



Hope
of the
Pokomchi

ASOSAP
Asociación
Sakombal
Pokon

Introduction

MISSION TO GUATEMALA

Mission teams sponsored by Hope of the Pokomchi are called “Hope GO (God-Ordained) Teams.” The goal for every aspect of the mission, including team participants, is to be in the center of God’s Will. Therefore, if you are considering being a team member, God is already at work in your life.

You have signed up to be a team member, so here are some qualities you should consider:

- Have a "heart to serve"
- Good physical and emotional health
- Flexibility
- Ability to work under authority and as a team member
- Ability to SMILE A LOT!
- A particular skill is helpful but not necessary - such as masonry, technical ability, children’s ministry, speaking Spanish, music

During your work week, you and your team will live...

- Minimum 8 people: in the village in a “base camp” which will be a school, a church, or the village community center. The camp is safe, hygienic, and has all the basic creature comforts, BUT it is rustic. Be prepared to step out of your comfort zone.
- Minimum 6 people: in the Shekinah Center and travel to the village daily

Prime goals of the trip:

- Build relationships with the Pokomchi and your fellow team members
- Be the “hands and feet” of Jesus to those around you – Pokomchi and team members
- Savor the experience and the culture
- Ask God what delights, lessons and personal growth He has prepared for you on this trip
- Be a blessing to others

Secondary goals of the trip:

- Complete a project for a Pokomchi family – latrine, water tank, wood cook stove, Shekinah Center upgrades
- Share the Gospel through planned children’s programs, either team organized or ASOSAP organized



LAMPS

A Pre-Trip Perspective on your Guatemalan Experience

WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS!!

You've decided to step out of your comfort zone and venture into a life-changing experience in a developing country, into an ancient Mayan culture, into the day-to-day life of an isolated, rural Pokomchi community nestled in the breathtaking mountains of Alta Verapaz.

You come as LAMPS. Read Matthew 5:14-16 to find out why we have chosen this as your "title". LAMPS is also an acronym which further explains your role in this cross-cultural experience:

Learners - You'll be in a "classroom", "learning" mode all week. Keep in mind that although you'll be limited in knowledge and understanding of the local culture and customs, what a golden opportunity to learn and grow! Have you thought about what your personal learning goals are? Also remember that you are *Unlimited* in the amount of love, friendship, and spiritual blessing that you can share.

Ambassadors - First and foremost, of CHRIST, then of Hope of the Pokomchi, known as a *Christian organization in Guatemala*. Many of the cultural tips that we give you are intended to help you be good ambassadors.

Masons - You will be building a foundation on which every successive team will rely. Think carefully about what you would like your "Finished Product" to be, years down the road. What legacy do you want to leave?

Pioneers - The people of your village have had very little contact with outsiders, even Guatemalan outsiders. They are shy, even frightened at the prospect of a bunch of "gringos" suddenly being in their midst days at a time - especially the women and children. What a precious opportunity you have to gently melt fears and replace them with budding friendships and fond memories!

Servants - Remember how Jesus washed His disciples' feet? And then He told them - and *us*- "Go, and do likewise". The concept of servanthood is stated perfectly in Philippians 2:5-8. Realize that our Pokomchi friends have a long-ingrained worldview that they are inferior, helpless, and hapless; and that all foreigners are superior in every way.

Team Leader Guidelines

Team Application and Preparation Process

1. **Make sure each team member completes the Volunteer Application, Code of Conduct, and General Release Forms.**
 - These forms can be downloaded from our website: www.hopeofpokomchi.org
 - Have each team member email their completed forms to you
 - Review each set of forms to ensure that all is complete and correct, then email all forms to the Guatemalan Team Coordinator: asosapguatemala@gmail.com
 - Ideally all forms should be sent to Guatemala ONE MONTH before team departure

2. **Payment of Funds:**
 - Pay the first and second deposits by the dates on the bottom of the Team Budget form that you received
 - **The first deposit is non-refundable**

Make Checks Out To	Write on Memo Section of Check	Mail Checks To
USA: Hope of the Pokomchi, Inc.	Name & Date of Team	Hope of the Pokomchi, Inc. 120 Belmont Drive Auburn, CA 95603
Canada: Hope of the Pokomchi, Inc.	Name & Date of Team	Get Bank Draft in U.S. dollars and mail it to address above

3. **Packing for Trip:** Team members should review the packing list at least one week prior to departure.

4. **Prayer Partners:**
 - We suggest that each team member seek a prayer partner to pray for them before and during the trip; we believe in the importance of operating in *God's strength* rather than our own.
 - We also suggest that your church hold a Commissioning Service to send the team off with God's and the congregation's blessing

5. **Airline Tickets:** Each team will be responsible for booking their own tickets.

6. **Passport:** Each team member must have a current passport, including a copy of the face page which should be kept in a different place than the passport

7. **Immunizations:** Each team member must have proper current immunizations. Check with your local health unit or immunization clinic.



Team Leader Guidelines continued...

8. **Important Contact Information – Team Leader Should Bring with them:**

- Phone number of team's church and name of contact person there during the day
- Name, email address, and passport face page of each team member
- Emergency contact list – name and phone number of contact person for each team member, plus the team member's allergies

9. **Phone Numbers in Guatemala for Emergencies:** 011-502-3301-0346 or 011-502-5918-9813

10. **Team Meetings:** We urge you to hold several meetings with your team to go over all aspects of the upcoming trip and preparation for it

11. **Suggested Pre-Departure Team Planning Meeting Topics**

- Packing reminders
- Exchange of money – Cultural Liaison will exchange \$US50 worth of Qs per person on arrival. During your R&R time in Antigua, you can exchange more in banks and at ATM's.
- Devotionals – Plan themes and who will do them
- Prayer partners – Any questions?
- Church Commissioning Service – date and time
- Emergency contact names and numbers – each team member should supply emergency contact information and allergies to their team leader no later than 2 weeks before departure
- Team projects and work requests – who has what preferences or skills?
- Stickers, vitamins, dental & school supplies: decide who buys and packs what
- Procedure for airport departure and arrival – times and arrangements
- Arrival back home – airport pick-up, times and arrangements
- Post-trip Debriefing Session – We suggest a potluck and photo night within the first month
- Post-trip Informational Activity for church congregation - Plan slide shows, presentations at church service, Bible studies, or Sunday schools



Travel Suggestions and Packing List for Guatemala

Inform Yourself:

We suggest you visit our website, www.hopeofpokomchi.org. There you will find valuable information about the Pokomchi culture, the country of Guatemala, and about our organization.

Climate:

Alta Verapaz sits at an altitude of about 4500 feet and temperatures range from the 40F's (5-10C) at night to the 80F's (25-30C) during the day. Days can be hot and humid; it rains part of each day, for 10 months of the year.

Clothing in General:

In the villages, the indigenous women will sometimes work in their 'slip tops', but it is better for team women to wear tops with sleeves. Women should wear below-the-knee, loose-fitting skirts that one cannot see through (gauzy Indian-type) and T-shirts or blouses with short sleeves, even in the evenings at the Village Camp. Men should not wear shorts or muscle shirts. Don't wear jewelry in the villages. (A wedding band is okay). In Guatemala City and Antigua, you may dress as you would at home.

Clothing for Women:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 4-5 work skirts or dresses, not see-through | 5-6 T-shirts/blouses (loose) |
| 2-3 pairs of shorts (to wear under skirts) | Jacket or sweater for evenings |
| Warm pajamas or sweats | Swimsuit |
| Light rain gear (poncho) | Shorts/slacks for the city |
| Semi-nice outfit for our evening out | Bandannas |
| Work shoes (tennies/hikers/Texas) | Comfortable sandals for city |
| 6-7 pairs of socks & underwear | Sun hat |

Clothing for Men:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 3-4 pairs of work pants
(see Walmart nylons in camping sections) | |
| 5-6 T-shirts | Sun hat |
| Jacket or sweater for evening | Shorts/pants for the city |
| Warm pajamas | Swim trunks |
| Light rain gear | Bandanna |
| 2 nice casual shirts | Work shoes or boots |
| Sandals (optional) | 6-7 pairs of socks & underwear |

Other Items to Pack:

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|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Sunscreen | Insect repellent |
| Personal medicines | Band-Aids |
| Antibacterial towelettes | Waterless hand cleanser |
| Travel packs of Kleenex | Soap |
| Daypack | Personal toiletries |
| Fanny pack or money belt | Work gloves (1pair) |
| Flash light w/batteries | Camera |

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|--|---|
| Anti-Itch cream | Water Bottle (2 is best to stay hydrated) |
| Copy of passport photo page (pack in separate bag from passport) | Bible |
| Snacks | Wash cloth and towel |
| Paper and pen/pencil for journaling | Extra batteries for all appliances |
| Plastic bags for packing dirty items | Shower shoes |

How to Pack:

Pack all items according to the following categories:

- Overnight in Guatemala City – in a day pack
- Big bag with clothes for the work week
- Bag for Antigua

The idea is no one will have to rummage through all their gear at each phase of the trip. It will be pre-arranged in your luggage.

Remember! What you put in your bag, you alone will carry. Think carefully!

Laundry:

Due to rain and humidity, clothing items may stay damp for days, so don't plan on washing clothes during work week because they may not get dry.

Luggage:

Each person should pack in their carry-on what he/she will need for the first night in Guatemala City - a change of clothes (skirt for women), and toiletries in case luggage is lost. Carry on any medications you need.

Money:

The Quetzal is the Guatemalan currency with an exchange rate of roughly Q7 to \$1 US (exact exchange rates vary daily). On the first night, you will have the opportunity to exchange \$US 50 for quetzales. Canadian dollars are not accepted in Guatemala. Your meals during your stay in the field are prepaid, but the only meal pre-paid in Antigua is the banquet dinner the last night. You will have the opportunity to buy crafts from PokoMaya, village artisans, and in San Cristobal. For your days of R&R, there are ATM machines in Antigua to obtain quetzales. A credit card can be used at your hotel and most restaurants and shops in Antigua. Jade and silver are plentiful in Antigua. If you don't intend to purchase many souvenirs, \$US 100 should be sufficient spending money. If you love to shop, bring more.

Communication:

Don't expect to do much communicating with home until we get back to Antigua. Tigo phone cards can be purchased for calls to home/ internet communication on your cell phone. For emergencies, ASOSAP staff always carry cell phones with which we can call North America. Please bring one or two emergency home contact numbers with you in case we need them.

Helpful Donations to Bring

Stickers, Vitamins, and Dental Supplies

Stickers: They are used by children at school and Building My Horizon, and by women during craft activities in educational sessions

Multivitamins for adults, children, or women: Vitamins are given out as needed to patients at the health posts

Toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss: We teach *dental hygiene* in the Fluoride Application program and these donations are used in this program so that they can put into practice what they learn.

School Supplies

At the beginning of each year we make up a “care package” of school supplies for the village teachers. Since their budget from the Ministry of Education is very minimal, this minimizes the amount of personal money that the teachers have to spend.

We appreciate it when teams help us supply these items. This is an option, not a requisite, for sending a team or coming on a team. And we thank all of you in advance for helping out in this way.

Items that the teachers need are:

Pencils, Erasers, Pens, Notebooks, Construction Paper, Glue, Crayons, Felt Pens*

*Dollar Stores are a gold mine!

Soccer Balls

Soccer (Futbol) is a national passion in Guatemala, so gifts of soccer balls with pumps, to the local school are always loved and welcomed.



Typical Schedule for Team Trip

Friday

Meet at church – take cars or vans to airport

Flight to Guatemala City

Arrive in Guatemala City, overnight in Guatemala City (if arrival time is in the evening)

Saturday

7:00am

Breakfast & Leave for San Cristobal

12:00pm

Lunch in San Cristobal

3:00pm

Arrive in your village & settle into your village Camp

4:00pm

Welcome activity by the village (depending on the village)

6:30pm

Supper

8:00pm

Devotions and Social Time

Sunday -Thursday

7:00 am

Breakfast, pack lunches, fill water bottles

8:00am-12pm

Work on projects in village

12pm- 1pm

Bag lunch at worksite

1pm- 4:30pm

Continue work, cultural activity (Sunday), kid's activity (Monday), prayer for projects (Thursday)

4:30pm-6:30pm

Return to base camp, showers

6:30pm

Supper

7:30pm

Devotions and Social Time

9:00pm

Lights out – Bedtime

Friday

6:30am

Breakfast; pack lunch for bus

7:30am

Leave for Antigua

3:00pm

Arrive at hotel in Antigua for two nights

Evening

Free time

Saturday

Day time

Leisure time – optional shopping, massages, tour of the city, volcanoes, etc.

7:00pm

Banquet dinner

Sunday

3 hrs. before

Bus arrives at hotel – load luggage

Flight departure

Leave hotel for drive to airport and flight home; have \$US3.00 for improvement tax*

*sometimes this tax isn't asked for, but it is important to have ready just in case

Final Tips

Here are some **KEY** thoughts we want to dangle in front of you:

FLEXIBILITY - *the most important prerequisite for a cross-cultural volunteer*

EXPECTATIONS - *Take a moment to ponder yours for this trip, maybe bounce them off someone else. We all have them, but let them not be a damper on your experience. Yes, we have work goals, but take time to 'smell the roses'. . .return home with a story. The end product isn't as important as the PROCESS of trying to attain it.*

VILLAGE CULTURAL TIPS

- Greeting: Guys - Shake a man's hand gently; Girls - Gently pat a woman on the upper arm; guys do not touch women, just a verbal greeting
- Verbal Greeting – kah-LEN
- Dress for women volunteers - skirts or dress below knees, tops with sleeves and modest necklines.
- No smoking or drinking alcohol (For most Christian Guatemalans it is not socially acceptable to drink alcohol. Most Non- Christians drink to get drunk or as part of a Mayan religious ritual.)
- Asking an adult person's name is only done after a relationship has been established, not as an icebreaker as in our culture. You may ask children their names.
- Opposite sexes holding hands or touching in general, is not done among adults
- When you're leaving some one's presence, a Pokomchi 'Good-bye' is "noch-PED"
- If you have tattoos, try to cover them up; in Guatemala mostly only gang members have tattoos

"BONDING" TIPS

- **Bring photos of your family or landscape where you live, to show them.**
 - Music is universal. Practice some songs your group can sing - SMILE a lot!
 - Offer to play soccer. YES! Guaranteed to put a sparkle in every male heart!
 - Bring simple games like jump-rope or jacks or marbles to play with the kids
 - Bring card games, dominoes, and beach balls to play with the village kids while in camp
 - Bubbles are always a big hit
- *game items to be returned to base camp each night and not given out to the kids - see note re: stuff below

A WORD ABOUT "STUFF"

We have a lot of stuff. They have very little stuff. Our natural tendency is to bring lots of stuff and give it away to them. By our standards, their needs are endless. However, copious, random giving away of stuff quickly erodes their dignity and self-respect and turns them into opportunistic "beggars" with a "welfare mentality". It is probably the most common hazard of Developed-Developing World relationships.

How do we address their very real needs in an appropriate manner? Listen and observe what THEY perceive their needs are and respond by giving the item in an appropriate, orderly fashion, i.e., to be distributed by a church or community leader. This should only be done after consulting with our team coordinator.

LOGISTICS NITTY GRITTY

- Money: Keep in it in several different places
- Travelers diarrhea: **Acidophilus Capsules, 1- 2 per day** lessens the chance of getting it; start a week before arrival here; Pepto-Bismol is good if you get it, Imodium in severe cases
- Use ONLY bottled water for drinking and brushing teeth
- DONT put TP in the toilet!
- NEVER go anywhere alone; even in groups, always tell someone where you are going

WE PRAY ALL GOES WELL

We can't underestimate the power of prayer! Blanket your trip with prayer – personal prayer, corporate prayer, prayer with your prayer partner. We look forward to sharing your cross-cultural experience with you and to being alongside you as you partner with the people of your village, to help them move toward their God-given potential!

In His Grip,
The Hope of the Pokomchi, ASOSAP Ministry Team