

# L'ARCHE- FMR INDIA



## Basic Guidelines for Foreign Volunteers

### L'ARCHE IDENTITY

- We are people, with and without intellectual disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an International Federation.
- Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together.
- We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need of one another.

### THE MISSION OF L'ARCHE IS:

- To make known the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities, revealed through mutually transforming relationships.
- Foster an environment in community that responds to the changing needs of our members, whilst being faithful to the core values of our founding story.
- Engage in our diverse cultures, working together toward a more human society.

### INTRODUCTION

Asha Niketan is a home where growth in truth and maturity is made possible for all those who are welcomed. We invite you to live your life in Asha Niketan like a SADHANA – a spiritual journey leading to a covenant.

GROWTH does not happen by itself. You have to take responsibility for it. Here are a few requisites that will make your experience in this community a positive one:

- ✓ That you try to understand the vision and spirit of Asha Niketan as defined in the WAY OF LIFE and the CHARTER;
- ✓ That you respect the traditions of your particular community;
- ✓ That you come with a desire to grow in all areas – in community life, in work, in relationships, spiritually, intellectually - even if it is difficult at times;
- ✓ That you come with an openness to learn from your daily experience of life in the community and from other members, especially our core -members, those who have an intellectual disability;
- ✓ That you try to work as well as possible in harmony with those who carry authority in your community and in L'Arche.
- ✓ That you do all that you can to build unity and to live in truth, with a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation

We are here at Asha Niketan to create communities with people who have intellectual disability -- where the weakest are at the centre. This is made clear in the Charter. Also expressed in the Charter is a spirit, a particular vision, which comes from our Founder, Jean Vanier, and also from the traditions and experience of so many years of all our communities worldwide.

You should realize that some traditions are particular to Indian communities and reflect the experience of L'Arche as lived in the Indian culture.

Whatever your stage of life, whatever your background and experience, L'Arche (Asha Niketan) has something to offer, and so do you. We believe that as we live our ordinary moments together in community we experience something extraordinary and develop long lasting relationships.

People choose to join L'Arche (Asha Niketan) as Volunteer for a variety of reasons. Some are mature individuals wanting to give their lives new meaning through

genuine and trusting relationships with others. Some come to L'Arche to learn or develop new skills and attitudes to people with a learning disability. Others may be professionals seeking a new context and deeper meaning within which to practice their chosen career. Asha Niketan welcomes people of all faiths and none; if you are hoping to develop your spiritual life there will be opportunities through regular worship, prayer, retreats and pilgrimages.

Whoever you are, in return for the gifts you'll bring, you will discover a very simple and honest joy in the relationships you build with other people, both with and without learning disabilities.

### **About Daily life:**

- A live-in Asha Niketan Volunteer will support people with learning disabilities to take part in community life, to cook, clean and run a household, go to work, have a social life, to see friends and family and with their personal care.
- A live-in Asha Niketan Volunteer will join in the revised model of the rotation system which focuses quality of presence and commitment to the needs of the community. This system provides good working condition for the volunteers. In the present rotation system the working hours will be 12hrs each day for 5 days. The volunteers are eligible like other assistants to take their day off and weekends as mentioned in the national policy.
- A live-in Asha Niketan Volunteer will involve in the community affairs for 6 days in a week.
- A live-in Asha Niketan Volunteer are entitled to take 30 days annual leave if stayed for more than six months in the community, either in the middle of the contract or at the end of it which needs to be organized with the community.
- Living in Asha Niketan is about “sharing with people”. In Indian context members of the family sharing room is a common practice. So the live-in Volunteers should be opened to do so if necessary.
- Every live-in Volunteer will be given a copy of the Way of life and Charter to get to know the character principles of L'Arche and Asha Niketan in India.

**Conclusion:**

- L'Arche-FMR India, Asha Niketan is a group of over 140 worldwide communities where people with and without intellectual disabilities share life together in community.
- It fosters an environment to celebrate the unique value of each and every person in those communities and recognizes our need of one another.
- We seek to be a sign of hope in a world that increasingly looks for purpose and meaning in the pursuit of material success often at the expense of deeper personal relationship.

*Prepared by Rajeevan CC for community document*