

Work Team Orientation Guide

Revised November 2022



Thank you for choosing to partner with Nueva Esperanza! We pray that your experience will be a valuable one. The time that you and your teammates spend here in Honduras is an opportunity for you to minister to others, but it is also an opportunity for the Lord to minister to you. We believe that every member of your team can leave Honduras changed, having received a fresh understanding of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have put together this orientation pack to help you and your team prepare for your trip here. We hope that this will answer all of your questions.

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Honduras facts

- Honduras is the 2nd poorest country in Latin America, 63% of the 8.8 million residents live in poverty.
- 97% of the population is Catholic, 3% Protestant.
- Honduras is the largest country in Central America, approx. the size of Tennessee.
- Only 24% of the Honduran population aged 15 and above have a high school education.
- Honduras shares borders with Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.

Nueva Esperanza- then and now

Nueva Esperanza (New Hope) was started by Barbara Maurer in 1992 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras to care for children from underprivileged families. The idea behind the ministry was to ensure that single and poor parents could leave their children at the ministry during the day and thus be able to work, allowing them to provide for their children without having to put them in an orphanage. The ministry began in a church building with ten children attending.



We now have over 180 students attending the ministry five days a week. The children's program has its own building and facilities. This allows us to provide care in many areas. Meals are provided to the children on a daily basis. They also receive classes with suitable educational materials and activities, medical attention, structure, and most importantly, lots of love. The families we serve come from extreme poverty. The majority of them live in one or two room wooden homes on the hillside outskirts of the capital city where the ministry is located. Many of the families do not have access to basic services such as running water. The majority of our children are from homes where the mother or father is single or unwed, and some children live with their grandparents.

We have a thriving youth program for our children to move into once they reach seventh grade. This program provides scholarships, discipleship classes, and lots of encouragement to enable these young people to continue their education and finish high school. Property has been purchased, plans have been made, and we are in the fundraising to be able to build a Youth Career & Training Center for the youth program.

Nueva Esperanza has also expanded to have a "Team House Ministry". The team house property can host over 30 team members. Our hope is to provide a comfortable place to stay for supporters and others willing to spend a week ministering to the children, youth, and families of Nueva Esperanza.

The Directors

Barbara Barahona

Barbara Maurer graduated from Bible College in the spring of 1992. While in college, Barbara had a roommate who was the daughter of missionaries in Honduras and often talked about the country, its beautiful people, its tragic poverty, and especially about the unfortunate plight of the children. Barbara began to feel a burden for these children, and when an opportunity to work with poor children in the capital of Honduras arose about the time of her graduation from college, she knew she was receiving her calling. On July 7, 1992, Barbara left her belongings and way of life to work in Honduras.

Living in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras, was difficult. She knew little of the Spanish language and even less about the culture of Honduras. With God's help, however, she was able to persevere and open a small children's center in a church by the end of her first month. The church was located in a hillside neighborhood away from the center of the city, and Barbara received permission to use the sanctuary for the proposed children's ministry. On August 3, 1992, Nueva Esperanza began with ten children. While in Honduras, Barbara met and married her husband Carlos who decided to join her in running Nueva Esperanza.

Carlos Barahona

Carlos Barahona serves as the Executive Director of Nueva Esperanza. Being raised in an orphanage has given Carlos the compassion and desire to make a difference in the lives of Honduran children. Carlos oversees the ministry and projects carried out in Honduras through Nueva Esperanza Inc.

Carlos and Barbara along with their four children call Honduras their home and have dedicated their lives to serving God. They enjoy working with the ministry of Nueva Esperanza and are incredibly blessed to be able to witness the long-term changes taking place in the lives of underprivileged children.



Work teams: Preparing yourself

Physical preparation

You will probably do a lot of walking here, so we suggest being prepared for that. Tegucigalpa is a city in the mountains, so there will be many hills and stairs you will encounter. For those intending to be involved in construction, please ensure that you feel physically able to do so. It is a good idea to check with your doctor before you come to make sure that you are aware of any health issues and have the appropriate medication with you as you may not find the medicines you need here.

Mental preparation

Please bear in mind that Honduras is a third world country, and as such, conditions here will be very different to those you are used to at home. This means that you should prepare not to have all the comforts and luxuries that you may have on a vacation. Although the new team house has been built to make you as comfortable as possible, there may be times when circumstances will not be as expected. Don't be surprised if ...

- * You cannot communicate with the USA as regularly as you are used to. There is wifi at the team house, but when going around the city, communication will be limited.
- * The electricity goes out for a few hours (or even days!).
- * You do not always have hot water.
- * Your bed is not as comfortable as your bed at home.
- * The food is slightly different (Most American foods here are either not available or very expensive).
- * You are not able to *change* the whole country of Honduras on your trip! Prepare to be confronted with extreme poverty and hard situations.

Do expect to...

- * Find a much simpler lifestyle which focuses on the value of people and relationships.
- * Let God use this experience to cause you to reevaluate your priorities and your relationship with Him.
- * Feel more tired than usual. Coming to a developing country is physically and emotionally challenging, and you might be more prone to illness, viruses, and tiredness here.
- * Let God use you to encourage the Honduran people.
- * Be **FLEXIBLE**. Living and serving in Honduras is not the same as in the United States, and flexibility and patience are key.

Spiritual preparation

Begin praying that God will use you on this trip to "Glorify Him in everything that you say and do" and to be a witness to others. You could do a group study with your team before coming to Honduras on one or more of the following books:

- *When Helping Hurts* by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett
- *Serving with Eyes Wide Open* by David Livermore
- *From Foreign to Familiar* by Sarah A Lanier



Acts 3:6 challenge

We encourage you and your team to take up the Acts 3:6 challenge! It is tempting to give the children and their families monetary handouts when you see their living conditions, but this can create a culture of dependency and begging. We therefore challenge you and your team to think of ways which you can minister to the people, like Peter did in Acts 3:6, without giving handouts.

Things to bear in mind....

Please remember that the ministry staff and directors still have jobs to do while you are here. Please be patient with them and respectful of their responsibilities to the ministry. Although you and your team are here for a short time and may want to cram in as many activities as possible, please be realistic about your aims and recognize that you will need to have time to rest and reflect each day. It is better to do fewer activities with a well-rested and prepared team than many activities with a team that is tired and unwell.

Please remember that you will be in a developing country, and your immune systems are not used to coping with the illnesses and viruses to be found here. If you do not take ample time to rest and recharge, you will be more likely to get sick and not be able to serve and participate. Make sure to talk to someone when you feel unwell or have a concern.

Please tell ministry staff if you have invited visitors to the ministry. We need to be careful of whom we invite in for the safety and security of the children and staff.

Please use resources responsibly. Honduras suffers from water shortages and rationing is common. Please preserve this precious resource carefully by:

- Turning the faucets off when soaping your hands
- Turning off the water in the shower when shampooing
- Turning off any faucets you see running or dripping



The majority of Hondurans speak little or no English, and this can easily lead to misunderstandings. Try to communicate with the directors or English-speaking staff if you are unsure of something and need clarification.

We will always try to make you feel comfortable and welcome. Please remember that the ministry runs on the generous support of our donors and ask that you be sensitive to the care and conservation of our resources.

Also remember that the ministry has many needs, and while you may come with a specific timetable or project in mind, there might be another task that is more pressing. Please be flexible and ready to participate where most needed.



Upon arrival...

When you arrive, you will be asked at immigration to write down an address for your stay in the country. Please use the following address:

Nueva Esperanza
Barrio San Pablo,
Calle Alejandro Flores, edificio #2165
Tegucigalpa

Should you require a phone number for the ministry, it is: 504-2238-1954

While in the country...

Staying healthy

We want you to stay healthy while you are here, so please follow these tips:

- Do not drink the tap water nor use it to brush your teeth.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap, and use hand sanitizer, especially before eating.
- Do not pet animals that you do not know.
- Wear shoes when outdoors.
- Wear sunscreen! Honduras is closer to the equator than the US and sunburns happen fast.
- Drink lots of liquids to prevent dehydration. The first sign of dehydration is a headache, so before taking medication for a headache, drink a full glass of liquid.
- Shake out your shoes before putting them on in the morning.
- Carry toilet paper (or a small pack of tissues) and hand sanitizer with you when going into the city as some public bathrooms do not have these available.
- Honduran septic systems cannot handle toilet paper, so never put toilet paper in the toilet. Instead, always use the wastebasket next to the toilet.
- The food served at the team house has been properly prepared and cleaned and is safe to eat. Food and drinks served at fast food restaurants should generally be safe too.
- Remember that you will be working hard while you are here, so get plenty of rest and eat enough to keep up your strength. Team members often try to over-exert themselves, but this can lead to illness and exhaustion which hinders their ability to serve effectively in the time they are here.

Behavior

Please remember that you are representatives of the ministry while you are here, and your behavior could affect our reputation. No smoking or drinking is allowed. This is deeply offensive in Christian culture here in Honduras, and this could expose Nueva Esperanza to great risk of losing its reputation and effectiveness. Physical interaction between genders is not appropriate, such as kisses and back rubs, or talking to someone you do not know on the street.

Appropriate Dress

Please dress appropriately. Modesty is the key. As foreigners, you can attract attention, and dressing inappropriately will intensify this attention, especially for women. Anytime your group leaves the team house, women should wear knee length or longer dresses, skirts, or pants. Tank tops/sleeveless shirts can be worn if the strap is at least the width of three fingers and covers everything appropriately. Out of respect for the Honduran culture, we suggest that men wear jeans or long pants when out in public. It is not appropriate for men to take their shirts off. Dress at the team house can be more relaxed. Please consult your team leader for guidelines.

Money

The exchange rate is around 24 Lempiras to one US dollar. When you are purchasing something, the easiest way to convert without a calculator is to divide the amount by 20. In some stores you can use credit cards, but be careful as you are likely to have international fees added to your purchase.

You may want to bring spending money for:

- Snacks between meals (small bags of chips and soft drinks are very reasonably priced in the little local shops called Pulperias)
- Souvenirs and keepsakes

Staying safe

Honduras has a very high crime rate exacerbated by gangs, drugs, and poverty. We want you to stay safe while you are here.

Use the buddy system and never go anywhere alone. Always tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return. Do not walk in the streets. Carry contact information with you at all times.

Split your money between several locations such as your purse/ wallet, pockets, money belt, camera case, suitcase etc. Be careful in crowds where people can bump into you and take your money- keep it close to you at all times. If you have a bag, keep it near you and don't leave it on the back of your chair when eating at a restaurant. Do not leave your personal items unguarded, even when in the ministry.

When in a vehicle, each person should help ensure that all doors and windows are secured. When stopped at an intersection, have windows closed and doors locked as many robberies happen when traffic is stationary.

Keep valuables such as cameras, watches, and phones out of sight. If your camera has a cord, place it around your hand or wrist while using it so it can't be snatched. If someone demands an item from you, give it to them. Many thieves will have guns or knives on their person or are willing to physically harm someone for the sake of a phone or some money. However, you are unlikely to be harmed if you give them the item.



Gifts and donations

Please do not exchange address details with or give gifts directly to teachers, children, or other staff members. Even if well-intended, this could create a dependency or promote begging. If there is a special case where you would like to give something to someone specific, please discuss this with the directors of Nueva Esperanza.

If you have bought items to donate to Nueva Esperanza, do not give them directly to the Honduran employees as they may assume that they are for them to take home. Although you may communicate your intentions, the language barrier can and does cause misunderstandings!

Do not give away money or make promises of sending money. Do not allude to visits to the U.S.

If you sponsor a specific child and have bought a gift for them, let our office workers know so that they can arrange a private meeting where you can give your gift to your child without making the other children feel left out.

Any items that you want to leave with the ministry should be given to the directors on your last day so they can distribute them.



Frequently asked questions

What should we hope to accomplish?

Remain flexible and see how the week turns out. Start with the timetable you have, but be open to new opportunities that present themselves daily. You will be guided by the directors and staff on an on-going basis as to where there is the most need within the ministry.

Should we be afraid here?

No, on the contrary, God has led you here and will be with you. In order to keep safe, please follow our tips above and be sensible.

Why is it important to help people from different countries?

1. It is definitely an individual calling, but it is also a command from God to both love your neighbor and help the poor. Our inspiration is scripturally based on Matthew 25: 35-40 which reads, *"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me...The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"*

2. God blesses people so that they can be a blessing to others. If we hoard our blessings as individuals, or as a country, they will dry up. But when we share out of our abundance, blessings come back to us (so we can repeat the process again!).

3. The US has social programs to help the poor; however, Honduras doesn't. There is no backup system here to help the poor.

When can we give out the presents or supplies we brought with us?

Let the directors know what you have bought and they will be able to advise you on how best to distribute the items. Please be sensitive to their response as it is very important that order and propriety is maintained. Some things may be best given in homes, at the end of the day, or in private with each student.

How is the ministry supported?

Nueva Esperanza is supported entirely by donations from others. This includes:

- Child sponsors
- High School Scholarship program sponsors
- Directors' sponsors
- Work teams
- Donations to the ministry's general fund

What should we do if we choose to sponsor a child?

When you return home, you can view some children on our website who are in need of sponsors. You can choose one and email us with your interest. Alternatively, please feel free to talk to our office staff when you are here if you have any questions about this. When you are assigned a sponsor child, in addition to the monthly sponsorship, you can send additional support or gifts for your sponsor child on his/her birthday or at Christmas.

What happens to my money when I make a donation?

Nueva Esperanza uses 100% of the money sent for its designated use. If you send additional money to buy a child a gift, we will ask the child what they need or would like, and then suitable items are purchased and presented to the child in private.

Are the services provided by the ministry completely free of charge?

We do charge a very small fee each month to the families who are served by this ministry. It is very important here that Hondurans are not encouraged to become dependent on handouts from foreigners. We also have rules about discipline, tardiness, and cleanliness. This isn't because we don't want the ministry to be a fun and welcoming place! It is because we want to encourage responsibility from the families and the children, and these rules help us do that.

Checklist for recommended items to bring:

Medical items

- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Antiseptic ointment (e.g., Bactine) and Band-Aids
- ☐ Antibiotic cream such as Neosporin
- ☐ Pepto Bismol
- ☐ Advil, aspirin, Tylenol, or whatever you take for pain
- ☐ Sunscreen (25 or higher SPF is recommended)
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Hand wipes (antibacterial)

Clothing suggestions

- ☐ Avoid dark colors as they attract mosquitoes. Khaki is one of the best colors.
- ☐ Long pants or knee length shorts (Honduran men usually wear long pants)
- ☐ Knee length (or longer) skirts for women if desired
- ☐ T-shirts and/or tops that are cool, comfortable, and modest
- ☐ At least one nice outfit for church
- ☐ Light jacket or sweater during the evening
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes
- ☐ Sneakers for playing games with the children/youth
- ☐ Flip-flops to wear in the shower
- ☐ Shorts and t-shirts for sleeping

Personal Items

- ☐ Soap
- ☐ Deodorant/body powder
- ☐ Toothpaste and toothbrush
- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Personal bottle for carrying water during the day
- ☐ Umbrella (the small folding kind are best) or a lightweight raincoat
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Pair of leather or cotton work gloves
- ☐ Bible and pen/pencil
- ☐ Trash bag for your dirty clothes
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Spending money in US dollars for souvenirs and snacks (no traveler's checks please)
- ☐ A cheap watch to keep track of time when doing activities with the children

Items to leave at home

- ☐ Clothing that you do not want to spoil
- ☐ Expensive watches and jewelry
- ☐ Bottled water – (you can purchase this locally)

***Bedding and towels are provided for your use at the team house. If you wish to bring your own towel and/or bedding to use and donate at the end of the week, you may.