

# 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:

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|--|--|
| <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**

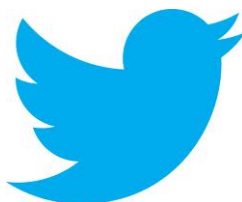


**Website:**

[www.vwbinternational.org](http://www.vwbinternational.org)

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# UGANDA



**U**ganda is a landlocked country that lies in the heart of East Africa. It consists of savanna plateau with mountains and lakes. The population in Uganda is approximately 26.9 million people. Of the 26.9 million Ugandans', 1.2 million of them call the capital city of Kampala their home. The Area of the country is 241,139 square kilometers (93,104 square miles). The most common languages spoken in Uganda are English, Ganda, and Luganda. There are also many other local languages that are spoken in more remote areas across the country. As in most of East Africa, the major religion followed is Roman Catholic and/or Protestant. Two of the other religions that you may or may not come in contact with are Muslim and/or Indigenous beliefs. Because healthcare is not very accessible or affordable for most people in Uganda, many rampant diseases and illness go untreated which deeply impact the life expectancy for the country. Like most countries in Africa, the life expectancy is substantially lower than most developed countries in the rest of the world and the life expectancy for Uganda is 44. Unfortunately, Uganda has quite a similar story as most of the countries in Africa in the sense that education is limited and not available to all. One of the more positive facts of Uganda is that they do boast an impressive literacy rate of 70%. This value exceeds most other countries literacy rates in Africa.

Uganda is known to most as: 'The Pearl Of Africa.' Sir Winston Churchill coined this term back in 1907 when he first visited Uganda. It is a magical place full of incredible scenery, fantastic wildlife, a collection of tribes and an abundance of culture. For those who venture to Uganda, you'll be captivated by its beauty, peacefulness, serenity, and safety. The natural beauty of the countryside and landscapes are unforgettable, and the kind natured, gentle hearted, and ever so friendly people are what make this country so special. It is one of the most appealing nations in Africa and a place that will easily captivate you in more ways than one. With so much to offer, Uganda is most definitely one of the best places to volunteer in Africa.

If that is not enough to make you want to come volunteer in Uganda, here's a few more valuable things to consider when choosing where you wish to volunteer in Africa. Uganda is the source of the Nile River, which is one of the largest and longest river systems in Africa and flows all the way up through Egypt into the Mediterranean. If you enjoy water and a good thrill, Uganda offers some of the best white-water rafting in the world. To top it off, it also has the highest concentration of primates on earth, including the majestic mountain gorilla, which is one of the rarest animals on our planet.

Prosperous at independence in 1962, this country was brutalized under the chaotic regimes of Milton Obote and Idi Amin, when as many as 800,000 Ugandans were

murdered. In 1986, Yoweri Museveni, leader of the National Resistance Army, came to power and, despite continued military and economic challenges, restored stability to a large extent. Museveni was elected president in May 1996 in the first popular election for president since independence and re-elected again in 2001.

The economy is a big part of Uganda that helps hold the country together and the most common industries you will see are: sugar, brewing, tobacco, cotton textiles, and cement. When you come to Uganda, you will quickly notice that a lot of the countryside is farm land and the agriculture has played a large role for both employment and a means of food supply for the locals here in the country. The most common agriculture you will see during your time in Uganda will be: coffee, tea, cotton, tobacco and beef. Like most countries in the world, there are items that are imported from elsewhere into the country but there are also natural resources that are exported to other countries that help add to the countries GDP, which is approximately \$1200 USD per capita. Here are the main items that are exported from Uganda: coffee, fish and fish products, tea, gold, and cotton.

## Advice for bringing Currency into Africa

Uganda's currency is the **Ugandan shilling (UGX)**. In some places, prices can be high in Uganda, and 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. You may find larger companies or places that also accept USD or Euros' during your trip but it is far easier to use local currency as there is a standard rate and you don't have to take the risk because some people may try to cheat you or exchange your USD for a lower than normal rate. For emergency measures, we recommend bringing with you a Visa card for withdrawing money from ATMs.

## Dangers and Annoyances

Uganda 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 Kampala, Jinja, or Kabale, 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, 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.
- 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

Uganda is a very peaceful, and scenic country, and is one of the few places in Africa where the majority of the population speaks good English. That being said, we still encourage volunteers, to try learning some essential words and phrases in the Ugandan Language 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 Uganda are very different to what volunteers may be used to at home. Visitors to Uganda 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.**

## **BATWA PYGMY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Providing Food, Housing, Medical Services, Agriculture, Social Development & Education



**Location:** Lake Bunyoni District (Kabale and surrounding area)

If you're looking for a unique opportunity to get involved and volunteer your time and energy with one of Africa's most remote tribes, then this volunteer project in Uganda is the best option for you. This non-profit independent organization you will become involved with was founded in 2008. The aim of the project is to provide food, housing, medical services, gardening programs, social development, educational training, cultural preservation and human rights advocacy to some of the poorest and most underdeveloped Batwa Pygmy communities in southwestern Uganda, Africa. The goal of the project is to develop programs to enable them to become sustainable and self-sufficient.

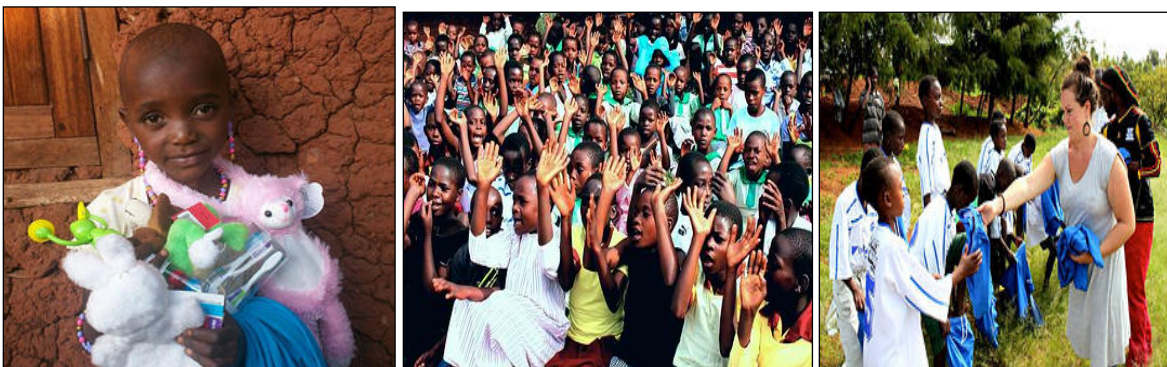
This program allows you to get involved with the Batwa Pygmy tribes which is an impoverished minority group living in Uganda. The Pygmy tribes are believed to be the first indigenous inhabitants of Central Africa and their existence is said to date back to more than 1 million years old. Unfortunately, they have become one of the poorest and most isolated tribes in Africa and make up approximately 0.02% - 0.7% of the population in Uganda. These Batwa people have been living under tremendously harsh living conditions and most of the tribes that are located in the S.W. region of Uganda suffer politically, economically, and psychologically. To make matters worse, most families are working on farms for meager wages that are usually barely enough to feed their families.

Like most poverty stricken children in Africa, the children of the Batwa tribes are often suffering from malnutrition and have a frightening infant mortality rate at 38% before the age of 5. For centuries, the Batwa people have depended on hunting and gathering to survive in the forests. However, today, only a few Batwa still live in Echuuuya Forest Reserve and Semliki National Park; and most of the tribes have been forced out of their native land and are currently living on the periphery of their ancestral forestlands. The Batwa's dispossession and landlessness is due to the environmental conservation efforts and ecological measures by the Ugandan Government and International agencies.

In the early 1990s, the Ugandan government declared the Semliki National Park a protected area and evicted all those who had entered and settled in the area, including the Batwa tribes. To make way for the famous mountain gorillas in Bwindi and Mgahinga forests, the Batwa were 'relocated' by the MBIFCT without their consent, and without any public hearings. This was a devastating move by the Government. Not only were the Pygmy tribes displaced from their homeland, settler-farming communities and logging companies also imposed private land rights which limited the Batwa's freedom of movement. During the time of their removal, the farming communities and logging companies continued to greatly damage their forest. At this point there is no real solution and the future has never looked more uncertain for the Batwa Community. While the MBIFCT provides some Batwa families with land leases of a very short duration, it is unknown what will happen after these leases expire. The largest problem facing the Batwa people is that only a few of the families are covered under the scheme and most have been forced to become 'squatters' on the land of their neighbors and charged high fees to remain there. With the help of volunteers like you, the future for the Batwa people may have just become a bit brighter

## **GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION**

Providing Teachers, Education, Support, Community Outreach and Activity Development



**Location:** Isingiro District (Southwestern Region, located approximately 35 kilometers southeast of the city of Mbarara)



This program is relatively new grass roots organization that is mainly in its development phase. As a volunteer, you will have a unique opportunity to help shape this program and have some real meaningful involvement in the activities. The program requires volunteers to be independent and responsible for much of their own growth and involvement through the duration of their stay. This type of volunteering is not for everyone, but for those who are interested we promise it is a great way to experience rural Uganda while having some real significant influences on the children and the community they become involved with. This program is for the adventurous individual who is looking to work with a new grass roots project and get the real Ugandan lifestyle experience. What that means is that there is no power at the school and in your house, no running water inside the house and most locals that you come in contact with in a daily basis will have little to no understanding of English. By volunteering on this program, you can get involved in the following projects:

## **TEACHING & SUPPORT IN CHILDRENS' LEARNING**

This program is dependent on the particular volunteers skills, interests and personal experiences. As a volunteer you can assist with the daily teachings, help prepare lectures for the teachers, organize activities that you feel would benefit the children, have your own classroom of children requiring extra attention, or you can even help to strengthen the local teachers' ability by working with them. Educating our children is one of the main goals and priorities, though we consider education in a holistic manner that transcends the boundaries of the typical classroom. We welcome your ideas to helping these children grow and become prepared for the world.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION**

Our main beneficiaries are our children, but we understand that their development depends on the entirety of their life, not just what happens at school. This includes their family, community and social structures. Therefore, This program aims to help improve the lives of all individuals living within our community by facilitating education and awareness projects, including ones relating to Education, Health (such as HIV/AIDS) and Empowerment of women. Volunteers are required to help develop our communities by assisting in creating outreach materials and presenting important information for everyone in the community to benefit from.

## **ACTIVITY DEVELOPMENT COORIDINATOR**

This is a relatively new program and the aim is to advance its program scope, we are looking for new suggestions and to incorporate ones own experiences and skills to those involved. For this program, volunteers are encouraged to take initiative in developing new areas of interest and activities for both the community and children they become involved with.

## **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**

## **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** – airport pick-up, orientation, program supervision, accommodation (private or dormitory style depending on location) and meals during volunteer program period, in-country 24/7 volunteer support and in-country administration costs.

## **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!**