



Volunteers will be trying to bring young and seniors closer together

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Volunteers from all over the UK have descended on Newham to help heal the rift between young and old.

YouthXchange, a programme run by Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), involves 18 to 25-year-olds from two countries to work on development and share cultural ideas and differences between their communities.

Twenty volunteers from the UK went to Nigeria to carry out charity placements and now they will be spending three months in Newham working with charities, community centres, youth clubs and Canning Town homeless shelter Anchor House.

Experience

Partners Aston Mansfield, who run the Froud Centre in Manor Park and Durning Hall in Forest Gate, will also be using their experience to help the young people.

Volunteer Joseph Hook said: "We chose to work in Nigeria and Newham for this project because the theme is intergenerational work. There are a lot of opportunities in both places for the volunteers to get involved with intergenerational problems.

"In Nigeria, they had quite a paternalistic society which created its own problems and in



Volunteers with the Etung community in Nigeria

Newham there's a big generational gap which causes problems and misunderstandings between young people and older residents."

The volunteers worked in the Cross River State region of Nigeria, educating about community harmony and HIV and AIDS. They will also use the charity work placements to draw up reports to present to local councils to help people ac-

cess opportunities for community development.

Joseph said of the work in Newham: "The work we've done so far has been quite ad hoc, just getting involved with what needs to be done. So all the work has been organised by ourselves.

"There are a couple of volunteers who come from London but none from Newham. The idea is to go to new places that might be out of our comfort zone."

