

EU and Asia European Voluntary Service Project on  
**“Youth and the Environment”**



**Volunteers' Testimonials**  
**September 2008 – June 2009**



Education and Culture DG

**‘Youth in Action’ Programme**

“This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

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## Youth and the Environment

The increasing man made pressures on the environment and its resources cause many challenges that need to be faced on the international level. Moreover we need to better understand the environmental issues in order to make our actions less harmful for our surrounding. Young people especially will have to live longer with the consequences of today's environmental decisions than will their elders. Therefore young people should be educated in this area, as they constitute a big part of the world's population and they will be managing



the natural resources in the future. The European Commission already organizes many projects related to this theme. They help not only in increasing the awareness of the young people who are taking part in the projects, but also those that are interacting with them. They allow getting to know the environmental situation in different countries and the attitude of people from other cultures. It helps in understanding the importance of protecting the environment and the necessity to educate the young generation about the possible consequences of the overexploitation of the natural resources.

Against this background ICYE International Office together with its partner organisations and with the support of the European Commission, was able to develop a multilateral EVS project around the theme "Youth and the Environment".

This project enabled 12 young European volunteers to do their voluntary service in various fields related to environmental protection and education as well as youth work in 6 Asian countries and 4 young volunteers from Asia to work in similar projects in Europe. This allowed them to make a worthwhile contribution to environmental and educational efforts in their respective host communities and provided them with an environmental and cultural awareness and an array of general skills.

For the host organisations reaching out and involving young people in meaningful activities provided a unique opportunity to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect. Therefore both the host organisations and the EVS volunteers could benefit from the possibility to exchange opinions and share experiences



regarding education, environmental and biodiversity protection, pollution prevention and control, climate change and sustainable production and consumption.

We would like to thank all the volunteers and partners who participated in this project for their commitment and dedication which led to promising results.

We particularly thank the volunteers who have contributed to the creation of this documentation and the European Commission for the invaluable support.

## Cultural differences and adaptation process

### Lana Simpson, British volunteer in Vietnam

Cultural adaptation was something that I was not too worried about before coming to Vietnam, as I have travelled to various countries before and was prepared to be open minded and relaxed about cultural differences. I don't feel that I encountered many serious cultural 'shocks' whilst here, although it took me a little while to become accustomed to the lack of personal space and number of people staring at me!

### Raido Mänd, Estonian volunteer in India

Indian culture is very different from the European one. We tried to respect it, but we had problems adapting to it. We couldn't totally forget our European lifestyle and thus sometimes we had some misunderstandings with our host family and some inhabitants of our village.



*Street in a small Indian city*



*Milla gets a tikka from her host mother*

### Volunteers in Nepal: Milla from Finland, Juan from Spain and Tariq from UK

Living in a host family helps enormously in adapting to Nepali culture and learning the basics of the language. By living with family members who do not speak English it is vitally important that the basics of the Nepali language are learnt by us, so that we are able to communicate effectively.

Our time in Nepal has also enabled us to gain an insight into cultural differences which are prevalent in Nepali society. For instance, we have gained more knowledge of the workings of the caste system as well as gaining more understanding of the role of women in society. By gaining an understanding of these cultural norms, we could immerse ourselves into life in a different country.

We have adapted to the culture fairly well without any huge conflicts. It is good to stay long time in the same place; this way we have got to know people well and understand the culture better.

We don't like the night life because they close bars too early! 11.00pm and its 'lights out'...



*Nepali wedding*



### Swantje Heiser, German volunteer in Indonesia

I can't say that I had a concrete problem to adapt to Indonesia's culture although it is a mostly Muslim society and thus you might think it is quite different. But I experienced that life and culture here are very friendly with a lot of helpfulness and respect towards each other. I also never experienced criminality or violence and I really like that most of the people don't drink alcohol, so there are no drunken persons. In Indonesia I can still find something



*Swantje with her friends*

like a hierarchy regarding to people; thus you always have to show a lot of respect to older people. And as most of the people are Muslims I am supposed to

wear clothes covering my shoulders and knees, but this is not asked too much. One thing I am a little bit annoyed of is that I am always striking out because of my skin and hair (white and blond) and there are a lot of people staring at me. The problem is that I don't feel any

more as a tourist as I learned the language quite good and feel that I'm living here and not just visiting, but most of the people consider me as a visitor because of my appearance. Thus I see my appearance as a hindrance to being able to totally adapt to Indonesians.



*Swantje in a traditional Indonesian dress*

### Maciek Kokowski, Polish volunteer in Taiwan

Taiwanese are very curious about the "western people" habits, so they like to observe them. They are also very friendly and forgiving towards foreigners, so I didn't have any problems with intercultural misunderstandings. Even when I did something against local rules, there was usually someone who just politely explained how I should behave in this situation.

I didn't have any problems with Taiwanese food as I had expected. I learnt how to use chopsticks quite quickly.

Language barrier is still a big problem when it comes to the communication with people on the street. There are also some habits and situations here which are still hard to understand or even accept for me, like burping at the table, lack of cultural life, karaoke culture or lack of knowledge about some international symbols or events.



*Maciek with his Taiwanese friends*

### Sara Winther Skriver, Danish volunteer in Indonesia

I see my cultural adaptation as four different parts. The biggest part is a part that I honestly don't feel like an adaptation anymore – it has become me – my life. Subjects like my dressing, my way of speaking, most of my food, my



routines. These are all the things which are very natural for me to do in an Indonesian way.

Activities like peeing on the floor and eating the same rice dish for breakfast every morning – are activities that goes to the part that could be called “partly adapted”. Most days totally implanted in my daily routines without causing any annoyances, but some days it can still make me dream of Denmark.

The third part is “objects” I just do because I should. Like buying souvenirs every single time I have left the village or not using my foot to close the door when I am carrying the dishes.

The last part is a part that consists of all the things I just don’t want to adapt to... Like eating chicken feet or get up at 5am.

Luckily this third and fourth part are quite small.



*Sara at an Indonesian wedding*

### **Vera Haschkovitz, Austrian volunteer in India**

Through the EVS project I achieved a lot for my whole future life. My trip to India has changed the way that I think about life. It’s hard to imagine how other less fortunate people live but it’s even harder to see it through your own eyes. I experienced a lot about culture differences and the importance of religion. I got more self-confident and more self-dependent. I know now how to deal with difficult situations and problems. I can say that India made me more patient and more thoughtful in a good way. I developed teaching skills, adaptability and more capacity for teamwork. Knowing those skills will make it easier to find a good job. Because of participating as a volunteer in India I would like to find out more about different cultures and lifestyles all around the world. That’s why I decided to study cultural and social anthropology.

### **Sangeetha Ravikumar, Indian volunteer in Spain**

I think my cultural learning expectations have been fulfilled. I not only learnt about the Spanish culture, but also about the culture of other European countries like e.g. Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, Italy. I managed to live and work in a multicultural environment. I also tried to introduce my own culture to other people. I was preparing Indian food, wearing my saree and trying to tell others about Indian traditions. I had an opportunity to participate in many parties and festivals. I participated also in a summer course of a Spanish dance (Flamenco). These experiences helped me to understand better the Spanish culture and people.



*Sangeetha teaching traditional Indian dance to the Spanish children*

## **Dian Wahyu Ekawati, Indonesian volunteer in Austria**

„Jump into the cold water“ is the phrase my Austrian friend uses to describe my coming to Austria. It's a big adventure for me to try the life that is completely different from the one in my home country. I found out and experienced many things during my stay here. At the very beginning I had to ask many basic things, that are obvious for the locals.

People in Austria drive on the right side, while in my country we drive on the left side. I almost had a bicycle accident because of this difference. People's attitude towards time, appointments and 'invitations' are also different. In Indonesia, it's not a problem if you are late for an appointment without any notification. But in Austria it's totally different. People will think that they are not important for you, that you don't respect them.

Indonesian people like to spend their leisure time in front of the TV. But Austrians do sports for example cycling or jogging. In the weekend, when the sun is shining, a lot of people go out, sit on the Donau riverbank, sunbath, swim and make picnics or barbecues (normal Indonesian would never do that). Most of Indonesian people is afraid of the sun and getting dark, especially young people. Almost every weekend, my neighbours made barbecue in their garden. They invited friends or other neighbours to join. Austrians like also going to bars, pubs and coffee houses.

Food was a problem for me at the beginning. I was a person who didn't like eating bread and cheese in the morning, didn't drink any milk or coffee. When I hadn't eaten rice, I hadn't had my meal. During the first month, it was a little bit hard to adjust to the food here. But now I really like to eat rolls, butter, jam and cheese in the morning.

There are more things here that I managed to adjust to, but there is one thing that I still can't get used to. All the shops here close at 18.00 on the working days and are completely closed on Sunday. In Indonesia Saturday and Sunday are the perfect days for shopping.

## Living situation

### **Dian Wahyu Ekawati, Indonesian volunteer in Austria**



*Dian on an excursion*

Wohnheim Sankt Martin consists of 2 houses which are located in two different places I worked in Wohnheim Sankt Martin 1 and stayed in Wohnheim Sankt Martin 2. The second one looks like an apartment which consist of 3 floors. On the first floor there is a working place for the patients, while on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor there is the living place. I live on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. People who live in this house are nice and welcoming and it contributes to the nice atmosphere that we have here.

The place where I live is close to Donau river and a small hill. Whenever I get bored, I can go for a walk along the Donau.

### **Lana Simpson, British volunteer in Vietnam**

I have been living in a dormitory style accommodation just outside of the city centre in Hanoi, owned by my coordinating organisation, Volunteers for Peace Vietnam (VPV). For the most part I was happy with this arrangement as I was able to live with other international volunteers and mostly had my own room...

### **Swantje Heiser, German volunteer in Indonesia**

I am living in a 6000 inhabitants' village in Central Java in Indonesia. The village is called Sulursari and very small, but luckily we have a market and also some small shops. There is not much to do, but after a while I adapted to the life there and suddenly



*Swantje and her host family*

my days have been filled. I arrived in September together with Sara, a Danish girl doing the same projects as me but in another school, and we had been living in the same family for three months but then she changed the house because of some problems. Therefore now I am living alone with one man around forty, but when I say "my Indonesian family" I always think of three houses next to each other as those people are all considered as my family.

There is then my host father, then next to his house his older sister with her husband and two

boys (one older, one younger than me) and next to her house the mother of my Indonesian host organization's boss with her daughter (in my age) who has a one year old sweet child. So I have a lot of places to go but as doors here aren't closed during the day, also every other house is open and warmly welcoming.



### **Volunteers in Nepal: Tariq from UK and Juan from Spain**

We both live with the project manager and his family which consists of Grandfather, Grandmother, Mother, Father, Son, Daughter and maid. It is often quite a manic household with something always going on! Our host family belongs to the Brahmin caste and is also upper middle class which is highlighted by the fact that our host father drives a car which is unheard of within other volunteer host families. The family has a history of farming which is illustrated by the amount of land they own as well as the various animals we have living in our house area. For instance, we have buffalos, chickens, goats and cows. One of the benefits of having these animals is that we even get to drink fresh buffalo milk and eat freshly made curd everyday with our daily meals even though we are woken up at 05:00 everyday by the farm workers!

### **Sara Winther Skriver, Danish volunteer in Indonesia**

I am taking lodgings with a local Indonesian family – mum, dad and two teenage daughters. Occasionally a grandmother too. They have been extremely friendly and they are always very helpful if I have problems. On the way, I have been introduced to their



biological families as well and they all treat me as a full member of their family. As both of “my parents” are working, we are usually buying our food at the local market but in the periods where our grandmother is living in our house, she is usually cooking! Our house is comparatively well-maintained and above average in this village but the walls are still made of wood, no glasses in the windows and soundproofing non existing – including to the neighbours motorbike, dog and baby!:)

### **Vera Haschkovitz, Austrian volunteer in India**

My accommodation was good but was connected with some troubles in the beginning. I had to share my room with an other volunteer for about 3 months. ... The food was delicious. Integration into the local community wasn't really difficult; everyone wanted to know me and was helping me to get faster into the culture and their traditions and daily life activities. I was very often invited to family houses and I also met people of my age, who I could hang out with.

### **Raido Mänd, Estonian volunteer in India**

Our living situation was very good. ICDE-INDIA was renting one house for all the volunteers and we really liked it.

We were eating in a host family. Nice people and good food. At first food was very spicy for us, but we got used to it. We ate only Indian food and sometimes we got bread and jam for breakfast and chicken once a week. That was a bit of luxury, because not everybody can afford it here.

### **Milla, Finnish volunteer in Nepal**

I'm living with a Chhetri (second-highest caste) family in Bharatpur, just outside Narayanghat city. In the family there is father, mother and a 6-year-old son. I really love this kid. The house is really nice with two floors and a garden, where grows for example a papaya tree – ooh, can you imagine... fresh, ripe papaya straight from the tree every week... I join my family's normal life, which includes helping the mother with the housework, visiting relatives or just hanging in the front porch and watching what the neighbours are doing...

### **Maciek Kokowski, Polish volunteer in Taiwan**

I live with the host family in the segment. The location is quite nice. I have my one room and Internet connection there. I live about 20 minutes by bike from the center of Tainan which is one of the biggest cities in Taiwan.

### **Sangeetha Eruchappan Ravikumar, Indian volunteer in Spain**

I got a chance to do my European Voluntary Service in Spain, in a village called Castuera. I'm sharing an apartment with volunteers from other countries like Portugal, Dominican Republic and Germany. I'm glad to live with other volunteers, we support and help each other in everyday life.



*Sangeetha and her flatmates*

# Host project

## Lana Simpson, British volunteer in Vietnam

I have greatly enjoyed volunteering for Action for the City, a Vietnamese NGO, during my time here in Hanoi. I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity to work with a group of highly dedicated and capable women within this NGO; they have been very supportive and encouraged me to get involved with many different areas of work. During my time here, I have been primarily focused upon a project titled 'Organic Vegetable Farming to Alleviate Poverty', which has proven to be extremely interesting and provided me with a range of skills and experiences. Aside from a few ups and downs which I feel are present in any kind of job, I feel that I could not have asked for a better host project.

## Volunteers in Nepal: Milla from Finland, Juan from Spain and Tariq from UK

We work on four different projects: Gyaneswor Community Forest, Malika Nursery, Kantipur College of Medical Sciences and FriPAD. Our work is varied and ranges from duties such as writing proposals to wedding. Everyday tasks include watering plants, planting seedlings, cleaning forest areas, writing reports and teaching. We have in the past nine months taught English to people from disadvantaged backgrounds, participated on school construction projects as well as a Korean Monastery restoration assignment and also worked on a Medical Health Camp



*Cutting bushes in a community forest*

which provided free treatment for the most needy in rural parts of Chitwan, Nepal.

Our work environment is what one may describe as being 'relaxed'. The people we work with are extremely hospitable and accommodating. We thoroughly enjoy working with the people at the various projects and have established close personal relationships with them. We will miss the intercultural dialogue once we leave!



*Class group Kantipur College*



*Working in Kantipur College*

### Maciek Kokowski, Polish volunteer in Taiwan

I work in the St. Theresa Opportunity Center which is a center for people with disabilities (both children and adults) in Tainan County. We have here both people with physical and mental disabilities. Most of them live at their homes with families and come to the center during a day like to school. There are school buses taking students from home to school in the morning and then back after the classes.



*Maciek at work*

### Vera Haschkovitz, Austrian volunteer in India

My host project name is Ooty's Children Home. As the name already says its set in Ooty/ Tamil Nadu and is about working with children. I'm working together with a volunteer from Sweden. Together we work with 5 girls who are all coming from a different area of Tamil Nadu.

When I came to my project in September 2008, Gustav (the other volunteer) and I had to rearrange the rooms in the house and decorate them, so the children could come and move in. The two persons, who are in charge of the project, helped us. We set a timetable up, but our first try didn't work out properly. Gustav and I changed it a little bit and we also found other options to get ourselves more work or rather "useful" work. After Christmas holidays my schedule was fixed and looked like this:

- getting up at 6:30 am and help cooking in the kitchen and look after the children
- after breakfast I found myself a new task to do which was teaching at a government school (only in the mornings for about 1 ½ hours)
- then I had lunch within the project and after that my free time started till about 3 o'clock (every second day till 5 o'clock)
- from 5 to 6 pm I was giving three teachers from my area extra English lessons (this I wouldn't really count as working because I really got to know them and I enjoyed talking to them)
- At 6 o'clock I started tutoring at the children home. Our 5 girls and children from the neighbourhood came over to do their homework together. Mainly I was helping in subjects, like English, Mathematics and reading
- at about 7: 45 pm the tutoring lessons were over and had dinner together with our girls

It was really helpful for the children to have us there. Their English improved rapidly and as well their manners and characters. Although the beginning wasn't really easy because of various reasons as aforementioned I would evaluate the project as successful.

### Sara Winther Skriver, Danish volunteer in Indonesia



*Sara with the children*

My main task is teaching English in the local elementary school. The students are in the age of 8 -16 divided among 3th to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Usually the students will receive English lessons (just 4th to 6<sup>th</sup> grade) once a week but during my stay they have 3 additional lessons a week. I usually teach alone as the normal English teacher just teaches at my school on Saturday, when I am free. In addition to this, I am assisting



extra English lessons for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade at the local senior high school once a week.

### **Dian Wahyu Ekawati, Indonesian volunteer in Austria**

Wohnheim Sankt Martin is a place for handicapped people. It's a kind of dormitory where handicapped people can experience family atmosphere, friendship and fun. Wohnheim Sankt Martin was started by a mother of one the patients. She wanted her son to have a place to live, when she won't be able to take care of him anymore. Together with 6 other people, she financed the construction of the houses (Wohnheim-1 and Wohnheim-2). The relations between the patients and the staff are like in a family. The patients are taught to be independent and they also have some duties, like e.g. washing their own clothes, making their bed, doing the dishes, gardening and helping in the preparation of the meals.

I work in the morning from 07.00-09.00 and in the afternoon from 16.00-20.00. My main task is to help the staff with taking care of the patients. In the morning I'm waking them up, helping them with dressing, breakfast and preparation for the work. In the afternoon we are playing games, taking a walk, I'm helping them with home work (kitchen work, gardening, washing the clothes), then we have an evening tea together and then I'm sending them to bed.



### **Sangeetha Eruchappan Ravikumar, Indian volunteer in Spain**

I'm working in the Youth and Leisure Centre of Castuera. As well as centre de Interpretacion de la zapa de la serena (Bird Environmental centre).

The main aim of the centre is to organize activities for children and youth in different age groups. We want the young people to participate in as many social and cultural activities as possible. The centre offers, among others, creativity workshops, IT courses, video, cinema shows, information about youth sports competitions. The



*Sangeetha on an excursion with children*

centre is organizing also birthday parties and different events during local festivals.

My main role is to help in preparation and implementation of the projects for environmental education. Some of the activities are implemented in cooperation with the centre for the study of nature and other organisations that are working for the protection of nature in the area of Castuera.

## My life in the host country

### **Sara Winther Skriver, Danish volunteer in Indonesia**

Most Indonesians, especially in the rural areas haven't met a foreign person before so inevitable I have had a lot of unwanted attention! Mainly this has been funny and I have met many people on this account, too. It has caused long conversations in the public buses with strangers and people who are touching my white skin, just to check if it's real! Indonesians are in general very friendly and extremely curious – but also don't know much about life outside Java. They ask you about everything – even things my own mother would never ask me directly! (like my weight and when I have my period...) Most days it has been funny to meet new people and share my culture but I have also realized that I can't retell my whole life story every single day to a person I don't even know the name of! I evolved two rules to protect myself in my every day!



1. always smile in public! - if not; you will have SO many questions from people you barely know!
2. it is OKAY not to tell the whole truth! This wasn't absolutely easy for me in the beginning but it realized that it was necessary in order to "survive" all the Indonesians' questions!

To live in Indonesia has been a challenge – some days more surmountable than others. I have never felt alone or neglected and in general, I must say I have been happy here!

### **Swantje Heiser, German volunteer in Indonesia**

Life in Indonesia or at least in a small village like mine is very slow and relaxed in comparison to Europe. The people here have always time to make a small talk or just come across and hang out in our house for a while, they seem to be in a good mood all the time (maybe because showing feelings is considered as weakness) and although they don't have a lot of extraordinary amusement like cinemas, shopping malls and fun parks they are satisfied. Living standard is still rather low as some don't even have running water, electricity runs out very often and washing machines are a true rarity. Of course there are problems and also unemployment is very high (in Sulursari nearly 50% someone once told me), but apparently they know how to fill their time and do enjoy life. When I am tired of reading, playing cards, having a chat with someone, relaxing or preparing my lessons I sometimes wish to have more social contact and more possibilities to develop myself by joining a club or do some sports for example. I know there are a lot of individual sports but as it is so hot in Indonesia I have become quite lazy. But I like the spontaneity and friendliness of the Indonesians and am very happy because I found something like a second home and a second family!

### **Lana Simpson, British volunteer in Vietnam**

I have really enjoyed living in Hanoi and have been able to have a full and busy life whilst here. My time has mostly consisted of working 4-5 days a week, then socialising with friends and seeing parts of Vietnam (mostly as weekend trips) in my spare time. Hanoi is such a busy and exciting city that I feel there is always something to do;

whether it's visiting a pagoda or museum, going for a bike ride around one of the lakes or meeting friends for a Vietnamese coffee or fruit smoothie! Vietnam itself has many interesting places to visit, and the good (though sometimes bumpy!) public transport makes this relatively easy.

### **Volunteers in Nepal: Milla from Finland, Juan from Spain and Tariq from UK**

Our life in Nepal is fairly easy-going with not a lot of restrictions. We are basically free to do anything we want when it comes to working hours, taking days off for visiting places or work descriptions.... There are many other volunteers here who we meet regularly. In general we are feeling content. ...



*Milla participating in a masonry training*

### **Maciek Kokowski, Polish volunteer in Taiwan**

Even with language problems Taiwan is still very friendly for the foreigners. There are a lot of English signs on the streets and people are very helpful. Actually the life for the foreigners here is easy, because no one wants to make them problems.

But sometimes it might be also boring, because of limited number of entertainment places for example pubs or clubs. Culture of singing in karaoke is not so attractive for me and other foreigners as for local people. Unfortunately it is also not so easy to make friends with Taiwanese so most often my friends are also foreigners.



*The exhibition of Maciek's photos is being prepared*



# A day in Hainan Foreign Language Vocational College in Wen Chang

By Tammo Fröhlich (German volunteer in China)



Depending on my schedule, which was organized by the school, I have to wake up during week days at about seven or nine in the morning. On Thursdays, my class does not begin before half past two in the afternoon, so I have the chance to catch up on some sleep if necessary. In the morning I normally eat breakfast at my place. There is a wide variety of pastry and fruits to find in the town. Sometimes, I go out to one of the little tea-houses down the road where I can enjoy the morning sun amongst the curious locals and have a “Bao Zi” (bread filled with meat), noodles, and milk-tea. They also serve a very strong green tea that wakes me up. Another possibility is going to the schools dining hall, but normally I avoid that because of the large number of the college’s students in their everyday morning-rush.



My dormitory is located on the campus, so my way to the classroom buildings is rather short. In my classes there are generally about 30 students, most of them are girls. Their major is Oral English, so my task is to get them speaking to me.



This often means I am entertaining and motivating more than I am teaching. The students are all very friendly, respectful, and easy to handle. Sometimes, I teach from the book the school gave me, or watch an English movie in one of the media-rooms and have a chat about it, or I play little vocabulary games and have



them discuss their own topics. I always have some candy to prevent a lack of motivation. One class lasts two periods with a ten minute break, each period is forty-five minutes long. During the break I like to go to the teacher’s lounge where I can get water and have a chat with the Chinese

English teachers.







For lunch I prefer going outside to one of the many little restaurants near the school. Normally I am accompanied by friends or students of mine who are usually up for a little chat afterwards. Sometimes I also like to go alone because I always meet new people to talk to and practice my Chinese. Some food available is a large variety of noodles, soup, rice with meat and vegetables, or dumplings. Some of the many snacks offered in the streets are fried chicken, a kind of pancake, corn, or “shao kao” which is Chinese for barbecue. Fruits range from apples and bananas, over melons and oranges to mangos, papayas, pineapples, and the coconuts which Wen Chang is famous for. Thankfully, the food



is not expensive at all.

As a foreigner you will surely get the people's full attention, both locals and students, all the time and everywhere in this town. There are a lot of different schools in Wen Chang and the local economy heavily depends on the business brought by the pupils.

Just to get through the totally crowded streets and finding a place to sit in the little shops can be a little difficult sometimes. After all it's always amazing to see all these young people and everyone smiles at you or says “hello”.



*The campus after class*

At about one in the afternoon the streets that were full of life before become totally empty and most of the little stores close down, because at this time it gets very hot. Most people will take a nap, me included.

After finishing my class in the afternoon at about half past four I have a little rest again and I go out to buy some more fruit or things that I need. I also like having a little chat with my neighbour or some students time to time. Depending on the day, I also have Chinese lessons in the morning or afternoon. The school arranged a Chinese teacher for me who can speak good English and we get along very well with each other. The lesson lasts for one hour and thirty minutes. The lessons are private which makes the atmosphere very comfortable and personal. Of course I don't have to pay for these lessons the school provides them for me.

In the late afternoon I can choose from many activities here on the campus. I often play sports like basketball, football, volleyball, or table tennis with the students. I also like running and stretching afterwards. The teachers here invited me to their basketball team and the football team as well. Furthermore there is the opportunity to learn some Chinese Kung Fu, go to the art building to play instruments, or join the break dance club. So life here is never boring.



For dinner I also normally go out with friends. On Thursdays the student's English club invites me over to have a little chat about a specific topic with their members in the evening. Sometimes I also get invited by one of the English classes to chat and answer their questions about my home country. All the students are very interested in foreigners and their stories.



*School trip with one of my classes*

On weekends I have to prepare my lesson plans for the coming week and do some documenting about my teaching methods. When I am free I enjoy having short school trips with my classes or travel around the island by myself or with friends. Travelling is quite cheap here and the island is very beautiful and offers a lot of little attractions and

different landscapes.

Wen Chang also has a small nightlife. There are a few clubs here besides the many karaoke bars. People are usually very friendly and respectful towards foreigners.



*Short vacation in beautiful Sanya*

Overall a day in this college can be very busy, exciting, exhausting, and fulfilling.

### 3. Participants' List

#### EU-ASIA EVS Programme on Youth and the Environment 2008/2009:

Volunteers	Host Country	Project	Sending org / country
Tammo Fröhlich	China	Hainan Foreign Languages Vocational Colleges	ICJA Germany
Sander Sirel	China	Hainan Foreign Languages Vocational Colleges	ESTYES Estonia
Raido Mänd	India	Helping Hands for the Under Privileged - We serve Charitable Trust	ESTYES Estonia
Gustav Grahn Calminder	India	Ooty Childrens Home	PeaceWorks Sweden
Vera Haschkowitz	India	Ooty Childrens Home	ICYE Austria
Swantje Heiser	Indonesia	DEJAVATO	ICJA Germany
Sara Winther Skriver	Indonesia	DEJAVATO	ICYE Denmark
Milla Hyvärinen	Nepal	Community Conservation/Ecology Programm in Chitwan	MaaIlmanvaihto, Finland
Juan Luis Perez Lopez	Nepal	Community Conservation/Ecology Programm in Chitwan	ASERMUN Spain
Tariq Patel	Nepal	Community Conservation/Ecology Programm in Chitwan	ICYE UK
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This documentation was published by the International Office of the ICYE Federation within the frame of the Action 2 “EU and ASIA European Voluntary Service Project: Youth and the Environment”

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