

Bolivia Trip for Teachers

with Mano a Mano International



St. Paul, Minnesota public school teacher training rural Bolivian teachers



TRIP DATES

**June 17-25,
2017**

JOIN MANO A MANO IN TRAINING BOLIVIAN TEACHERS!

Mano a Mano invites you to join a 9 day group trip for teachers to Cochabamba, Bolivia. We will visit rural Bolivian schools to view teaching methods, develop curriculum with their teachers, learn how they keep parents involved, and have an opportunity to interact with them in informal as well as classroom settings.

We approach this trip with a deep appreciation for the dedication of teachers in both countries, for the similarities and differences in our life experiences and for the gifts that teachers from each country can bring to the other.

*"Education is the
most powerful
weapon which you
can use to change
the world."*

Nelson Mandela

What is Mano a Mano?

Mano a Mano is a grass-roots non-profit organization based in St. Paul, MN whose mission is to create partnerships with poor Bolivian communities that improve health and increase economic well-being. The website – manoamano.org - will give you the most up-to-date information on the organization's projects and results.



What is the purpose of the trip?



The Andes Mountains of Bolivia



Bolivia Teacher Trip Participants facilitating a training session for the rural Bolivian public teachers.

The trip will immerse travelers in the educational experiences of rural Bolivian children and their teachers. You will see first-hand the challenges faced daily by teachers in very materially poor communities. There are no books for the students, basic school supplies are scarce, children may walk for hours on their way to and from school, classes are taught in Spanish but Quechua is spoken at home, teachers must leave the community for days to travel to the city to collect their pay, and the list goes on.

It will deepen the understanding, skill and commitment of Minnesota teachers to providing excellent educational experiences for their culturally diverse students as they:

- Examine, refine, and further practice their strategies and examples through developing and refining curriculum;
- Evaluate their effectiveness in teaching others as they observe the extent to which the lessons taught are applied;
- Become respectfully immersed into another culture and review how that immersion informs teaching practices;
- Engage in dialogue about challenges faced and solutions attempted by Bolivian teachers;

- Create simple teaching materials that can be made and duplicated in Bolivia (graphic organizers, for example).

Through the curriculum development process, teachers will find opportunities to reflect on their own practices, try new things, and further develop their classroom teaching skills. Their school communities will benefit from the enhanced leadership skills that teachers develop through sharing lesson plans and ideas with other teachers. Many school districts will offer board credits toward a lane change.

It will provide a teacher training opportunity for Bolivian teachers who have little or no access to continuing educational experiences. The Bolivian Ministry of Education will issue certificates to participants which may lead to a pay raise for the teacher.

We also want the trip to benefit Mano a Mano. We hope that by traveling together to Cochabamba, we will build a group of people who are very knowledgeable about Mano a Mano's activities, both here and in Bolivia. We hope that a trip to Bolivia will encourage travelers to deepen their commitment to supporting Mano a Mano. We want to demonstrate our support and solidarity with Mano a Mano's Bolivian staff and volunteers, and especially with the communities in which Mano a Mano works. When you return, we hope that you will become passionate advocates, telling the Mano a Mano story and/or volunteering in whatever capacity fits your interest and schedule.

Who can go on this trip?

Teachers, from early childhood education through doctoral level classes, are invited to join us. The Bolivian workshop participants teach grades 1 – 6.

While Spanish speaking ability is highly valued, it is not essential. Interpreters will be available throughout the workshop and all trip activities. Fluent Spanish speakers who are not teachers but have experience working with children are also invited to join us.

Segundo Velasquez, co-founder of Mano a Mano and Bolivian national, will lead the trip. Jackie Smith led the 2013, 2014 and 2015 workshops and will lead in 2016 as well. She and other teachers who participated in our previous workshops will provide supportive visioning and direction.



Where will we stay?

Mano a Mano will reserve a block of rooms in a comfortable, clean hotel in Cochabamba. Private single or double rooms are available.

There are many internet cafes in Cochabamba from which you can e-mail or phone home.

For purposes of an address for Homeland Security you may use the Cochabamba address of:

291 Junin – esq. Ecuador, Cochabamba, Bolivia (address of Mano a Mano – Internacional).

How will we travel?

Mano a Mano will recommend a specific flight to you from Miami to Cochabamba, Bolivia. The entire group will travel together from Miami. If you wish, Mano a Mano will give you the name of the travel agent it uses to schedule flights from Bolivia to other Latin American countries.

Auto travel to and from Mano a Mano worksites in Bolivia will be provided by experienced, safe drivers in Mano a Mano vehicles.

Where will we go? What will we do?

Your destination is Cochabamba, Bolivia's third largest city, located in the Andes at about 8,000 feet above sea level.

Mano a Mano has organized trips to Bolivia since 1998. The Mano a Mano staff and experienced Minnesota teachers are involved in planning the experience. We have established the following tentative itinerary. Flexibility and patience become important when working in Bolivia.

Itinerary

Day	Activities
Saturday, June 17	Travel to Bolivia
Sunday June 18	Arrive Cochabamba around 9:30 a.m. Settle into hotel. Salteñas for lunch. Afternoon: tour of the city. Cochabamba is a beautiful, hospitable city with rich cultural history. Evening: welcome dinner with brief Mano a Mano presentation.
Monday June 19	Morning: Travel to rural community of Santivañez. Meet school officials and teachers. Shadow teachers in classrooms. Afternoon: lunch and discussion with teachers; introduce them to the subject matter that we hope to share and learn during time together. Tour the community; learn about daily life in rural Bolivia. Evening: Return to Cochabamba. De-brief at hotel.
Tuesday June 20	Morning: Visit classrooms and assist teachers and students as they apply new strategies. Illustrate and practice use of teaching tools in classroom setting. Afternoon: Lunch and discussion with teachers. Mano a Mano agronomist will do active ecological exercises with children and teachers. Evening: Community talent show and bonfire. Return to Cochabamba.
Wednesday June 21	Morning: Visit additional classrooms and interact with teachers and students. Afternoon and evening: open for relaxing and de-briefing in Cochabamba. Prepare packets of materials for distribution to schools.
Thursday June 22	Morning: Visit additional classrooms and interact with teachers and students. Lunch with teachers. Afternoon: Give certificates to teachers and packets of materials to the schools. Afternoon and evening: Free time for relaxing in Cochabamba.
Friday June 23	Morning and Afternoon: Visit other Mano a Mano programs and projects.
Saturday June 24	Free day for shopping, touring.
Sunday June 25	Return to U.S. or to personal travel

You may want to plan for independent trips to other parts of Bolivia, or perhaps to the Inca city of Macchu Picchu in Peru, after you leave Bolivia. A day trip via the Mano a Mano aircraft to the Salares, the high altitude salt beds from which Bolivia's salt is harvested can be arranged. There will be an additional charge for the Mano a Mano aircraft flights.

If I decide to come, what am I agreeing to?

This trip to Bolivia is not a guided tour. We are a group of people who have independently and voluntarily agreed to travel together. Mano a Mano does not assume responsibility or liability for your personal safety, changes in travel plans, health problems, or property losses. **We recommend that you purchase travel insurance prior to the trip.**



How many people can go?

We hope we will be able to include everyone who wants to come on this trip. We must have at least six travelers to make the trip.

Is my trip tax deductible?

After you return home Mano a Mano will send you a letter stating that you participated in a volunteer trip to Bolivia. Check with your tax accountant about tax deductibility. Mano a Mano is a 501 (c)(3) organization.

Is Bolivia safe?

Cochabamba is safe and stable. Bolivians, in general, are chivalrous and polite. The likelihood of any bodily harm coming to you is very low. However, Bolivia is also one of the poorest countries in the world. Poverty leads to desperation and sometimes to theft. You will want to be careful about your property and cash.

How about my health?

In general, there are two major areas of health concern for visitors to Cochabamba: altitude, and infectious disease.

Altitude: Cochabamba is at an altitude of about 8,000 feet; higher than Denver. You can expect to feel a little winded or headachy on your first day in town. Unless you have respiratory problems, however, the altitude should not make you ill. During the trip you may be traveling to villages at altitudes as high as 15,000 feet. Consult your health care provider about any personal concerns regarding travel at this altitude.

Disease: Before you travel to Bolivia, you must consult with your health care provider and/or travel medicine clinic for recommendations about vaccinations and other personal medications. A current yellow fever vaccination is required for entry into Bolivia if you travel there from another Latin American country.

In country, you will drink bottled or boiled water. Food provided by Mano a Mano will be safe to eat.

How do I get a VISA to enter Bolivia?

As of December 1, 2007, citizens of the United States must obtain a visa to enter Bolivia. We recommend that you obtain your visa when you enter Bolivia. You will need the following items:

1. A valid U.S. passport that does not expire within six months of your travel date
2. \$165.00 visa fee in U.S. dollars (since Bolivians reject many \$100 bills due to counterfeiting, carry bills of smaller denomination for this purpose)
3. Completed visa application form available as download on the Bolivian Embassy website at www.bolivia-usa.org on the page related to Consular Services. (Mano a Mano will ask you for a copy of your completed form)
4. Two passport photos (Bolivian sites note the requirement for 4cm x 4cm photos. This requirement has confused U.S. airline ticket agents who have asked some travelers for 4' x 4' photos. You may want to print and carry with you a copy of the website requirement to clarify this point.)
5. Copy of your ticket
6. Credit card
7. An invitation for your stay from someone in Bolivia (the Mano a Mano office will send this to you)

You may want to review this website for additional information on travel to Bolivia: travel.state.gov/conent/passports/English/country/Bolivia



I want to go! What's next?

Here's our suggested timetable for preparations. Items in bold face are essential.

Learn more about Mano a Mano	Pick up some literature from the Mano a Mano office or visit the Mano a Mano website, www.manoamano.org . Better yet, volunteer to help if you live in the area. To volunteer contact us at manoamano@manoamano.org
Learn more about Bolivia	Check your library or bookstore for a recent travel guide. We recommend the Lonely Planet guide, called simply, <i>Bolivia</i> .
Get a passport	You'll want to get started on this as soon as possible. If you don't have a passport, or if your passport expires within 6 months of the trip date, check the US Customs website on what to do or go to Fedex to take photos and obtain a passport application form. The expiration date on your passport must be at least six months after your date of travel.
Assemble your visa documents	Be sure to carry all required items with you to Bolivia
Consult with medical provider; get shots and medications	Local health departments can give you information on where to get immunizations.
Pay the trip fee and reimburse Mano a Mano for airline tickets	The trip fee is \$1,500. Payment of the fee reserves your space on the trip and must be paid at least 60 days prior to departure. Your airline ticket should be reserved as soon as you decide to make the trip.
Pack	We will provide a detailed set of suggestions for what to bring along, but in general, pack light. We may ask you if you are willing to take medical or school supplies in a second suitcase and to bring handcrafts back with you. This is legal but may be physically burdensome. Please feel that you can decline this request.

How much will the trip cost?

Mano a Mano charges a \$1,500 per person trip fee, **excluding air fare from the U.S. to Bolivia**, for a 9 day trip. **The trip fee includes the following:**

- Within Bolivia airfare to Cochabamba from your airport of entry into Bolivia (Santa Cruz) and to your airport of departure
- Lodging in Cochabamba on the nights of June 17 - 24
- Meals except on days of travel to and from Bolivia
- In-country transportation to Mano a Mano sites
- Mano a Mano staff who are knowledgeable about the community, culture, customs and who speak fluently both Spanish and Quechua; some with English ability
- Interpreters

The trip fee does not include:

- Flights to and from Bolivia
- Visas
- Food, snacks and drinks not provided or arranged by Mano a Mano
- Paying someone to wash your clothes
- Pre-travel preparation (doctors' visit, travelers' insurance, passport fees, etc.)
- Souvenirs
- Trip to the Salares or other side trip within Bolivia in the Mano a Mano aircraft
- Additional travel prior to or following the trip

Please Note: Any teacher who wishes to participate in this trip and its training activities in Bolivia but finds the fee too steep to afford is encouraged to contact Joan Velasquez at 651-233-0070 or via e-mail at joan@manoamano.org to determine whether a partial scholarship can be located.

What have other teachers said about this trip?

Alison, workshop teacher in 2015 and 2016: "The trip provided an opportunity to use Spanish both here and in an overseas setting. Using skills and applying them in Spanish is an excellent learning experience."

Jackie, workshop leader in 2013, 2014 and 2015: "Parent engagement is a challenge for us. In Bolivia we saw over 300 parents at a meeting about the school. Their culture is very communal and engagement is high. We can learn from that."

By when do I need to let you know that I will join this trip?

Teams of teachers begin meeting in **February 2017** to develop their instructional plan. Other participants in the trip will meet intermittently in the spring to plan and assess the needs of the group.

Please let us know your decision by **April 15, 2016**. We ask that you pay the trip fee at that time so we can make your hotel and transportation arrangements. If Mano a Mano makes your flight reservation from the U.S. to Bolivia, we ask that you reimburse the cost of ticket at that time as well.

BUEN VIAJE

