



Volunteer Field Manual

Amigos Worldwide. Registered in England, Company Number 6122350, Registered Charity Number 1119450
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Contact Details

Visit our website www.amigos.org.uk, or drop us an email at info@amigos.org.uk

Alternatively, call us on 01271 377664

Or visit our office 3 Boutport Street, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 1RH

History

Since the late 1980's Uganda has rebounded from civil war and economic catastrophe to become relatively peaceful, stable and prosperous. However much of the northern population remain blighted by one of Africa's most brutal rebellions. In the 1970s and 1980s Uganda was notorious for its human rights abuses, first during the military dictatorship of Idi Amin from 1971-79 and then after the return to power of Milton Obote, whom Amin had ousted. During this time up to half a million people were killed in state-sponsored violence.

Since becoming president in 1986 Yoweri Museveni has introduced democratic reforms and has been credited with substantially improving human rights. Furthermore, Western backed economic reforms produced solid growth and reduced inflation, however the country has failed to industrialise.

The terror and conflicts during the regimes of Idi Amin in the 70s and Milton Obote in the 80s are only a memory now, but still etched in many minds. The Lord's Resistance Army were active in the north of Uganda over many years causing hardship and fear for communities in this area, hence why Amigos feels compelled to help shape lives more positively. There has been a ceasefire in place for some time with little rebel activity and the sites where our volunteers are based; Kampala, Masindi and Lira have no security concerns at present.

Local Conduct

Two primary thoughts; firstly, expect to be called Muzungu, which translates affectionately as 'white person'. This is in no way intended to be threatening or disrespectful, and in fact tends to be used as a form of greeting. Secondly, stay safe. Remain in groups, particularly after dark and follow the advice of your guide or native team member. Do not 'advertise' your valuables, keep them hidden and to a minimum.

We ask our volunteers to drink alcohol in moderation. It is easy to misjudge the effects of alcohol when influenced by unfamiliar circumstances – heat, physical effort, medication or the different alcoholic content of local drinks. Remember that you are in a country with different levels of tolerance, laws, strict moral codes and a tough police force. Therefore for your own safety, always err on the side of polite, respectful behaviour and never put yourself in a situation which might be misunderstood or cause distress or annoyance.

While in Uganda you are a representative of Amigos and your behaviour will be viewed and associated with Amigos. **Kira Farm has a no smoking and no alcohol policy.** The guesthouse where we stay in Kampala also has this code of conduct. Amigos has a zero tolerance policy toward the possession and use of illegal substances. If you are found in possession of, or are under the influence of such substances, you will have your trip terminated immediately.

For locals experiencing a tough life below the poverty line, the friendship of ‘rich’ Europeans can occasionally be seen as a quick route to a better lifestyle. Because of this you may be asked for money or sponsorship and very occasionally inappropriate offers of company and marriage. It is important to deal with these offers with a polite but firm no, however persistent the approaches are. Please be careful not to encourage any unrealistic hope or appear to be taking advantage of this financial inequality. If you would like to donate cash during your visit, or offer help in some form, your team leader or locally based Amigos workers can advise you on the individuals who would most benefit from your generosity. Never make any promises or speak on behalf of Amigos.

* You will likely be offered the opportunity to travel north individually or with your group to visit the families of Kira students, graduates and sponsored children. The families will make every effort for your visit, and you may find that you are offered various gifts as a sign of appreciation for taking the time to visit them. Your team leader will advise you on how to accept any gifts.

** When visiting these families, we like to discretely offer them a very small monetary donation. It tends to be passed via a handshake, and although not spoken of, is gratefully received and considered norm of the culture. You may be asked to donate some money but please do not feel pressured to do so. Just make your wishes know beforehand to avoid any embarrassment.

Ugandans are friendly and obliging but can sometimes be sensitive about having their photograph taken, so always ask permission first. **Never film or photograph military or official equipment and property.** Ugandans are a very tolerant, self reliant, welcoming people and keeping to these basic guidelines will ensure that you can enjoy this cultural and social opportunity to the full.

Accommodation

Amigos stay at very good guesthouses/hostels in Kampala, Lira and Masindi, which are clean and cheap. Bedding, mosquito nets and towels are supplied but we advise you to bring one travel towel. Please check with the trip organisers on single or shared occupancy of room. At Kira Farm you will stay in our comfortable guesthouse.

Your accommodation will have basic facilities, but bear in mind electricity is sporadic and unreliable. Therefore to minimise inconvenience bring a small, powerful torch, particularly for early morning and evening when power cuts are common. Plugs are the typical UK three square pin types and the supply is the same 220v but can vary between 160v and 300v. Wiring can be of low standard and high-powered items like hairdryers can sometimes cause overloads and not work.

Internet and broadband facilities are usually available, but connections may be weak and often inconsistent in supply.

Food and Water

Water supplies cannot be relied upon to be safe without treatment and it is recommended that you drink bottled water, which is readily available at all times. When you are at Kira Farm any water that has been treated through our Bio-sand filters is safe to drink. Flavoured drinks or alcoholic drinks will be considered a personal spend and not included in the cost of the trip.

The main staples of a Ugandan's diet consists of matoke – a type of plantain or green banana that is usually steamed and mashed, and posho- a maize based cornmeal, like a grainy potato mash, kidney beans, ground peanut sauce, cassava, sweet potatoes, rice and meat. Much food is sold in open markets where price is readily haggled. If you are offered food by people known to Amigos, please be diplomatic if you find it unpleasant to eat. For people who have little food to offer, your response to their generosity is important. Food consumed outside of the meals provided by Kira and other sites of accommodation will be not be covered by the cost of the trip.

At Kira Farm, we offer a simple breakfast of cereals, bread/toast and jams, bananas, scrambled eggs and omelettes. Kampala has good supermarkets where you can you just about anything. There are a large number of restaurants and bars in Kampala, offering a wide range of international dishes. If you have any special dietary requirements please make these known ahead of departure. We will go to every effort to ensure that food suitable is prepared, but some varieties of food are not always easily accessible.

We ask you to maintain good hygiene when preparing and consuming food and advise you to bring an antibacterial hand gel with you.

Guides and Crew

Members of the Ugandan team that you may meet/their backgrounds

Mr Robert Bayita: BSc (Psych) MoP Director of Operations (Uganda)

Robert previously worked for World Vision and is now providing Amigos Uganda with much needed oversight, leadership and capacity building. Robert heads up management of finances, human resources, departmental project management, general administration as well as our rural extension project.

Mr Joseph Sabiiti (aka Mr Fix it). Amigos Child Sponsorship and Trip Coordinator

When God created Joseph he broke the mould! Joseph oversees our child sponsorship programme which involves travelling thousands of miles each year to visit children and their families. He also speaks 17 languages/dialects!

Mrs Grace Komakech: B.Ed. M.Sc. (Home Economics and Nutrition)

Grace is Kira Farm Training Centre's Principle or 'HM' as she is more fondly known.

Miss Mary Kayaga: Kira Farm Catering and Guesthouse Manageress, and more!

Mary is the most important person on Kira Farm. She works tirelessly to ensure that our students, management team and volunteers are satisfied and contented. She manages the Guest House, which gives 'real life' training to our students in Catering and Hospitality, as well as dishing up some culinary delights!

Mrs Doreen Adokorach: PGDE Kira Farm's Warden/Matron

Doreen is responsible for the welfare, attendance and involvement of each Kira student. She is a great hands on team member, emulating a hardworking African woman and mother to all. Besides being a teacher, Doreen used to be a prison warden – not much gets past the watchful eye of Doreen at Kira Farm!

Miss Joeline Namakula: Dip IT Amigos Child Sponsorship Assistant.

Joeline was the first ever child sponsored by Amigos. Since gaining her A Levels, she has funded herself through evening classes to gain a Diploma in IT. Joeline has since come on board the Amigos Management Team, and assists Joseph in Child Sponsorship.

Your Group

We have taken volunteers of all ages, personalities and skills to Uganda, and so you can expect to be part of a varied and dynamic group. Depending on the group's collective and individual objectives, we hope to tailor projects that meet these.

You will be put into contact with fellow volunteers prior to departure so you can meet beforehand. We also hold a half-day informal course, *depending on the number of volunteers per organised trip*, which is a good opportunity to meet the rest of your group and some of the staff.

Dress and Weather

You will need light, cool clothing during the day and some warmer layers for the cooler evenings. There may be an opportunity to eat in a smart restaurant so pack smart/casual clothing and footwear. When visiting remote areas it is important to be well covered, particularly if you are a woman. Exposing bare shoulders, midriff and above the knees is considered disrespectful. Please dress thoughtfully as we do not want to offend.

From dusk till dawn mosquitoes are prevalent but clothing that covers bare areas of skin will help to protect you from bites and repellent is advisable, and strongly recommended that you

opt for one that contains DEET. It is sensible to protect yourself from the sun, especially as being so close to the equator the sun is at its strongest. Chose sun block or high factor sun cream and perhaps clothing with an appropriate UV rating is very useful. Don't forget a hat and sunglasses and strong footwear that will cope with the rough terrain and occasional heavy downpour.

Uganda has short wet seasons but is usually dry and temperatures range between 21 and 31°C with the evenings a little cooler. Rain tends to be short lived but heavy so a lightweight rain coat is necessary. Clothing items can be washed by hand but for a small charge can be washed and ironed by staff at the accommodation.

Recommended clothing for a two week trip

- You will need casual and smart-casual clothing that can be easily hand washed and dries quickly
- 2 long sleeved, lightweight tops
- 3-4 t shirts/strap tops
- 1 trousers (lightweight)
- 2 shorts/1 skirt (knee length or longer)
- Lightweight sweater
- Heavyweight sweater
- Water and windproof lightweight jacket
- Smart-casual outfit and footwear
- Underwear
- Trainers/walking boots
- Lighter footwear/sandals
- Watch (basic)
- Sunglasses (basic)
- Hat
- Toiletries including cloth soap
- Towel
- Insect repellent
- Tissues/wet wipes
- Antibacterial hand gel/alcohol based
- Water bottle (1litre min)
- Plastic bags for dirty and wet clothing
- Music/personal
- Waist belt/money pouch
- Small day bag (e.g. 20 litres)
- Vaccination certificate and photocopy
- Passport and photocopy
- Anti malarial drugs
- Any personal medicines

Personal medical kit

- Plasters
- Bandage tape
- Aspirin/paracetamol
- Anti-diarrhoea pills
- Throat sweets
- Antiseptic cream
- Fungal infection powder
- Rehydration salts - recommended

Health and Safety

If you are worried about any aspect of your current health, have a check up with your GP before you depart.

Anti-malarial tablets are essential and Amigos will not take any volunteers who are not taking this medication. These can be easily prescribed by your GP. In addition to this there are a number of other immunisations and preventative medications that are advised and listed below. This is separated into highly recommended, recommended and optional. This information is provided by Travel Health Consultancy, a specialist Travel Clinic based in Exeter.

James Moore RN BSc (Hons) Dip TravMed Dip TN MFTM RCPS (Glasg) FRGS

Director

Travel Health Consultancy

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www.travelhealthconsultancy.co.uk

Some courses of immunisation require several months to complete fully before your departure but some can be sped up if necessary. It is also recommended that all the courses required are completed at least three weeks before departure to ensure they are active by then, so seek advice as early as possible. If you are leaving at short notice, ask about the possibility of an accelerated schedule of injections.

Hepatitis A, Typhoid and tetanus/Diphtheria/Polio are free, and sometimes Hepatitis B is too, but the rest you will have to pay for and can cost up to £45 an injection. Be sure to mention you are involved in charity work as some health centres will waive costs where possible. Give full information on the types of areas you will be working in or visiting and the degree

to which you will be in close contact with the local community. You will be given a booklet which lists all your immunisations, keep it safe with your passport.

On your return from Uganda ensure you follow up with any boosters still due and complete all courses of medication, i.e. anti-malaria medication.

Malaria tablets are very effective but will not give you full immunity so be rigorous in following the simple measures needed to prevent or minimise bites. Follow these simple ABC rules:

Awareness – mosquitoes that spread malaria predominantly bite between the hours of dusk and dawn so take extra care at these times

Bite prevention – if you don't get bitten you can't get malaria

- Sleep under a mosquito net that had been treated with an insecticide
- Use a DEET based mosquito repellent. 50% DEET is more than adequate and apply regularly
- Use mosquito coils in dorms and bedrooms
- Cover up when sat around in the evening – mosquitoes are attracted to ankles and feet

Chemoprophylaxis – these are your anti-malarial tablets. Make sure you take them regularly and that you complete the course. They don't stop malaria entering your body but treat it if it does get in. This is why you must continue the course after returning from Uganda.

Diagnosis – if you return unwell after returning to the UK with flu like symptoms and a high temperature, make sure you see a doctor and explain that you have been in Africa.

There are a number of types of malaria tablets and it is worth asking a health advisor to inform you of the possible side effects of each type. Visit the website www.malariahotspots.co.uk for full information and preventative measures and identifying symptoms of malaria.

Remember to pack useful first aid items and carry these essentials with you on Kira Farm and on all long distance trips.

Drink only bottled or bio-sand filtered water and avoid ice cubes and raw salads etc which may have been washed with untreated water. Brush your teeth with bottled water. Don't eat raw shellfish and don't swim in lakes, rivers or untreated pools.

Avoid contact with local animals. Rabies is common in Africa. If you do get bitten or scratched, the first and most important thing you can do is to wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water, or preferably alcohol or iodine. Inform someone immediately.

Other things to bear in mind; it is sensible to bring a pack of antibacterial hand wipes or hand sanitising lotion as hand washing facilities are not always available or adequate.

We suggest you bring an envelope with your name on the front of it which can be stored in the safe with your passport. This envelope should contain a list of all prescription drugs you are taking, any other relevant medical information including allergies, health insurance details, contact details of next of kin and your doctor, as well as photocopies of important documents – both medical and passport. We also suggest you scan a copy of your passport and email it to yourself. Should you lose your passport you will always be able to download a copy from your email account. In the event of a medical emergency, the team can help provide local health services with this valuable information on your behalf. It is also advised that you leave another copy of these documents at home and let someone you trust know where to find it, in case you need it emailed to you in an emergency.

There are professional medical facilities in Kampala; it may be useful to seek local advice if you develop any unusual symptoms during your visit, as local doctors have a sound knowledge of problems specific to the area. If you require emergency treatment that's not available locally you will be flown to a neighbouring country or home. Ensure that you have good travel insurance – this is one cost that is well worth every penny and shouldn't be skimmed on. In the event of any emergency back home, you will need to have a phone number for someone to contact your group leader in Uganda. Joseph Sabiiti (our in country trip supervisor) can be contacted on 00256 772499933 or Amigos head office (Kira Farm) in office hours on 00256 312202361.

General safety tips are the same as for any travel in any other country, or even in your home town on a Saturday night. Carry only the minimum of valuable items or cash and keep them hidden. (A safe is available in the accommodation to store any valuables). Travel with an Amigos leader or in known company, especially after dark or in areas you don't know well. Take the time to assess situations fully before committing to any course of action. The personal space that we naturally leave between ourselves and another person is considerably less in Uganda than in the UK so don't misinterpret this closeness as suggestive or threatening.

Vaccination details

When travelling to Uganda, Travel Health Consultancy would recommend the following vaccinations.

Current British vaccination schedule – each participant should be up to date with his or her childhood vaccines.

Highly recommended vaccines

Hepatitis A

Spread through contaminated water and poor sanitation

1 injection lasts about one year, a booster provides 20 years cover

Typhoid

Spread through contaminated water and poor sanitation

One injection lasts three years

Tetanus/Diphtheria/Polio

A single injection containing these vaccines lasts 10 years

H1N1 – influenza

Travellers to the southern hemisphere between April and September are at greater risk. The risk increases if working, travelling or living in crowded conditions.

Yellow fever

Spread by mosquitoes and prevalent in many areas of Uganda

1 injection lasts 10 years

A certificate is required when crossing between neighbouring countries

Recommended vaccines**Hepatitis B**

Spread via infected blood or bodily fluids. The main risk to travellers comes from the following activities:

Contact with blood or bodily fluids during sport or physical activities

Sexual activity or intravenous drug use

Undergoing emergency medical treatment (e.g. emergency dental care) whilst abroad

Rabies

Endemic throughout Africa and spread by the saliva of infected animal including monkeys bats and dogs. Rabies is currently an incurable disease, however those vaccinated and who have appropriate post exposure treatment is almost 100% safe (WHO, 2008). Rabies vaccination is recommended for anyone at risk (those working or living with animals or likely to be over 24 hours away from a reliable treatment centre).

Meningitis ACWY

Spread through close respiratory contact. Advisable for people working closely with locals and working, travelling or living in crowded conditions.

Final thoughts: we recommend that you bring your own personal first aid kit for any minor problems you experience. Ensure that you have rehydration salts as dehydration is a common ailment. It is important that you remain hydrated, so please make allowances for purchasing bottled water.

AIDS – widespread across Africa. Please be careful and practical.

Money

We suggest that you bring sterling as we usually change everyone's money together in Uganda, in order to get a good rate of exchange. Traveller's cheques are not widely used and you will unlikely get a good exchange rate, so we recommend that you do not bring them. There are a growing number of ATMs in and around Kampala which can be used just like in the UK. It is often a good idea to inform your bank that you are travelling abroad and using your credit/debit cards as it has been known for some banks to put a stop on people's cards that are being used overseas as a precautionary security measure.

The Ugandan shilling comes in 50,000, 20,000, 10,000, 5,000 and 1000/= notes, as well as 500, 200, and 100/= coins. The rate is around 3500/=ugs (Ugandan shillings) to a pound but fluctuates daily. Several international banks operate in Uganda including Barclays bank. Check with your own for availability. Banking hours are approximately 8.30am to 4pm Monday to Friday; a few banks are open for longer hours or on Saturdays.

Aside from the project costs, we recommend you bring an allowance for personal spending. This will cover drinks/bottled water, extra food that the meals provided for at Kira Farm, laundrette facilities, souvenir and present buying etc and any additional activities.

Travel and Documentation

Flights

You will need to organise your flights independently of Amigos. Please budget approximately £500 for a return flight; however note that this price will vary considerably depending on time of year and how early you book your flight prior to departure.

You will need your passport (**ensure that it is valid for a minimum of 6 months after your proposed return date**), you will be issued with a visa on arrival at Entebbe (£30). State the reason for your visit as a holiday on the immigration form given to you on the plane. Enter Fields of Life, (Kampala) or Kira Farm Training Centre, (Gayaza) as your accommodation.

Entebbe is a small airport with only one arrivals and departure lounge. Please keep your luggage to a minimum. BA allows 23 kilos of luggage and 10 kilos of hand luggage each. We always have plenty of clothes, book, and medical/educational/sports equipment ready to take with us for the charity. If you are able to keep your luggage to around 15-20 kilos each then Amigos would like to use the rest of your luggage space!

To help prevent the risk of Deep Vein thrombosis (DVT) on long flights, stand up and walk around the cabin as often as possible. Most airlines provide information about DVT on board their aircraft. Avoid drinking too much alcohol on the flight but do drink plenty of water before during and after the flight.

Documentation

It is essential that you have your passport, visa (obtained on arrival), travel insurance information and policy, medical certification (of Yellow Fever) with you. We recommend that you have photocopies of the above which are kept separate from the original documents, and suggest having a scanned copy held in an email account as an extra precaution.

Visas can be easily obtained on arrival at Entebbe at a cost of £30, but if you would rather arrange your visa in advance of your trip, the following address will be useful.

*Ugandan Embassy in UK
High commission of the Republic of Uganda
Uganda House; 58-59 Trafalgar Square
London; WC2N 5DX
Tel: (020) 7839 5783
Fax: (020) 7839 8925*

Arrival at Kira Farm Training Centre (KFTC)

Amigos is fully committed to responsible volunteer travel and sustainable tourism. If you have volunteered to help on Kira Farm you will need the following guidelines and code of conduct. The code of conduct is designed to help you achieve the most out of your experience in a safe and enjoyable manner. It also ensures that the Amigos charity and the local people we work with are treated with respect and that consideration is given to other cultural aspects during your visit. Please note that breaches of these guidelines may result in your visit being terminated.

Mr Robert Bayita is our Operations Director, and all visitors/volunteers must report to him first. Robert will give you an introduction to life on Kira Farm and you will be responsible to Robert while you are visiting.

Code of Conduct

- Abide by all the rules of KFTC and respect them as any other member of staff
- Work hard to achieve not only your own personal goals but also those of Kira and the people you are helping
- Listen to, and follow the instructions of your supervisor
- Inform your supervisor if you are at any time unable to fulfil the duties to which you have committed
- Refrain from smoking in and around the Kira Farm premises and within the surrounding village

- Refrain from using bad/foul language around the Kira Farm premises and within the surrounding village
- No volunteer must be alone with any students unless given permission by Amigos staff
- Students accommodation, washing and toilet area is out of bounds unless otherwise stated
- Dress appropriately and modestly at all times
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about r to a young person even in fun
- Do not engage in inappropriate or intrusive touching of any kind including rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Do not openly judge, criticise, or challenge any learning objectives
- Do affirm, encourage and empower both Kira students and the hardworking staff
- Treat all students with equal consideration and care not favouring anyone person
- Be sensitive to students background and past, focusing on positive successes and future goals
- Do not walk around Kira Farm without first seeking guidelines; bio-security is of the upmost importance for livestock/chickens and appropriate footwear and disinfectants maybe needed.