

# Bridge Volunteers Public Health Volunteer Manual

Location: Livingstone, Zambia

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

As a volunteer, you will spend your time in Livingstone observing and assisting the Maramba Home Based Care Group, as well as assisting the medical staff at several local clinics. More information on individual projects that you will be assisting is attached.

Because Zambia is one of the world's poorest countries, health care suffers as much as any other public service sector in the country. One of the biggest problems facing Zambian health centers at present is the 'brain drain' of medical professionals, with huge numbers of Zambian trained staff leaving the country in search of opportunities abroad. Though structures are in place for effective health care systems, there is an enormous deficit of staff and resources.

Your assistance in the clinic will greatly help the overwhelmed staff there, provide you with an opportunity to learn about infectious and tropical diseases, and give insight into the medical realities of the developing world. With the Home Based Care Program you will have the opportunity to visit the homes of terminally-ill villagers and offer your attention and care.

## PROJECT LOCATION

Mosi-oa-tunya: The Smoke That Thunders. This is how the locals refer to the magnificent spray elevated above the Victoria Falls. Against this backdrop we find Livingstone town, located just six kilometers from the town of Victoria Falls. Livingstone has been described as Zambia's tourist mecca and the "adventure capital of Africa", a place with a colonial character and easygoing African charm. Adjoining the city is Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, which attracts tourists every year to see its famous waterfalls, elephants, giraffes, hippopotamuses, and the only white rhinoceroses in Zambia. Yet wildlife isn't all that Livingstone has to offer; the people there are known for their warmth, hospitality and rich cultural heritage.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATION

Our partner organization, African Impact, is the local organization that will be managing your volunteer placement. It was founded by Andrew and Wendy Conolly in the late 1980s with their lion rehabilitation program at Antelope Park. Based in Southern Africa, African Impact works in partnership with schools, educational institutions, and individuals from around the world to conduct volunteer programs and organize development initiatives for the benefit of African schools and the environment.

## CONTACT INFORMATION AND EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Local address in Zambia:  
c/o Davies Mutanga  
PO Box 60896  
Livingstone, Zambia, AFRICA

African Impact's main office in Harare, Zimbabwe: +263 (0)4 702814 or 252710.  
UK Toll Free No: 08717205439 (from UK only, same price as a local UK phone call).

Fax: +27866183370

Office: +263 (0)4 702814 or 252710. (Hours: 8am-4pm Zimbabwe Time)

Mushili Way House landline number is + (260) 213 324072 or Mambo Way +260 213 320585.

For general inquiries re: your project, please contact your bookings coordinator at Bridge Volunteers or the following local staff members:

Michelle Stanton : +260 975 148 292

Neale Harman : +260 979 720 819

**In the event of a true emergency, you can also call the Bridge Volunteers Emergency Contact Line at the following U.S.-based cell: (541) 740-6370.**

## **BEFORE YOU GO**

### **HEALTH**

#### **Insurance**

Before you leave, check with your health insurance company to ensure that you are covered outside of the country. As a volunteer with BridgeVolunteers, you are covered under our emergency travel/medical insurance plan. However, this program is not meant to serve as a replacement for your own comprehensive medical coverage. (For more information about this program please visit <http://www.volunteeradventures.com/insurance.htm>) You will be enrolled in the program insurance before you travel and you will receive an email of your enrollment confirmation. In that email there will be a link to your individual coverage details, including an insurance card.

**Note:** Visitors to Zambia must take out a comprehensive medical insurance policy to cover them for emergencies, including the cost of evacuation to another country within the region (because the facilities are not as comprehensive in Zambia).

#### **The Basics:**

- It is highly recommended that you bring malaria pills. However, there are two you might want to avoid: **Larium** (sometimes known to cause hallucinations) and **Doxycyclene** (which can make you more susceptible to sunburns).
- If you need medical attention in Zambia, please head to a private hospital, where you are likely to find English-speaking physicians and adequate medical care, provided you have health insurance. The local hospitals should be avoided when possible.
- Although Zambian pharmacies carry a wide variety of good drugs over the counter (just remember to check the expiration date), it's a good idea to bring a small First Aid kit. Include your preferred drugs—enough to last you for the entire trip, plus a bit more.
- While in Zambia, you are advised not to swim in or drink water in the country's dams, streams and rivers as it may be infected with the Bilharzia (Schistosomiasis), a disease caused by parasites.
- The water in most towns isn't likely to have any pathogens but it will probably still cause an upset stomach in visitors. Because of this, you should make sure that all water used for drinking or washing food in Zambia has been purified, boiled, filtered, or treated (with chlorine or iodine tablets).

- Indigestion and traveler's diarrhea are the most common traveling illnesses. Both are a result of eating a new diet. If your diarrhea is persistent, please visit a doctor. But always remember to stay well hydrated and, if need be, drink supplemental salts.
- The sun in Zambia may be much stronger than you're used to, so it's important that you take preventative measures to protect yourself. Use SPF 15, 30, or higher.
- In Zambia, public restrooms are rare, and wherever they do exist toilet paper and soap are far from guarantees, so be sure to carry your own supply.
- In Zambia malaria and yellow fever are potential threats. Since malaria is a mosquito-borne disease, the best way to prevent it is by avoiding mosquito bites. Use DEET-based repellent, and cover up with long pants and long sleeves. Because of DEET toxicity, repellents with a 50% concentration are considered effective yet non-toxic. You'll want to talk to your doctor about anti-malarial drugs and take them as instructed.

### **Immunizations**

To have the most benefit, see a health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect and to start taking medicine to prevent malaria, if you need it.

Even if you have less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see a health-care provider for needed vaccines, anti-malaria drugs and other medications and information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling. Routine vaccinations are recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT), etc.

**Hepatitis A** or immune globulin (IG) vaccination is recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in countries with an intermediate or high level of hepatitis A virus infection where exposure might occur through food or water. Cases of travel-related hepatitis A can also occur in travelers to developing countries with "standard" tourist itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behaviors.

**Hepatitis B** vaccination is recommended for all unvaccinated persons traveling to or working in countries with intermediate to high levels of endemic HBV transmission and who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment, such as for an accident, and for all adults requesting protection from HBV infection.

**Typhoid** vaccination is recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in Central Africa, especially if visiting smaller cities, villages, or rural areas and staying with friends or relatives where exposure might occur through food or water.

**Rabies** vaccination is recommended for travelers spending a lot of time outdoors, especially in rural areas, involved in activities such as bicycling, camping, hiking, or work. Also, children are considered at higher risk because they tend to play with animals and may not report bites.

**Polio** vaccination is recommended for adult travelers who have received a primary series with either inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) or oral polio vaccine (OPV). They should receive another dose of IPV before departure.

**Malaria-** If you will be visiting a malaria risk area in Zambia, you will need to take one of the following antimalarial drugs: [atovaquone/proguanil](#), [doxycycline](#), or [mefloquine \(primaquine\)](#) in special circumstances and only after G6PD testing).

**Note:** Chloroquine is NOT an effective antimalarial drug in Zambia and should not be taken to prevent malaria in this region.

**Malaria risk area in Zambia:** All

Although yellow fever is not a disease risk in Zambia, the government requires travelers arriving from countries where yellow fever is present to present proof of yellow fever vaccination. If you

will be traveling to one of these countries where yellow fever is present before arriving in Zambia, this requirement must be taken into consideration.

Your local doctor or Health Department can also advise you on vaccination requirements, if any. For updated and more complete information, check out the CDC's recommendations for Zambia at their website: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationZambia.aspx>.

## **WEATHER/ CLOTHING**

For the most part, there are three seasons in Zambia:

### **Cool and dry season (April to August)**

Nights and early mornings are cool and can reach as low as 9°C (48°F), while mid-day heat can reach up to 31°C (87°F). If you arrive during this time, be sure to bring warm clothing, and know that even though it is the dry season you should still be prepared for the possibility of rain.

### **Hot and dry season (August to November)**

The hottest part of the dry period occurs between the months of September and October. Temperatures range from 12°C (53°F), to 31°C (87°F) for most parts of the country. Be sure to wear loose fitting, cotton based clothing, but be prepared for the occasional cool morning as well.

### **Warm Wet Season (November to April)**

Days and nights can get very hot and sticky. You need light clothes although there might be a day when the temperature drops, so bring a sweater. Bring a light raincoat, waterproof shoes, and plenty of clothes you can change into just in case you get caught in a downpour.

For both the dry and wet seasons, you will need to bring a hat and a high SPF sun block—the sun is extraordinarily strong and harsh to your skin. Also, this weather information is just a guideline; it's possible that you could have twenty days of rain in the dry season. For your own comfort, be sure to bring the proper gear to prepare you for any weather.

Lastly, regardless of the season, you will be playing with children and/or working in a clinic, so bring comfortable clothes, preferably cotton - ones you could throw away if necessary. Wearing shorts (not too short) is appropriate for men and women, as long as they reach to the knees. Local Zambian women rarely (if ever) wear shorts, so women might consider bringing pants, long skirts, or Capri pants to wear in town. **The clothes you wear to your project should not be revealing or inappropriate in any way.**

## **PACKING LIST**

Passport, insurance certificates and personal documentation, including some certified copies stored separately. ***It is important that you bring your own lock and two spare keys for your personal locker.***

- Project numbers just in case you are stuck somewhere and need to contact them.
- Spending money in US\$—small denomination notes (you can change money once you've been picked up at the airport.)
- Camera with enough film and batteries for the duration of the expedition (Note: you can recharge batteries in Livingstone, and they are also available for purchase there.)
- Personal medical first aid and hygiene kit
- Anti-malarial tablets (we do not recommend Doxycyclene, which makes skin extremely sun-sensitive, or Larium, which can cause hallucinations)
- Proof of recommended inoculations (see your doctor on what inoculations you might need for each country you visit).

- Sunscreen and lip balm
- Sun hat
- Trainers (running shoes)
- Sport sandals especially during wet season
- Flashlight or headlamp, plus spare bulb and batteries
- Sunglasses
- Light rain jacket for wet months (Nov. through Apr.)
- Fleece-type pullover (it can get cold at night)
- Khaki or similar neutral colored lightweight bush wear (**Note: Not with camouflage design**)
- Long trousers
- Mosquito and insect repellent
- Any medication you might be taking at home, bring enough for the duration of your stay
- Water bottle(s)
- Swimwear
- Beach towel and bathing towel
- Waterproof & secure bag for documents & money
- Daypack to carry: fleece, personal medical kit, camera, sunscreen and water bottle (esp. for optional excursions)
- Positive attitude!

**Optional:**

- Daypack to carry: fleece, personal medical kit, camera, sunscreen and water bottle (esp. for optional excursions)
- Notebook/diary and pen
- Anti-diarrhea tablets, anti-histamines, ibuprofen and acetaminophen for aches and pains
- Pocket-knife (not in your hand luggage)
- One soft kit bag for main packing
- Small gifts such as pens, colored pencils, scrapbooks, crayons (you might go to local villages and gifts are always welcome by children)

**SUPPLIES**

If you have extra space in your bag, here's a list of some small things to help the project that are difficult to get in Zambia.

- Old clothing that you no longer need
- Old sheets to give to the people at the Old Age Home
- Toys & games for the kids
- Sports equipment (such as tennis balls and baseball bats)
- Pens & pencils, glue, chalk, rulers, compasses
- Text books for all ages
- Educational posters for the walls
- Trowels & garden forks
- Paint brushes & rollers
- Plastering trowel
- Large letter & number stencils
- Children's novels
- If you are able to bring any of the above items, please just hand them to your project managers on arrival.

For the volunteer house:

- DVD's
- Books – wildlife & novels
- Cards & games

## **IN ZAMBIA**

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE INFORMATION**

You will be met at the airport by one of our project managers – Michelle Stanton & Neale Harman, or one of our other appointed representatives at the airport.

Michelle Stanton : +260 975 148 292

Neale Harman : +260 979 720 819

**NOTE: If you cannot find the representative, please do not accept any offers to take you anywhere.** Instead, please call the above numbers, or you can also call the house landline number at + (260) 213 324072.

**When you arrive at immigration you MUST request a business visa and state the following:** "I am volunteering for The Happy Africa Foundation, which is a Zambian registered NGO". African Impact is the partner and only representatives for The Happy Africa Foundation (THAF.)

An African Impact Livingstone representative will meet all arrivals (with the THAF NGO registration certificate) at Livingstone airport and act as a liaison between the volunteer and immigration should clarification be required. Should volunteers be arriving at a different port of entry (Lusaka / Victoria Falls) we MUST know in advance in order to advise the immigration officers of their expected arrival and supply them with a copy of the THAF NGO registration certificate to avoid any potential misunderstandings.

**If asked to give an address of where you will be staying in Zambia, please state:**

Livingstone Backpackers, 559 Makambo Road, Livingstone, Zambia

Please also find a letter of invitation from African Impact attached in case you should run into problems.

Once in Zambia, you can get your visa extended (up to 90 days) with the help of your project coordinator.

For a list of major Zambian embassies and consulates internationally (i.e. the Zambian consulate in Washington D.C.), as well as international embassies and consulates in Zambia (i.e. the US consulate in Zambia), visit [www.embassies.abroad.com](http://www.embassies.abroad.com)

**Important note:** As a safety precaution, make sure to make a photocopy of any important personal documentation. This includes the first page of your passport, your passport's entry stamp, return plane tickets, credit card contact information, health insurance, etc. If you want to be especially secure, it is a good idea to make electronic or scanned versions of your documents, and send them to yourself via email. Always separate the original from the photocopy, but **always** keep one form of documentation (preferably the photocopy) with you at all times and **keep whatever documentation you receive at the airport.**

## **Departure**

There is a departure tax of US\$20 for all international flights out of Lusaka or Livingstone, and this is always payable at departure by you. It cannot be prepaid on your ticket, so set the cash aside in advance when you arrive in Zambia.

## **PROJECT ACCOMODATIONS**

You will be housed in one of several volunteer houses which are all within walking distance from each other. All houses are very comfortable, and staffed with a cook (only one cook at Mambo; however all food is provided for each of the houses) and laundry/cleaning ladies. The houses all have a large living/dining area, several bathrooms, a large garden, a safe for your valuables, and satellite TV (Only 2 of the houses have TVs). One of the houses has a big swimming pool, which is available to all volunteers. All bedding is provided, so you will not need to bring a sleeping bag with you, though sometimes it is useful in the colder months (June - September). Regardless of which house you end up staying at, all meals, laundry and transportation to and from your projects and tourist activities will be provided and organised by your volunteer co-ordinator.

All sites have electricity (US participants must bring an adaptor for 'British' 3-pronged square plugs), hot water, locked cupboards and/or safes. You should bring your own travel mosquito net though, as those are not provided.

Your laundry will be washed, ironed and folded for you free of charge once a week and you will be given a laundry basket to use for the duration of your stay. We recommend that you do not bring clothing that you are too attached to, as the facilities are basic by the developed world's standards and the staff would not want to ruin your favorite clothes.

Our partner organization believes that volunteers living together and working closely together with their volunteer coordinators is the surest way of guaranteeing their safety and being able to attend to their most pressing needs. For this reason we expect all volunteers to stay only in the accommodation provided for them and do not allow volunteers to spend nights away in the town or nearby villages unless they are away on pre-arranged sightseeing excursions.

Note: Couples can request their own room if they give Bridge Volunteers advance notice.

## **MEALS**

Volunteers on the Livingstone program will be provided with three meals a day. Breakfast is on a help yourself basis and usually consists of cereals/porridge, toast, tea and coffee. Depending on each of the volunteers' daily schedule, they will then be given sandwiches to take with them or will be fed lunch at the volunteer house. The main meal of the day is dinner in the evenings, which is cooked and provided for you at your volunteer house. This usually consists of casseroles, pasta dishes, roast dinners, etc. Please note that while we do our very best to provide you with varied and interesting meals, due to the nature of our rural location food will generally be quite simple. We ask that you are not overly fussy and ungrateful with what is provided for you.

Every meal will have a vegetarian option.

Please let us know prior to your departure of any food allergies or specific requirements. We do everything we can to provide for any dietary requirements, but we may have to ask you to bring some things with you if what you need is not available locally.

Sometimes on weekends you will need to cook your own meals with ingredients that will be provided as the staff will have well-deserved time off. Weekends are usually good times for tourist activities and exploring the surrounding area, so that is the time that a lot of volunteers are out and about anyway.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The food you eat at your site might be very different from the food you are accustomed to at home or unlike anything you've ever had before. You may not like every meal

and you don't have to eat it, but you should always be respectful and never say anything offensive about the food that has been prepared for you.

Even though you'll be eating most of your meals with other volunteers, here's a little information on the local Zambian cuisine:

Zambia's native cuisine is based on *nshima*, a cooked porridge made from ground maize, which is eaten at least twice a day. This is usually made thin, perhaps with sugar, for breakfast, then eaten thicker, the consistency of mashed potatoes, for dinner. For these main meals it will usually be accompanied by a tasty relish, called *ndiwo*, which can be fish, beans, chicken, beef and vegetables. At many of the small restaurants they will often offer only three dishes: *nshima* with chicken, *nshima* with meat, and *nshima* with fish.

On a cultural note: most Zambians will only eat *nshima* with their hands—their right hand in particular—though you may be offered utensils as a foreigner. After a traditional meal, a bowl of water is passed around to wash your hands with. Make sure that you allow any elders to wash their hands before you do, and assist them if necessary.

In addition to *nshima*, Zambians eat a lot of simple meat stews and curries packed with rice, potatoes and other starches including sorghum, beans, pumpkin, and okra. For fruit, there's the local *paw-paw*, bananas, mangos, and lemons.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Telephones**

In order to make calls abroad, we recommend that all volunteers bring their own mobile phones as we have locked the phones to outgoing international calls. The phone bills are too high for the houses and we have had to implement this. You can obtain a SIM card in Zambia and ensure that the phone is enabled for international roaming. Outgoing calls are limited to local calls and this excludes local mobile phone calls.

**Note:** You will need to have your cellular provider at home 'unlock' your phone before you leave, so that you are able to use foreign SIM cards in your phone.

### **Internet**

Internet access is surprisingly good, though the service among the various cafes varies widely. Most towns have at least one Internet café. No matter where you go connection speeds vary drastically, as does the cost, so do a little research in town to find out the best deals. The cafes often experience various power cuts, malfunctions and server outages, so please be patient, and be aware that most internet connections are not nearly as quick as the equivalent first world standard. Your project coordinators will have advice for you on which internet cafes to use.

### ***Laptops are not recommended***

### **Snail Mail**

You can send mail to basically anywhere, just take it to the local Zambian post office. However, Mercury Mail (a service that delivers mail both internally and internationally) offers an inexpensive courier service (more reliable and timely than the post), which you can access at any local Mercury office. You can have people send mail to you at PO Box 60896, Livingstone, Zambia, just make sure it's c/o Davies Mutanga. You are not advised to have packages sent to you as the post service is unreliable, but letters and postcards are fine.

## **ELECTRICITY**

The local voltage is 220V, delivered at 50Hz. Sockets fit plugs with square pins, like the UK design, so be sure to buy a universal adaptor if need be.

## **TIMEZONES**

Zambia is two hours ahead of Greenwich meantime, and does not observe Daylight Savings.

To find out the difference between your time zones, you can go to:

<http://www.greenwichmeantime.com/time-zone/africa/zambia/> or Google: Zambia local time.

## **FREE TIME AND EXCURSIONS**

You will have some free time (and the discretion of your professor) to participate in independent activities. Guideline prices for the most popular activities:

- Dinner cruise on the Zambezi: USD \$35.00 – 45.00
- White water rafting: USD \$110 half day
- Gorge swing: USD \$90 half day
- Bungee Jump: USD \$90 per jump
- Helicopter Ride for 15 minutes: USD \$90
- Microlight Flight for 15 minutes: USD \$85
- Check out: Safari Par Excellence (<http://www.safpar.com>) for price ranges and information. This is the company that our partner organization does all their excursions with.

## **MONEY AND FINANCES**

Because customs can be so hectic, our partner organization asks that you **avoid changing money until you are picked up by your coordinator**, who can then suggest where you might want to go.

The currency is the Zambian kwacha (Kw), which is subdivided into 100 ngwee. This has been devaluing steadily in line with the country's exchange rate. For current exchange rate, visit this website: [www.x-rates.com](http://www.x-rates.com).

Most hotels, restaurants, and the bigger shops will take credit cards and US\$ cash but only in Livingstone. Credit cards are pretty useless in the rest of the country, where only local currency is accepted. The ATM's at Barclays and Standard chartered banks in Livingstone work well so we recommend volunteers bring a Bank card, small amount of US dollars and if necessary traveller's checks. Traveller's checks can be a nuisance as you may have to wait in line for about 20 mins whilst the checks are cleared in Maputo, which takes another half hour and can therefore be quite inconvenient. Volunteers must travel with the original bank purchase slips for their traveller's checks too.

**A word of caution:** Do not attempt to change currency with money-changers at the border—they're notorious for their dishonesty. It is better to try to change money in town at the banks or even at one of the shops (sometimes those run by the Asian community are most approachable in this regard). Lastly, using money changers on the black market is illegal and you run the danger of being ripped off.

### **Tipping**

Tipping is a difficult and contentious topic—worth thinking about carefully. Some say it's illegal in Zambia, but the reality is that it's done widely and is expected, though the amounts are generally moderate. Ask locally what's appropriate. Someone helping with baggage might want US\$.50, while sorting out a problem about a reservation might be around US\$1-3. Restaurants will usually add a service charge to the bill, but if they don't then 10% would be appreciated if the service was good.

## **Spending Money**

In terms of spending money—it depends largely on what you want to do while you're there. Adventure excursions can add up quickly (see Free Time and Excursions) so if you plan on participating in these, please plan your budget accordingly. \$300 to \$600 USD should be enough to cover personal expenses such as phone & internet use, beer, souvenirs, etc. In general, restaurants, bars, and shopping items cost only a bit less than they would in the US.

US\$

Alcohol: approx \$5 for a drink

Coke: approx \$1

Chips/crisps: approx \$1

Chocolate: approx \$1

Phone call: approx \$2 per minute

Internet: varies

Bungee jumping: approx \$100

Whitewater rafting: \$100

**If you carry USD cash to the project please ensure the bills are dated later than the year 2000 as any bills that are older (i.e. 1999 and earlier) cannot be accepted as payment for excursions and safaris.**

## **VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS**

Africa provides an ever-changing environment with frequent power failures, water shortages, temperature fluctuations and other uncontrollable situations. Also, "African time" can be difficult and frustrating for those used to a very structured life. Work can often be delayed or interrupted because of holidays, weather, vacations or unexpected events. ***Volunteers need to remain flexible, patient, understanding and good humored.***

Once you arrive in Africa, your care is the responsibility of ***African Impact***. They promise to provide you with all your daily needs, keep you out of harm's way, and support you in your volunteer work. In exchange, you are expected to attend work punctually and to behave consistently in ways that reflect well upon ***African Impact*** and ***Bridge Volunteers***. We expect you to dress according to local norms (nothing too revealing) and to treat people on the work site with kindness and respect. In addition, ***African Impact*** and ***Bridge Volunteers*** insist that volunteers avoid any contact with drugs or any culturally inappropriate activities relating to alcohol. These projects rely on networks, and those networks are held together by good relations. If a case should arrive in which the project staff feels that volunteers have repeatedly behaved in ways that contradict the basic spirit of this agreement, ***African Impact*** and ***Bridge Volunteers*** reserve the right to remove volunteers from the program.

We view the volunteer experience as a commitment that includes a willingness to overcome challenges of various sorts. In cases where volunteers are experiencing difficulties, we strongly encourage creative and collaborative solutions. At the same time, we respect the ability and freedom of our volunteers to make their own judgment and understand that volunteer work only functions well when volunteers retain the will to participate fully and energetically.

**Volunteers should be aware that the living conditions they come in contact with can be shocking to someone who is not accustomed to them. Often, volunteers feel uncomfortable because they are working in an environment that they are not used to, and occasionally may not be able to communicate well due to language/cultural differences (though the official language in Zambia is English). This is normal and should be expected, but should not be underestimated. Most volunteers overcome these challenges and find that the volunteer work is extremely rewarding.**

## **RULES AND GUIDELINES**

You will be given a complete orientation upon arrival at each project. Please be aware of all the rules and respect the areas in which you are working and your project leaders. If you are put in an uncomfortable position, they should be able to accommodate you. We also would like to emphasize flexibility. Open-mindedness will go a long way in ensuring an enjoyable volunteer experience.

A few points to keep in mind:

**Relations:** AIDS is widespread throughout Africa and as such WE DO NOT ENCOURAGE ANY SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS WHILE ON YOUR PLACEMENT. It is not only your own health you are risking, but also the health and safety of others around you. In addition, volunteers who enter platonic or sexual relationships with staff that cause any problems for management should remember that such behavior will have serious consequences for the staff member involved, and may include dismissal.

**Drugs:** If you use, abuse or even come in contact with drugs, drug users, drug pushers or anyone remotely connected with drugs, illegal or otherwise (other than for medical reasons), your placement will be terminated immediately, your visa will be withdrawn, and you will be deported from the country with no compensation. If you are taking drugs for medical reasons, and have not informed **Bridge Volunteers** and **our partner organization** of your condition prior to departing for your placement, the same condition applies. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.

### **Discrimination on any grounds**

If you see, hear or encounter any discrimination of any kind, DO NOT CHALLENGE THAT PERSON OR INTERVENE. If you feel that you need to express your views, please tell the PROJECT MANAGER and they will take the necessary actions. Our partner organization is totally against any form of discrimination and any information given to us is taken very seriously.

**You will be given a more thorough code of conduct during your orientation.**

## **SAFETY AND PRECAUTIONS**

Zambia is not considered a dangerous country—it is seen as one of the most politically stable countries in Africa. However tourists are always targets for pickpockets and thieves and you should be aware of certain safety concerns. Please educate yourself about Zambia before you go by doing your own independent research so that you can be alert for all types of situations.

**For the most part, using common sense as a traveler should suffice, but here are some useful tips:**

- Travel in pairs - It is a good idea to travel in pairs or groups, especially at night. Even if you are in a group, at night it is often best to take a taxi rather than walk.
- Use caution in unfamiliar locations - Do not wander into unfamiliar areas alone without knowing where you are going. It is best to consult a map before setting out to explore new areas.
- Safeguarding valuables - Remember foreigners are easy targets for thieves; don't let yourself be the victim. You should always safeguard your money and belongings and never leave them unattended. You may want to bring a money belt for your money, or carry a fake wallet with a little bit of cash to give up in case you are in a compromising position. Do not show a lot of cash in public, and you should think twice about carrying expensive devices, such as cameras, in public.
- Avoid flashy dress - Never wear expensive jewelry, etc. while traveling. Don't carry all your credit cards and other valuables with you. All you should need for everyday use is one form of ID and a small amount of cash. If you need to wear a watch, bring a cheap one.

- Backpacks and purses - These should be worn in front of you when in public places to avoid being pick-pocketed. It may also be wise to put locks on your backpack's zippers. A man who carries a billfold should place it in a front pocket while in crowded areas. In restaurants, etc. Don't leave your backpack or purse on the seat next to you, or hanging on the back of your chair. Keep it on your lap or at your feet (with your foot through the strap) at all times. If you carry a daypack, put your valuables in the largest pocket, because this tends to be a more difficult pocket for pickpockets to access.
- Photocopy important documents - Keep copies of your passport, credit cards the phone numbers of your bank and credit card companies in a safe place just in case you are robbed. It is also wise to keep original documents in a safe place and carry photocopies of them with you.
- Public demonstrations - Avoid any kind of public demonstration. Although these are rarely violent, there is always the possibility that one could turn violent.
- Female travelers – For females, it is important that you learn the local attitudes, project a certain level of confidence, and develop conversational techniques to avoid overt male attention. Also, as a general rule, women should try to be fairly formal in their interactions with men they encounter in everyday situations (taxi drivers, shopkeepers, etc.), because sometimes men mistake informality for disrespect or interest in forming a deeper relationship. For the same reason, it's also a good idea to ride in the back seat of a cab instead of next to the driver.
- Awareness –Be aware of your surroundings at all times and always try to look in control. Even if you are lost walk purposefully rather than in circles scratching your head.
- Swimming - Before swimming, inquire about the safety of the water in that area

## **CULTURAL CUSTOMS**

Zambia's population is around 10.5 million, and composed almost entirely of Africans, though there are some smaller minority groups including Europeans (about 1,500), Asians (about 10,500), Americans (about 8,500), and others (about 500,000). While the people of Africa are often viewed as belonging to a multitude of tribes, Zambian cultural identity is rather complex. There are many different cultural groups in Zambia (about 16 have been identified) and over 70 different dialects spoken, though English is spoken by almost everyone. As you will see, there are cultural differences throughout the country, just as there are in different parts of most other countries as well.

And though the statistics about African countries can often be uncertain (46% of Zambians are under 15 years old, and 20% of the adults are infected with AIDS), they speak nothing of the warmth and generosity you will find if you take time to interact with the local people. Almost 80% of the adult population is literate, and most Zambians are enthusiastic conversationalists. They will be eager to assist you when they can, and to help you learn about their country and customs as they learn about yours as well.

### **Greetings**

Zambians are used to a more leisurely lifestyle than most Westerners. Because of this, you should greet people in a leisurely way; say good afternoon and ask how the person is doing before you ask for what you need. If you've been introduced, or are greeting someone you have previously met, greetings also start with a hand shake, it's not appropriate to kiss and hug a Zambian in public.

It's also important to know that both familiar and unfamiliar adults in Zambia always address each other as Mr. Banda or Mrs. Musonda, using the person's last name whether they are in the upper class, lower class, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, villager or urban dweller or the person is your employee, your taxi driver, waiter or waitress, boss or subordinate. Addressing or calling them aloud by their first name is considered disrespectful, unless they are a child.

Lastly, an interesting thing about Zambian culture is that after greetings have been exchanged and you are just socializing, it's considered normal for a guest and host to sit quietly without any conversation for while. That silence may be torture to a Westerner but most Zambians find it

normal. So don't try to fill empty silent moments by just saying something because you are feeling uneasy or bored.

For further information on Zambian etiquette, you can visit this website:

<http://www.thezambian.com/zambia/etiquette.aspx>

### **Photography**

Be sure to ask permission before taking photos of government buildings and bridges, as this is occasionally regarded with some suspicion. Out of respect you should also ask permission before taking pictures of locals.

### **Business Hours**

Government offices are open from about 8 to 1 and 2 to 5, Monday through Friday only (and sometimes they are only open till 3). Banks are open from about 8:15 to 2:30 Monday to Friday. Most banks are closed for business on Saturdays except the last and first Saturday of each month and when they are open from 8:15 to 11. Your local banks may have slightly different times, and most restaurants and cafes (internet included) and large markets will have later hours.

### **Nightlife**

Most of Zambia's nightlife consists of drinking and dancing, or chatting at a local bar. Because some of the dance clubs can get pretty wild at night, it's advisable to travel in groups.

## **CULTURE SHOCK**

It is obvious that you will be entering a new environment where much is unfamiliar. Coming to Zambia from more developed areas of the world can be quite a shock, and can be extremely disorienting and uncomfortable. Some people call this "culture shock".

Almost everyone experiences culture shock to some degree. It can be frustrating and confusing, but there are positive steps that can be taken to minimize the impact.

- Realize that this is normal and that you will live through it.
- Be open-minded and ready to learn. You will come to realize that there are different ways to do things, and that's okay.
- Research your new culture. You can begin today, by reading the suggested links at the end of this packet. Guidebooks also have good suggested reading lists.
- Look for logical reasons for behaviors in the new culture that you may find strange. With a little analysis, you may find that these different behaviors don't seem strange after all.

**Above all, flexibility, humility and open-mindedness will be your most valuable traits.**

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **Websites:**

**Safari Par Excellence** (<http://www.safpar.com>) The company that African Encounter does all their excursions with.

**The Zambian Embassy** ([www.zambiaembassy.org](http://www.zambiaembassy.org)) The Zambian embassy in the U.S—a great source for info about travel to the country, as well as historical and cultural info.

**The Zambian** ([www.thezambian.com](http://www.thezambian.com)) An online resource for Zambians and visitors to Zambia. Be sure to check out their resources for visitors at the bottom of the webpage.

**Zambia Tourism** ([www.zambiantourism.com](http://www.zambiantourism.com)) An extensive and well put together source of information for Zambian tourists.

**The Lowdown** ([www.lowdown.co.zm](http://www.lowdown.co.zm)) An electronic version of Lusaka's monthly magazine.

**Sunvil Africa** ([www.sunvil.co.uk/africa](http://www.sunvil.co.uk/africa)) The homepage for Sunvil Africa (a travel company), including an on-line version of a several African travel guides.

**Times of Zambia** ([www.times.co.zm](http://www.times.co.zm)) An extensive version of the Times of Zambia, featuring main stories of the day.

**The Post** ([www.postzambia.com](http://www.postzambia.com)) An independent view of Zambian life and politics.

**Zambia Online** ([www.zambia.co.zm](http://www.zambia.co.zm)) Bills itself as the "national homepage of Zambia", and has some useful links.

### **Recommended books:**

*Tales of Zambia* by Dick Hobson. 1996.

*Africa: A Biography of the Continent* by John Reader. 1997.

*The Africa House* by Christine Lamb. 1999.

*Travels and Researches in Southern Africa* by David Livingstone. 1857.

*A History of Zambia* by Andrew Roberts. 1976.

*The Africa House* by Christine Lamb. 1999.

*The Lake of Royal Crocodiles* by Eileen Bigland. 1939.

*Pole to Pole* by Michael Palin. 1999.

*Survivor's Song: Life and Death in an African Wilderness* by Mark and Delia Owens. 1993.

*An Explorer's Handbook—Travel, Survival, and Bush Cookery* by Christina Dodwell. 1984.

*Zambia: Condemned to Debt* Published by the World Development Movement. 2004.

### **Recommended films**

*Nowhere in Africa* (2002)

*14 Million Dreams* (2003)

*Enough is Enough* (2005)

*Born Free* (1996)

*Safari ya Jamhuri* (Road to Freedom; 2003)

*Out of Africa* (1985)

*Africa, the Serengeti* (1994)

*Mama Africa* (2002)

*The Constant Gardner* (2005)

*National Geographic: Africa* (2001)

*Babu's Babies* (2003)

*The Oath* (2004)