



HOPE FOR **HAITI** FOUNDATION

Trip Manual

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www.hopeforhaitifoundation.com



Welcome

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome each and every one of you to our team. I believe if you are reading this package, you are either going to Haiti or are going to continue to help us make a difference in the lives of people that are far from us, yet dear to our hearts.



Thank you for your willingness to embark on a trip to Haiti with us. I must warn you that a trip to Haiti, while a beautiful island, will be difficult physically and mentally. During the trip, you will not always have basic necessities like running water, inside plumbing, and electricity; however, if you are able to mentally overcome these obstacles, you will go to Haiti again and again.

There are hundreds of people who await your arrival, and they will be willing to do anything to make you feel welcome—their hospitality is second to none. They understand the sacrifices you make and want your trip to be a memorable one. I pray that God will continue to use you for His glory, and I thank you for being obedient.

What a blessing to share your enthusiasm for this country. I look forward to our trip.

Jean Elade Eloi

Founder, Hope for Haiti Foundation

Main contacts

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Mission statement

Hope for Haiti Foundation’s mission and objectives are threefold:

- To provide education to the underprivileged children throughout the remote villages and towns of Haiti.
- To provide medical care to communities without clinics, hospitals, medical doctors or nurses.
- To provide places and activities that foster community growth and vitality — by physical, mental and spiritual means.

Our goal: Helping Haiti help Haiti. The Foundation’s work impacts individual Haitians, empowering them to change their own nation.

We are equipping a new generation with a vision and the skills to make the dream a reality. Already, there are native Haitians making a difference as nurses, ministers and teachers. The future generation undoubtedly holds influencers in law, politics, community organization, media and more.

About Haiti

Name

République d'Haïti

Population

10,485,800

Population growth rate

0.787%

Birth rate

24.4 births/1,000 population

Life expectancy

62.17 years

Capital and largest city

Port-au-Prince

Monetary unit

Gourde

Languages

Creole and French (both official)

Literacy rate:

60.7%

Ethnicity/race

Black 95%, Mulatto and White 5%

Agriculture

Coffee, mangoes, cocoa, sugarcane, rice, corn, sorghum, wood, vetiver

Industries

Textiles, sugar refining, flour milling, cement, light assembly industries based on imported parts

Natural Resources

Bauxite, copper, calcium carbonate, gold, marble, hydropower, arable land



Geography

Haiti, in the West Indies, occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Dominican Republic. About the size of Maryland, Haiti is two-thirds mountainous, with the rest of the country marked by great valleys, extensive plateaus, and small plains.

Government & History

Haiti is a Republic
with an elected
government.



1492

Explored by Columbus.

Haiti's Arawak natives
fell victim to
Spanish rule.

1801

Declaration of
independence by
Pierre-Dominique
Toussaint l'Ouverture

1804

Jean-Jacques
Dessalines gave the
new nation the Arawak
name Haiti.



1957

Gen. Paul Magloire
was succeeded by
François Duvalier,
nicknamed "Papa Doc."

1971

Upon Duvalier's death,
his son, Jean-Claude, or
"Baby Doc,"
succeeded as ruler of
the poorest nation in
the hemisphere.

1991

Haiti elected its first
elected chief executive,
Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

1994

A U.N. peacekeeping
force, led by the U.S.—
Operation Uphold
Democracy—arrived.



2004

Violent protests rocked
the country.

2006

Haiti held elections
with hopes of stability.



1697

Haiti became the
French colony
Saint-Dominique,
which became a
leading sugarcane
producer dependent
on slaves.

1791

An insurrection
erupted amongst
the slave population
of 480,000.

1905-1941

A bankrupt Haiti
accepted a U.S.
customs receivership.

1949

After four years of
democratic rule by
President Dumarsais
Estimé, dictatorship re-
turned under Gen. Paul
Magloire.

1980

Haiti became one of the
first countries to face an
AIDS epidemic.

1986

Unrest generated by
the economic crisis
forced "Baby Doc"
to flee the country.

1996

Jean-Bertrand Aristide
was succeeded by
René Preval.

2000

U.S. soldiers and U.N.
peacekeepers left.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide
was reelected.

2010

A massive magnitude
7.0 earthquake struck
Haiti.



2016

Jovenel Moïse is named
president-elect of Haiti.



Safety Concerns

There is inherent risk that comes with traveling to a remote area, whether that is Haiti or anywhere in the world. HFHF requires that each individual make an informed decision about traveling to Haiti. As an organization, we are committed to helping the people of Haiti. To accomplish our mission, we have assumed a certain level of risk. However, each individual must decide for themselves what level of risk he or she is comfortable accepting.

HFHF safety measures

Between natural disaster recovery, poor health infrastructure, and political uncertainty, there is a lot to consider when traveling. HFHF has a set of safety procedures outlined below.

1. Prior to travel, we are in constant contact with staff on the ground in Haiti to assess the current country situation and safety of travel.
2. We are in contact with several other Haitian organizations regarding safety of travel to Haiti at any particular time.
3. We always travel with HFHF Haitian staff who are familiar with the area, speak the language, and understand the culture. We always use the buddy system.
4. We have emergency funds available should it be determined that travel is not wise. In such an event, the team would be taken to a hotel and remain there until it is deemed safe to travel again.
5. We carry an emergency medical kit with basic supplies and a cell phone for emergency calls.
6. We make every effort to travel only during daylight hours.

Individual safety measures

HFHF does its part to make sure proper safety measures are in place, but it cannot guarantee anyone's safety. Please understand that Zorangé is a six-hour drive from Port-au-Prince and that there are no emergency facilities available. Getting back to the States in a non-life threatening situation could take up to 24 hours. For this reason, we strongly recommend that you do the following:

1. HFHF purchases traveler's insurance with every airline ticket. If you prefer to get your own traveler's insurance or would like to see an example of what ours covers, please email Elizabeth at ebrown@hopeforhaitifoundation.com.
2. Register your travel with the U.S. Embassy. You can do this online at <https://travel.state.gov>.
3. Consider your current state of health—if you have a medical issue that requires access to immediate medical assistance, please be aware of the increased risk you are assuming.
4. READ this trip manual in detail, and make sure you follow appropriate guidelines for safety.
5. Recognize that you are still responsible for your own safety, even when traveling in a group.

Exercise

The people of Zorangé have strong hearts because of the amount of walking they do. You will also be walking and hiking a great deal. You can take steps now to get fit or in even better shape for the trip. Here are some suggestions for getting started.

- See your doctor for a full physical
- Walk to do your errands instead of driving
- Mow the lawn with a push mower
- Use a shovel instead of a snow blower
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Walk the long way to someone's office
- Stand at your desk, stretch or march in place
- Join a recreational sports team
- Walk daily. Each week, add distance or hills.
- Use resistance bands to strengthen muscles
- Go to the gym, if you are a member

Nutrition

Getting into the habit of healthy eating will help prepare you for the Haitian menu. During the trip, you will not see fast food. You will be eating what is found in the community: rice, beans, chicken, plantains, oranges, etc. Start by choosing fresh foods. Add fruit and vegetables to every meal and drink milk and water throughout the day. Make eating a time for fueling the body and not just consuming calories. Any steps taken now, no matter how small, will benefit you in Haiti. Essentially, you want to make sure your body is used to expending a larger amount of energy daily.

Health Concerns

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is an excellent, up-to-date resource for health concerns related to travel to Haiti (wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/haiti). Vaccine recommendations are based on the best available information, but the level of risk for vaccine-preventable diseases can change at any time. See your doctor at least six months before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect. If you are getting immunizations from the CDC or state, schedule now as it takes at least 4-6 weeks to get an appointment.

Vaccination or disease

Recommendations or Requirement

Make sure you are up-to-date with routine shots such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc. Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG) recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in countries with an intermediate or high level of hepatitis A virus infection where exposure might occur through food or water. Cases of travel-related hepatitis A can also occur in travelers to developing countries with “standard” tourist itineraries, accommodations and food consumption behaviors.

Hepatitis B

Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to countries with intermediate to high levels of endemic HBV transmission, especially those who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment (e.g., for an accident).

Typhoid

Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in the Caribbean, especially if staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities, villages or rural areas where exposure might occur through food or water.

Malaria

Malaria is a serious illness transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Travelers to Haiti may be at risk for this potentially deadly disease and should protect themselves by taking an anti-malarial drug and by preventing mosquito bites. Despite the risk, most travelers can avoid becoming ill by taking these precautions.

- Take your malaria-prevention medication before, during and after travel, as directed. Typical medication prescribed for avoiding malaria is hydroxychloroquine. Local pharmacies do not normally stock this drug, so place your prescription well in advance of the trip.
- Pay special attention to mosquito protection between dusk and dawn. This is when the type of mosquito whose bite transmits malaria is active. Zika and Chikungunya mosquitos bite during the day as well.
- Know the specific Zika precautions if you are a woman who is pregnant or is planning to get pregnant (www.cdc.gov/zika/pregnancy).
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants and hats.
- Use insect repellents that are 100 DEET. Follow the directions and precautions on the product.

Precautions

- Wash hands often with soap and water, or use antibacterial hand sanitizer.
- Because motor-vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury among travelers, walk and drive defensively. Avoid travel at night, if possible, and always use seat belts.
- Do not eat or drink dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: boil it, cook it, peel it or forget it.
- Never eat undercooked ground beef or poultry, raw eggs, or non-pasteurized dairy products. Raw shellfish is particularly dangerous to persons who have liver disease or compromised immune systems. Do not eat food from street vendors.
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks and ice cubes. If this is not possible, make water safer by BOTH filtering through an “absolute 1-micron or less” filter AND adding iodine tablets to the filtered water. “Absolute 1-micron filters” are found in camping/outdoor supply stores.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections keep feet clean and dry and do not go barefoot.
- Do not handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs and cats) to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague).
- Do not swim in fresh water. Salt water is usually safer.

Passports, Payments & Policies

Passports

Every team member must make arrangements for a passport. Because it often takes several weeks, do it now to avoid panic, additional fees or the possibility of not being able to join the team in Haiti. Go to <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports.html> for more information. Please note:

- A certified birth certificate is required. This is issued by the state in which you were born. This is not the piece of paper issued by the hospital. You can obtain this certificate by contacting the state or www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.
- Do not sign your application until the Passport Acceptance Agent instructs you to do so.
- You will need a current state-issued driver's license for identification.
- You will need two color photos/headshots. These can usually be obtained at places like UPS stores or post offices. Check the website for details.
- For security reasons, you must apply in person. Acceptance office hours vary. Call for specific hours.

Local passport offices

Cary Post Office

150 Wrenn Dr.
919-468-9602

Apex Post Office

501 W. Williams St.
919-387-6708

USPS Capital Station

311 New Bern Ave.
919-833-0155

Find the nearest location: <https://iafdb.travel.state.gov>

Payments and deadlines

The average trip cost is \$2,000. The cost varies based on trip type or length. More than the required amount can be paid at any time. If you have committed to a trip later in the timeline, the amount and time that funds are due still apply.

Deposit

A \$200 non-refundable deposit is due nine months in advance to secure your place on the team. The deposit is evidence of your sincerity and commitment to the trip.

Second payment

\$900 due six months prior to travel

Last payment

\$900 due two months before the trip

Funds Timeline Example

- Trip is May 1 – Cost is \$2,000
- \$200 non-refundable deposit due in August
- \$900 due in January
- \$900 due in March

For those who are able to make larger payments, we would be grateful, as this permits us to buy medications and supplies without over-extending our credit. If more than the required amount is raised, excess funds will go into a trip scholarship fund that can be applied to expenses on behalf of the team's efforts (i.e., the school building, materials, training, scholarships).

Make payments by check, credit card or PayPal.

Check payable to: Hope for Haiti Foundation

Mail to: PO Box 4794, Cary, NC 27519

Credit Card or PayPal

www.hopeforhaitifoundation.com/donate-your-money

Financial policies

All funds for trips must be given to Hope for Haiti Foundation with no strings attached, to be considered tax-deductible. For proper credit, please include a note that identifies which team member's account is to be credited.

If for any reason you are unable to fulfill your commitment to go on the trip, you are responsible for all prepaid expenses incurred on your behalf (i.e., airfare, lodging, transportation, etc.). It is your responsibility to communicate to your support team regarding your inability to participate and to assure them that the funds will be used for the intended purpose.

What happens to the funds raised for your trip?

- Due to our tax-deductible status and issues related to IRS law with charitable contributions, all funds you raise will go into a general trip scholarship fund for the intended trip.
- OR, if you'd still like to participate in a trip, your funds will be saved for a future trip to which you commit.
- OR, if HFHF has to cancel the trip you're committed to, then your raised funds will be saved for the next trip to which you are able to commit.

If you have difficulty raising funds for the balance of the trip costs before the due date, you must make an appointment with the administrative director, Elizabeth Brown, to discuss your specific situation. If no reasonable effort has been made in raising funds, and if you are unable to pay the balance by the due date, then you will forfeit your place on the team. Any funds raised up to that point for your trip will either be placed in a trip scholarship fund OR saved specifically for you for a future trip — please let Elizabeth know your choice.

Fundraising Guidelines

You're excited about the trip, but the amount of money you need to raise can be daunting. Raising money doesn't have to be as difficult as it seems, as many people want to be part of something that affects others around the world. Sharing your excitement and your vision for the trip can help you raise all you need.

Here are a few things to consider:

Strengths: What are your strengths in relationship building? However you plan to raise support, go with your strengths. Don't try to be someone else.

Lists: Develop a list of everyone you can think of who is interested in what is happening to you. Include friends, family, co-workers, business contacts, and school contacts, young and old. Think relationship, and not their ability to contribute. You may be surprised.

Steps: Consider any deadlines and other factors affecting your support needs. Put them on the calendar, and keep yourself accountable to do what it takes to get the work of raising support done.

Fundraising methods & "etiquette"

Use personal visits, phone calls, letters or emails to request support. Use social networks or fundraising sites like Facebook, Twitter, Firstgiving.org or GoFundMe.com to spread the word about your trip and help gain financial support. Make sure any written communication is professional, grammatically correct, and includes all correct details and information.

Contact your supporters before and after your trip. Send "thank you" letters that include trip details, events and accomplishments. Remember, your supporters are partners with you, so they will be interested in how the trip went and what you learned and "received" from the experience.

Yes, I want to contribute!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Here is ☐\$100 ☐\$50 ☐\$25 ☐\$10 ☐\$_____ to make the trip possible.

DONATIONS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

Make checks payable to Hope for Haiti Foundation and send your generous gifts to:

Hope for Haiti Foundation
c/o [Your Name]
PO Box 4794
Cary, NC 27519

Visit us at www.hopeforhaitifoundation.com

Donations & volunteer opportunities

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities with HFHF, or finding out ways to donate in-kind items such as medical and school supplies, please visit: www.hopeforhaitifoundation.com/donate. You will find detailed information about needs, opportunities and relevant contacts.

Note: Shipping items makes it more difficult to efficiently steward the funds and donations given to us. A cash donation is much appreciated, so that we can purchase items in Haiti.

Sample Fundraising Letters

Fundraising can be a challenge. Here are two sample letters to get you started. Don't forget to keep track of all your donations for following up after the trip.

Please take the time to craft a personal letter to whomever you are asking for support—it is worth the investment of your time. We can provide the HFHF letterhead for you to apply to your letter.

Sample #1 General letter

Dear (FILL HERE),

I would like to share with you that I am planning to take a trip that will be life-changing to those I serve and to myself. I hope to travel to Haiti on (FILL HERE) with the Hope for Haiti Foundation. This is an amazing opportunity and I couldn't be more excited to be a part of this team and this mission.

Can you envision a country where poverty, hunger, a lack of resources, and natural disaster have ravaged the land and its people? Haiti has been the victim of corruption, misguidance and greed for many years; however, its people are strong, steadfast and hopeful. I am eager to help and work alongside the people of Haiti.

Hope for Haiti Foundation works to impact Haiti by empowering its people and supporting efforts in medical care, education, spiritual and community development, and more. Our team will travel to the remote village of Zorangé to continue our relationship with the school and medical clinic staff and the community at large. We will assist our Haitian friends and share with them our experiences and skills.

In order to make this opportunity a reality, I cannot do it alone. The total cost of the trip will be (FILL HERE). I will be covering a portion of that myself, but I am hoping that my friends and family will be able to assist me in raising the necessary funds for the trip. I am truly grateful for anything that you may be able to contribute.

Thank you for all your support,

Your Name

Sample #2 Faith-focused

Dear (FILL HERE),

How are you doing? How is (FILL HERE)? What has been happening in (FILL HERE)? (This first paragraph should be written differently to those who are closer to you, asking about what is happening in their lives. For more distant relatives or acquaintances, develop one paragraph of general greeting.)

God has been at work in my life recently in some special ways. It has been exciting! God has begun to impress on me the reality of a world that does not know Him. I see God's great love for the millions who have not heard about Jesus and how much He wants them to hear. Now I have an opportunity to be part of a team that will be taking the Gospel to Haiti.

We will be leaving for Haiti on (FILL HERE) and returning (FILL HERE). Our team will be returning to the remote village of Zorangé to continue our relationship with the church leaders in ministering to the needs of the community and to reach those who have not heard the Good News. We are praying that God will establish long-term medical care and continue a school through us. (This paragraph details the trip objectives.)

But we can't do it alone. Our team will just be a small part of the larger team God will use to make this ministry happen. Each of us needs people who will partner with us, and who will help reach the Haitians through prayer and financial participation.

The total cost for this trip will be (FILL HERE). I will be covering a portion of that myself, but I am looking for the team God has called to partner with me. I am also seeking prayer partners who will pray for the ministry each day. (These previous two paragraphs communicate partnership and specifics of how the recipient can partner with you.)

Will you pray about whether God would want you to partner with me in prayer or finances? Your gifts and your prayers will bring the Gospel to many in Haiti. We will bring hope to Haiti! (This paragraph asks them to do something. They need to decide.)

In His Service,

Your Name

Packing

A note about TRASH: Leave nothing behind...

Whatever you bring into Haiti, make sure you take out or dispose of properly in the country. Haiti struggles with trash removal and proper disposal. It may be easy to discard trash anywhere, because you will see trash around, but we need to lead by example by using proper trash receptacles to help Haiti's trash problem, rather than contribute to it.

Packing can be stressful, but with this list, most everything will be covered. If you are having second thoughts about an item, call a teammate. Some items like bug spray can be shared. You won't have room for extras, so pack wisely. No checked bags! We use the checked bags allotted to your ticket for our supply containers.

- ☐ Camping backpack or small roller bag holding everything you need, must fit in the overhead compartment
- ☐ Clothes: loose-fitting/cotton items (shorts, T-shirts and sundresses). Medical teams may bring scrubs.
Tip: Some team members pack each day's clothing in sealed/compact plastic bags. Travelers will appreciate a clean change of clothes for the flight home.
- ☐ Light jacket/sweater or long-sleeved shirt
- ☐ Extra socks
- ☐ Light but warm clothes to sleep in (in January and other winter months)
- ☐ Comfortable closed-toe shoes that are broken in (a lot of walking/hiking)
- ☐ Water shoes or sandals for showering or river bathing
- ☐ Small flashlight with a few extra batteries, or personal LED headlight
- ☐ Towel (quick-dry camping towels are the best), washcloth
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Bug repellent, ant killer, sunscreen, lotion, sunglasses, hat with brim or sun visor
- ☐ Indiglo watch, useful for nighttime viewing
- ☐ Extra small, compressible pillow (very handy to sit on during the car rides)
- ☐ Antibacterial gel, baby wipes, or pre-moistened wipes
- ☐ Personal medications (keep in original prescription bottles)
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Baby powder
- ☐ Antidiarrheal medication, Tylenol, Band-Aids, Tylenol PM, Benefiber
- ☐ Earplugs (roosters and other animals don't sleep when we do)
- ☐ Snacks that won't melt (trail mix, jerky, gum, power bars)
- ☐ Refillable water bottle – with clip may be helpful (Camelbak, Nalgene, etc.)
- ☐ Crystal Lite or Tang to add variety to your water; sugar and creamer packets, if you wish to add it to coffee
- ☐ A camera, batteries (you won't be able to recharge) and memory cards
- ☐ Compact notebook and pens
- ☐ Only enough cash for souvenirs and meals in the airport (no more than \$100)
- ☐ \$10 cash for the entrance fee at the airport – exact amount is best
- ☐ Copy of your passport and driver's license – keep it separate from the original
Tip: Keep the paperwork you were issued on the plane on the way to Port-au-Prince; you will be required to show it when you leave the country.
- ☐ Medical staff may want to pack a stethoscope, otoscope or other equipment necessary for a patient exam.

Do NOT bring

- Alcohol, gifts, valuables, more money than stated in the above list, jewelry, or anything you do not want left behind. Limit "extras" or "just in case" items; arrange with others in the group who will take special items to prevent duplication. If you forget something, someone in the group will help you out.
- Contact lens wearing is strongly discouraged because of the risk of vision-threatening infections. There are bacteria common in Haiti that can penetrate the intact cornea in 48-72 hours. In the event of such an infection, we may not have the necessary medications in our clinic. The condition is very painful and could result in permanent vision loss.

Airport liquid restriction

Remember that the airports limit the amount of liquids we can pack in our carry-ons. All liquids must be separated in a clear plastic bag and no larger than 3 oz. This includes things like deodorants, shampoos and lotions, including sunscreen. Larger quantities must be packed in the containers being checked (be sure to put them in a clear plastic bag with your name on it as well).

You should only need larger quantities of liquids if you are going on a trip longer than a week. If you will be bringing larger-quantity bags, tell someone in advance and give them the bags in advance to ensure they are packed.

A Typical Day

The ride

The road trip from the capital city of Port-au-Prince to the village of Zorangé is not what one would expect. A small portion of the trip is on paved roads (with pot holes that could swallow a small car or goat). The rest of the drive is nearly a four-wheelin' event. You will experience bumps that will shake everything loose, swallow dirt clods, and teeter on the edge of mountains. Women are recommended to wear sports bras and everyone should consider taking Dramamine.

When we wake up

The roosters know no time. They crow all night and into the morning. If you sleep through that, our hosts will begin preparing breakfast around 7:00 a.m.

Breakfast

The most memorable part of breakfast is coffee, and sometimes hot chocolate. The coffee is just shy of jet fuel. One cup will get you off to a good start. Breakfast often consists of some form of eggs, local fruit, and a piece of firm bread baked fresh each day. Peanut butter and jelly will be provided. Most team members eat together while watching the sun come up over the mountains—mornings in Haiti are truly spectacular.

Activities of the day

Activities will vary depending on the trip focus and present needs. Those involved with the clinic will head in that direction. Others may be working with teachers or in helping with a construction project. Lunch will be prepared for us each day around noon. The day will wrap up around 5:00 p.m., and dinner will be served shortly after. Any and all plans are subject to change. Thank you for being flexible. Travelers will have an opportunity to explore the area with one of our Haitian team members.

Temperatures

Summer and into fall – Days are in the 80s and 90s, and nights can still be pretty warm.

Winter – Days are in the 80s and evenings can be chilly. A light sweater or sweats are suggested. Bring a warm but compact blanket for the evenings.

How often water is available

Bottled and filtered water will be available at all times. Because the weather is comfortable, it may be easy to become dehydrated. Always have a water bottle with you. Water bottles are in demand, so if you don't keep track of your bottle, it will disappear. We suggest writing your name clearly on your bottle. During the day, our hosts will sometimes offer cocoye (coconut milk) as a delightful refreshment – coconut milk is a healthy alternative to water, so enjoy.

Typical dinner and evening activities

At the end of the day, you'll be ready for dinner. Our hosts will have worked several hours to prepare dinner for us. Count on rice and beans with some type of meat. Often it will be chicken, sometimes goat. Fresh juices often accompany dinner. Enjoy knowing that we are their guests and this is one way they can show appreciation to us. Once dinner is finished, it will be dark. Some will stay up and hang out with the local villagers. Dominos and laughter abound. Others of us will retreat to recover from the day and share with our teammates our experiences.

Brushing your teeth

Travelers should brush their teeth with bottled or filtered water ONLY. Please do not brush your teeth outside of the dorm—use the sinks in the bathrooms.

Bathing

Let baby wipes become your friend! Use antiseptic wipes or gel frequently during the day. It may be possible to wash up or take a bucket bath in the bathrooms in the dormitory where you will stay. Another option is to walk down to the river to bathe. While this feels good, it is not the safest water, so please refrain from shaving. You will find several modes of dress at the river; therefore, we suggest that men bathe with men and ladies with ladies. Some of us will be in swimwear; others may have more or less coverage. A few things to remember: We are the whitest things the villagers have ever seen. They will flock to the river to watch the "blancs" bathe.

Bathrooms

There are two bathrooms in the new dormitory. You may have to use a bucket to flush the toilets, but compared to what travelers used to endure, these facilities are AMAZING! There are still two outhouses, one close to our dorm and the other up at the school. If we are traveling and nature calls, the only option may be to go outside, so please be prepared with wipes or toilet paper.

Other thoughts to remember each day

It will be easy to feel overwhelmed by what you experience. Take a break when you need to. Find a teammate with whom you can talk. We cannot solve all the problems with one visit (or a hundred for that matter). HFHF strives to be the vessel for change, and not a handout. For that reason, we discourage team members from giving gifts or money to individuals.

A Typical Day (con't.)

Taking pictures

Our mission is to help Haiti help itself by providing the resources to empower the next generation of Haitians to influence and impact their native land. To accomplish this, we must treat everyone with equal dignity and respect. Although you may not be able to communicate verbally with Haitians you meet, you can certainly communicate – either positively or negatively – non-verbally through your body language, actions and behavior.

On this trip, you will see things that surprise you, excite you, disturb you or touch you. You will want to capture these experiences to share with friends and for your own memories. However, we need to be careful that in our documenting, we do not turn people into objects, thereby destroying their dignity. In areas such as Port-au-Prince, there has been a lot of attention and media coverage since the earthquake. Many Haitians have started to feel objectified and are particularly sensitive to having pictures taken.

A good first step is to put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself, “If this was my home, my family or me, would I want a stranger taking a picture and sharing it with everyone they know?” Remember, what may look like a shack to you is someone else’s home. Haitians take pride in their appearance and accomplishments, and do not want their picture taken when they are “having a bad hair day.”

The second step is to ask permission. In Creole, you can say “Mwen ka pran foto ou a?” (“May I take a photo of you?”), or have a translator ask for you. Some people will decline, and we ask that you respect their wishes. However, many will agree. If it is someone who is part of HFHF’s Haitian staff, or someone you know, they will be more likely to agree to a photograph. Consider leaving your camera in its case until you’ve gotten to know people a little bit.

Kreyol language

The native language is Haitian Kreyol, which is somewhat similar to French. For audio lessons on basic phrases, www.kreyol.com/dictionary is a good resource. There is a free software download and app available on the website. For those who learn better by reading, “Creole Made Easy” by Wally R. Turnbull can be found on Amazon.com.

Computer

We recommend against taking your laptop. It’s something else to keep up with and can interfere with the relationship-building aspect of the trip. However, if you feel you need to, please keep the following in mind:

Internet

We have no Internet in Zorangé. Most mobile phone carriers have an international plan that you can add to your phone for the trip. There will be an extra expense, and it’s usually not cheap. We can all survive without internet for a week.

Blogging

While we ask that you refrain from personal blogging, we do encourage blogging on behalf of HFHF. Please do this from your smartphone and send all blog entries to Elizabeth Brown to be posted.

Power

We have power 24/7.

Notes & advice

Before the trip, share your hopes and enthusiasm with everyone. You’ll find nearly everyone is curious about these trips and the country of Haiti. Even strangers will encourage you. The more people that can share your experience, the better chance of support you’ll receive (financially, through prayer and general donations).

It’s the same thing for returning. Have a few quick stories ready to share. Encourage folks to donate medical supplies, school supplies, money, etc., all year long. The needs don’t stop because the trip is over. Keep a few photos or postcards handy to reinforce your stories. Getting people engaged will help keep the hope alive.

Plan enough time off from work to decompress after the trip. Some people need a day or two to spend with family and friends, sharing their experience. Others may need a day by themselves to regroup. Reconsider going back to work immediately. Your mental and physical health may be strained. If you need support to decompress, contact Elizabeth Brown. We are here to help in any way.

Your commitment to go to Haiti is not without recognition or appreciation. Just being willing to step outside your comfort zone is tremendous. Know that you are changing a nation, bringing hope to a desperate country. Your team members, the people of Haiti, your community, and above all, God, value your contribution.