



# Bina Antarbudaya

The Indonesian Foundation for Intercultural Learning

## Selamat Datang di Indonesia!

## Welcome to Indonesia!



A Partner of



# TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>I. Bina Antarbudaya &amp; AFS Programs in Indonesia</b>	4
<b>II. About Indonesia</b>	6
1. INDONESIA AT A GLANCE	6
Geography	6
People	7
The State and the Government	8
2. INDONESIAN LIFE	10
Costums	10
Family	11
Living in a Muslim Community	12
3. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM	14
4. HEALTH PRECAUTIONS	17
<b>III. Your AFS Year in Indonesia</b>	18
1. Your Hostfamily	18
2. School and Social Life	19
3. What to Bring	19
4. Arrival in Indonesia	20
5. Important Documents	20
6. Rules & Regulation	20
7. Spending Money	21
8. Medical Expenses	22
9. Accidents & Liability	22
10. Communications	22
11. Miscellaneous Information	23
12. Going Home & Departure	23
<b>Some Helpful Hints &amp; Tips</b>	24
<b>Bibliography</b>	25

# SELAMAT DATANG

(Welcome)

Bina Antarbudaya/AFS Indonesia and the Indonesian people welcome you. We are glad to have you here and we hope you will enjoy your stay.

This booklet will introduce you to some facts and figures about the country and give you some advice about living here. It will not tell you everything you need to know, but we hope it will be helpful in your preparation for your stay.

## **Bina Antarbudaya**

Jalan Limau No. 22  
Kebayoran Baru  
Jakarta Selatan, 12130  
Indonesia

phone.	+62 21 722 2291
fax.	+62 21 726 7118
mail.	<a href="mailto:contact@bina-antarbudaya.info">contact@bina-antarbudaya.info</a>
web.	<a href="http://www.bina-antarbudaya.info">www.bina-antarbudaya.info</a>

# I. Bina Antarbudaya & AFS Programs in Indonesia

## What is Bina Antarbudaya?

Bina Antarbudaya - The Indonesia Foundation for Intercultural Learning is a legal body engaging in intercultural learning and exchanges. It is guided by the principles that individuals and families can leave the world different from the way they found it. This organization is moving towards the goal of peace by stimulating an awareness of mankind's common humanity, a wider understanding of diverse cultures of the world and a concern for the global issues confronting society.

## How does Bina Antarbudaya Work?

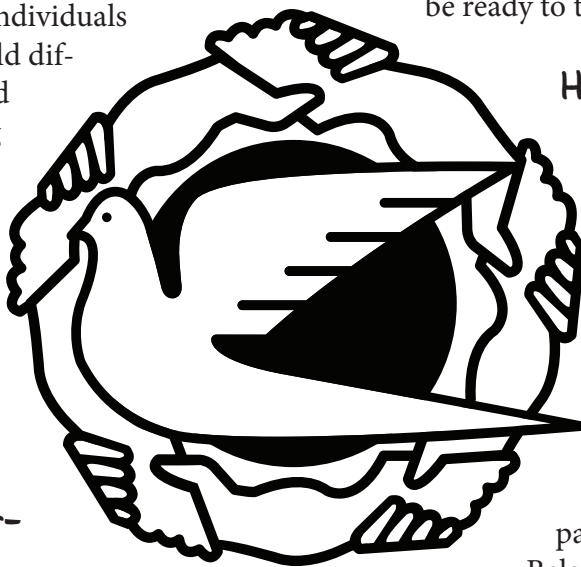
Bina Antarbudaya is a non-governmental, non-profit organization, and does not affiliate with any religious, political or partisan group. In its endeavors to achieve its goal, Bina Antarbudaya is in cooperation with AFS Intercultural Programs and became a partner in 1992.

To run AFS programs in Indonesia, Bina Antarbudaya depends on volunteers, mostly AFS returnees, their parents, former host families, and people who are interested in the ideals of AFS.

The main office of Bina Antarbudaya in Jakarta administers AFS program operations throughout the country and supported by 18 chapters all over Indonesia. The chapters are: Banda Aceh, Bandung, Banjarmasin, Bogor, Denpasar, Jakarta, Karawang, Makassar, Malang, Mataram, Medan, Padang, Palembang, Samarinda, Semarang, Surabaya, and Yogyakarta.

You will meet your local chapter, as well as the person assigned to you as your contact person or counselor. These people are there to help and to give

you and your family guidance. So, if you need help, please do not hesitate to ask them. It is your responsibility as an AFS student to contact them if you want to discuss a problem or just to ask a question. While you are in Indonesia, please be appreciative and be ready to take part in chapter's activities.



## How does Bina Antarbudaya cooperate with AFS Intercultural Programs?

Bina Antarbudaya conducts intercultural exchanges in partnership with AFS Intercultural Programs. Annually, from 1985 until 1998 we hosted around 120 participants from 17 countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the United States of America and Venezuela. In 1998–2000, the hosting program was suspended due to internal situation in the country, which involves major social, economic and political changes. Bina Antarbudaya is happy to resume the hosting program in the year 2000.

Bina Antarbudaya also sends selected Indonesian high school students on AFS, YES and several other exchange programs. To-date, it has conducted sending programs to Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the United States of America and Venezuela.

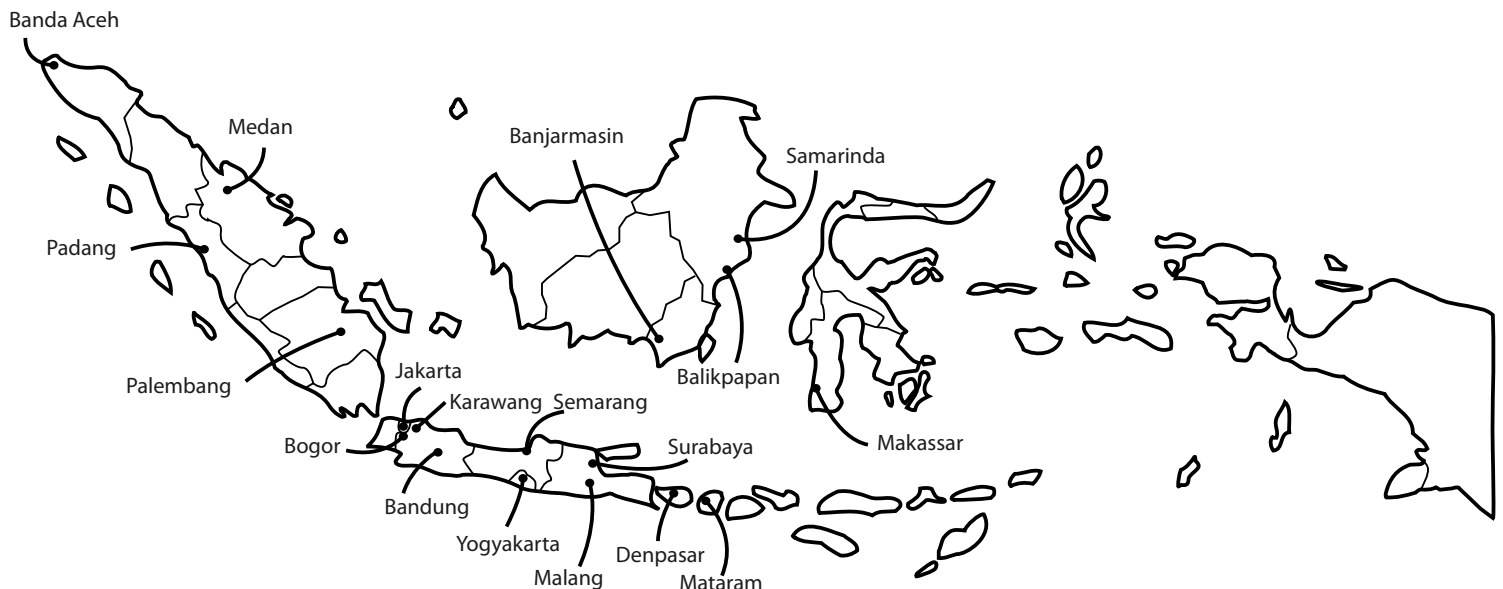
AFS itself is an international organization with 60 partners countries and works with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Some farsighted volunteers created AFS in 1947 to promote peace and intercultural understanding through programs designed to build human bridges across cultural differences.

The effort of around 100,000 volunteers from over 60 national volunteer organizations involves a wide diversity of participants cutting across socio-economic, political, religious, national and culture lines. Active support for the organization and its mission has always been a characteristic of AFS people. This commitment has led to the growth of the organization, and to personal and professional work that extends well beyond it. AFS can point with pride to many former participants who have studied abroad, returned to their home countries and made important contributions.

After so many years that Indonesia has been participating in the programs, around 1,600 of students have lived with Indonesian families, and thus have better understanding about Indonesia. More than 3,000 of Indonesian students have also been granted the experience to live and study abroad. Many of these returnees are now better equipped to contribute constructively to the development of Indonesia. They are now working as lawyers, economists, teachers, doctors, engineers, social workers, entrepreneurs, politicians, journalists, and in many other fields.

Bina Antarbudaya sends students from various levels of socio-economic backgrounds. To help finance students from less fortunate economic backgrounds, Bina Antarbudaya depends on contributions from generous individuals and corporations.

## Bina Antarbudaya Chapters in Indonesia



## II. About Indonesia

### INDONESIA AT A GLANCE

#### Geography

The territory of the Republic of Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world. It is situated between the continents of Australia and Asia and between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. That is why Indonesia has a very strategic position of being the crossroads between East and West and from North to South.

Indonesia has five main islands:  
Borneo (Kalimantan), Sumatra, Papua, Sulawesi and Java.

#### Location and Extent

The location of the Indonesian Archipelago is between 6° Northern latitude and 11° Southern latitude; and also between 94° - 141° Eastern longitude. The distance between the outmost eastern and western points of the Indonesian Archipelago is about 5,110 km ( $\pm$  3,200 miles), while the distance between the outmost northern and southern points is about 1,888 km ( $\pm$  1,200 miles).

The extent of Indonesia's territory is around 5,178,641 sq.km comprising about 2,012,478 sq.km. of land area and about 3,166,163 sq.km. of water area. The number of islands, large and small, found in this archipelago is nearly 17,000, which have a coastline of about 61,147 km. Around 6,000 of those islands have a name, but only 930 of them are inhabited. The western part of Indonesia's territory is generally comprised of larger islands, such as Sumatra, Java and Borneo, whereas the eastern part, except for Irian Jaya which is now called Papua, and Sulawesi, is made up of smaller archipelagos, such as the archipelago of Nusa Tenggara and that of the Moluccas, which is locally known as Maluku.

#### Climate and Topography

Being located along the equator, Indonesia has a tropical climate with two seasons; the dry monsoon, lasting from June to September, and wet monsoon, lasting from December to March, respectively. Indonesian physiography consists of low-lying plains in the coastal areas and plateaus in the mountain areas. Most of the islands are rugged, sometimes volcanic, and after covered with rain forest. These variations create 2 broad range of air temperatures. On the lowland plains or coastal areas, the air temperature is rather high, around 27°-30° Celsius (81°-86° F), while on the plateaus or mountain areas, it is relatively low, around 22°-25° Celsius (72°-77° F).

The five main islands contain the majority of the population, but Java is by far the most populated. Most Indonesians live in river valleys, alluvial coastal plains or on terraced mountainsides. Indonesia has about 400 mountains, more than ten of which are still active volcanoes. For this reason, Indonesia is classified as a seismically active area.

#### Natural Resources

Indonesia has abundant natural resources. However, most of them are not yet fully exploited. Some of the most important natural resources are petroleum, natural gas, tin, bauxite, manganese, coal, gold, silver and copper. Some of Indonesia's agricultural products are rice, corn, cassava, soybeans, rubber, coffee, palm oil, and tobacco. Some of these products are exported, and are regarded as primary foreign exchange earners. Export revenue is used in financing Indonesia's national development.

Approximately 58.8% or about 113,545,535 hectares of Indonesia's land area is covered by dense forests. In these forests thousands of plants and animal species thrive. Indonesia's flora and fauna are valuable assets



of the nation. Timber as a forest product for instance, has been referred to in recent years as the “green gold” for the simple reason that it has the highest potential as a non-oil export commodity.

As much as 16,129,256 hectares of Indonesia’s forest area have been converted into forest preservations. These preservations are divided into:

- a) 175 units of natural preservations (6,123,743 hectares)
- b) 71 units of wildlife preservations (4,676,088 hectares)
- c) 11 units of hunting parks (326,291 hectares)
- d) 47 units of tourist park (165,265 hectares)
- e) 1 unit for a national park (4,837,869 hectares)

This way, it is possible to protect and preserve various species of animals, such as elephants, rhinoceroses, orang utans, komodos, tigers, wild bears and various species of birds, such as bird of paradise, cassowaries, cockatoos and peacocks as well as thousands of plant species.

## People

Indonesia’s most valuable asset is its people. They are the driving force behind the rapid development of this nation. Indonesia is a mosaic of more than 300 ethnic groups and cultures with dozens of languages and also with different social and cultural backgrounds. As in most other multi-ethnic nations, it is difficult to describe a “typical” Indonesian. But the present Indonesian is the product of political ties, and constitutes a union of all ethnic groups living in the territory of the Republic of Indonesia.

These political ties and unity are based on the principle of one fatherland, one nation and one language: Bahasa Indonesia.

## Population

Indonesia’s population ranks fourth in the world, after the People’s Republic of China, India and the United States of America. Based on the data gathered in 2010, Indonesia’s population totaled approximately 237.6 million people.

Three-fifths of the people are concentrated on the islands of Java, Madura and Bali which all-together only account for around 7% of Indonesia’s total land area. The islands of Java is occupied by 690 persons

per square km. Conversely, the province of Irian Jaya, having 21.99% of Indonesia’s land area, is only occupied by around 3 persons per square km.

The uneven distribution of the people constitutes a significant problem in the current development effort of the Indonesian nation. To solve the problem, Indonesia has not only a family-planning policy, but also a policy of transmigration which provides land grants and financial incentives to those who are willing to move to thinly populated areas.

## Language

Although there are over 583 ethnic-languages and dialects used daily in the country, the official language is “Bahasa Indonesia” - the Indonesian language.

This language was ratified as the unifying language at the Indonesian Youth Congress, held on October 28, 1928, when Indonesia was still under Dutch colonial rule.

## Indonesias biggest cities (2010)

1	Jakarta	9,588,198
2	Surabaya	2,765,487
3	Bandung	2,394,873
4	Bekasi	2,334,871
5	Medan	2,097,610
6	Tangerang	1,798,601
7	Depok	1,738,570
8	Semarang	1,555,984
9	Palembang	1,455,284
10	Makassar	1,338,663

## The State and the Government

Indonesia proclaimed its independence in Jakarta on August 17, 1945. Indonesia is a unified state in the form of a republic. The sovereignty is vested with the people and is exercised through the People's Consultative Assembly. The ultimate goal of Indonesia's independence is to protect the entire population and their native homes, and to promote social welfare as well as to enhance the people's education.

Since September 1950, Indonesia has become an active member of the United Nations Organization.

The year of 1998 marks the beginning of the reformation era in Indonesia. Preceded by a severe economic crisis starting in 1997, major fundamental changes has been taking place in the country.

In 1998 university students all over the country rallied on the streets, while the major happening took place at the Parliament House in Jakarta, demanding for reformation in all sectors. With this pressure and from other democratization efforts, President Soeharto stepped down in May 1998 after being in power for 32 years.

This Reformation has changed the face of politics in Indonesia, as the nation is building its democracy. A practical example of this are rallies or demonstrations as a form of freedom of expression and opinion, which is becoming a part of the daily life in Indonesia. Among others, the people demands for a clean government which is free from corruption, collusion and Nepotism.

### Pancasila

Pancasila is the State's ideology and philosophy. It also reflects the way of life of the Indonesian people. Pancasila consists of 5 principals that are interrelated, and are also inseparable from each other:

1. Belief in the One and Only God
2. Just and Civilized Humanity
3. The Unity of Indonesia
4. Democracy Led by the Wisdom of Deliberations among Representatives
5. Social Justice for All the People of the Republic of Indonesia

## Constitution

The constitution of the Republic of Indonesia is that of 1945, taking effect as from August 18, 1945. The 1945 Constitution comprises a preamble, 16 chapters, sub-divided into 37 articles, plus 4 articles on transitional provisions, and 2 paragraphs on supplementary provisions. Indonesia adheres to the democratic principles Pancasila, e.g. democracy is based on consultations and consensus.

### People's Consultative Assembly

The People's Consultative Assembly, abbreviated as MPR, is the state's highest institution that holds the supreme sovereignty in the Republic of Indonesia. The primary duties of this body are to draw up the Constitution, to compose the guidelines of state's policies, and to elect the President and Vice President. The MPR convenes at least once every 5 years, but currently meet once a year in through its Annual Assembly.

### The President

The President is the chief executive power. The President and Vice-President are in office for a period of 5 years, and are eligible to be re-elected. The President is responsible to the MPR. He and the House of Representatives are the lawmakers in this country. In running the administration, the president is assisted by a number of Ministers.

### House of Representatives

The total membership of the House of Representatives, known as DPR, is 500. To determine the number of the elected members in the House is that each elected member represents at least 400,000 voters.



## National Symbols

Indonesia's coat of arms is the "Garuda", with the head turning to the right side. At the center of the eagle's chest there is a heart shaped shield. The eagle's claws are gripping a ribbon on which is enshrined "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" meaning "Unity in Diversity". The shield is divided into 5 compartments, each depicting one of the 5 symbols of Pancasila.

The national flag has two colors; red on the upper portion and white on the lower portion. Red symbolizes "courage" and white symbolizes "purity". The national anthem is "Indonesia Raya" – The Great Indonesia, composed by Wage Rudolf Supratman, and was sung for the first time at the Indonesia Youth Congress in 1928.

## Religions

88% of Indonesians are Muslims; the followers of this religion can be found everywhere in the country. 5.1% of Indonesians are Protestants; the followers can be found generally in North Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara and North Sumatra. 2.9% of Indonesian are Catholics, and the followers can generally be found in Central Java and East Nusa Tenggara. Most of the Hindu people, which is around 2% of Indonesians, live in Bali. Another 2% of Indonesians, are the followers of Buddhism.

Freedom to be a follower of any of the five above-mentioned religions, including freedom to worship, are guaranteed by the state. The guaranty is stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia under Article 29, clause 2. It explicitly states that the state guarantees the freedom of every citizen of Indonesia to profess his or her religion and to exercise its rituals. Every citizen is given the freedom to choose his or her religion and the state acknowledges and respects each religion without any discrimination.



**Religions in Indonesia (Census 2010)**  
**Numbers in Million**

<b>Muslim</b>	207.18
<b>Protestant</b>	16.53
<b>Catholic</b>	6.91
<b>Hindu</b>	4.01
<b>Buddhist</b>	1.70
<b>Confucian</b>	0.12

# INDONESIAN LIFE

## Customs

Indonesian customs vary from place to place, depends on the ethnic groups, thus it is almost impossible for a visitor to know and understand all customs. But, like visiting any country in the world, good manners, courtesy and concern towards other people are essential to develop friendly relationships. Below are some specific suggestions that might be helpful.

### 1. Indonesians are generally indirect in their approach.

The implication of this characteristic in the daily-life is that people tend not to talk or request something directly. They would avoid embarrassing the other party by saying “no” at the beginning, and also avoid embarrassing themselves by getting their request turned down by the other party. Usually people will make a request if they know that they have a fairly good chance of getting a “yes” answer. This indirectness, however, cannot be generalized. Usually the closer the relationship is, the more straightforward one can be.

### 2. One must be considerate of others in the way one speaks.

It is suggested that you talk slowly, otherwise you might have to repeat some of the things that you have already said. Using common words is advisable. Slang expressions should be avoided because they might not be understood or it may create misunderstanding.

### 3. Body language and gestures are important.

A picture is worth a thousand words; this is also true in the case of body language. Some body language can be so degrading that a thousand words still cannot describe the meaning. Unfortunately, some body language which is common in one place, can be very insulting in other place. The following are some common body language that should not be done!

- **Crossing your legs and raising your feet high when you sit down**

This regarded as disrespect, especially when one is sitting in front of an older, important or respectable person. However, crossing legs are still acceptable when the over-lapping foot is hanging low. Never raise your feet on the table, it is considered very impolite.

- **Calling a person with index finger**

In some countries, this kind of body language is very common. In Indonesia it is one of the ways to call your dog, so it is very impolite to call a person this way.

- **Touching other person's head**

The head is regarded as the center of being and the most respected part of the body. Touching somebody's head, especially if it is the head of an older person, is considered very disrespectful.

- **Using feet to point out something**

- **Talking and standing with hands on the waist can be interpreted as arrogant**

- **Using the left hand to pass anything or to eat**

The right hand is known by almost all Indonesian as the “good” hand, while the left is considered to be the “dirty” one. Also, when you hand something over, please do not do it as if you are throwing it, as this is also considered very impolite.

### 4. The way a person dresses up is important.

People tend to read you and make an impression of you through your clothes. Students may dress rather casually, except when they are in school, where uniforms are required. A more formal dress such as a suit, a jacket or a gown is used when attending a wedding or other formal occasions. For men, Indonesians' long-sleeved “batik” shirt is considered formal.

### 5. One should be considerate of a religious believer.

“Belief in God” is the first of five Indonesian National Principles. Indonesians are known as rather religious people, no matter what religion a person belongs to. Therefore, you are advised NOT to expose yourself as a non-believer even if you are one.

### 6. Time is viewed in a rather flexible perspective.

School, office and most business usually function on time. The term “rubber time” describes the lack of importance on punctuality. Some Indonesians do not plan too far into the future.

## 7. Greetings are important in Indonesian Society.

The form of greeting is the same for all salutation, influenced by the Islamic word “Selamat” (safe and blessed). It is combined with other words to suit the occasion:

<b>Selamat Pagi:</b>	‘Good morning’ Used until app. 11 a.m.
<b>Selamat Siang:</b>	Literally “Good (after)noon” Used from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.
<b>Selamat Sore:</b>	‘Good afternoon’ Used from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m.
<b>Selamat Malam:</b>	‘Good evening’
<b>Selamat Datang:</b>	‘Welcome’
<b>Selamat Jalan:</b>	‘Have a safe & pleasant trip’

When meeting a person for the first time, it is customary to shake hands. This is also a custom when you want to congratulate another person for special occasion, such as birthdays, weddings, graduation, etc.

## 8. Terms of address

Indonesian use titles before names when addressing of referring to people as a gesture of respect. When addressing people who are older, respectable or of higher status, be sure to use a title, while when addressing friends of similar age you can omit it. Some of Indonesian terms of address are:

<b>Bapak:</b>	‘father’ also used for calling male adult (comparable with Mister)
<b>Ibu:</b>	‘mother’ also used for calling female adult (comparable with Mrs or Madam)
<b>Kakak, kak:</b>	‘older sister/brother’ also used to refer to an older person (both male & female)
<b>Adik, dik:</b>	‘younger sister/brother’ also used to refer to a young person (both male & female).

## Family

### Indonesian people are very family-oriented

The family has the most important meaning for Indonesians. The relationship between each member of the family is close, although you would seldom see each member showing their feelings and affection openly. Without words, everybody knows and assumes that the other members of the family also know, that they love each other and will always take care of each other.

Parents especially fathers, have a *very dominant role* in the family. This is why the *decision-making* process in the family tends to be authoritarian. No matter how old a person is, he will always be his parents “child”. This means that a university student who is 22 years old or even a young married couple who still lives with the parents has to involve and consider the parents’ opinion in making their decision. To ask for the parents’ opinion and permission is not viewed as a form of dependency, but more as a form of respects toward them, as they are considered to have more experiences in life. It is very common in Indonesia that children live with their parents even after they are married.

***Obedience* is a very important value in the family. Children are seldom questioning the parents’ decisions and rules. As this is usually HARD to adjust, especially for those of you coming from a liberal and independent society, please remember that it is as hard for your Indonesian family to be more liberal as it is for you to be more obedient.**

With a lot of patience and a large amount of time in discussing the different values that you and your Indonesian family have, hopefully you will understand each other better and thus find “in between” values that are moderate enough for both your Indonesian family and yourself.

## Living in a Muslim Community

Indonesian government currently recognizes 5 World Religions:

- Islam
- Christianity (Protestantism & Roman Catholicism)
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Confucianism

Religious practices are important part of Indonesian daily lives as the people religious. Indonesia is not an Islamic state, but with around 87% of the population being Muslims, you will experience quite a unique atmosphere. You can see that the practice of Islamic belief and values colors the daily life. In some part of Indonesia religion became the basic norms of society.

Being a multi-cultural nation with a multi-religion society, Indonesian people have learned about the importance of tolerance and respect. People from different ethnicity and religions are able to live side by side in harmony. One may have a preconceived idea about the practice of Islam from the media. However one should take cautions to differentiate between Islamic teachings and cultural values of the society.

### What is Islam?

The Arabic word “Islam” simply means “submission”, and derives from a word meaning “peace”. In a religious context it means complete submission to the will of God. Islam is both a religion and a complete way of life, and guides Muslims towards peace, mercy and forgiveness.

### Sholat or Prayer

Muslims observe the obligatory prayer five times a day. Prayer in Islam is actually an inner and outer action, which serves as a direct link between the worshipper and God. It involves ablutions, intention of reciting the prayer, the requests for grace and pardon, the recitation of appropriate phrases, recitation of verses of the Qur'an and bodily movements.

The times of the prayers are:

- Subuh            before dawn
- Zuhur            from midday until mid-afternoon
- Ashar            from mid-afternoon until sunset
- Maghrib        at sunset
- Isya              from after sunset until before dawn

Because of the first prayer, a Muslim family's day usually starts as early as 4:30 a.m. Prayers can be done individually, but collectivism is favored in Islam, so you may find your Muslim host family perform some prayers together. Fridays, Muslim men go to mosque to observe the Friday prayer. For this reason school only goes until 11:00 a.m. on Fridays. It is not compulsory for women to observe Friday prayer, but in some areas they do.

### Fasting during Ramadhan

Fasting is a sublime spiritual exercise and a prescription for self-assurance and self-control. Physically, fasting involves abstaining from food, drink, smoking and sex, and spiritually it involves refraining from bad thoughts, actions and utterance. Fasting is principally regarded as a method of self-purification.

Before starting to fast, people have an early breakfast. Waking up for this is not easy at first, but it doesn't take long to become accustomed to it, especially as it is done together as a family. As an AFS student you are not required to fast, but many students find it an interesting experience as they join their Muslim host families performing the fasting.

Those who do not observe fasting should practice respect and sensitivity. For instance restaurants are still open but they make sure to block all glass windows in the way that passersby won't be able to see people eating inside. In some areas restaurants are closed during Ramadhan.

Ending the fast at sunset is a special time for Muslim families. People make efforts to be with families or friends during that time. It is customary in most areas to end the fast together, usually combined with praying together and listening to preaches. A special prayer called Tarawih is also recited during the evening of Ramadhan. Following the month of Ramadhan is the Idul Fitri. It is one of the biggest Islamic holiday and it is when Muslims are considered being “purified”. Idul Fitri is also an important time for Muslim families when extended families get together and reunite. During Idul Fitri people ask for forgiveness from each other.

## Dress Code

Muslims cover themselves and avoid wearing “revealing” outfits. As part of the community you should respect this and avoid wearing something that does not conform to this value.

Be prepared to dress modestly. It is advisable to wear dress/shirts with sleeves and longer skirts/pants. Depending on where you are placed, dress code varies from one place to another. Bigger cities will tend to be more liberal, while smaller ones are naturally more conservative.

When you meet Muslim women who cover their heads you need not to be overly cautious. The way they dress does not necessarily mean that they are inflexible and extreme. You will find many Muslim women who choose dressing styles that are the same as women from your own culture.

## Dietary Restrictions

Muslims are not allowed to consume pigs and its by-product and alcohol. As you become a member of a Muslim family/society, you are expected to respect this value by complying with it.

### How Muslims greet each other:

*Assalaamu’ alaikum:*

“Peace be upon you!”

The answer is

*Wa’alaikum salam*

“And peace be upon you, too.”



# EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Indonesians follow a philosophy of life-long education and participate in many formal and informal programs of education. The National Education System of Indonesia is generally aimed at elevating the intellectual life of the nation and developing the Indonesian people fully.

The government of Indonesia offers a complete program of education through its Ministry of Education and Culture which is based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Based in the Law No. 2 of 1989 about National Education System, it is identified in terms of units, paths, types, and levels of education.

## The Paths of Education

The education system is organized in two different paths:

- **School education** is organized in schools through teaching and learning activities which are gradual and continuous.
- **Out-of-school education** is organized outside the formal schooling which may or may not be hierarchical and continues i.e. education in the family, group learning, apprenticeship, etc.

## Compulsory Education

Indonesian citizens are required to attend a 9 year compulsory education which includes 6 years of Elementary School (SD) and 3 years of Junior High School (SMP).

## School system

### Pre-school Education

(kindergarten / Taman Kanak-Kanak)

Among the types of pre-school education are Kindergarten at the formal school, provided for children age 5 to 6 years which is for one to two years of education, also Play Groups and Day-care Center at the out-of-school, for children at least 3 years old.

### Elementary School (Sekolah Dasar)

SD provides basic education of six years.

The school teaches reading, writing, mathematics and general knowledge. There is also an Islamic Primary School which focus on religious education.

### Junior High School (Sekolah Menengah Pertama)

SMP extends the basic and general education of SD.

There is also an *Islamic General Junior Secondary School* called *Madrasah*, which is managed and run by the Ministry of Religious Affair.

### Senior High School (Sekolah Menengah Atas)

Secondary education is available to graduates of primary school. The paths of secondary education include general secondary school, vocational secondary school, religious secondary school, service related secondary school, and special secondary school. The length of general secondary education is three years and three or four years for vocational education.

### University/College

Academic and professional education is available for graduates of SMA.

The length of higher education is three years for diploma program and four years for undergraduate program (Bachelor's degree). After undergraduation students can continue in Master program for two years and (if possible) finally attend doctorate program for three years.



## Academic Year

The academic year begins in July and ends in the middle of July in the following year.

There are 2 terms :

- July - December
- January - July

Schools are closed during the fasting month of Ramadhan which timing is based on the lunar calendar so every year it moves about 11 days earlier.

School days are Monday until Saturday and classes run from 7.00 a.m. till 13.15 p.m. with 20 minutes break. On Friday the schedule is from 7.00 a.m. till 11.00 a.m., due to the Friday Prayer at noon. In some Islamic schools school days are Saturday to Thursday with Friday off. There are 8 periods a day, each period is 45 minutes long. Some schools have afternoon sessions instead of in the morning.

## Curriculum

In the first year of high school, students are expected to take general courses. Based on the first year academic reports and student's interest, the student can choose one major program out of two major programs. Once a student takes one certain major, he/she has to take all required courses available in that major.

The two major programs are IPA (science) and IPS (social). Some schools also have Language Studies.

### Subjects offered in public high school

(may slightly vary from school to school) :

#### 1. Science Program (IPA)

##### Compulsory subjects

- 1.1. Religion
- 1.2. Civics
- 1.3. Indonesian Language
- 1.4. National Ideology (Pancasila)
- 1.5. Mathematics
- 1.6. Physics
- 1.7. Chemistry
- 1.8. Biology
- 1.9. English

##### Elective Subjects

- 1.10. Sport and Health Education
- 1.11. Optional courses

#### 2. Social Program (IPS)

##### Compulsory subjects

- 2.1. Religion
- 2.2. Civics
- 2.3. National and World History
- 2.4. Indonesian Language
- 2.5. National Ideology (Pancasila)
- 2.6. Mathematics
- 2.7. Accounting
- 2.8. Sociology and Anthropology
- 2.9. English
- 2.10. Economics
- 2.11. Second Foreign Language (i.e. French, Dutch, German, Japanese, Arabic, etc.)

##### Elective subjects

- 2.12. Sport and Health Education
- 2.13. Optional courses : computer, typing, cooking, etc.

## Vocational High School

Vocational high school has its own school curriculum according to its subjects specialties.

Examples of vocational schools: Karawitan Art School, Aviation Technical High School, Agriculture Technical High School, Home Economics High School, etc.

## Extra Curricular Activities

Students are expected to take extra curricular activities. Some activities that may be available are :

- music
- dancing
- vocal group
- scouting
- painting
- nature-base activities (mountaineering, hiking, etc.)
- choir
- science club
- Youth Red Cross
- marching band
- school magazine
- etc.

## Grading System

9, 10	=	outstanding
8	=	excellent
7	=	good
6	=	fair
4 - 5	=	poor
1 - 3	=	fail

## Dress Code in School

Indonesia is a diverse country, including in terms of socio-economic levels of its communities. Wearing school uniform is a way to eliminate that gap among students in schools, and therefore is practiced in almost all schools.

High school uniform in the public schools is light gray trouser/skirt with white shirt/blouse. On certain day(s), some schools also have batik uniform with varied designs from school to school. Private schools may have uniforms of different colours.

School regulations specify that boys have short hair and may not wear earrings. Girls' hair length is not regulated as long as it is neat, while make-up is not allowed in schools.



# HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

## **Please note:**

**Bina Antarbudaya and AFS is not allowed to give you advice in medical questions as we are not medical doctors. It is important that you visit your family doctor and if necessary a specialist for tropical countries 4-8 week before your departure!**

**In the following we only give general tips, not medical advice.**

Indonesia is a tropical country and visitors from temperate zones are often concerned over potential health problems. However, with reasonable precautions, you can stay healthy in Indonesia. If you become ill, adequate health care and medical facilities are available. Host families will also be prepared to take necessary precautions to provide a healthy environment.

## **Before leaving home**

Have medical and dental check-ups and bring copies of your medical and dental records with you. Copies of a recent electrocardiogram and a chest X-ray are also a good idea if they were part of your examination.

## **What to bring along**

- Bring a sufficient quantity of any special medication you need or make inquiries about its availability in Indonesia.  
Many of the medications you need might be available in Indonesia but with a different trade name. Bring copies of clearly written prescriptions that list the trade generic and chemical name and ingredients of the medication, and also the dosage required.
- Bring along an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses and a copy of your prescription for replacement. There are many local opticians who can fill prescriptions and provide contact lenses care.

## **Vaccinations & Immunizations**

As recommendations for vaccinations sometimes change we summon you to ask your doctor for the latest device.

For the beginning check the website of CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

## **Personal Hygiene and basic precautions with food and drinks**

It is important to quickly establish healthy personal habits and routines since they will influence your future health.

The importance of washing your hands after using the toilet, before handling food and before eating cannot be over-emphasized.

Remember to clean and disinfect any cut or scratch immediately to prevent infection: use water that has been boiled (so it is sterile) to clean the wound.

A balanced diet is just as important for good health in the tropics as it is in a temperate climate.

Make sure to drink a lot of water to avoid dehydration as the hot and humid climate will make you sweat a lot. Note that tabbed water in Indonesia is not drinkable.

Begin your acquaintance with the pedas (highly hot and spicy) cuisine of Indonesia slowly. Simple diarrhea is often a problem for newcomers because of changes in food and water and because the body is exhausted from adjusting to a new environment.

# III. Experiencing Indonesia

## 1. Your Hostfamily

As soon as you know your host family's name and address, please write to your host family. They are looking forward to hearing from you. You can write short and simple note. Also your parents, if they would like to, may write a letter to your host family. So by the time you arrive in your new family, you are not a total stranger for one another.

Get to know your host family from their form. For most Indonesians, it is hard to put everything about themselves down on paper. So, whatever impressions you may have gathered about your host family and community, they might turn out to be quite different.

The first step you will have to take is to become a member of your host family. It is possible that during the first days, even though we have asked your host family to treat you like their own children, nothing would be demanded from you and you might be considered more like a guest.

Many Indonesian families have one, two or maybe more live-in house helpers and/or drivers. Even though, the family would appreciate your offer of helping in the household chores.

If you happen to be placed in a family where you will have brother(s) and/or sister(s), you will find that it requires a great deal of maturity, insight and tact to be a true brother or sister to a complete stranger. Be patient if they sometimes do not seem to be able to live up to it. And above all, help them to fulfill their task by trying to act brotherly or sisterly. Should misunderstanding arise, try to clarify at once by talking about them. Be ready to make fun of your own mistakes and to forgive a thoughtless action of others. If you have a problem and you cannot find its solution, you can contact your contact person, counselor or local chapter. Adjustment comes easier when you have somebody to talk to. Do not impose your wishes on your host family, and do not expect anything.

You should ask your host family to tell you about special "house-rules" which they want you to follow such as curfew, household chores, asking permission whenever you want to go out, using the phone, etc. We think you will appreciate knowing these from the very first beginning rather than find out later.

Your host family is different from your own, as well as from other AFS students'. Your relationship with them will also be unique. Still there are some circumstances, which are common to all AFS families. For one, **your host family, as well as your chapter volunteers, are not paid.** Whatever it costs them to have you, it is their contribution to the mission and purpose of AFS.

They may not be "wealthy" compared to some families you know at home, but they have chosen to spare a time in their lives with you. In the same spirit, you should share yours with them.

### KEEP THESE HELPFUL HINTS IN MIND:

- Family ways and customs in your Indonesian home will be new to you. Ask about the rules, do not just try to guess.
- Your host family can help you to understand what is going on around you. Ask them to explain customs, attitude, etc.
- Even in a family a "thank you" is never out of place. It will always be appreciated and particularly meaningful to your host family when they know you like things that they have been planning for you.
- You are not being asked to change yourself, only to be one of the family.

## 2. School and Social Life

Your school will be something special for you, and also something different from school other AFS-ers attend. It was designed to meet the wishes and needs of your community. It may have some aims that your school at home does not, and in the other hand your school at home might have some that this one doesn't. Of course it will be difficult for you to go to school since you don't understand the language, but this is the best place to meet people of your age. You should take a schedule of courses that challenges your abilities. Even if you have graduated from school at home, there are still many things you can learn at school here.

At the beginning, you will probably feel like a fish out of the water, as it takes time to adjust. If you are patient enough and not letting yourself discouraged, you will be surprised at how quickly the new atmosphere becomes familiar. But this depends on you, the quicker you learn the language, the easier it is to communicate. At first it will be boring, but as time flies it can run to be a lot of fun.

You may find the students have a formal relationship with their teachers. Maybe they are more formal compared to 'student-and-teacher' relationships in your country. Indonesian teachers have a full authority in the classroom where they are teaching.

On Monday, school often begins with a ceremony called "Pledging Allegiance to the Flag" or Upacara. The ceremony usually takes place outside, in the schoolyard. When this happens, the proper thing for you to do is just stand up. If you already know our National Anthem, you can sing together with the other students.

Social life for Indonesian teenagers usually means mixing in-groups rather than going on individual dates. The American dating system is unknown here. Get-together-of-a-crowd-of friends are more common.

Most of your social life activities will probably take place within your family. Enjoy them! You will not miss your social life from your home country. You surely will get insights into a different way of living, and you should try and learn to understand them.

Many families would like to spend as much time as possible with you. You will probably go at various times to visit relatives or family's friends. It is always very nice to give a short thank you note to people who have entertained you in their home or have shown you a special kindness.

## 3. What to bring

Make a list of things you wish to bring to help you get organized. Below are some of the things your list should contain.

### Clothing

Because of the tropical weather, Indonesian people prefer light clothing e.g. cotton. To go to work people usually wear smart-casual outfit, e.g. trousers, shirt and a tie for male, skirt and blouse or a dress for female. To go outside, you can wear something more casual for example a pair of jeans and a polo/T-shirt. In most areas shorts are not commonly worn. Formal attire may be needed for special occasions.

Female	Male
Dresses	Jacket
Evening dresses	Suit
T-Shirts	Tie
Blouse	Shirts
Jeans/slack	Long sleeves shirts
Jacket/Sweater	T-Shirts
Skirts	Jeans/trousers
Shorts	Jacket/Sweater
Sports-wears	Shorts
One-piece bathing suit	Sports-wears
Undergarments	Bathing suit
Casual shoes/sandals	Undergarments
Sneakers	Casual shoes/sandals
Socks	Sneakers
	Socks



## Souvenirs

It would be very nice to bring something from your country as gifts to your host family as a token of your appreciation to them for welcoming you and making you a part of their family. These gifts do not have to be something expensive, because it's the thought that counts.

You may also want to bring some specific things from home to share about your country and culture, for example:

- Photographs of your family and home
- A map of your country
- A national costume
- Recipes
- Picture books
- Handicrafts
- Posters
- Etc.

Books would make good gifts for your school library, and at the same time will promote your home country among the students and teachers.

## 4. Arrival in Indonesia

When you arrive you will be picked up by AFS staff or volunteers who will take you by bus or car to an on-arrival orientation camp in Jakarta.

At the camp, Bina Antarbudaya/AFS Indonesia will welcome you. You will briefly learn about Indonesia and your host community, learn some survival Indonesian language and have time to rest and recover from jet lag. There will also be courtesy visits to various Governmental and other institutions, such as the Indonesian Ministry of National Education, the Embassies, etc. You will stay 4-5 days at the camp. Pack what you may need for the orientation at the top of your bag.

After the camp, you will join your host family. You will have to travel by car, train or plain to your chapter before meeting your families.

Upon your arrival, your chapter will hold another orientation. More specific information about your city, host community, its people and way of life will be discussed at this location.

## 5. Important Documents

Please make sure that you keep your documents safely during your stay in Indonesia, such as Passport, Embarkation Card, etc.

Within three days after your arrival in your host family, you must register yourself at the local Immigration Office. Your chapter will help you with the procedures. Later you will receive your "KITAS" Card and an ID Card to be used as documentation to public authorities. USD 100.00 is needed to process those IDs.

## 6. Rules and Regulation

While you are participating in the AFS program in Indonesia, Bina Antarbudaya is fully responsible for your programmatic and administrative affairs. As such, we expect your full cooperation in following the guidelines and rules provided below to ensure an educational stay in Indonesia.

Bina Antarbudaya/AFS strongly enforces these rules, and any student who violate them will be sent home.

### GOLDEN RULES

You are forbidden to drive any motorized vehicle requiring a license while you are in Indonesia, regardless of the fact that you may have a license at home.

You are forbidden to hitch-hike, not even in company.

You are forbidden to use drugs not prescribed for medical purposes as well as other illegal substances.

## Student Travel

Each country has specific rules which is in accordance with its realities. Given the geographic facts of Indonesia, we have set a specific travel guidelines for you. As a participant of the exchange program in Indonesia, you are required to abide by the following guidelines.



Travel within Indonesia without member(s) of the host family or Bina Antarbudaya is **RESTRICTED** and plans for any trip must be discussed with and approved by your Bina Antarbudaya/AFS chapter. You are **NOT PERMITTED** to **travel abroad** unless accompanied by your host parents, and approved by Bina Antarbudaya National Office. Special permission from your Natural Parents should be obtained through Bina Antarbudaya and AFS organization in your country.

You are **NOT PERMITTED** to **travel alone at night** unless the trip is arranged by Bina Antarbudaya/AFS. No students may take a trip involving **overnight** or **an overnight stay with a teenager or learner driver** unless accompanied by an adult and approved by your host parents.

**NO INDEPENDENT TRAVEL** is permitted. For trips without your host family, your Chapter President can give you approval providing these are:

- School-sponsored events
- AFS events authorized either by AFS chapter or National Office
- Weekend visits to persons whom your Indonesian host parents know, provided that adult supervision is available, and that the visit is approved by your host family. However, the number and length of such visits should be limited.

## Visits from Family & Friends

Natural parents and friends from home country **SHOULD NOT PLAN** to **visit** you and your host family **without securing permission** from Bina Antarbudaya National Office. Such visit, if granted, is limited in duration and you may not stay or travel with the visitors.

Permission **CANNOT BE GRANTED** for **long absence from school** for personal travel or visits.

## Legal Issues

You are subject to the rules and laws of Indonesia. Neither AFS nor the sending country has the ability to protect a student who becomes involved in any way of **DRUGS** or **ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES**. AFS must be concerned with the effect on the host family and the community, as well as the student himself and action will then be taken.

Bina Antarbudaya signed a contract with the National Immigration Office which stipulates that Bina Antarbudaya is responsible that the students leave the country at the end of the program or when a student terminated his/her participation in the program. Based on this, students are not permitted to extend their stay even if natural parents agree to sign a program release or are traveling with the student themselves.

## Alcoholic Beverages

In respect towards the muslim community, AFS students should abstain from alcohol while on the program.

## 7. Spending Money

Your host family will provide you with home-living and meals, however you will need to bring some pocket money for your personal expenses. Please limit your extra money. You will be here for things more important than shopping or sightseeing. Establishing personal relations, learning and giving of yourself are your primary responsibilities. So, every cent you bring from home has to be spent wisely for buying toiletries, small gifts and other things you need monthly. Also keep in mind that your chapter or school may arrange one or two optional activities which cost is your own responsibility.

Please keep in mind that Indonesia is going through a period of tough economic challenges, and that people in your host community may be very cautious in spending their money. We advise you to be considerate about money.

Your natural parents may send money directly to you in the form of a bank draft or cash transfer. Ask your host family to help you in opening a local bank account.

Indonesian currency is Rupiah (Rp). In the past few years, the exchange rate has not been very stable, and fluctuates between Rp. 8.500 - Rp. 10.000 to the USD. Due to this instability, we suggest that you check the rate of currency exchange before you leave. You can see it in the daily newspaper.

## Indonesian money consists of

Bank notes	Coins
Rp. 100,000.00	Rp. 1.000.00
Rp. 50,000.00	Rp. 500.00
Rp. 20,000.00	Rp. 200.00
Rp. 10,000.00	Rp. 100.00
Rp. 5,000.00	
Rp. 2,000.00	
Rp. 1,000.00	

## Examples of prices in Jakarta

<u>Big Mac:</u>	Rp. 25,000
<u>A can of coke:</u>	Rp. 3,500
<u>Movie ticket:</u>	Rp. 15,000 - Rp. 50,000
<u>Bus fare:</u>	Rp. 2,000 - Rp. 5,000
<u>Overseas postcard stamps:</u>	Rp. 10,000

## 8. Medical and Special Expenses

As stated in your participation agreement/medical pamphlet, AFS will pay for any medical expenses, from accident or illness you incur during your stay in Indonesia, except for dental care, eyeglasses, inoculations, routine physical examinations, or for pre-existing conditions. Therefore, should you need dental care or eyeglasses, AFS will evaluate the situation and then write to your family at home asking for their permission and payment of the cost of the treatment.

## 9. Accidents and Liability

If you happen to be involved in any automobile or other accidents where there is a chance of someone's being liable (legally responsible), please do not sign anything about the accident. We are responsible to your natural parents for the handling of any legal matters in which you might be involved, and must refer all such matters to them and to our legal advisors.

## 10. Communications

### Postal

The postal service is reliable, letter cost depends on the part of the world you post to and also on the weight of the letter. The post office will help you with questions about sending letters and packages to any country. You can receive your letters and parcel from your host-families address, please be sure the address is correct.

### Telephone

Telephone calls are fairly expensive, especially during the day/business hours, it is 25% higher than the normal rate.

For long distance call, there is a discounted fare for certain hours, usually during the late hours of the evening until early morning.

Please consult your host family before using the phone. The safest way to make phone calls is to call from the WARTEL, a kind of communication shop with telephone and fax facilities. There are also card public phones, which calling card can be purchased from mini markets, wartel, post offices and vendors. It is a good idea to carry one at all times.

### Internet

Your host family may have an internet connection at home. While it would be very convenient to communicate using the internet, you need to make sure of the rules to use internet in your family. Be aware that the cost of telephone and internet may be of concern for your family.

E-mail is a very fast, practical and economical way to communicate. In using it, remember to practice wisdom, as what has been sent cannot be taken back. It is wise NOT to send right away an e-mail which was written in anger or sadness. Keep it as a draft for a day or two, read it again and see if you still feel the same. Sometimes, as time passes by, you will have new perspectives on the matter concerned. Remember that being far away and not knowing the real situation, such outcry might be interpreted differently by your natural parents or friends. By delaying sending the message and reviewing your feelings, you can avoid making them overly worried over something which may turn out to be nothing at all.

## 11. Miscellaneous Information

### Electricity

Electricity bills are fairly expensive, try to turn off the lights when not needed. In Indonesia the voltage is mostly 220 volt, but in some area the volt is 110 volt. You may need to ask about it to your host family.

### Metric System

Indonesians use the metric system. Below is some comparison between the two systems :

#### Length

1 Kilometer (km) = 0,62 miles

1 Meter (m) = 3,28 feet

1 Centimeter (cm) = 0,40 inch

#### Weight

1 Gram (gr) = 0,04 ounces

1 Kilogram (kg) = 2,21 pounds

#### Volume

1 Liter (l) = 0,22 gallons

The plug which is used in Indonesia:



## 12. Going Home and Departure

Without you realizing it, it is time to go home. You probably will have mix feelings, excited that you will be going home, but afraid that maybe a lot of things have change while you were in Indonesia, also sad because you are leaving your host family, new friend and all the stuff that you just found. But all this will turn out all right, it just needs time to adjust, just like when you arrived in Indonesia.

Before you leave Indonesia at the end of your program, students will come together at a central place for an End of Stay (EOS) for 2 - 3 days. You will have time to share your experiences, renew friendships and prepare for returning home.

## SOME HELPFUL HINTS & TIPS

1. Don't be timid about food – try everything. Take just a little; if you like it, fine! Take some more. If you don't, fine! Tell your host family politely, anyway you haven't taken that much but at least you tried.
2. Be patient. Things don't always happen as fast as you expect.
3. If there is a problem, big or small, go to your contact person and counselor, and ask their help. Don't be afraid to come out with it right away. Remember that they are there to help you with your adjustment.
4. Be receptive and tolerant to any different experience, and be observant.
5. Remember these people live here all of the time. It's their country and they want to share it with you.
6. Don't be bragging or showing off about your own country and house. Sure you can be proud of it, but Indonesians are proud of theirs, too. Always share views and ideas, never impose on someone.
7. Dress modestly and tastefully in public. At home, just follow the example of your host sister(s) or host brother(s).
8. Because of the weather and temperature, Indonesians take a bath at least twice a day. For some of you, this may sound strange, but this is the way to keep our body clean and fresh all day.
9. Study seriously in school, like you would at home.
10. It is customary to tell your parents wherever you go. Bid them farewell when you leave, and greet them when you arrive home.
11. Be unannoyed by people who stare and point at you.
12. Study the language diligently. The faster you learn the language the better. As soon as communication becomes easier, all problems and frustrations will seem to disappear or become less difficult to handle and cope with.
13. Try to keep a diary or some type of record of your feeling, experiences, etc., to help you rationalize what's happening to you.
14. Be open to your host family, and ask them to do the same.
15. Accept your host family for whatever they are and also their way of lives. Don't criticize or try to judge before you really understand the habits and customs.
16. Don't pretend you understand when you don't, because pretending can be dangerous.
17. If more than one student stay in one town or go to one school, it is not advisable for them to call, visit or stick together often.
18. Some people object strongly to smoking. Ask your host family what they think about it. This may be one area in which you will have to compromise or change your habit in. After all, one year is not a too long time until you are free to do that again.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

AFS New Zealand. Haere Mai — Notes for Overseas Students. Wellington: 1995.

Agoes, Asmir. Some Personal Behaviour Guide for Foreign Managers in Indonesia. Jakarta : Pusat Kajian Antarbudaya, 1994.

American Woman's Association & Int'l Allied Medical Ass. Staying Healthy in Indonesia. Jakarta : P.T. Intermasa, 1991.

Asia Pocket Book. : New York : The Economist, 1993.

Indonesia 2000; An Official Handbook. Department of Information, Directorate General for General Information, Directorate of Foreign Information Services/ National Communication and Information Board. Jakarta: Perum Percetakan Negara R.I.P., 1999/2000.

Indonesia Education Statistics in Brief 1996/1997. Jakarta : Ministry of Education and Culture, 1998.

Sardar, Ziauddin and Zafar Abbas Malik. Muhammad for Beginners. St. Leonards : Icon Books, 1994.

Understanding Islam. Washington D.C. : The Islamic Affairs Department - The Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 1989.