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## Volunteers promote public health through theatre

**In an unorthodox approach, a group of 21 youngsters from 14 countries are using forum theatre to enhance awareness on public health issues, importantly on water-borne diseases, organisers said Wednesday.**

'Health on Stage' is a joint initiative of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the Coordinating Committee of the International Voluntary Service (CCIVS). Hosted by the Field Services and Inter-Cultural Learning (FSL India) in Bangalore, Chennai and Mysore, the group's tour started on Aug 20 and concludes on Oct 1.

"The first phase of the project has just been concluded and, during this phase, volunteers familiarised themselves with the public health concerns of local communities," FSL India president Rakesh S. Soans said. "Water-related diseases are common to all the three locations."

Volunteers have been trained in inter-cultural learning and introduced to the methodologies used in forum theatre. "With this necessary knowledge and skill, they will organise theatre performances with and for the local people," Soans said.

Direct interaction with local communities and creative performances will take place during field implementation between Aug 28 and Sep 26.

The participants will later converge in Bangalore between Sep 27 and Oct 1 for an evaluation. Based on what they would have experienced, they will make recommendations on how to make the best use of forum theatre in promoting dialogue on water-related diseases.