

# WELCOME TO

## Volunteers Without Borders



### Dear Potential Volunteer,

Thank you for taking the time to locate our organization and we would like to personally send you a warm welcome. We are pleased to hear you will be volunteering with Volunteers Without Borders. Although there are numerous avenues for volunteering, we can assure that we offer **life changing volunteering opportunities** at the **LOWEST possible cost** to you, the volunteer. Now that you've filled out the online application and that you're on board, our goal is to take care of you every step of the way. We will ensure that you are fully prepared before you leave to the country of your choice and begin working on your first volunteer program with us. This information package was designed to serve two purposes. The first purpose is to give you more detailed information about the country you have chosen to volunteer in as well as providing some additional insight into the various types of programs we offer. The second purpose is to provide you with specific items that you will be expected to bring along with you, what types of vaccinations you will be needing before you leave, and what we recommend for your emergency/medical travel insurance. Not only do our volunteering programs benefit the organization and community you will be working with, but they also provide volunteers with an appreciation and gratitude for others, sense of fulfillment, as well as new perspectives. Our goal is to inspire volunteers to raise awareness, share their stories and continue to support or contribute to our programs in any way possible in the future. Although our programs can be quite demanding at times, we ensure that you will be given adequate time and days off to tour around the area you are working in and get the opportunity to participate in any outdoor activities or adventures you would be interested in.

It is your job to explore this information package and then reply back to us at: [info@vwbinternational.org](mailto:info@vwbinternational.org) to let us know that you are ready for the next step of the enrollment process. If you have specific questions please our frequently asked questions page as this covers most questions that the volunteers may have. To locate this page, visit our website and click the 'About VWB' tab.

Like most developing countries in the world; political instability could arise at any given time, so we encourage you to check with your local government travel advisory just to be sure that nothing is expected to occur in the location while your over there. With that being said, we can ensure you that every country that we offer has been checked out by our team to ensure the security and safety for our volunteers.

While volunteering on any of our available programs, you will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of health, educational, community development, or wildlife and marine conservation programs. This will give you a chance to make an important contribution to the local community and while doing so, gain an in depth understanding of the country and its culture. We assure you that this experience will leave a lasting impression and stay with you for the rest of your life.

## Information to help you prepare for your trip

If it's your first time volunteering or going abroad, there are several things you will need to make sure you bring on your trip before you leave. Here is a list of the following items that we have deemed necessary to bring to make sure you can enjoy your time on the program. The list below is a general suggestion; each volunteer may prefer more specific items that we have not included in this list. Please make sure that you remember to bring any special items that you are used to having back home, that may only be purchased in your own country.

### What to Bring:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable shoes and sandals   | <input type="checkbox"/> Camera and/or iPod                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shorts and pants                | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone - You can buy simcard)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rain Coat/Jacket                | <input type="checkbox"/> Rechargeable batteries w/charger    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping Bag                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses and Sunscreen        | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight/head torch               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Guide                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lock                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mosquito net & insect repellent | <input type="checkbox"/> String                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Sanitizer                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Eyeglasses/Contacts                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Medication (Anti Malarial Tablets)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Duct Tape and/or superglue      | <input type="checkbox"/> Picture Book / Journal              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Binder or notepad               | <input type="checkbox"/> Country Map                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet Paper                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Ear Plugs                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small water heater or kettle    | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes or Electronics for donation |

## Vaccinations:

The World Health Organization recommends that all travelers be covered for diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, polio and hepatitis B, regardless of their destination. The consequences of these diseases can be severe and outbreaks do occur. [Click here](#) to learn more.

*“As the President and Founder of Volunteers Without Borders Association, I’d like to offer you a warm welcome! I have done a lot of volunteering myself and believe it is the most fulfilling and gratifying way to give back to countries around the world that need all the help they can get. Whether you’re an adventurous traveler or looking to help make a difference, we are happy to have you join us. By volunteering, you will make a difference to the local people that you come in contact with overseas. Our volunteering opportunities expose you to the often-harsh everyday realities of life for many people around the world in underdeveloped areas. We thank you for your time and consideration.”*

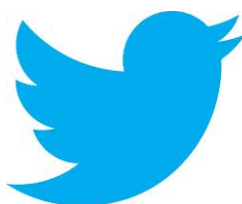
~ Kevin Francis

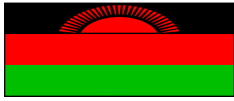
**President & Founder of VWB**



**Website:**  
**Email:**

[www.vwbinternational.org](http://www.vwbinternational.org)  
[info@vwbinternational.org](mailto:info@vwbinternational.org)





# MALAWI



Malawi is one of the poorest countries in Africa, but surprisingly enough one of the warmest. It has been nicknamed as 'The Warm Heart of Africa' and it doesn't take long once you arrive here to feel the warmth and friendliness of the locals. Lake Malawi runs through most of the country and is the lifeline for so many. It's been named the calendar lake since it is 52 km wide and 365 km long. Getting involved with the local projects and community here is what our placements are all about.

## Advice for bringing Currency into Africa

The currency accepted is **Malawian Kwacha (KWA)** or USD. In some places, credit cards are frequently not accepted, even at many up market hotels. Where they are accepted, it's often only with steep commissions, which means that you will need to rely here more heavily on cash, ATMs and (in major centers) travelers checks. The best currency to bring is USD in a mixture of large and small denominations, plus some travelers' checks as an emergency standby and a Visa card for withdrawing money from ATMs. Euros are also easily changed.

## Travel Document information

Visas are not needed by citizens of Commonwealth countries, the USA and most European nations (except Switzerland). Visas are limited to 30 days, although extensions are easy to get.

## Dangers and Annoyances

Malawi is in general a safe, hassle-free country and can be a relief if you've recently been somewhere like Kenya or Tanzania. With that being said, you do still need to take the usual precautions. Avoid isolated areas; especially stretches of beach, and in cities and tourist areas take a taxi at night. When using public transport, don't accept drinks or food from someone you don't know and ensure your bag or belongs is secure. Be skeptical of anyone who comes up to you on the street asking whether you remember them from the airport, your hotel or wherever. In the majority of cases, they are just trying to get money from you.

In tourist areas like Lilongwe, Nkhosakota Bay, and Blantyre, touts and flycatchers can be extremely aggressive, especially around bus stations and budget tourist hotels. Do your best to minimize the impression that you're a newly arrived tourist. Duck into a shop if you need to get your bearings or look at a map and don't walk around any more than necessary with your luggage. While looking for a room, leave your bag with a friend or reliable hotel rather than walking around town with it. Buy your bus tickets a day in

advance (without your luggage) and, when arriving in a new city, take a taxi from the bus station to your hotel. Be very wary of anyone who approaches you on the street, at the bus station or in your hotel offering safari deals, and never pay any money for a safari or trek in advance until you've thoroughly checked out the company.

## A Few Tips

- Avoid external money pouches, dangling backpacks, camera bags, and leave jewellery, fancy watches, and fancy headphones at home. Carry your passport, money and other documents in a pouch against your skin, hidden under loose-fitting clothing. Or, better, store valuables in a hotel safe, if there's a reliable one, ideally inside a pouch with a lockable zip to prevent tampering. It never hurts to make a photocopy of your identification and cards and store it separately in another bag.
- Arriving for the first time at major bus stations can be a fairly stressful experience. You'll probably be hassled by touts as you get off the bus, all reaching to help you with your pack and trying to sell you a cheap hotel rate or safari.
- Have your luggage as consolidated as possible, with your valuables well hidden under your clothes. Try to spot the taxi area before disembarking and make a beeline for it. It's well worth a few extra dollars for the fare, rather than attempting to walk to your hotel with your luggage.
- Take requests for donations from 'refugees', 'students' or others with a grain of salt. Contributions to humanitarian causes are best done through an established agency or project.
- When bargaining or discussing prices, don't do so with your money or wallet in your hand.

## Water

Unless your intestines are well accustomed to Africa, don't drink water from the tap that hasn't been boiled, filtered or disinfected (with iodine tablets). Also avoid drinking from streams, rivers and lakes unless you've purified the water first. The same goes for drinking from pumps and wells – some do bring pure water to the surface, but the presence of animals can still contaminate supplies.

## Cultural Awareness

Malawi is a pretty colorful and lively country, where most of the population has a good understanding of the English language. We encourage volunteers, planning to stay for 2 to 3 months or more, to consider learning essential words and phrases in Chi Tonga or Chi Chewa in order to communicate better with the surrounding community. Female volunteers should be aware that in the towns and villages, it is normally respectful to have your knees and your mid-riff covered (and in some cases, your shoulders). Some

practices in Malawi are very different to what volunteers may be used to at home. Visitors to Malawi do not have to agree with all the customs around them, but should respect them and endeavor to understand the complex cultural history that shaped them.

**PLEASE NOTE:** There is a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy in place for alcohol consumption, during volunteer work hours, while on the project. The consumption of alcohol is looked negatively upon and even forbidden in certain countries and it is essential that you abide by this rule. We need to ensure that you are giving the project the right impression of Volunteers Without Borders during your stay. **If volunteers choose not to follow this policy, they will be removed from the project immediately, and no refund will be issued.**

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM**

Nursery school, Community resource center, Youth clubs, sports clubs and more



**Location:** Nkhata Bay (Central Malawi located on west side of lake Malawi)

The location of this program is simply stunning, sitting on the lakeshores of a tropical lake and carved amongst beautiful trees. We are living in a time of massive environmental change and there is no way of knowing how these changes will affect Malawi or any other countries in our world. One thing is certain, the more we can develop using local resources and techniques, the more stable our future will be. No specific skills or experience is required on this project; it is geared toward attracting all kinds of people who specifically feel they have something to offer and learn.

This opportunity is for volunteers or travelers looking to get involved in helping to educate locals in the community and teach and share skills to those interested in learning in and around Nkhata Bay. We encourage people to get involved in the areas they are most passionate about and have the most knowledge about. There are numerous projects to get involved in so the opportunities to help out are endless. A few of the

projects you could get involved in is the youth clubs, the community information room, the media centre, teaching at a nursery school which is in nearby Chikale village. Others worth mentioning are the Chikale primary school, Nkhata Bay hospital, FAWN's HIV group, widows group and many more. Also, the directors and locals will be happy to provide local language lessons, in Chi Tonga or Chichewa since communication is central to our vision in being able to greet and converse with the locals you come in contact with on a daily basis. Malawi is a country that needs all the help you can give. There are so many options for you to help out so here the main ones:

## **PROGRAMS AVAILABLE:**

### **Gulugufe Nursery school**

**Open 7:30 – 10:30am Monday to Friday**

The children at this nursery school are between the ages of 3 to 6 years old. Volunteers are welcome to join Zione and Margaret teaching at the nursery school in the nearby village of Chikale. There are about 50 children enrolled, many resources and accessible reports from other volunteers who participated in the school and what they accomplished while on the project.

### **Nkhata Bay Community Resource Centre**

**Open 8.00am - 6pm Monday to Saturday**

The Information centre is located on site at Butterfly. There are numerous ways in which people can assist, from giving computer lessons, community networking, to environmental demonstrations and workshops.

### **Butterfly Youth Club**

**Open 2:00 – 8:00pm everyday**

Also located on site at Butterfly is the youth club. Volunteers are welcome to help out in any of these sessions or initiate new sessions in areas, or with certain groups they are particularly interested in.

### **Butterfly Football Team**

**Training is on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays @ 3:00pm – 5:00pm**

Our devoted Football team trains at Chikale village, under the watchful eye of Willard and Anderson. We are always looking for volunteers with a sports background or a degree to help our athletes develop their core skills and ensure their success.

### **Butterfly Netball Team**

**Training is on Wednesday and Fridays @ 3:00pm – 5:00pm**

Our hardworking team trains here in Nkhata Bay. Volunteers are welcome to assist or take any of the training sessions, pass on their skills and accompany the teams to games.

## **School Garden**

### **Open year round**

A local garden that has been created that welcomes any of the volunteers to be part of. You are welcome to help garden and plant any day of the week all year round. In 2011, we started to develop the gardens around the nursery school to provide nutritional snacks to the children as well as acting as a useful community demonstration in sustainable agriculture techniques and erosion control. We hope to extend the project this year to Chikale Primary school and volunteers are welcome at any point to help this project progress further.

## **ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS WE OFFER:**

- Teaching English at local schools
- Working with kids at a daycare or nursery center
- Assisting or helping run a drama club
- Women's' empowerment projects
- Building, construction, and/or development programs
- Running art/film/photography classes
- Assisting with special needs children
- Meal planning/food preparation/nutrition workshops for HIV/AIDS groups
- Assisting with community resource center

## **Accommodation**

As a volunteer on this program there are a number of different options depending upon your budget for your accommodation. Please refer to the website for up to date program fees. The fees are the rates based on per person per week.

## **Meal Preparation**

There is space in the kitchen to store your food and small charcoal burners if you want to cook on your balcony. There is also a simple self-catering area where volunteers can cook for themselves, with charcoal provided at a small fee. Also, there is a restaurant and bar where food and drinks can also be purchased.

## HERE ARE THE STEPS TO COMPLETE OUR ENROLLMENT PROCESS

**Step 1)** - Review this information package and decide which country you want to volunteer in and what program you are most interested to volunteer on. Once you have done that, please fill out the online application form available on our website and click submit. Please make sure to include the necessary required information.

**Step 2)** Once we receive the application form, we will send you a temporary confirmation for your desired program. If you need to make any changes, please feel free to email us and let us know. If we do not receive any further correspondence from you, we will send you the program fee payment request via Paypal within 3 business days.

**Please note:** *A \$225 CAD one-time registration/enrollment fee will also be added to your program fee.*

**Step 3)** - When we receive confirmation that your program fee has been paid, you will receive a confirmation email from us. In this email, there will be a waiver/release form that will be required to fill out and send back to us at your earliest convenience. You are also encouraged to book your flights at this time. Once you have done so, please send us a copy of your flight itinerary so that airport pickup/transfer (if available) can be arranged for you upon arrival.

**Step 4)** - After we receive your waiver/release form, we will confirm your placement on the program and detailed program specific information will be provided to you at this point.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Our enrolment and registration process begins by applying online. Once you have filled out and submitted the online application form, you will receive a confirmation email. To continue on in our enrolment process, all volunteers will be required to pay a Registration Fee of \$225 CAD, which will be added to the Program Fee. This fee helps to cover the administration and processing costs. Once we receive your payment, we will send you a confirmation email with the program details and encourage you to book your flight at that time. Our team will be readily available to correspond with you and answer any questions you might have from the time you apply until you reach the project. If you have any further questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact us at: [\*\*info@vwbinternational.org\*\*](mailto:info@vwbinternational.org)

## **OUR PROGRAM FEES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

- **Registration Fee** (refundable if you choose not to go), ongoing support from VWB staff, program marketing costs, information pack, administration costs, travel costs to develop and ongoing costs to sustain programs and communication costs with volunteers.
- **Program Fee** - orientation, program supervision, accommodation (private/shared/camping), in-country 24/7 volunteer support and in-country administration costs. For this program volunteers are required to cover the cost of their food during their stay.

### **WHAT ADDITIONAL COSTS WILL I HAVE?**

Visa, flights, travel insurance (mandatory), immunizations / vaccinations, in-country trips or tours, transfer to other areas of the country, and spending money.



During this entire process, we will always be available to correspond with you to answer any other questions you might have from now until you reach the program. Thank you for choosing **Volunteers Without Borders**.

**We can assure you that you've come to the right place!**