. Women should expect to experience with much more harassment than men, including occasional lewd comments and grabbing. The best thing to do is ignore negative attention, be cautious and aware of your surroundings, dress conservatively so as not to attract any extra attention, and don't stay out too late (especially not alone). Do not give out your phone number to people you don't know. You can explain that you are living in someone else's house and are not allowed to receive calls or visitors. Please remember that most attention you receive reflects innocent curiosity and interest in you, instead of malicious intentions. Please also note that any physical

harassment (i.e. groping) is unacceptable behavior and should be reported to the site team immediately.

In 2014 the Supreme Court of India recognized transgender people as a third gender. In an advance for human rights, transgendered individuals will now be provided with equal opportunity under the law.

DISCRIMINATION

The previous three sections are not written to validate or excuse discriminatory behavior. Not only is there a lack of awareness regarding diversity of race, gender, and sexuality, you may also find a lack of awareness in regard to religions, ethnicities, and nationalities. This lack of understanding/awareness does not always translate into discrimination.

However, if at any time you feel discriminated against at your host family, host organization, or during your interactions within the community, please inform the FSD site team immediately so we can help. We will work with you to ensure that you are able to enjoy your time with FSD to the fullest without worrying about discrimination.

LANGUAGE GUIDE

No less than eighteen major languages are officially recognized by the constitution, and numerous minor languages and over a thousand dialects are spoken across India. When independent India was organized, the present day states were largely created along linguistic lines, which at least helps the traveler make some sense of the complex situation. Hindi is commonly spoken throughout northern India and will be the language you will find most helpful to know at work and at home.

PRACTICE

Speaking a language is the best way to learn, so don't be afraid to practice your Hindi with as many people as possible. Your best resource in learning the local language will be your host family and co-workers at your host organization. Relax and remember that the key to learning (or improving your skills in) a language is the ability to laugh at yourself. Indians are also very receptive and appreciative of foreigners who speak even a little broken Hindi so don't be afraid of making mistakes. Hindi is spoken by such a wide diversity of people in India (many who actually speak it as their second language!) that it is rarely spoken in its pure form and Indians are used to hearing mistakes and variances of grammar. Many Indians these days also speak Hindi with a generous amount of English mixed in ("Hinglish"). This is great for new Hindi students because when you don't know a vocab word it is often acceptable (and even trendy) to just use the English equivalent. Pronunciation, however, causes the most confusion both for new language students and those trying to understand you. Many Indians are not used to hearing Hindi spoken with a foreign accent and mispronunciation can often completely change the meaning of a word. The Hindi alphabet is very phonetic with each letter having a specific sound which often can not be directly translated into an English equivalent. It'd be very helpful to learn the Hindi alphabet from the start so you can read and understand the sometimes subtle differences in pronunciation.

LANGUAGE RESOURCES

The following is a list of basic to intermediate Hindi language learning materials. This is a limited selection of books that past participants have found useful; there are many other quality volumes available. Many of these may be available in Udaipur, though selection will be somewhat limited. It's a good idea to find one that you like before leaving home to give you the chance to start practicing.

Teach Yourself Hindi by Rupert Snell—This book is one of the very best books

for learning Hindi and is probably one of the only books participants who are interested in learning Hindi will need. 2 It is fairly challenging and can take the student from a complete beginner to an intermediate level. It contains an excellent dictionary, lessons in writing and pronunciation, and a solid review of Hindi grammar. It is particularly recommended to purchase this book as a set with the audio CD's and is best purchased in the US.

Hindi-English Phrase Book by Kavita Kumar—A wonderful and very small pocket book with many useful phrases, grammar lessons, dictionary, and useful lessons about Indian culture and religion. It is written in both Hindi and English alphabet for beginning to intermediate students. It may be hard to find in Jodhpur but can probably be ordered by a good bookstore.

The Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary by R.S. McGregor —This is the best and most reputable Hindi to English Dictionary. It is available in India for much less than in the US and is meant for intermediate to advanced students who can read Hindi.

Advanced Learner's English-Hindi Dictionary by Dr. Hardev Bahri—An excellent English to Hindi dictionary for the intermediate to advanced student complete with numerous examples of words being used in sentences so one can understand their use in context.

Hindi for Non-Hindi Speaking People by Kavita Kumar—An excellent upper intermediate to advanced level grammar book which is written more as a reference guide than a textbook. The numerous examples and detailed grammar rules it covers is extremely helpful for more advanced students.

A Course in Advanced Hindi by Sheela Verma—An excellent book for the advanced student with an introduction to some of Hindi literature's greatest short stories, plays, and poetry, advanced grammar lessons, and useful regional variations and proverbs that are rarely covered in other language books. She also wrote an intermediate level book which is ok.

Hindi Structures: Intermediate Level by Peter Edwin Hook—A great intermediate grammar book that sheds light on some hard to understand grammatical uses and variations.

FILM GUIDE

Hindi film is beloved in India and having a familiarity with films, songs, and actors can give you a window into Indian popular culture. While in the U.S., a good source for renting Hindi films is www.netflix.com and Wikipedia has a good guide to Bollywood cinema with great links (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bollywood>). Hindi film is often very long (~3 hours) and usually incorporates song and dance routines and far-fetched storylines which sometimes surprise and amuse foreign viewers. However, amidst the stereotypical mass-released films are a good number of very high quality movies with fantastic cinematography, storylines, acting, and yes...usually music. The following is a list of some recommended films based upon their influence and popularity in Indian society, their quality, and entertainment value.

Fire (1996) directed by Deepa Mehta—A romantic drama where a tender and passionate love story develops in the dark recess of a traditional New Delhi household signaling the slow and painful dissolution of the old order in this contemporary story of women breaking the bonds of obedience, fidelity and silence; and of men struggling to maintain their traditional advantages while exploring the freedoms of westernized life

Water (2005) directed by Deepa Mehta—The film examines the plight of a group of widows forced into poverty at a temple in the holy city of Varanasi. It focuses on a relationship between one of the widows, who wants to escape the social restrictions imposed on widows, and a man who is from the highest caste and a follower of Mahatma Gandhi.

Delhi 6 (2009) directed by Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra—A story about love, hope and self-discovery set in the walled city of Delhi (zip code 6) and its chaotic but touching life that forces us to ask questions about ourselves.

Dor (2006) directed by Nagesh Kukunoor—The film is about two women who come from different backgrounds and how fate brings them together. Meera, a young woman who becomes a widow shortly after marriage, is trapped by tradition. Zeenat, on the other hand, faces the daunting task of saving the life of her husband, who is on trial for murder. A bahuroopiya helps her reach Meera, who holds the “string” to Zeenat’s hope. The companionship that develops between Meera and Zeenat results in redemption for both.

Rang De Basanti (2006) directed by Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra—A young woman from England comes to India to make a documentary about her grandfather’s diary which was written in the 1920s about the Indian Independence with five young men who hesitate to get out into the real world. Gradually the friends ponder over their roles and the lives of the selfless freedom-fighters, and in the face of a tragedy, realize that they too, like Bhagat Singh and Azad, must take action, to ensure that their now corrupt and poverty-laden country, awakens and the guilty do not go unpunished.

Lage Raho Munna Bhai (2006) directed by Rajkumar Hirani—A musical comedy where the lighthearted Munnabhai falls in for a radio jockey Jahnvi, and to meet her, he wins a competition in Munnabhai style! But to woo her, he has to study about Mahatma Gandhi. This brings about a new change in him and he tries to change the lives of people around him using his ‘Gandhigiri’.

Three Idiots (2009) directed by Rajkumar Hirani—A comedy where two friends embark on a quest for a lost buddy. On this journey, they encounter a long forgotten bet, a wedding they must crash, and a funeral that goes impossibly out of control.

RECOMMENDED READING

Shantaram by Gregory David Roberts—A book about a convicted Australian bank robber and heroin addict who escaped from Pentridge Prison and fled to India where he lived for 10 years. While partially based on Roberts' own experiences, Roberts himself has clarified that the story and its incidents are largely fictional.

Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found by Sektu Mehta—a narrative nonfiction book by Suketu Mehta, published in 2004, about the Indian city of Mumbai. Mehta writes as someone who is on one hand an outsider to this magnificent city and on the other hand was born and raised in the city then known as Bombay.

Two States: The Story of My Marriage by Chetan Bhagat—It is the story about a couple coming from two different states of India, who face hardships in convincing their parents and persuading them to get married.

Three Mistakes of My Life by Chetan Bhagat—The novel follows the story of three friends and is based in the city of Ahmedabad in western India. Govind dreams of starting a business. To accommodate his friends Ishaan and Omi's passion, they open a cricket shop. However, each has a different motive: Govind's goal is to make money; Ishaan desires to nurture Ali, a gifted batsman; Omi just wants to be with his friends.

Five Point Someone — What not to do at IIT! By Chetan Bhagat—The novel is set in the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, in the period 1991 to 1995. It is about the adventures of three mechanical engineering students (and friends), Hari Kumar (the narrator), Ryan Oberoi, and Alok Gupta, who fail to cope with the grading system of the IITs.

Hindu philosophy: The Bhagavad Gita; or The Sacred Lay, a Sanskrit philosophical poem translated by John Davies—The Bhagavad Gita is a Sanatana Dharma or Hindu scripture produced from the colloquy given by Sri Krishna to Arjuna during the Kurukshetra War. Its philosophies and insights are intended to reach beyond the scope of religion and to humanity as a whole. It is at times referred to as the “manual for mankind” and has been highly praised by not only prominent Indians such as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi but also Aldous Huxley, Albert Einstein, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Carl Jung and Herman Hesse.

In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India by Edward Luce—As the world's largest democracy and a rising international economic power, India has long been heralded for its great strides in technology and trade. Yet it is also plagued by poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and a vast array of other social and economic issues. Here, noted journalist and former Financial Times South Asia bureau chief Edward Luce travels throughout India's many regions, cultures, and religious circles, investigating its fragile balance between tradition and modernity.

India: Development and Participation by Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen—A fantastic book that looks at the inequality of India's economic reforms during the 1990's. It displays the positive impacts of reform but also argues that India must develop in ways that uphold democracy and spread the benefits of reform among the poor and rural sectors

Understanding Contemporary India edited by Sumit Ganguly and Neil DeVotta—A book that offers a good overview on different concepts and issues in contemporary India. It offers good insight into issues such as historical context, Indian politics, the role of women, caste etc.

The Ramayana translated by N.K. Narayan—Ramayana is one of the two great epics of India that depicts the duties of relationships, portraying ideal characters like the ideal father, ideal servant, the ideal brother, the ideal wife and the ideal king.

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

Headlines from and links to major Indian news agencies, including Times of India, The Hindu, and Indian Express

www.samachar.com

An informative site on the development sector in India

www.indianngos.com

A respected newspaper, which often has stories related to the development sector

www.thehindu.com

Top national news and current events magazine

www.flonnet.com

India's most widely distributed daily

www.thetimesofindia.com

An influential journal for social development studies and policy discussions

www.epw.org.in

India's leading business newspaper which covers the economy, financial, and industrial news and stock market reports

www.financialexpress.com

US department of State's page for country-by-country travel warnings, consular information and public announcements

www.travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html

The Government of India portal, it has links to most government of India websites, including departments, autonomous bodies, state governments, ministries etc.

www.indiaimage.nic.in

Informative development sector news, features, and stories

www.indiatogether.org

Offers international and domestic stories in conjunction with the Wall Street Journal that vary from business, financial and lifestyle news

www.livemint.com