



VOLUNTEERING & INTERNSHIPS IN

UGANDA

2016 www.umbrellaofhopeuganda.org

ABOUT UGANDA

he Republic of Uganda, the pearl of Africa, is a

landlocked country in East Africa. It is bordered on the east by Kenya, on the north by Sudan, on the west by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on the southwest by Rwanda, and on the south by Tanzania.

The Republic of Uganda gained independence in 1962. This is a country which boasts dramatic scenery. It includes the Ruwenzori Mountains (Mountains of the Moon), Africa's highest mountain range. Mount Elgon, on the country's eastern border ascends to over 14,000 feet. Lying within the Nile basin, the country has the White Nile River running through it, with its source in Lake Victoria. Nile white-water rafting around Jinja is among the best anywhere. Add to that the presence of the world's biggest concentration of primates, not least among them being the mountain gorilla, and Uganda is clearly a country that merits some exploration. Although landlocked, Uganda contains many large lakes, besides Lake Victoria and Lake Kyoga, there are Lake Albert, Lake Edward and the smaller Lake George.

Kampala, its capital, is considered one of the safest and friendliest among Africa's sometimes notorious capital cities. It is steadily being rebuilt after systematic looting and destruction during the changes of government. The city infrastructure has been restored and new office towers, hotels, stadiums and shopping malls are appearing almost monthly. Kampala is built on seven hills and is surprisingly green, a lovely backdrop to the colour of the people and the culture. Indeed, Ugandans are widely regarded as being warm and hospitable.

Entebbe, the former administrative capital, is still very picturesque, though rundown and neglected. The century old botanical gardens are being restored to their former splendor. The safari opportunities, to see African wildlife including gorillas and chimpanzees in a diverse but beautiful natural environment, are endless in variety.

CULTURE

Uganda is rich with culture and artistic talent; it is thought by many to be the most colourful of African countries. Ugandans are lively actors and public speakers. Hardly a night passes without the rhythmic sounds of traditional dancing or, in Kampala, modern disco music. The overriding impression of Uganda is of its happy and colourful people. Hardship and war are not forgotten,

but they are in the past, to be recalled in silent prayers and thoughts for absent friends.

CLIMATE

Although generally equatorial, the climate is not uniform as the altitude modifies the climate. Southern Uganda is wetter with rain generally spread throughout the year. At Entebbe on the northern shore of Lake Victoria, most rain falls from March to June and the November/December period. Further to the north a dry season gradually emerges; at Gulu about 120 km from the Sudanese border, November to February is much drier than the rest of the year.

The south of the country is heavily influenced by one of the world's biggest lakes, Lake Victoria, which contains many islands. It prevents temperatures from varying significantly and increases cloudiness and rainfall. Most important cities are located in the south, near Lake Victoria, including the capital Kampala and the nearby city of Entebbe.

CUISINE

There are a number of dining options in Jinja and Kampala ranging from the cheap and local to the very fancy (and very expensive). Meat or chicken stews are popular in Uganda served with rice, chapatti, ugali (a stiff maize porridge) or matoke (a cooked plantain/ banana mash). For a sweet dish, locals enjoy a type of doughnut called mandazi. With Uganda's many lakes and rivers, fish are an important food. Local fish include the Nile perch, tiger fish and the naged tilapia.

LANGUAGE

When visiting Uganda, the ability to speak some basic Swahili and Luganda can win you many smiles, not to mention the fact that it is a fun language to speak and learn! Knowledge of Swahili and Luganda becomes even more essential if you plan to stay or work outside of the urban areas, or in the more remote parts of Uganda where most people do not speak English.

MONEY

The national currency is the Ugandan shilling, code UGX, sometimes written as Ush. There are 50,000, 20,000, 10,000, 5000, 2000 and 1000 shilling notes and 500, 200, 100, and 50 shilling coins (10, 5, and 1 shilling coins exist but are rarely used). Some bigger hotels and restaurants do accept US dollars as payment.

However, there is no reason for visitors to Uganda to use foreign currency when there is a wide network of ATMs.



PROGRAM DETAILS

OVERVIEW

In Uganda there are opportunities in a variety of fields, each of which is certain to make a decisive difference to people's lives in a country which has been blighted by problems for decades and where half of the population are under 18, many of them living on the streets. Volunteer projects in Uganda are centred in Jinja and include work in our Projects (HIV, Sexual Reproductive Health, Livelihoods, WASH, etc.), clinics and hospitals, as well as primary and secondary schools.

Volunteering in Uganda - particularly in a challenging environment - is an experience you will look back on with pride. It will bring a greater understanding of, and compassion for, humanity.

With our volunteers in Uganda coming from many walks of life and generations, it is often a way of forging new and lasting friendships. Volunteering in Uganda gives you the chance to live amongst a population urgently requiring help. Uganda is toward the east of Africa and borders Zaire, Sudan, Tanzania, Kenya and Rwanda. The bulk of the country comprises a plateau, which is 4,000 feet above sea level. Lake Victoria occupies a large part of the south of the country. While predominantly Christian, Uganda has many cultures living within its borders, and several African languages are spoken.

The programs that The Umbrella of Hope Foundation is involved with have few resources and would find it difficult to operate without the valuable input and assistance from our volunteers in Uganda.

Volunteer Requirements

Applicants should be at least 18 years old and speak English to an intermediate level. Whilst experience in teaching and education, or working with children, youths and women will certainly be advantageous, it is not a prerequisite for these programs. A responsible, enthusiastic and compassionate attitude is a must. It is preferred that medical volunteers have some experience within the health sector.

however non-medical volunteers can contribute. Initiative and self-motivation are qualities that are welcomed on all programs.

Start and Duration

Volunteers going to Uganda can choose from short term to long term stays and can start on any day of the year. Programs are flexible; however, two weeks is the recommended minimum.

Transport and Orientation

A local team member will meet volunteers at the airport and will provide transport to the accommodation and project site. From there volunteers will be introduced to the staff and project supervisors. This is followed by an orientation program that includes information about the volunteer placement, introductions to the staff and other volunteers, and details about customs & daily life in Uganda. Volunteers will be shown where they can withdraw money, buy snacks, phone cards, and other items they might need during their stay.

Food and Accommodation

Accommodation is provided for volunteers at a local guesthouse or with a local host family. Living within the community is a great experience and gives volunteers an authentic glimpse of the customs, lifestyle and values of the Ugandan people. Breakfast and dinner will be provided, and lunch can be bought cheaply at markets, street stalls and cafes. All over Uganda, the local

people produce their own food. This makes for a healthy diet. On smallholdings, locals grow cassava, millet, corn, potatoes, cabbage and other greens, tomatoes, bananas and many other crops.

Some of the dishes that volunteers are likely to be served include matooke (made by steaming plantains) and tilapia (a fish which is served grilled). Traditional dishes made with sweet potatoes, beef and chicken, or fish or goat stews are also common. Uganda's national drink - waragi - is a banana-based gin, sometimes likened to Schnapps. Fruit juices, from the likes of jackfruit, are among the great non-alcoholic options. Jinjs has restaurants serving every kind of European and Indian dish, as well as the fast food chains found everywhere.

Typical day

A volunteers working day will generally last between 4 and 6 hours, however, specific details of the placement schedule will be agreed upon during orientation. It is extremely important to have a flexible attitude and fit in with the needs of your project. Please keep in mind that work hours may vary, but a typical pattern is likely to be: 7.00am Rise and have breakfast which will be provided at the volunteer house, or with your host family. 8.00am Prepare to start at your placement. We suggest speaking with the local staff members each morning to plan for the day ahead. A tea break and lunch break will be fitted in during the day, but often the timing of breaks will change based on the needs of the local staff and number of volunteers on hand. 4.00pm A volunteer's day will often finish around this time. but flexibility is required. There are cases where you might finish a couple of hours earlier, and likewise a couple of hours late. It is important to fit in with the needs of your project and as with many things in developing countries you should be prepared for changes.

Evenings and weekends: Volunteers are free to spend time in Jinja town depending on the location of their placement. They can relax at home, socialize with other volunteers, or disappear for a weekend adventure. Uganda's biggest national park (Murchison Falls) is a popular destination, as is at the Source of the Nile and Sipi Falls in Eastern Uganda.





TEACHING IN SCHOOLS

(PRIMARY AND SECONDARY)

On this program, volunteers are placed in a school in Uganda which has high levels of staff shortages as a result of limited funding and inadequate resourcing. These schools are also usually attended by orphaned and underprivileged children. For these reasons teaching volunteers in Uganda are very sorely needed here. The teaching which volunteers in Uganda undertake is very varied and can cover one or more of a wide range of more academic subjects, as well as practical vocational skills.

The majority of these skills help students to improve their career prospects. Volunteers can plan and teach lessons in subjects such as English, Maths, Science, Physical Education, Health, HIV awareness and any other subject that the volunteer has knowledge and interest in. Volunteers can also plan fun activities and sports programs for recess times and after schools. A lot of schools are also attempting to develop sustainable projects such as gardens, farming projects and water sanitation projects. Volunteers are more than welcome to help with these or develop their own projects along with local staff and students.

Fees and Expenses (EUR)

1 week	N/A	8 weeks	1050
2 weeks	350	10 weeks	1260
3 weeks	460	12 weeks	1470
4 weeks	540	16 weeks	1890
5 weeks	740	20 weeks	2310
6 weeks	830	24 weeks	2730

^{*} The Umbrella of Hope Foundation registration fee of EUR239 is charged in addition to the program fees and is valid for 12 months from the start of your first intended placement.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

(3 WEEKS MINIMUM)

The work usually undertaken by volunteers in Uganda orphanages entails organizing play, assisting with arts and crafts, and helping with feeding, hygiene and HIV/AIDS education.

Volunteers in Uganda may be involved in some administrative tasks such as preparing budgets, writing proposals, and setting up and maintaining the children's personal files.

Most of the places we place volunteers include the following; children's home, primary school, secondary school, special needs unit, vocational school and clinics all aimed at meeting the desperate needs of the local community. The children's homes can have a population of over 200 children aged from 4 weeks to 16 years. The schools cater to all the orphans and also the local community. Most children's homes are run under religious beliefs and although they do not require volunteers to hold the same religious values, they do require volunteers to be courteous and respectful.

Some of the children have been found in extremely poor situations and often come to the home malnourished and ill. It can be emotionally challenging but the rewards are immense.

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MEDICAL AND HEALTH

(THROUGHOUT UGANDA)

Placements in Uganda are available in a number clinics and hospitals, where the volunteer's role is tailored according to individual abilities and interests. Qualified medical personnel may work directly with patients and perform emergency duties; they might work in surgery settings or patient support areas. Medical students, pre-med students and those considering a career in health care are certain to find the volunteer experience extremely helpful in solidifying their chosen careers. Volunteers in Uganda with no medical training will be asked to help patients and visitors in waiting rooms, the pharmacy and the in-patient areas. The options for hospitals in Uganda include:

Iganga Hospital in Iganga - is the biggest hospital where volunteers can work. It is underfunded and very basic. In the wards there are no sheets unless patients can bring their own, no food is provided, there is minimal equipment and minimal sanitation. But the local staff here work hard to provide the best medical care they can with the resources they have. Volunteers can help in all general wards, however, Iganga Hospital prefer volunteers to have medical experience as they are very busy and need volunteers who are able to work hands on with patients.

Bugembe Health Centre 4 - is an outpatient clinic. The in-country coordinator is the head doctor and is often there to help out. Volunteers work alongside doctors and nurses with outpatients, lab, malaria/TB /HIV testing, ART clinic, immunizations and maternity. Although this is an extremely busy clinic with anywhere from 200-300 outpatients per day they are often dealing with shortages of testing kits and medication.

Iganga Health Centre 3/ Iganga District Maternity Unit - specializes in maternity but also sees a few outpatients each day. The clinic delivers approximately 300 babies per month, however, staff often find themselves having to improvise as they do not have the equipment they need. Volunteers can assist the nurses and doctors with deliveries, check-ups, immunizations, HIV testing and 6-week screening.

Fees and Expenses (EUR)

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

On this program, volunteers are placed to work on a number of projects we are already implementing in Uganda. Placements are usually with The Umbrella of Hope Foundation projects or projects with our partner organizations in Uganda. These projects are usually focused on the most vulnerable groups like women, youths, and children. The volunteer might work as a capacity building officer, Trainer, mentor, Monitoring and Evaluation officer, fundraiser, HIV/AIDs testing and counselling, project officer among other responsibilities. We need to know which area volunteer has interest in then we guide you accordingly in order for you to have the best out your volunteering experience.

Fees and Expenses (EUR)

1 week	N/A	8 weeks	1050	
2 weeks	350	10 weeks	1260	
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why volunteer abroad?

Being a volunteer requires you to give up your time and money to help those less fortunate than yourself. Despite these sacrifices most volunteers leave their experience having gained considerably more. It sounds like a cliche, but we constantly hear phrases like "life changing experience" - and that it is! In our opinion (and those of most of our volunteers), to get involved at a grassroots level is infinitely more helpful and far more rewarding than a simple donation.

Why should I pay to volunteer?

Good question! A lot of people are surprised when they realise they have to pay to volunteer. However, the cost of volunteering includes accommodation, food, transport and in-country support staff. When you consider the costs you might incur at a hotel or eating at restaurants, the costs are minimal. Plus, as The Umbrella of Hope Foundation offer non-profit program fees you know that every penny of your program fee is going to the local projects and the people you have chosen to support. Our local projects and local partners are grass-root organizations who, in many cases, are solely funded by volunteer fees, and for the concept to work fees are essential. Ultimately, it is a decision of where your money goes. To a hotel, or a local family? We know which we'd choose.

Are there more expenses once I arrive?

Although the program fee includes your accommodation and some meals you will need additional money for buying snacks and souvenirs, eating at cafes or restaurants, socializing with other volunteers and locals, transport and weekend travel. Other costs include your flights, travel insurance, visa and vaccinations, departure tax and buying

a local sim card. Once you've arrived you may also need to pay for bottled water, wifi, and local buses to and from your project, which can cost around USD 1-2 per day depending on your destination and program type.

Will I be useful?

In your day-to-day work you'll be helping impoverished people.

Ultimately, though how useful you are depends on you! The volunteers who are willing to accept that life will be different, and won't always go to plan, are usually the ones who have the most successful placements. Likewise, those who can use their initiative, will both give the most, and in return gain the most from the experience.

Many volunteers choose to undertake additional "side projects" while working. If you see something missing or not working correctly while volunteering, make it your mission to fix it while you're there. It doesn't need to be huge! Maybe it's a leaky tap, a broken gate or a chicken coop that needs to be built. Whatever it is, it will be your legacy after you've left!

There are so many ways to contribute, something that seems very small to you is likely to be life-changing for the person you are helping. A small act of kindness goes a long way.

How bona fide is the local organization?

The Umbrella of Hope Foundation only works with trusted, established partners like hospitals and NGOs. All of The Umbrella of Hope Foundation partner organizations have been fully vetted to ensure that, not only does a genuine need for assistance exist, but that the environments that we place our volunteers are safe and of a high quality.

Transparency is a high priority and their credentials can be checked out. The Umbrella of Hope Foundation ensure that volunteers have access to local support 24/7.

Can I come with a friend, or as a group?

Yes, we welcome individuals, couples, families, small and large groups, students and professionals to join our programs. We don't have an age limit and we know from many past experiences that everyone has the capacity to make an amazing contribution by becoming a volunteer.

Will I be working with other volunteers?

Generally, yes, but this depends on the location and time of year.

Some of our programs are busier than others so please let us know your preference and we will make some suggestions.

We have found that some people prefer to be around fewer volunteers, as this is a great way to become part of the community and to be fully immersed in the local culture. Other volunteers prefer to be around more international volunteers, which is a great way to make new friends and means you will have like-minded people to plan weekend activities with.

Which countries do volunteers come from?

We have volunteers from all over the world, but most of them come from North America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, Korea and Japan. What a great way to meet other like-minded people from around the globe!

What skills or qualifications do I need?

This is totally dependent on the program you choose, and you will find specific requirements are detailed in each program description. Some specialized programs such Healthcare/Medical/ Architecture/Media and others, require

that you hold relevant qualifications and/or experience within that field. In these cases, you will need to provide a current CV/Resume and/or proof of qualifications. Other Healthcare programs will simply require you to be undertaking some form of study in the field. Please note, these programs tend to be more 'observatory' in nature, but the experience can be hugely beneficial to students.

A good grasp of English is generally required for all programs, and mandatory for all Teaching English programs. Some programs may require you to have an understanding of the local language, and we strongly recommend that you at very least learn the basics, so that your time volunteering is both productive, and

enjoyable. On many programs we can arrange for you to join language classes in addition to your placement.

Aside from specific requirements, all programs share a common prerequisite. That above all else, volunteers are open-minded and have a true and honest desire to help, no matter the situation.

Having the ability to adapt and use your initiative will be the single determining factor in the success of your volunteer placement.

What are meals and accommodation like?

Accommodation and meal types can be very different. Every country will have its own distinct 'flavour', not only regarding the food, but the accommodation as well. Where possible, we have deliberately sought out accommodation offering volunteers a 'traditional/local' experience, including the food that is provided at meal time. We feel strongly that immersion into the local culture is one of the fundamentals of successful volunteering. In short,

the accommodation and food you will experience meet our own requirements. That is to say, we wouldn't mind bedding down

What can I do when I'm not volunteering?

There will be plenty of time to relax in the evenings and weekends. We find that volunteers often spend their free time together, and tend to visit local attractions, plan

there for a few weeks ourselves (and likely already have). That said, you need to remember that some locations will be lacking certain amenities you may be accustomed to at home. Hot water for instance ... so no bubble baths after a day's work, sorry!

Ultimately, the specifics of your accommodation and meals will depend on the location you choose. Check out the country 'Details' page for more info. or just ask us.

Will I have access to the Internet?

In the vast number of cases, the locations where our volunteers are placed either have Wifi at the project site, or in the volunteer house/host family accommodation. Where this is not the case, project sites are usually close enough to a sizeable city where internet cafes abound. The opportunity will arise at least once weekly to visit one of these. It is important to remember though, that the internet service in developing countries, as with many other aspects of life, will not be as reliable as you may be used

to. Even when internet is available, it could be slow and/or intermittent. This is a factor that every volunteer will encounter at least once, and must become acclimatised to. The lack of ability to communicate with friends and family as often as you may like can often sound daunting at first, but you may also come to find that this non-reliance on technology can be a refreshing change!

Do I need insurance?

While not all of our programs require insurance, it is highly recommended that all volunteers arrange travel insurance. Regardless of which country you are visiting it is important to be covered should something go wrong. You need to be prepared for all possibilities, which could include losing your luggage, dealing with flight interruptions or cancellations, and covering health and medical expenses. In our view the

excursions or weekend trips to nearby areas, or simply relax at home after a busy week of volunteering.

Our local team can often help to organise weekend excursions and will have some great suggestions. These will incur additional costs, but by making these arrangements once you are in-country the costs will likely be much lower than booking in advance.

best option is World Nomads who offer flexible policies for travellers in developing countries.

What about flights, visas and vaccinations?

The Umbrella of Hope Foundation can advise on what is required to volunteer, and works closely with some amazing companies to help make this is a straightforward process. Whether you need quotes on flights and insurance, or information about visas and vaccinations please check our Resources page for more information.























BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

VOLUNTEERING

We have volunteers join us from all walks of life. Perhaps you are taking a gap year, are in between jobs, or have taken a sabbatical.

For some, it might be the chance to use your annual leave, or a school or university holiday to help others. Whatever the reason, volunteering is the ideal way to convert your free time into an enriching, life-changing experience.

By making the choice to volunteer, you unlock a whole dimension to yourself that could just lie dormant and untested your entire life. You get to experience life in another country. There are gains that will vary from individual to individual in terms of discovering depths of respect, understanding, compassion, maturity; which inevitably leads to a re-appraisal of oneself and what is important.

Deciding on how long to sign up for is very much a personal decision and will depend on factors that only you can determine.

How long can you be away from your studies or career? What level of commitment and stamina do you possess? What can you afford to spend? Although any length of stay is beneficial, a common post-volunteering sentiment is: "I wish I'd stayed longer!"

THE CHALLENGES

Volunteering is going to be a life-changing experience, but it is important to remember that it won't always be easy. You will find that things don't always run smoothly in developing countries, and this experience will challenge, and at times may frustrate you, but keep calm, stay positive and be considerate of other cultures.

Sometimes different customs can seem unusual, or even backward, but try not to forget that you are there to serve the local community. If you are concerned that something is not going your way, look at the bigger picture and ask if it is helping the local people. There are so many ways to contribute, something that seems very small to you is likely to be life-changing for the person you are helping. A small act of kindness goes a long way.

You will need to get used to living with fewer luxuries, having to be sparing with water, eating sometimes less varied food, getting more tired than you are perhaps used to, and being without the mod cons of home. Being immersed in another culture, and understanding how they live can be exciting and an eye-opening experience. Relax and embrace it!

THE REWARDS

In addition to the fulfilling experience of assisting those in need, volunteering is also a wonderful way to meet new people and develop friendships that will last a lifetime. Many volunteers talk with enthusiasm about the relationships they have developed and still maintain with the local people and other international volunteers. We realise this is one of the true benefits of volunteering and encourage you to make the most of the unique

opportunity to develop these cross-cultural friendships.

Take some time to explore your surroundings, and truly experience another country and culture. The daily rigours of volunteer work, although extremely satisfying, can be hard. We encourage our volunteers to have a look around and plan weekend excursions where and when possible.

WHY VOLUNTEER WITH US?

The Umbrella of Hope Foundation is the most affordable way to volunteer and help local communities in developing countries. Why are we cheaper than other organizations? Firstly, we are just a handful of passionate people working hard to help volunteers and local communities around the world. We don't have huge overheads - no company cars, no downtown office - we're just volunteers who thought we could do a better job. Secondly, we work with local organizations wherever we can to keep administration costs to a minimum and also to feed as much money and skills as possible into the local communities where we operate.

All of The Umbrella of Hope Foundation partner organizations have been fully vetted to ensure that not only does a genuine need for assistance exist, but that the environments that we place our volunteers are safe and of a high quality. We understand that you are giving your trust that you will be involved with worthwhile projects and we work hard to ensure this.

The safety of our volunteers is our number one priority. Immersing yourself in new cultures and surroundings is part of the excitement and wonder of traveling. However, as with any travel to developing countries, there is always a chance that things might not go according to plan. We work closely with our partner organizations to understand the local security and safety arrangements and only provide programs where we have carried out a thorough safety assessment. In addition to this we will ensure that all safety and security considerations are made clear to you in your starter/welcome pack. We will also appoint a The Umbrella of Hope Foundation staff member to be your point of contact throughout the duration of your placement.

Volunteering is exciting and challenging, fascinating and fulfilling, and will engage all of your emotions. It will highlight skills and strengths and inevitably, will lead to a re-appraisal of oneself, and we know you will be pleased with what you discover!

Are you ready to become The Umbrella of Hope Foundation Volunteer?



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The Umbrella of Hope is a registered Foundation in The Netherlands (KVK No: 63567563) and Uganda (5562036664).