

A GUIDE TO CONTRIBUTING TO THE NURSE EDUCATION PROGRAM AT IUBAT, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

PREFACE

This handbook is intended as a resource guide for volunteers supporting the College of Nursing at the International University of Business, Agriculture and Technology [IUBAT]. This project, which began in the summer of 2004, aims to elevate standards of health care in a unique partnership between the host university in Bangladesh and volunteers from Western countries. It provides a fulfilling opportunity to contribute expertise, as well as to develop skills in international health care.



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ORIENTATION TO THE PROGRAM

IUBAT: A Brief History (www.iubat.edu/)

Bangladesh faces many challenges. Some are common to many Less Developed Countries, while others are unique. In a country which has exceptionally high levels of malnutrition and illiteracy, the quality of post-secondary education has been inconsistent. Factors such as low pay for instructors, state interference with curriculum, and institutionalized corruption have produced questionable exam results and a poor standard of qualified graduate.

In response to some of the limitations of state funded post-secondary institutions, local pioneers in the field of education have taken leadership. The International University of Business, Agriculture and Technology established in 1991 by Dr. M. Alimullah Miyan is the first non-government university in Bangladesh. Dr. Miyan is an exceptional leader with a commitment to social justice and equality of access for poorer students. IUBAT has been in the forefront of efforts to establish private universities in Bangladesh, impelled by the need for high quality and relevant academic instruction.

As a committed academic who has affiliations with universities in many countries, Dr. Miyan met Dr. John Richards, an economics and public policy professor, at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, B.C., in 1992. John has made annual visits to IUBAT since that meeting, and his interest and local contacts were instrumental in furthering Dr. Miyan's objective of establishing the country's first international standard Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

How is health care in Bangladesh organized?

Health care providers in Bangladesh are overwhelmed in their attempts to provide health care for the vast majority of citizens, many of whom have no ability to cover medical expenses. According to the World Health Organization, Bangladesh has only 2.3 doctors per 10,000 population, and 1.4 nurses per 10,000 citizens. Infant and maternal mortality rates are high. Life expectancy for men is 64.5, and for women 65.4. Pneumonia and diarrheal diseases due to malnutrition poor sanitation are the most common causes of death.

The Bangladesh health system is organized around principles of access to primary health care. The first nursing school was organized at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in 1947, shortly after the partition from India. Bangladesh was then East Pakistan. According to the model of care of the time, the British matron was the administrator of the nursing services and school, and was also Nursing Superintendent and acting registrar for East Pakistan Nursing Council.

Nursing Training Centres were set up in eight medical college hospitals between 1962 and 1970, and an additional 18 Centres opened up in regional subdivision hospitals. The emphasis was thus on hospital-based nurse education.

Currently, basic nursing education in Bangladesh is offered in 44 nursing institutes. This consists of 3 years of general nursing instruction followed by one year midwifery for female students and 1 year orthopedic instruction for male students. The educational model is similar to the hospital-based apprenticeship common in the West several decades ago. An average of 1000 students graduate each year, and there are approximately 20,000 qualified nurses, of whom 2,000 are currently working abroad with many more unemployed. In 2010 the government increased to six the number of institutes providing BSN programs.

Despite the obvious need for well trained nurses, nursing is not a desirable profession in Bangladesh. This is in part related to the lower status attributed to workers who have contact with

the human body. It is not uncommon in Bangladeshi hospitals for patients to have to pay hospital cleaners to perform physical care, as nurses do not typically have physical contact with their patients. Nursing education is substandard by international standards. Hospitals which serve people who have financial means to afford good care typically import their nursing staff from other countries.

It is with all of these factors in mind that the establishment of the BSN Nursing Program at IUBAT has become the focal point of the desire of a committed group of health care providers to improve both standards of care, and the status of nursing in Bangladesh.

The College of Nursing at IUBAT

Despite large international investments to upgrade nursing practice over the past decades, care standards have steadily declined. It is the premise of the Mid-Main Bangladesh Health Project that nursing practice will not improve significantly or sustainably until nursing is seen as a valued and respected profession. Internationally trained nurses command high salaries and prestige positions in Bangladesh and worldwide. It is our aim to help raise the status of nursing as a profession by demonstrating the global value of skilled nurses. We don't expect this to happen quickly but we believe that with perseverance we can achieve pride of profession in Bangladeshi nursing. This will ultimately lead to a significant and more importantly, sustainable improvement in health care. Although some of our graduates will travel overseas, we know that others will choose to stay and provide the core of new nursing values in Bangladesh.

The BSN program at IUBAT has established the following goals:

1. To provide a baccalaureate program in nursing (BSN) that reflects public health priorities in Bangladesh and meets international competence standards;
2. To support a core group of local nursing professionals to assume leadership roles in practice, education and research within Bangladesh;
3. To develop resources for ESL-based health sciences education, including partnerships with academic institutions and clinical practice settings in Bangladesh and globally;
4. To help improve public perceptions about the status of the nursing profession in Bangladesh;
5. To make our curriculum available to other non-profit organizations seeking to improve health care in Less Developed Countries.

We have developed the curriculum for all courses as we offered them. In addition to preparing and teaching the nursing curriculum, our visiting faculty offer workshops in specialty areas for local nurse educators and community leaders as well as for practicing nurses. By reaching out to nurse educators in Bangladesh we hope to begin "training the trainers", thus ensuring that our efforts have greater impact. We have made contact with many nurses, doctors and health officials in Bangladesh, in addition to members of the Bangladeshi community in Vancouver-- all are supportive of this project (details are available at <http://www.bangladeshhealthproject.com>).

The IUBAT Nursing Program is based on a four-year schedule consisting of three trimesters per year, beginning January, May and September. Students progress through classroom lectures, clinical labs, workshops from visiting faculty and practicum placements in teaching hospitals. The present group of students comes from Bangladesh, Nepal and occasionally other countries. The following table shows the courses typically offered in each trimester.

SPRING TRIMESTER	
NUR 219	Medical Surgical Nursing – I
NUR 220	Practicum - Medical Surgical Nursing - I
NUR 333	Maternal and Child Health Nursing - I
NUR 334	Practicum - Maternal and Child Health Nursing - I
NUR 301	Nutrition
NUR 401	Community Health Nursing - I
NUR 402	Practicum - Community Health Nursing - I
	Pharmacology
SUMMER TRIMESTER	
NUR 114	Introduction to Nursing - I
NUR 115	Laboratory – Introduction to Nursing - I
NUR 221	Medical Surgical Nursing - II
NUR 222	Laboratory - Medical Surgical Nursing - II
NUR 335	Maternal and Child Health Nursing - II
NUR 336	Practicum - Maternal and Child Health Nursing - II
NUR 340	Mental Health Nursing - I
NUR 341	Laboratory - Mental Health Nursing - I
NUR 403	Community Health Nursing - II
NUR 404	Practicum - Community Health Nursing - II
NUR 423	Nursing Professional Orientation
FALL TRIMESTER	
NUR 101	Concepts of Health and Illness
NUR 116	Introduction to Nursing - II
NUR 117	Laboratory – Introduction to Nursing - II
NUR 223	Medical Surgical Nursing - III
NUR 224	Practicum - Medical Surgical Nursing - III
NUR 337	Maternal Nursing and Midwifery
NUR 338	Maternal Nursing and Midwifery - Practicum
NUR 342	Mental Health Nursing - II
NUR 343	Practicum - Mental Health Nursing - II
NUR 451	Research in Nursing
NUR 415	Nursing Administration
NUR 416	Laboratory – Nursing Administration

Alongside students from other programs, junior Nursing students study English, Computing and Sciences. As their studies progress, the Nursing focus increases: care of acutely ill adults in second year, followed by mental health, family nursing and community health. Because of the strong primary care emphasis in Bangladesh, third and fourth year courses provide extensive exposure to these topics. All courses are taught in English.

This program structure was approved in 2003 by the Bangladesh Nursing Council, the equivalent of the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia. The program is evolving, and we are committed to improving as we progress

Clinical practice sites

Beginning in their second year, nursing students spend a set number of hours under supervision at various clinical settings, all of which provide opportunities for hand-on learning. Visiting faculty will be expected to supervise students in these clinical placements.

United Hospital, Dhaka

United Hospital is modern facility which provides a high standard of care and treatment in most medical and surgical specialties. United has recognized the quality of our students, and is willing to partner with us in their training.

ICDDR, B

The International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh is a world renowned centre of health excellence. Since its inception as the Cholera Research Laboratory in 1960, the Centre has developed its research agenda to include child health, reproductive health, infectious diseases, vaccines, nutrition, and HIV-AIDS, among other specializations. Students attend practicum placements at the Centre including their senior practicum and an intensive session during cholera season in summer.

Families for Children Orphanage

The Families for Children [FFC] orphanage is located in Uttara, not far from the IUBAT campus. Starting in their the second year, nursing students attend the orphanage to gain experience in meeting the health needs and concerns of its 135 child and adolescent residents, which include over 20 children with special needs, FFC has a large support base of volunteers who raise funds for the orphanage in Vancouver. Contact us for more information if you wish to be more closely involved in their efforts.

Center for Woman and Child Health [CWCH]

CWCH is a short distance north of Dhaka In a formerly rural area that is now home to many garment factories. The women from the factories use CWCH for their perinatal care. It is a small facility with a focus on maternity and pediatrics, although it is expanding into more general medicine. The hospital does charge for services but is subsidized by charitable donations and offers reduced cost or free treatment to families who are unable to pay. IUBAT students attend CWCH for parts of their maternity and midwifery nursing practical training .

National Institute for Mental Health [NIMH]

NIMH is a government institution in downtown Dhaka. It is the country's main tertiary psychiatric hospital, so has a largely poor population of patients. Although the building is rather shabby, the care is organized on a psycho-social rehabilitation model and modern anti-psychotic drugs are available.

Centre for Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed [CRP]

CRP is a large facility in Savar, north of the campus. It serves many patients with spinal cord injuries, often using non-surgical treatment (i.e. immobilization with traction) and multidisciplinary approach that includes sexual and vocational therapy. It has a large out-patient program, especially for pediatrics. Because some patients are admitted from care in the community, our nursing students learn how to provide wound care for some extreme cases.

What do volunteers do?

After you contact us to say that you are interested in contributing to the project in Bangladesh, we will get in touch to discuss with you the length of time that you will spend in Dhaka, as well as the type of teaching activity that you would be prepared to take on. We will meet with you if possible, and if not, communicate by phone and email, to sort these details.

Visiting faculty deliver lessons, prepare and mark assignments and exams, and develop new learning modules. We also encourage visiting faculty to become involved in clinical supervision, providing workshops for the community, tutoring students, improving English language skills, or providing one-to-one counseling for students if this is an area of expertise. We welcome additions and modifications to the lesson plans but ask that instructors stay close to the prepared syllabus. We have learned from our experience about teaching to students who often have weak educational backgrounds and struggle with English as a second language. This background requires a graduated approach to ensure the students have the vocabulary and learning concepts they need as they progress through their courses.

Our volunteers have come from a variety of health care backgrounds, with varying levels of expertise. We have drawn on the knowledge of nursing instructors, well-experienced professionals, and recent nursing graduates. Other health professionals have also made a big contribution as have volunteers with no health care background. Since this is a new project, and is innovative in its goals and method of delivery, we are constantly seeking to upgrade our program activities, and to learn from our experiences. Your feedback and suggestions for improvement are always welcome, as well as your contributions.

A day in the life of a volunteer

A typical day for an IUBAT volunteer begins with self-made breakfast. We get a daily newspaper delivered. Usually volunteers walk together for the ten-minute trip to IUBAT. Unless, they have an 8:30 class start, most plan to arrive about 9 a.m. The IUBAT cafeteria is another option for breakfast as well as mid-morning tea and snacks. Lunch, usually taken about 1p.m., can be eaten at home, prepared by our housekeepers. Some people prefer to stay on the campus, eating in the IUBAT cafeteria or a sandwich from home. (A jar of peanut butter is a good thing to bring.)

We always try to leave for home by dusk due to road safety. This is not always possible, so be sure to cross the busy highway with the IUBAT road crossing guard. There are lots of students living in the neighbourhood; many like to walk home with volunteers so they can practice their English. People usually rest and clean up before dinner, which is served by the housekeepers about 8 p.m. in the dining room. Power failures make for many intimate candle-light dinners! (You may want to bring a good flashlight.) After dinner volunteers who want company sit and chat about the day or current events, play cards, or watch movies or TV (we have several English channels including CNN and BBC). Those wanting some quiet time retire to their rooms.

The teaching duties of volunteers

Courses at IUBAT are taught on a **trimester model, which is twelve weeks of lectures followed by an exam period of about four weeks**. Three credit courses offer three hours of classroom time per week; there are a few two credit courses with two hours of classroom time. We tell students that they should expect to study three hours on their own for every hour of lecture. Most students take five courses or less per trimester.



Clinical courses also include an associated practicum or lab component. This requirement varies, but is always provided for major courses such as, introductory nursing skills, medical surgical nursing, mental health nursing, maternal-child nursing and community health nursing. Again with some variation, these **lab courses involve one day per week in the clinical area.** Students may have two such clinical courses so their schedules can be very busy.

Most volunteers teach two courses.

Thus they may have six hours of lecture time per week (two courses at three hours each) plus one or two six-hour blocks of practicum supervision.

Preparation time varies. Most instructors find the prepared lectures a good starting point but need to brush up on advanced details and personal examples to illustrate key points. Depending on circumstances, sometimes instructors spend extra time coaching students during office hours. Marking tests and assignments also varies, but you can expect six to eight hours at mid-term and end of term. If your marking load is light, other instructors do appreciate assistance.

Supervision in the clinical area typically starts early, with transport leaving the university at 6:30 a.m., returning about 3:30 p.m. We arrange orientation for the clinical areas. Generally you will find the nursing roles and patient acuity much more limited than in Canada.

Most volunteers spend their days at the university. We discourage personal travel that cuts into class time. You will find that national and religious holidays and occasional government closures cut into class time. It is hard to make up that lost time without a lot of hassle. Best to save your personal excursions for periods when the university is closed anyway, and before or after you arrive at IUBAT.

There are many options for day trips and it may be possible to get a student to accompany you for translation and guidance. Longer journeys can also be arranged. There are guidebooks at the guest house and lots of free advice all around!

BEFORE YOU GO

Considerations in deciding to become a visiting faculty member or intern

Committing your time to serve abroad involves both financial and emotional considerations. As in many Less Developed Countries, **the stresses of everyday life can be difficult**. If you have already traveled to such countries, you will have an advantage during the acclimatization period. Bangladesh will not be for you if you cannot cope with hot, humid weather, noise, crowds, or extreme poverty. Visiting faculty and interns need to be flexible and open-minded. Challenges often include unexpected situations or alterations to the original plan. **An ability to adapt and a positive attitude to change** will help you manage.

Although the task itself is fulfilling, it is also demanding. The people involved in this project are all volunteers. Your time here is valuable; we want to use it effectively to give the students maximum benefit. If you plan to visit other places in Bangladesh or South Asia as part of your trip, **please arrange your vacation either before or after your teaching duties with us**. We will appreciate it if any family or friends who plan to join you do so after you complete your stay. If visitors can only join you during your assignment, please discuss this with us in advance in consideration of the students. We will also make a small charge for room and board for visitors.

We find our Bangladeshi colleagues and neighbours to be very helpful and appreciative of our support. Aside from other visiting faculty we spend virtually all our time with Bangladeshis in educational and leisure activities. **Becoming familiar with local customs shows respect** to the people of Bangladesh, who will generally welcome you as their guest.

Is this experience right for you?

Some volunteers are quite shocked by the living and working conditions in Dhaka. If living in a Less developed Country is a new experience for you, **please consider using a self-assessment tool** to help determine your capacity to adapt and make a contribution in this environment. These sites have been recommended:

- Assessing readiness to work abroad/cross cultural work skills:
<http://www.suite101.com/content/assess-your-readiness-for-work-abroad-a96792>
- Thinking about working abroad?
http://www.nursingnetuk.com/abroadabout/4_workindevelopment.html
- Preparing for cultural differences/going abroad to work/volunteer
<http://www.licensedpracticalnurse.org/nursing-abroad>

Getting your visa

A visa is required of all visitors to Bangladesh. Canadians can download a visa application form from the website of the Bangladesh High Commission in Ottawa <http://www.bdhc.org>. Prior to applying for a visa, you will need a letter of invitation from IUBAT. Our volunteer co-ordinator will arrange this for you. You must include this letter, your travel itinerary and your passport with your visa application. It generally takes about 2 weeks turn-around time.

It is better not to apply for the visa too soon before the date you plan to leave. You will be able to use it for 90 days from the date of issue. Note that **the dates on your visa show the period during which you may enter Bangladesh**. In other words, the expiry date is the last day on which you can arrive in Bangladesh. The visa will contain a statement that it is valid for “x” days following the date of entry. If you expect to leave the country for a trip and return, apply for a multiple entry visa, which in Canada will cost about \$180 (2012). If you are planning further travel, other countries in the area, such as India, may also require visas. It is best to apply for these while you are still in Canada, however you can apply from Dhaka.

On the application, state that **the purpose of your visit is “research”**. You will be assisting us with our research on nurse education in Bangladesh. IUBAT is not an NGO. You are not allowed to do any work, whether paid or unpaid, in Bangladesh. If you are asked (this happens very rarely) stress that you will receive no money from Bangladeshi sources.

Along with your visa application you will need to send:

1. Two passport size photographs.
2. Your passport.
3. A money order for the cost of the visa .
4. A pre-paid self-addressed return envelope. Canada Post Express Post works well for sending and returning the documents.
5. A flight itinerary and address in Bangladesh. Use the IUBAT campus address on the invitation letter.
6. Your invitation letter.

Immunizations and medicine

You should consult with your physician or a travel clinic or travel website as you prepare for your journey. Up-to-date immunizations **for Hepatitis A and B, typhoid, polio and tetanus** are essential. It is also wise to consider having **a flu shot**. Although Dhaka does not have problems with malaria, dengue fever occurs, so bringing mosquito repellent and an “after bite” remedy is also a good idea. We provide mosquito nets; it is not necessary to bring your own. If you plan to travel to other countries you may want to consider malaria prophylaxis. Some of our volunteers take Ducoral prior to leaving home, as an oral anti-diarrhea and anti-cholera vaccine. **Bring any medications that you will need** or might find helpful. Most common medications are cheaply available without prescription.

Medical insurance

It is also **essential to have appropriate health insurance** before you leave home. If you live in Canada you will want to ensure your provincial coverage will continue (this is normally the case unless you leave for more than six months) and you will want to purchase travel medical insurance that includes repatriation costs. Shop around as rates and coverage vary widely. Keep all original receipts for travel medical costs and health Insurance as **Bangladesh Health Project may be able to issue you a tax deduction receipt** .We also may ask for evidence you have sought and taken medical travel advice and purchased health insurance before departure.

What Should I Bring?

Clothing: South Asian society is more formal than you may be accustomed to. Please wear business casual dress for teaching and nursing program-related work. These sites have some helpful tips www.realsimple.com; www.onebag.com ; <http://www.webbangladesh.com/travelandtour/travel-packinglist.htm>

Generally, for women, long, loose, and light shirts and light, loose pants or long skirts are preferable. Sleeveless shirts, Capri pants, and skirts above the knee are generally not appropriate for public wear, but can be worn in the privacy of home. You will probably want to buy a couple of local outfits (long tunic top with pants or *salwar kameez*) when you arrive because these are very comfortable for the weather. These are cheap and easily available, so you can decide when you're there. Women may wish to bring a light scarf [*orna*] to wear around the neck; local versions may be purchased after arrival. Shower shoes or flip-flops are easily bought (most bathrooms have tile floors and are VERY slippery).

For men, light trousers and cotton mix shirts are good (locals wear both long or short sleeve shirts but long sleeves are more common), since these minimize ironing needs. Men should bring along

lightweight cotton or permanent press trousers and several ties also, as business attire is the norm at IUBAT.

Winter (Dec. – Feb.) Winter can be cold! For both men and women, a light jacket or lightweight fleece or sweater will suffice for the cool winter mornings and occasional cool days. You will want socks and probably warm pajamas.

Spring/Summer/Fall: Waterproofs and umbrellas are necessary during the monsoon (rainy) season. You may want an umbrella for sun protection also. Long skirts are difficult to wear in the humid months because they will stick to your legs. Remember that Bangladesh is a garment manufacturing centre so Western style clothing and custom tailoring are cheap and widely available if you find you've forgotten something.

Other Items: These days most consumer items are available locally. As the water is hard, visitors are advised to bring good shampoos and conditioner. You will appreciate creature comforts, particularly protein bars, chocolate, peanut butter or coffee. These things might be locally available, but of a poor quality. Insect repellent will be useful as will pocket-size antibacterial soaps or wipes. Pepto-Bismol, and contact lens solution are generally not available in Dhaka. As a foreigner you are allowed to bring alcohol into the country provided you are inside the limits for transporting liquids (hand luggage) or importing liquor.

It is a good idea to bring copies or scans of your visa application and original invitation letter. You may also wish to scan credit cards and travel documents, and photograph your luggage, which you can then print or email to yourself. Some travelers prefer clothing with secure pockets for valuables with a small purse for cash and credit cards, so they avoid carrying purses.

Most newer laptops and camera chargers are dual voltage, but check to make sure yours will operate on 220/230V. You may need a transformer. Batteries are easily available. If you have a laptop computer of your own you will find it useful to bring it with you. The university and guest-house have adaptors for North American electrical plugs.

Money and security

The currency of Bangladesh is the *taka* (approximately 70 taka to the Dollar). Before you leave home be sure your bank card has a four digit Pin and advise any credit card companies of your travel plans. Canadian currency is not easily changed: bring about \$US 100 in small bills for back up but use your bank card to obtain taka in Bangladesh. Not all bank ATMs will work for you but most Standard Chartered and Dutch-Bangla ATMs will. There is a Dutch-Bangla ATM at the airport and several ATM's in central Uttara near where IUBAT and the guest house are located. Credit cards are useful only in expensive places and a few other stores. Traveler's checks are difficult to cash so not very useful. You will find Bangladesh inexpensive. Be aware that it is illegal to take taka out of the country when you leave.

Although Bangladesh has had sporadic outbreaks of civic unrest over the last years, particularly before the military government of 2007-08, none of the anger has been directed at foreigners. When there is violence, it is internally directed at various political factions within the country. We have never had the sense that foreigners are targets or that they would be prevented from leaving in the event of some serious problem.

You will find that although you may be the subject of much interest, especially at train stations, or in areas where large numbers of people congregate, the general attitude of people is very friendly. IUBAT students have been excellent about helping volunteers learn how to navigate the

local area. Usually there is no shortage of company on any outing for shopping or sight-seeing. Our guest house has a security guard who will lock the main doors around 2200h. Occasional late returns are fine but let the guard know when you expect to be in.

Although physical assaults of foreigners are uncommon, petty theft is not. As in any large city, you should be cautious with wallets, cell phones, cameras, and other personal items whenever you are out in public. Do not leave valuables unattended even around the university campus.

You should register with the Canadian High Commission, Dhaka (this can be done online) so assistance can be provided in the unlikely event of a natural disaster or unrest. Other countries offer similar services to their citizens. IUBAT will require much the same information from you (see appendix).

You should always carry copies of your passport, Bangladesh visa, emergency contacts, and visa size pictures. This is as much for convenience as security. It is useful to upload images of these to the internet so you can access them in event of loss.

The International Faculty office at IUBAT is secure. Keys and arrangements will be provided after you arrive. Never leave the Nursing office unlocked if you are the last to leave. Never leave valuables unattended in the classroom unless a reliable nursing student is present.

You need not be concerned about cyclones unless you are travelling near the coast in the spring or fall seasons. As it is inland, Dhaka is not particularly vulnerable to cyclone damage. Our volunteers weathered Cyclone Sidr, a major storm that passed directly over the city, with minimal disturbance apart from electrical disruption

How do I get there?

There are various air routes to Dhaka. The national carrier, Biman, flies to Bangladesh from London and Singapore, although it is not noted for reliability. Cathay Pacific/ Dragon Air flies from Vancouver with a Hong Kong stopover. Singapore Airlines is available from Seattle. If flying from eastern Canada or Europe, you may wish to fly through London instead. British Airways flies direct; Emirates Airways flies via Dubai, and Qatar Airways via Doha. Since we provide airport pick-up, please try to avoid flights that arrive or depart very late at night. Also **please let us know if you are willing to bring books or educational supplies**; we will help you to upgrade your baggage allowance on the outbound trip to bring educational materials.

What happens when I arrive in the airport?

Please send us your itinerary when you have made your travel arrangements, then we will send current **instructions to have you picked up at the airport**. We will also send you contact phone numbers in case of any delay or confusion. Because visitors are not allowed to enter the airport in Dhaka, we cannot come inside to greet you. Fear not: someone will be waiting for you as close as possible. We will have a car to bring you and your luggage to the guest house.

WELCOME TO BANGLADESH!

Quick Facts

With a population over 150 million, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world with over 1450 inhabitants per square kilometer. The population is projected to increase to 250 million people by 2050, easily in the global top ten. It is also a poor country, with average per capita income of US\$2270. One-third of the population lives on an income of less than \$1 per day. The majority of people live in rural areas. The agricultural sector is uncompetitive and lacking infrastructure which leads to rural-urban migration. Food prices in urban areas have seen rapid increases in recent months due to worldwide trends.



It is important to remember that relations between men and women in Bangladesh are more formal and regulated than in Canada. Visitors should take this into consideration during any interaction between themselves and members of the opposite gender. In this primarily Muslim country, dress norms for both men and women are different than in Canada. Modest dress for women means that a scarf, [*orna*] is usually worn around the neck. Although western fashions are beginning to appear, tight clothing is not appropriate for mature women, and most men do not wear tight clothing either.

Bangladeshi women are not generally alone with, or seen alone with, unrelated men. Local custom frowns on women being alone at night outside the home. Men and women do not generally shake hands. No bodily contact with women outside the family is a Muslim mandate that is followed by some, so in social or business situations, wait for someone to extend their hand rather than offering yours first. Men and women seldom touch in public. Public display of affection between the genders is not considered appropriate for Bangladeshis and foreigners alike. Relations between men are also different from those in North America or Northern Europe. Physical closeness and affection is commonly displayed between male Bangladeshi friends. Same-sex sexual behaviour is illegal and hidden in Bangladesh.

Alcohol consumption is restricted for Bangladeshi nationals, although not for foreigners or foreign residents. Alcohol is available for foreigners in some restaurants and hotels. As drinking is a sensitive subject, it is prudent to avoid alcohol except at home or in foreign clubs.

Accommodation

Our guest house is located within 10 minutes walking distance from the IUBAT campus, We provide free room and board to volunteers who are supporting the College of Nursing. We offer a semi-communal living arrangement in several self-contained 3-bedroom flats. All the flats are adjacent in the same building. Guests are expected to keep their living areas tidy and to observe the house rules, which are listed in the apartment.



We try to provide separate bedrooms but can't guarantee you won't have to share your bedroom (twin beds). If sharing is a problem for you please let us know in advance. We try to have separate female and male apartments but it may be necessary to live in a co-ed environment. (Shared bedrooms will not be co-ed.) Please let us know if this would be a problem.

Most bedrooms have attached western style toilets but a few have separate eastern squat toilets. Volunteers who have bathrooms with commodes should expect to share their

bathroom facilities occasionally. We do not have hot running water. In the warm months water from the tap is usually solar heated by 10:00 AM. At other times we heat water on the gas burner and carry it to the bathroom - this is not as difficult as it may sound. Bathing is usually in the traditional South Asian style, by filling a large bucket with warm water and pouring it over yourself with a large jug. If you use the bathtub or western style shower the water will be unheated. Although several of the rooms have tubs, the logistics of heating enough water for a full bath are daunting and would use a large amount of fuel and water. Although Bangladesh is a country of rivers, clean water is in short supply and there are many months when we suffer shortages of potable water (in the rainy season, feel free to soak at your leisure).

The rooms have air-conditioning [A/C] and ceiling fans. Please remember Bangladesh suffers from insufficient power generation. It is not unusual to have four hours of load-shedding (blackouts) in shifts throughout the warm months. Candles will be available in your flat and it's useful to carry a small flashlight if you're out at night. Electricity is a major expense. We ask that you be environmentally conscious while staying with us. 1) Don't leave the A/C units on while you are out of the house. 2) Close windows while you are using the A/C. 3) Keep the setting on your A/C around 25°C and sleep with a light sheet.

You will be expected to prepare your own breakfasts; we provide standard supplies like tea, eggs, bread, bananas and oatmeal. Lunches and dinners are usually communal and will be prepared for you. A usual meal consists of chicken, rice/potato and vegetables. You can also take meals at the two cafeterias at the university. If you wish to have special items like juices, imported breakfast cereals, imported fruits or snacks, you should bring them with you or purchase your own at local markets. We have drip coffee makers but ground coffee is generally not available, so plan to bring your own. We appreciate any donations you'd like to make as imported products are expensive and generally outside our budget. If you have diet restrictions let us know and we'll try to arrange meals to suit you; vegetarians usually have no problem here. If you have low tolerance for new foods, you might want to bring nutritional supplements such as protein powder, which can be mixed with yoghurt for a smoothie. All the flats do have kitchen facilities so you're welcome to cook your own meals if you prefer.

We have a tropical climate so you can expect to be sharing your living space with some insects. Making sure that the window screens fit tightly helps a lot! Your mosquito net should keep the bugs from cuddling up in the night but you will not be able to avoid cockroaches in your kitchen, no matter how well you clean. Be advised, we have some rather large cockroaches now and then. You will also have small lizards (*tik-tiki*) on your walls. They generally stay out of your way and we tend to encourage them as they eat the cockroaches. Note: There are cats in the apartment building, although not in the volunteer flats.

Every item in the guest house comes from someone's donation. Our budget is limited. We ask you to be considerate and please replace items you break or lose. We will look after occasional repairs to facilities so please let us know if something isn't working properly.

Communication: You will be able to email or call your family on arrival by borrowing a cell phone or laptop. Wireless internet is available in the guest-house and at the university. Phone and internet access are improving but not yet totally reliable. Cell SIM cards are cheap (as are cell phones) and you may wish to buy one if you have a compatible phone. Skype also is an option for low cost calling. You will need a copy of your passport and a head-shot photo to buy any phone or internet equipment or usage plan. This is easily done and help is available. Passport photos are very cheap to obtain locally. Two cautions: Be sure to buy prepaid plans for your phone so bills do not arrive after your departure! Internet viruses are rampant around the campus. Do not allow students to insert USB drives into your computer and make sure that you have powerful anti-virus protection.



Local travel

On first appearances, Dhaka is big, polluted and disordered. It is not as difficult as it first appears, however. Although chaotic, Dhaka is also colourful, dynamic and never boring. Travel around the city can be difficult, however. Public transport is crowded, hot and slow, but is very inexpensive. For local journeys in **Uttara**, the northern suburb where IUBAT is located, a bicycle rickshaw will usually suffice.

Destinations outside Uttara, are reachable via taxi or a CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) the three wheel mini taxi. CNGs are not the most reassuring vehicles on a busy highway, but they are reasonably safe, if subject to occasional breakdowns. Establish the fare beforehand, however. Copies of the Lonely Planet Guide are available in the guest-house. A simple Bengali phrase book is also available.

During your visit to Dhaka, you may frequently be approached by beggars, including women carrying infants or children. We advise you to be cautious in how you respond. Since much of the begging is organized by gangs, the people who approach you will most likely not receive the benefit. Giving money may actually compound the problem, not help the situation in the way that you intended. Kidnapping and maiming of children for the purpose of begging is known to occur.

What is the weather like in Dhaka?

Bangladesh has a tropical monsoon-type climate, with a **hot and rainy summer and a dry winter**, with warm temperatures throughout the year, and relatively little variation from month to month. January tends to be the coolest month with temperatures averaging near 26C (78F) during the day and cooling down to 13-15C at night, sometimes lower for brief periods. April and May are the warmest months, with temperatures from 33 to 36C (91 to 96 F) and nights around 30C. The notable feature of the climate, however, is the precipitation, as this is one of the wettest places in the world. Most rains occur during the monsoon (June-September) with very little in winter (November-February). Humidity is a problem even during the spring and fall, but especially during the monsoon season, when mold may grow on shoe leather while clothes and bedding take on a damp, musty smell.

Ramadan

During the month of Ramadan preceding the major Muslim festival of **Eid-ul-Fitr**, Muslims will not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset. Ramadan moves with the cycles of the moon so it will occur at different times in different years. If you are here during Ramadan please try to arrange to eat out of the public eye. Some restaurants will remain open, as there are exceptions to the fast, but don't count on easy access if you're out.



The main IUBAT library is well-used. With wireless internet connections throughout the campus, many students study in hallways and classrooms as well. In the Nursing Office we have a large collection of general and specialist texts.



We use the university's conference room for special events such as this nursing management workshop. Most classrooms have standard seating with digital projectors and whiteboards.

APPENDIX

Who to Contact

For more information please contact

Alex Berland aberland@telus.net

Karen Lund kd_lund@yahoo.ca

People involved with the Bangladesh Health Project

Dr. M. Alimullah Miyan – Vice Chancellor and Founder of IUBAT. Dr. Miyan originally asked the Mid-Main group to help establish the College of Nursing. He is a tireless advocate for higher educational standards, opportunities for impoverished students and social development in Bangladesh.

Dr. Karen Lund is Chair Health Sciences, IUBAT. Originally from BC, Karen has a Ph.D in Microbiology from University of Saskatchewan. She has lived full-time in Dhaka since 2004 and welcomes visiting faculty to IUBAT.

Deirdre Evans is a Board member of the Mid-Main Community Health Centre and a founding member of the Bangladesh Health Project. A psychiatric social worker in Vancouver, Deirdre, wrote the Mental Health Nursing courses and has taught these every fall at IUBAT.

Dr. John Richards is a Board member of the Mid-Main Community Health Centre and a founding member of the Bangladesh Health Project. He is a professor at Simon Fraser University, teaching in the Masters of Public Policy program. John supervises MPP students and also conducts research projects with the IUBAT College of Nursing.

Alex Berland and Judi Morton are also founding members of the Bangladesh Health Project. Both retired nurses, they operate an organic farm in British Columbia and have visited IUBAT numerous times since 2004.

Professional Standards for Volunteers

1. A volunteer's first professional responsibility is to the students in his/her charge.
2. A volunteer's expectation of students takes into account their interest, needs and abilities.
3. A volunteer keeps his/her comments as objective as possible in discussion with students regarding any controversial matter whether political, religious or social.
4. A volunteer, in cooperation with other school authorities, shares the responsibility of setting up and maintaining a learning environment suitable to the task and the students.
5. A volunteer accepts, within the constraints imposed by the school authorities, responsibility for the educational opportunity and the quality of instruction given the students in his/her care.
6. A volunteer regards as confidential, and does not divulge other than to appropriate persons, any information of a personal or domestic nature concerning either students or their colleagues.
7. A volunteer does not use his/her professional position for personal profit in money, goods or services from staff, pupils or their families.
8. A volunteer maintains appropriate staff/student relationship boundaries.

Visiting faculty and interns are expected to

1. Support the philosophy and goals of the IUBAT College of Nursing.
2. Collaborate with staff from other cultural and religious backgrounds.
3. Be sensitive to local customs and the religious sensibilities of Bangladesh.
4. Have a genuine interest in global citizenship and social justice.
5. Uphold IUBAT's stand against student smoking, drug & alcohol abuse and sexual immorality.
8. Refrain from smoking and drinking in the presence of students.

INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF BUSINESS AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY
MID-MAIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Field Learning Program

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY, RELEASE OF LIABILITY,
WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY
AGREEMENT**

**THIS DOCUMENT AFFECTS YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS.
PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING.**

“International University of Business Agriculture and Technology” or “IUBAT” is located in Dhaka Bangladesh, and includes the Board of IUBAT, its employees and any others acting on its behalf.

“Mid-Main Community Health Centre” is located in Vancouver Canada and includes the Board of Mid-Main Community Health Centre, its employees and any others acting on its behalf.

(Name of participant – please print) (Telephone) (Student Number)

(Address)

(Host Institution in Canada) (Program dates overseas)

PREAMBLE

The IUBAT Field Learning Program [FLP] is an exceptional educational opportunity, but it is not without certain risks, dangers, hazards and liabilities to all participants. These include, but are not limited to, personal injury, death, property damage, expense and other loss, delay or inconvenience. All persons taking part in the IUBAT-FLP are required to accept these and other risks as a condition of their participation in the venture. IUBAT will not accept any liability for injury, loss, damage or expense sustained as a result of any person’s participation in the IUBAT-FLP.

The Statement of Risks set forth below is intended to enable applicants to better understand and accept the various risks involved in the Program. All Program applicants will be required to sign the Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims, Assumption of Risks and Indemnity Agreement set forth below, which will release IUBAT, Mid Main Community Health Centre, their Canadian supporters and their representatives from any claims which might arise as a result of the applicant’s participation in the IUBAT-FLP.

STATEMENT OF RISKS

The Program involves all the risks inherent in international travel and field activities. The majority of the Program will take place in Dhaka, Bangladesh. There are significant risks, dangers and hazards to which all travelers are exposed. These include, but are not limited to, poor road and transportation systems, tropical and sub-tropical diseases, exposure to wildlife, political instability, threats of terrorism and harm to self. The medical facilities may be of a lower standard than in Canada. A high incidence of crime as well as malaria, hepatitis, cholera and other infectious diseases pose dangers to all travelers.

Participants in the IUBAT-FLP will be using the services of independent travel agents, airlines and local travel companies. IUBAT cannot accept responsibility for the conduct of these independent agencies. It is always possible that the FLP might not be completed or individual courses or activities may be curtailed or cancelled due to weather, illness, political disturbances, terrorism, motor vehicle accidents, transportation problems, civil unrest, failure to perform on the part of the travel agents or airlines, problems relating to customs, immigration or visa requirements, or other circumstances either within or beyond the control of IUBAT.

All participants in the IUBAT FLP will be required to attend orientation and safety briefings on these and other risks, and on the behaviour required to minimize risk and disruption during the course of the program. It is the responsibility of each participant in the IUBAT FLP to learn as much as possible about the risks of the venture, to weigh those risks against the advantages, and to decide whether or not to participate. IUBAT, its faculty, staff, support personnel and academic associates cannot and do not assume liability in respect of any of these risks, dangers, hazards and liabilities. IUBAT accepts no responsibility and assumes no liability with respect to any academic vocational, medical, financial or tax advice received by a participant concerning the program.

ASSUMPTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

I will take responsibility for obtaining any special vaccinations or preventative medications recommended or required by my physician and/or the Public Health office for travel pertinent to the IUBAT FLP. I will take only those medicines, drugs or cures that I am medically permitted to take to maintain my good health and which have been lawfully prescribed for me.

I will maintain my enrollment in B.C. Medical Services Plan or equivalent. Emergency medical insurance is required for the duration of the overseas program and I will purchase coverage before departure.

I will take ultimate responsibility for any personal items I take overseas even though there may be times I entrust the care of my valuables to someone else. I will not hold IUBAT, its employees or agents responsible for any of my lost/damaged/stolen items. Insurance coverage for personal items is optional and solely my responsibility.

I understand that Worker's Compensation Board coverage does not extend to practicum placements done outside B.C. and therefore excludes this FLP.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTIONS OF RISKS AND RESPONSIBILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

TO: *International University of Business Agriculture and Technology and Mid-Main Community Health Centre*

I, _____, am aware that the IUBAT-FLP involves many responsibilities, risks, dangers, hazards and liabilities, including but not limited to those referred to in the Preamble, Statement of Risks and Assumption of Responsibility set forth above. I freely accept and fully assume all such responsibilities, risks, dangers, hazards and liabilities and the possibility of personal injury, death, property damage, loss, expense or inconvenience resulting there from.

In consideration of IUBAT accepting my application to the IUBAT-FLP and allowing me to participate in the program, I hereby agree as follows:

1. TO WAIVE ANY AND ALL CLAIMS, whether in contract or in negligence, that I have or may have against IUBAT, its directors, officers, instructors, employees, agents, support personnel and other representatives (all of whom are hereinafter collectively referred to as “the Releasees”);
2. TO RELEASE THE RELEASEES from any and all liability for any loss, damage, injury or expense that I may suffer or that my next of kin may suffer as a result of my participation in the IUBAT-FLP, due to any cause whatsoever, including breach of contract or negligence on the part of the Releasees;
3. TO HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY THE RELEASEES from any and all liability for any loss, damage, injury or expense to any third party resulting from my participation in the IUBAT-FLP;
4. THAT THIS AGREEMENT shall be effective and binding upon my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators and assigns, in the event of my death.
5. TO COMPENSATE IUBAT for any expenses incurred on my behalf to provide health care and medical treatment in case of illness or injury.

I have read and understood this agreement prior to signing it, and I am aware that by signing this agreement I am waiving certain legal rights which I or my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators and assigns may have against the Releasees.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20 .

Participant’s Name: _____ Witness Name: _____

Participant’s Signature: _____ Witness Signature: _____