CHALATENANGO, El Salvador detailed information

The students in July will be divided into two groups for learning skills through field work. One group will go to Suchitoto and surrounding rural areas and the other group will do their work in the communities of Chalatenango. This document focuses on Chalatenango. Please also download the document that focuses on Suchitoto to get an idea of where you may be located in July.

Chalatenango is a rural municipality in the northern portion of El Salvador that borders Honduras, with roughly 40,000 residents spread across roughly 150 square kilometers. Salvadorans call this region the *Nor Oriente*, or northeast.

Reference in Lonely Planet:
https://www.lonelyplanet.com/el-salvador/northern-el-salvador/chalatenango

'Chalate' is the capital of the mountainous Chalatenango province in the country's north. There's a lovely daily rhythm here, as the narrow streets fill with farm trucks laden with fruit, sugarcane, indigo and coffee en route to the morning market on Calle San Martín, where you might just meet a cowboy. Colorful buses are stacked with friendly locals selling DVDs, toiletries and glittery sequined dresses; locals will strike up conversation in no time.

It's a pleasant place to walk around as you catch glimpses of the spectacular La Peña mountains and the Cerro Verde further west, both likely destinations if you've made it this far. Another popular day trip is to Lago de Suchitlan to the east.

On the map, it is on the top in the middle, bordering Honduras.
Where we are planning field work for some students

We anticipate that half of the students in July 2017 doing field work in this region and may have the opportunity to work in one of the following four local municipalities on a variety of development projects.

1) **Arcatao**: Arcatao is located 32 km east from the border with the Republic of Honduras in a small valley between the mountains: *La Cañada* and *Caracol*. Rivers include the *Sumpul, Lempa, Zazalapa* and *Guayampoque*. Its little villages are: *Cerro Grande, Eramon, Las Vegas, Los Sitios, Teosinte* and *Los Filos*. See links below for more information. This is a small community of about 3,000 people where most people are agriculturalists. The mild climate and plentiful rainfall allows locals to grow corn, beans, rice, sugarcane, cashews, watermelon, squash, chayote, cucumbers, bananas, tomatoes and other crops.

There are two Patronal festivities: the first in on February 2. "Dia de la Candelaria" and August 24 "Dia de San Bartolome Apostol". During these two holy days, for about 3 or four days prior the holy day, the community meets and celebrates with different activities, like: El Correo, with people wearing costumes, they explode sparks everywhere. Tianguis or swap-meets are taking place at the central plaza. And typical food is served in every corner of the plaza.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSXvEY3_At0
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8HnoC1ht88
http://www.mipuebloysugente.com/apps/blog/show/42276128-arcatao-chalatenango

2) **Nueva Trinidad**: this town borders Arcatao, San José and San Antonio, the other communities students will be working and is located in the same valley area described above. The population of Nueva Trinidad is around 2,000. Like Arcatao the climate is warm and humid. The community was completely rebuilt in the 1990s following the Peace Accords. The agricultural sector of the town receives assistance from a local non-profit CORDES, where some interested students may be placed.
3) **San José Las Flores**: this community was repopulated by refugees following the Civil War with the assistance of North American and European humanitarian organizations, several of which have retained relationships as sister cities, including Cambridge, Massachusetts and Ottawa, in Ontario, Canada. Tourists visit San Jose Las Flores when coming to the nearby River Sumpul complex. Two miles beyond Las Flores is a tourist complex with cabins, a small restaurant and a swimming area complete with two large waterslides, which are very popular with local people and visitors from further afield. People in San Jose Las Flores celebrate the day of the village’s patron saint in March. Local people celebrate over the course of a week with street processions, live music shows and ranching displays (known locally as *jaripeo* meaning a bull-riding competition).


4) **San Antonio los Ranchos**: This town has a population of about 1,300 people. Many locals have relatives living in the United States who send remittance money back, which is a major source of revenue for local families. Agriculturalists in San Antonio received assistance from CORDES (see above) and other local development initiatives are part of the larger Plan El Salvador.
