



UK OFFICE: Christian Centre, Oldbrook, Milton Keynes, MK6 2TG Tel: 01908 553070

UGANDA OFFICE: Telela B, Lira, Uganda

Email: missions@lightforce.org.uk Web: www.lightforce.org.uk

THANK YOU FROM LIGHTFORCE INTERNATIONAL

First of all, we would like to take the time to thank you for choosing to volunteer for LightForce International, giving your time to support the work that we do. Upholding our vision of taking good news to the poor and practical help to those in need.

We have taken the time to put together this information booklet for you so that you are up to date with all that LightForce do in Uganda. We ask that you please take the time to read the information, policies, and guidelines carefully, in preparation for your time with us.

As a volunteer for LightForce International we ask that you agree to live and work by our policies and principles.

- Act within the best interests of the charity and its beneficiaries
- Look to work alongside our policies, procedures and staff members, not trying to change how things are done but enhancing what we do
- Treat all our staff members, community members and anyone who comes into contact with the charity with respect and dignity.
- Adhere to our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policies and Procedures

Thank you again for volunteering your time with LightForce International. We hope it is a life changing time for you.

UGANDA VOLUNTEERS INFORMATION MANUAL

Uganda is situated in East Africa, sharing borders with Kenya, Tanzania, Congo, Southern Sudan, and Rwanda. Its capital city is Kampala. Educated Ugandans are generally fluent in English. There are over 30 different languages in Uganda. The languages that are spoken in the north are Luo and Acholi.



Weather

Temperatures rarely drop below 20 degrees and in dry season can reach highs of 40 degrees, between December and February the weather is at its hottest. Most of the year day time temperature is between 25- 30 degrees with little rain but when it does rain it is usually a heavy downpour.

Important information:

Money:

To change money whilst you are in Uganda can either be done in our offices in Lira, or in Kampala if you are travelling to Masaka. It is important that notes are clean and not torn. Do not bring traveller's cheques.

Entering Entebbe:

You will need to complete an e-visa online before your trip to Uganda. You can find Guidance on this in our Volunteer section on the website.

You must have your Yellow Fever certificate ready to present and be checked as you arrive at Entebbe airport.

If travel has been arranged with us, our driver will be at the airport to collect you. He will be holding up a sign, as you come out of the doors in the airport look for him.

Mobile phones:

If you have a mobile phone it will work in Uganda if you ensure it is "unlocked" from your UK network. You can purchase a local Ugandan SIM card which is inexpensive to buy and use. Our staff can help you to do this.

Sleeping arrangements:

Lira, Uganda

You would be staying in a village called Telela B, just outside a town called Lira, in the North of Uganda. Here we have a safari lodge where we can accommodate over 20 people. The lodge is beautifully kept and is located within a secure compound. You will



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be collected from the airport by a trusted driver and driven to Lira which takes between 5 and 6 hours, you will also be collected after your time with us and taken back. This comes as part of your £600 payment.

Masaka, Uganda

You will be staying near Masaka Town in South West Uganda in the care of our partners Pastor Bruno and his wife Mary. Accommodation is simple but adequate; you will experience rural Uganda at its best. Your trip from the airport will take 4 hours. Transport comes as part of your £600 donation

Food and leisure time:

Lira



A cook prepares meals for you during your stay with us. Food is a mixture of traditional Uganda dishes and western food. There is plenty of seasonal fruit & vegetables and meat. We cater for vegetarians and food allergies. We expect our volunteers to be adventurous and try some of the traditional African dishes. If you have or are recovering from an eating disorder you should declare it on the application form.

In the evenings, you can sit outdoors in Lira. Just remember, this is the time for mosquitoes, wear long sleeves and trousers.

Safari trips to Murchison Falls National Park are on offer most of the year. Our driver will take you to the park where you will grab a fresh chapatti on the way before meeting your guide for the day. This is an unforgettable experience. If you are interested in booking the trip please email to see about the availability during your trip.

Masaka

Whilst in Masaka, all meals will be prepared for you. Leisure time will entail spending time with Pastor Bruno, his wife and family. You will visit members of the community, take part in recreational activities the church puts on and have time to play with the children.

Washing your clothes:

LightForce International provides bed linen and towels. A housekeeper takes care of all domestic chores. Volunteers do not usually need to engage in domestic chores however it is a good experience to learn how to wash clothes as locals do.



Getting around whilst you are with us:

The common mode of transport in Uganda is Boda Boda (a motorbike). This is a cheap and efficient way to navigate your way to town. The staff at LightForce have contact details for local and trustworthy drivers, please speak to them about it.

If you are going on a safari trip whilst you are staying with us, we will provide a driver and the vehicle for the day.

Friendliness:

You won't fail to realise very quickly how friendly the people are. They will all speak to you and make you feel very welcome. Whilst in the local community it is extremely important that you visit people respectfully, greeting people with a shake of the hand and if you have learned any greetings in the local dialect that is always welcomed.

Why volunteer

- To give something of yourself to other people
- Experience another culture
- Live simply and examine your values
- Your financial contribution helps the sustainability of our work
- Understand poverty and realise its impact
- Ugandans feel encouraged to see you there and helping them





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Is this for you?

Being a Christian is not essential – but you must at least be sympathetic and open. In Masaka, the activities are based around the Christian Faith and this will form a big part of your trip.

Prayer and Bible study is not scheduled into your time, however, we encourage you to meet as a group or have daily time to think and reflect on your day. There are local churches close to the compound in Lira and also in town where you will be warmly greeted and well looked after.

It is also a great opportunity to serve. It goes without saying that you have got to love people and children. You must be patient, kind and generous but at the same time strict in order to earn their respect and ensure the smooth running of the project. You must be able to handle the heat and humidity and insects. You will struggle if you have a morbid fear of all things creepy crawly! If you are prepared to put in the work it will be the most amazing, life changing experience you will ever have. It may take time to adjust to the food, time difference, heat, smell and culture but it will be well worth it.

Principles you agree to live by whilst with us.

Volunteers agree to the following:

- Not to smoke or drink alcohol at the LightForce base or at project locations
- Not to get romantically involved with other visitors or people working at LightForce
- Respect that the office and kitchen are out of bounds.
- Get involved with the program as required
- Make every effort to be courteous to all and maintain unity in the team at all times
- To treat our staff with courtesy and respect

Kit list

There is no need to bring sheets & towels.

- Smart and modest clothing for when you are visiting projects or if you attend church (shirt and trousers for men, long skirt and blouse or long dress for women)
- Light cotton underwear
- Long trousers for evenings, shirts, long sleeve tops. (Note: jeans may not be comfortable as it is generally hot and they won't dry quickly when washed),
- ¾ length trousers are very practical for the day.
- Shorts must reach the knee
- T-shirts or short sleeve tops
- Cotton night wear
- One really good pair of shoes-sandals that fit well for general every day outside use.
- Walking boots or heavy shoes for use during wet and muddy seasons
- A set of clothes for hands on activities (gardening, painting etc)
- Flip flops or slippers for in the house
- First aid kit including blockers for diarrhoea, rehydration sachets, paracetamol, antihistamine tablets (especially if you react badly to bites) and cream for fungal infections (which are more common in the humidity)
- Sun tan cream, after sun.
- Hat or a cap.
- Insect repellent (spray variety is easiest to apply)- Jungle Formula Max Strength is recommended
- Bring your own feminine hygiene stuff.
- Torch & spare batteries as there are frequent power cuts
- Bring a diary-you'll regret not keeping one
- Toiletries-soap, shampoo etc.
- Bible & books to read
- Camera & music

Before you leave home

Please note the following:



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- You will be asked to complete a DBS check
- Passports must be valid for a period of 6 months longer than the period you will be in Uganda. Check it before you apply.
- Travel Insurance. Most travel policies do not cover doing any type of work. We highly recommend SALT Insurance company <https://www.saltinsurance.com/> as they cover the types of activity you may be involved in.
- Vaccinations are required for entrance into Uganda. Take advice from your GP.
- Malaria Tablets. As this is a high-risk malarial region you will require these. Seek your doctor's advice. As malaria tablets are not 100% effective, you need to take other preventative measures such as covering up at dawn & dusk and using mosquito repellent. We also recommend you travelling with your tablets in your hand luggage, that way if anything was to happen to your baggage you are protected from when you arrive.
- **Make photocopies of your passport, visa, tickets, travel insurance certificate and print out a list of emergency contact details and any medication you are currently taking. Give this to the office upon arrival.**

Getting to Uganda

You can get flights to Entebbe from a variety of airlines; unfortunately, there are no direct flights. You can come with whatever airline you wish but we need to coordinate arrivals and departures. Lira, where we are based, is a 6-7 hour drive from Entebbe Airport. Please plan to arrive in the early morning otherwise arrive the night before and stay in a hotel and we will collect you the following morning. Ensure that you have breakfast or a meal before; toilets will be few and basic as you travel, but the driver will ensure you can take comfort breaks.

What you can bring for the children

People ask us what they can bring that will be useful.

- Children's clothes
- Pencil crayons
- Educational toys
- Resources for teaching
- Coloured paper
- Bubbles
- Skipping ropes
- Story books



Please DO NOT bring anything electrical or with batteries

Please make the resources available to the senior UK staff person on arrival – don't give things out directly. We don't want to breed a culture where all our visitors are seen as gift bearers.

Staff should not ask you for help with school fees, building their house, financing a small business or for any of your belongings. They have been told that this is an abuse of their position so please don't do anything to encourage such practice.

We ask that you don't give email addresses & telephone number in the UK as you may be plagued with requests for help after you return home.

Health and Security

LightForce International has been providing opportunities for adults of all ages to volunteer on short term & medium term mission trips for 40 years. Our safety record is excellent. We don't have any serious incidents on record. We want to keep it that way and ensure that people joining our teams feel as secure as possible and are cared for. Sometimes volunteers are frustrated by the "ground rules" applied but we believe adhering to the guidelines has enhanced security.

The house is secure and supervised 24hrs a day by our guards.

We ensure that in Entebbe ALL volunteers are met. Volunteers need to come out of the airport and look for a sign saying LightForce International or with their name on.

Copies of Medical insurance should be placed in the LightForce International UK office before departure and a copy given to the office upon arrival in Lira. This ensures that in the unlikely event of serious sickness or accident there are no delays in organising treatment or if necessary repatriation.



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Travellers expect to occasionally get tummy upsets or feel the effects of heat and humidity. Take care not to eat food from unknown sources, drink safe or bottled water and peel fruits before eating. This will help avoid most problems. Personal hygiene is also more critical in hot climates. If volunteers are feeling unwell they should always make someone in the LightForce leadership team aware.

It is not unusual for most people to feel a little homesick. Especially if they are away for the first time or this is their first long trip. Keeping busy, making new friends and getting involved in the project will help. Those with a mobile phone can buy a sim card cheaply to keep contact with family and friends in the UK.

There is no greater risk of being mugged or robbed in Uganda than there is in the UK. The same rules apply there as here. Just be vigilant and use common sense.

- Don't go out alone after dark
- Don't carry phones, cameras or bags in ways that they can be easily snatched
- Don't carry large amounts of money or let it be on display when paying for things – just carry what is necessary for the day.
- Dress appropriately and modestly
- Don't be rowdy or act in ways that attract attention.
- Keep your wits about you – don't be flattered by people who you don't know – people will like to talk to you because you are English. Just be alert. Most are genuinely friendly but from time to time there'll be an opportunist.
- Follow the local advice given you – keep out of "no go areas" and don't go anywhere without advising the local project leader. Never change your plans without advising them.

We are so excited to welcome you to Uganda and wish you a safe journey to us and a memorable life changing time with us.

LightForce International

Contact Details

LightForce International UK

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