

D-LAB: *ENERGY*

Packing List

Overall, we encourage you to pack as lightly as possible. It's surprising how little you really need, and how heavy your pack gets over time. Some of these items you may opt not to bring to save space/weight. Bring only a few shirts and pairs of underwear, and wash them in the sink. Critical items are in blue.

If there is anything on the list that you don't have please let us know. D-lab has a lot of travel items and we maybe be able to find the things you need.

PASSPORT

Shoes:

- Texas (or other rugged sandals) very handy for most days; some people like to have flip flops for the shower, too/instead.
- Nice shoes or sandals-- for when you are dressing up for presentations (or if you can make one of your other shoes multi-purpose for this, even better)
- Sneakers for working with big tools or welding, playing soccer with the kids.

General Clothes. Think dark colors and patterns that don't show the dirt easily. Light-colored clothes look dirty pretty quickly. Clothes that dry fast are ideal. We want to make a good impression as professionals so you will need clothes that are going to weather sweaty bus trips and manual, dirty labor without looking wretched or falling apart. T-shirts are OK for travel days, but you should have at least one good outfit for meetings. Note that in urban areas, there's always a risk of fancy-looking watches, nice necklaces and new baseball hats being snatched right off your body. Definitely not worth taking things you can't stand to lose. Depending on where you go, it may be as cold as 50°F at night or as hot as 100°F in the day. Plan accordingly.

- Shorts-- good for relaxing at night, but may not be appropriate otherwise, follow what the locals are doing. Long shorts are much preferable to short ones.
- Swimsuit-- be sure to bring one, and preferably a conservative one. You'll find swimming pools in the most unexpected places.
- Some kind of hat-- it's hot out there! The sun can be brutal during the afternoon, it can also be useful in keeping the dust out of your face when riding in the back of a pick-up truck. Sunglasses are also nice to have.
- Skirt/dress-- these are important to have when working in the villages (for women), going to community meetings, church, etc.
- Slacks-- it is good for men to bring at least one pair of nicer (but comfortable) slacks for community meetings, church etc.
- Warm clothes-- you won't need much, but a thin fleece may be handy in the evenings and as a pillow when traveling
- Lightweight waterproof jacket.
- Underwear. Bring at least three pairs: one to wear, one to wash, one drying. Whatever underwear you bring is going to suffer. Again, dark colors are best. (enough said!)

Toiletries:

Your favorite toiletries will be hard to find, so bring enough for the trip. You may also want to bring packets of tissues for when toilet paper is in short supply. For women: if you have a history of yeast infections it's a good idea to bring medication because the warm humid climate can make them more likely. It's also important to bring supplies you'll need for menstruation.

Household supplies:

- Sheets-- a single, colored sheet (2m x 1m) can be helpful in places where the bed looks sketchy.
- Towels-- these are bulky, you can probably get by with a smaller one than you are used to. Kikois/Kanga cloths are a good alternative or the camp towels you can buy at REI/EMS.
- Camping pad-- useful for when you are crashing on someone's floor, also can make the rough roads a little more bearable when you're in the back of a truck. But they are bulky, so ask if you'll need one for your trip.
- Mosquito net--D-Lab provides these, you should use them to prevent mosquito bites (and malaria, dengue, etc).
- Mosquito repellent & sunscreen -- always a good idea; the bugs are fierce and carry disease, the sun is strong.
- Shaving/vanity mirror-- useful for putting in contact lenses. You can also put it behind a candle or lantern to get a little more light at night.
- Wide, flat drain cover -- useful for turning a sink into a washtub.
- Clothesline-- handy for drying clothes that you've washed by hand. Bring clothespins too!

Handy travel gear:

- Money belt, pouch or some other way to be discreet with your money.
- A dictionary or phrasebook (or both)
- Photocopies of all important documents (passport, WHO card, license, etc), also leave a copy at home
- Small flashlight with spare batteries. If you bring a small LED light, be sure it has an on switch, not just a squeeze button. Headband lights are ideal.
- Leatherman/pocket knife-- but remember that this should go in your checked bag.
- Water filter and iodine drops-- we provide at least one set for every team, so you don't need to bring your own.
- A couple 1-liter water bottles - very useful. You may find that you need to drink an awful lot of water. They are also good for filtering water.
- Gatorade powder and/or oral rehydration salts - for days when you get really dehydrated.
- Aspirin/Ibuprofen-- to help with dehydration (and other) headaches.
- Inexpensive, small camera and plenty of memory cards, or more film that you thought possible, if you are not using digital. It is a good idea to bring a bag to carry a camera that is low key and not spiffy. Also a way to transfer pictures to an internet cafe computer in case your memory gets full. Even if this has never happened before it may on this trip.
- Ear plugs-- invaluable for long plane rides, bus trips, noisy lounges, snoring room-mates, and more: one's sleep can be interrupted by the occasional rooster crowing, a donkey braying, early-morning traffic, a neighbor's radio blaring, or even the blowing of whistles by the all-night security patrol. The simple solution is to bring a few pairs of comfortable earplugs.
- Safety glasses -- it is important to bring your own so you have some that fit well especially if they need to fit over other glasses -- you can borrow D-Lab: Energy's set.
- Hand wipes-- a couple individually wrapped wipes can come be very useful if you need to put contact lenses in.
- Anti-bacterial hand-stuff-- useful for cleaning your hands before you eat.
- Handkerchief or bandana-- millions of uses, including face mask, washcloth, bath towel, signal flag, sweat band, emergency hat, water filter. Bring a few.
- First aid kit-- we'll be sending a large kit with each team, but you might want to bring your own supplies.
- Medication-- bring twice as much as you need and divide it up into different bags so that you are okay in case a bag gets lost or stolen.
- Snacks-- it's sometimes nice to have a power bar (or something) on really long rides. If you have special dietary needs, you should bring extra, for when there nothing else you can eat. Make sure you buy things that don't tend to melt and are in insect-proof wrappers.

Packing:

- Medium-sized backpack or duffle with heavy-duty zippers. Try to fit your personal supplies in one bag; the other bag will be for team research supplies.
- Fanny pack-- a great way to keep cameras, notebooks, tools, etc handy, and useful for day hikes (doesn't get as hot as a backpack).
- Zipper locks or zip ties-- keeps busy hands away from your stuff; they're available in D-lab.
- Nylon packing straps-- these are amazingly useful for strapping stuff onto your backpack. Find the kind with plastic buckles, so you can cinch them tight rather than tying them.
- Zip-loc bags-- really handy for protecting things from dust and water. Also useful for collecting small things. Sometimes one or two large trash bags can be useful for keeping things dry in the rainy season (or for transporting messy things back home)
- Make sure to pack your stuff that you can't live without in your carryon, as baggage delays are not uncommon. Also, if you have two checked bags, put some underwear and other essentials in each bag, in case only one arrives. What you wear on the plane might be what you have to wear for the first few days if there is a baggage delay (happens on most trips) so dress accordingly.
- Checked luggage should be durable and possibly lockable/zip-tie-able, in case you feel safer leaving it locked when you take it on buses and leave it where you stay for the night.

Entertainment:

- Books-- talk to your team to see if you can find a few books that you'll want to share, it'll be less to pack and useful when you run out of other discussion topics.
- Journal-- potentially one of the most valuable souvenirs from your experience. If you can find carbon paper, you can use the letters that you write as part of your journal. D-Lab will also supply you with a trip journal.
- Art supplies, origami paper-- get to know local kids (and adults) when you aren't working
- Games-- learning the local card games is another great way to integrate into the society; if you bring along your own deck, someone will teach you to play.
- Pictures from home-- local people will enjoy learning about your home and family.

Electronics:

Remember to not bring anything you can't stand to lose.

- Computers – you probably don't need one; ask if you really want to bring one.
- Thumb drives – good for using internet cafés.
- mp3 players – you can bring one (but a cheap one is better than the newest iPod) but don't expect to carry it in public because they attract thieves. I use mine mostly at night and otherwise keep it out of sight.
- Mobile phone – if you happen to have an unlocked one or a world phone please email Amy.
- If you are bringing any electronics, don't forget your chargers and spare batteries, as access to electricity will be very infrequent.

Professional Supplies:

- Calculator-- often very handy, but best to bring one that you can leave behind
- Gifts for the heads of the organizations that you are working with and for your hosts
- Pens that have waterproof ink, so your notes don't smear when they get wet. Multiple pens, in case you lose or give away some.

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