

india community challenge itinerary



A community challenge provides an exciting opportunity for individuals and teams to travel and work closely with people of another culture and to make a difference in their lives.

Building sports field for a community in need is a unique experience that opens your eyes to the plight of others who do not have the basic access to education that we all take for granted.

It is a physical and emotional experience, and volunteers often come away knowing a great deal more about themselves than they did beforehand.

All it takes to participate in a community challenge is enthusiasm, motivation and a desire to help make a difference. No other skills are required as there will be skilled supervisors on hand to show you what to do.

You will be working in partnership with the NGO MMF Project Evolution whose focus is on underprivileged families and those affected by HIV/AIDS. MMF Project Evolution believe that for children to thrive and develop, they need a safe, secure and healthy environment. MMF Project Evolution's mission is to provide a productive and healthy school environment for thousands of children to provide them with practical, emotional and educational skills to enable them to construct a dignified and productive future for themselves.

Your community challenge will help to break the cycle of poverty and hopelessness and support the aims of MMF Project Evolution.



The school is situated in Kottakuppam, near Pondicherry, located on the South Eastern coast of India.

Nirvana School is committed to the social, emotional and intellectual growth of their students. They are providing an English education blended with the moral, religious and cultural values of India. Their main aim and mission is to prepare the students to be enthusiastic and self motivated learners throughout life, by providing them with a unique education within a happy and healthy environment. MMF Project Evolution has also been working with the Nirvana School in developing vocational training for adults to help them improve their skills and prospects for a self sustainable future.



MMF Project Evolution is also incorporating an environmental element into the projects by using trees supplied by a local organisation that educates children on the need to conserve the environment. As part of this the volunteers will assist in planting seedlings to replace the ones used on the projects.

The following is an approximation of your community challenge schedule.

Day 1: Friday: International Departure

You will depart from London Heathrow on Friday evening with Jet Air to Chennai, India. Our Charity Challenge representative will be at the airport to assist you with the check-in and any last minute questions. The flight will arrive in Chennai the following day, Saturday.

Day 2: Saturday: Arrival in India

You will land and be met by the community challenge representative, who will transfer you overland by coach (approx 3hrs) to your Pondicherry hotel.

If you are making your own flight arrangements and traveling independently of the group, you will need to join the rest of your team at the hotel by lunch time on Saturday to give you time to settle in before your briefing during the evening.

Day 3: Sunday: Project Visit

You will have a late breakfast after which you will meet with the MMF Project Evolution representative for a briefing on the project. After this you will be taken to visit the current school premises, followed by a group lunch. After lunch you will have the opportunity to enjoy a walking tour of Pondicherry. The rest of the afternoon you will be free to relax by the hotel pool. You will have an early dinner with the group to enable you the chance to prepare for the next day. Your challenge Leader will brief you on any local health & safety procedures you should follow and they will be your point of contact for your entire challenge. In addition you will learn about the school from a local representative, so you can understand how your effort will fit into the bigger picture.

Day 4-8: Mon to Fri: Developing the school

Every morning, breakfast will normally be served from 0630hrs in the hotel and from here you will be taken to the community project for an 0830hrs start. You will be fully

briefed on site at the beginning of each working day on the challenge ahead and all safety and training aspects will be covered. This is a great opportunity to get acquainted with your new environment. There will be ample time for you to ask questions of the construction supervisor and to get to know the rest of your team.

Over the next 5 days your challenge will involve helping to build school facilities, working in teams made up of fellow community challenge participants.

You may not start and finish the construction in one week and as it is a rolling program you will carry on where the previous group/local builders left off. Teams will also be joined by local people whose community you are contributing to.

Friday afternoon will involve a thank you ceremony with the children and community.

In the evenings you will have the opportunity to experience the local food and culture with various organised activities, including a rickshaw ride.



Day 9: Saturday: To Chennai

Today in the morning you will have the opportunity to reflect on the past week, and see a little more of your local environment. By spending time and money in India you are helping to support the local economy. Farewell lunch at the hotel followed by 2 hours bus transfer to your Chennai hotel for dinner and shared rooms.

10: Sunday: Departure Day

You will leave the hotel early AM for the airport to check in for your return flight. It will depart for the UK at 0915hrs arriving back into London Heathrow at 1740hrs. Please note these are approximate times and we shall confirm flight details nearer your departure date.

Notes:

Accept that you don't always have to be productive to have a good experience. Regardless of the work you perform, Charity Challenge teams inject enthusiasm and encourage the families and community by sharing the burden of the construction process.



You do make a difference and are greatly appreciated. You will need to be patient and flexible.



There will be times of waiting for someone to show up, to make a decision or to just to get started. You can always work extra hard when the time comes. Make the most of the waiting around time to share with the school children and the local community. You may never have the opportunity again.

Often the work to be done is very labour-intensive:

- clearing and leveling a site
- hauling dirt
- digging foundations
- transfer or delivery of materials such as sand, gravel
- football coaching
- assisting with a physical inventory of construction materials

You will never be asked to do anything outside of your physical capabilities and teamwork will be encouraged at all times. No volunteer should be made to feel they have to do something they are not happy or comfortable doing. Be open and honest if you are not feeling useful enough or you feel you cannot do what you have been asked to. If you do have any reservations about any job you are assigned, please do not hesitate to raise these with the construction supervisor.

The days will be scheduled around the local working hours and appropriate temperatures throughout the day.

A packed lunch will be provided on site followed by more building. Evening meals will be eaten back at your hotel or a local restaurant.

During the course of the week, you will also have the chance to enjoy some local cultural exposure.

N.B. The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to the weather, the strength of the group and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your **communitychallenge** Team Leader or Construction Supervisor if on site will have the final say.