

Volunteer story Nepal

Year:

Project:

Work:

I had to write to you. Having travelled in both Asia and Africa, I was immediately struck by a sense of safety and comfort upon my arrival in Nepal almost one year ago. Though I was supposed to stay only five months, something about the friendly, smiling faces made me stay longer. I taught English, made a library, travelled around the country. Then, I began to work with INFO Nepal that organizes placements for foreign volunteers as Volunteer Coordinator. I had responsibility, freedom, and variety in my work. Then, things went very, very wrong. I arrived at work one morning to an e-mail from two of our volunteers placed in Prabatipur, Chitwan. There had been a horrific sexual harassment incident in the home where they were staying with INFO's host family. What followed was a long saga of misunderstanding between my employers and I over the question of refunding the volunteers who pay 125 euros a week to be in Nepal. The incident opened my eyes and I saw the organization for what it was: a business, a money-making enterprise, disguised as an NGO. Volunteers weren't valued, appreciated or respected. Prior to arrival, the volunteers were promised the moon but once they got here and paid their fees, the attitude changed dramatically. This is only a brief summary of one organization dealing with volunteers. This has resulted in foreigners, myself included, beginning to lose trust in Nepalis. Certainly not all Nepalis are this way, but I have become skeptical. This is a problem for the entire country, and thus should be taken seriously by all Nepalis.

About the Author

Brittany Sear volunteered with INFO Nepal in the year of 2007. Her Experience was published in a well known and reliable local news paper here are the links <http://www.nepalitimes.com.np/issue/2008/07/25/Nation/14142><http://www.nepalitimes.com.np/issue/375/Letters/14199>

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