

KITEGA COMMUNITY CENTRE



VOLUNTEER GUIDE

Welcome, “Tusanyuse Okulaba”

Kitega Community Centre Profile

Dear Kitega Volunteer,

We are so excited to have you participate in our program, your love, dedication and support will obviously leave the centre a step ahead.

Kitega community centre is a registered Charity in Uganda that started operating in March 2000, for over ten years the centre has achieved great results, behind this has been the support of both local and international volunteers like yourself who come and give their time and resources to help the needy.

Kitega centre is a christian founded Organisation, however it works with all people of all religions or none without prejudice.

We work with a community characterised by poverty , disease, illiteracy, unemployment etc, hopefully you had the time to look at our website and now you are going to physically see what it means to live in some parts of Africa.

Kitega works with children, adults , schools and communities that are underserved

This guide is designed to give you a preview of what to expect in the next few days as you stay and work at the centre.

More Orientation will be made id due course and if possible you can print this out and take time to read it in the first days at the centre.

Many volunteers have found this useful.

Hear this from the Person behind the founding of Kitega Mr. Nicky King Scotland.

My wife Jane and I have had several working trips to Uganda, the last one in 1997, as one of many projects supported or administered by the Kingserve Trust. We became involved with Kitega through our relationship with Archdeacon Silas Musoke who invited me to become the Patron of the Centre ten years ago. Kingserve (www.kingserve.org) has sponsored and guided the Centre as it has grown to have a full-time Occupational Therapist (Wilson Kennedy), become an NGO, and now, to have its own land (previously it had rented several pieces of land) and at the moment to start building its own rooms and compound. Since David Musoke, the son of Silas Musoke, has started to take an interest in the centre it has really began to move forward and there is great potential for the centre to become an effective resource for mentally disabled children. The Centre is a Christian organisation but is open to those of all faiths or none without prejudice. The ethos of the centre was not just to help rehabilitate mentally disabled children but to persuade their carers and the local community to accept them as people worthy of respect and able to contribute to society. There is a cultural rejection of mentally handicapped children in Uganda, many of whom are abandoned by their own parents because of the stigma and folk lore of the curse of evil spirits. Working for the children of Kitega is hard, heart-wrenching, but immensely rewarding in terms of treasures in heaven rather than treasures on earth. You will not earn any Nobel prizes, not even, perhaps, the respect or appreciation of friends or even the children you help, but you will gain a new view of life in ways that cannot be expressed in words. In giving self-sacrificially to the children you will gain a fresh awareness of the richness of your own life. The Kitega Centre is located in a fertile and safe area of Uganda – on the road between Kampala and the Kisumu on the Kenyan border. We have usually found it cheaper to fly to Nairobi and take the long-distance bus to Kampala but there are many flights through Kampala's international airport at Entebbe. Entebbe is built on a peninsular of land jutting out into Lake Victoria and thereby has a cooler climate and is therefore where you will find many old British colonial residences. Most people speak the Luganda language which is largely phonetic. English, however, is spoken by many people. If you have had no previous experience of living in a developing country you might have a bigger challenge with the living standards and cultural aspects of life in Uganda. I suggest you do some background reading into the history of the country and also cultural adaptation. You will need full inoculations and Malarial prophylactics. I further suggest that you ensure suitable accommodation is arranged and confirmed (and reconfirmed!) prior to departure to Uganda. Although Uganda is right on the equator, because of its altitude it has a hot but healthy climate. It is very fertile and given sufficient investment, could be a major exporter of many foodstuffs. I also strongly suggest that you agree with David Musoke and the Kitega committee exactly what you will be doing during your time in Uganda and who will be responsible for all resources that will be required – transport, equipment, food, accommodation etc. That way any misunderstandings will be avoided and you will be able to make a good contribution. Life in Uganda is very different to life elsewhere in terms of food, sanitation etc but Ugandans are very friendly and will welcome you and help you. Our experience is that working in Uganda can be hard but you will receive far more than you give. The experience will change you in your values and outlook on life and serving the disadvantaged children at the Centre will be one of the most rewarding things you can do.

Nicky King, B.Sc. B.A.

Patron Kitega Centre, Chairman Kingserve Trust

Arrival In Uganda.

Depending on the flight you will be taking the centre staff will be responsible for picking you from the airport when you arrive, we have only one International airport in Uganda, Entebbe International Airport located about 35km from the Capital Kampala.

You will spend the first three days in Gayaza, at the residence of the Chairman /founder of the centre also the home for David Clemy . This will help you be around someone you have been communicating to, and also an induction. Gayaza is just 10 Miles out of the Capital Kampala.

During these days you get to know the work of the centre in depth, you get a chance to look at the program of your stay and contribute to the drafting of the final program, above all you get to know Uganda better.

Travel to Kitega.

After the few days in Gayaza, you will then be taken to your host family in Kitega Village, the family where you will be staying will have atleast all the main facilities that would be needed by you.

Before you begin your work an orientation with the staff members will be held to ensure that activities which are beneficial are included in your program.

Kitega is a good place, and you will be staying in the town area of the Village, though you may find yourself working so much in the Villages around Kitega.

People and Culture

Ugandans are very friendly, one of the things you will learn to do is to greet and say bye to almost everyone, especially the children who will ensure you atleast wave at them when you are passing. Though most of the families you will be working are poor, they are ready to even share the little they have with anyone.

There are lots of differences between Uganda and where you are coming from, here people are more important than anything else, and thus you will find that people really do care for one another, you may like a lot of privacy, well for Ugandans its not an issue as they are willing to share anything say a room, and other things they want.

There are lots of things to learn from the Ugandan culture and somehow you will learn as you stay with us.

Usually as a way of inducting you in our culture, we give you a Ugandan name, with a clan and a tribe so you can also feel part of the community.

There are lots of cultural activities in Uganda and you will have a chance to be involved depending on the length of you stay.

Christianity is a dominant religion in Uganda, and infact the biggest majority of the people you will be with are going to be Christians, this does not mean that you have to change and become a Christian however you need to respect their religions, for instance in Ugandan Christians Pray before eating food, if you are not a Christian it is best you simply keep quiet and follow what happens, you need to make sure you are part of all the activities that go on.

Feel free to involve in all activities going on ,eg. in a host family, be it cooking, washing etc, in this way you will find it rewarding because you will learn more. Some families may not want you to involve in anything, but it is up to you to always ask how you can help. There is always activity in Uganda, and if you choose a host family there will always be activity , ensure you do not become idle, be involved.

However dont strain yourself to be involved, if you are tired them don't bother, rest.

Language

English is the Official Language in Uganda, though majority of the people you will be helping will not be well equipped with this.

Luganda is the main language spoken especially in Kampala and the Kitega area. So atleast with English you are okay, and incase you have to talk to some people in English, you will have someone to translate for you, so that all people understand.

Please mind the use of words, Ugandans are calm, use of abusive language and word is not encouraged, as it will offend others.

Food

We have lots of food varieties in Uganda, our delicious steamed Matooke and Groundnut source , Posho and Beans are some of the favorites for volunteers. Please let us know if you are vegetarian or not in advance and if any type of food does not work for you. Otherwise the food is healthy.

With the donation you make to the centre, you will have at least three meals a day, these are :

Breakfast, served between 7am- 9am depending in the day.

Lunch served between 1pm -3pm also depending on the day.

Evening Tea , this is usually in the evening after work.

Supper served between 9pm -11pm , also depending on the day.

In most case you will have lunch at the Centre unless otherwise, and the rest of the meals will be at the place you are staying.

Clothing

Uganda has a warm climate, especially the Kitega area, so we encourage you bring light clothing and also a jacket in case of rain.

Recommended clothing;

Male: it would be great if you bring trousers and Jeans and some shirts, that make you look smart as you work with the children and the disadvantaged, through you they will be seeing a lot of hope.

You can also bring light sandals for wearing when you are at home and covered shoes which you will be using on a daily basis.

Note that if you are going out to the community , you will always be wearing covered shoes to avoid some infections eg Jiggers.

Female: clothing that covers the entire body is recommended, you will have lots of contact with the kids, so if it is trousers, they should be descent, the same for skirts and dresses.

For shoes we also recommend covered shoes for outreach and you can have our open shoes at home.

Items you need to Bring with you:

A torch is necessary, it gets dark in Uganda, and at times electricity goes off.

Soap, if you feel that you may have a problem with the washing bathroom soap in Uganda, then it is good to move with your own, the same applies to toothpaste.

A mosquito net, to prevent mosquitoes, in some families you may find a net, but some may not have , so it is best you move with your own, nets a cheaper in Uganda, and you can buy one when you arrive.

You will need anti-malarials, you could mention the drug so we check in our pharmacies in Uganda, if it is not available, then it would be good to move with your own drugs.

You may also need a cream to put on your body to chase away mosquitoes, this is very helpful.

You can also carry any other items that are important to you eg computer, phone among others, not forgetting items that could be useful as you work on your project at the centre.

Your Security;

Uganda being a very hospitable country doesn't mean that all is well, your security is your responsibility.

Therefore we request that you only deal with the centre staff, host family, you are greatly discouraged from moving late in the night, if you have to do so then you should have an escort.

In the first days of your stay in Uganda you will be moving with a member of staff, and thus we only encourage you to walk with people we tell you too.

The centre has invited you, so it is responsible for your stay in Uganda.

Instructions:

All instructions will be made by the centre and staff, permission to do anything outside the designed program should be requested.

No other person will change the program unless the centre staff is aware, you are answerable to the Kitega community Centre only and we request you to remember this.

Facilities

You may find that the facilities in Uganda are much different from those in your country, however it is advisable to try all our facilities so you know what it means to be in Africa.

For instance the widely used Pit latrine, also known as the “Long drop” will be used most of the time, this facility is safe and can be used by you.

There are also water flash toilets, but these are limited to a few homes.

Bathrooms do not have the bath tabs, so you will be putting water in a basin and wash your body from a basin, in case you need warm water remember to request for it, do not be shy to ask for anything you want, or better still do not be a visitor in your host family, be open and feel free.

Costs

The entire donation for the stay is payable to the centre on arrival, alternatively you can use a bank transfer or Western Union to send over the funds for the donation.

There is no limit to what you can give to support the centre, your stay alone may consume a lot of the donation you will provide in terms of the host family, administration, 24 hour support etc, so the more you give, the more the project remains with funds to run its work

Transport too and from the airport will be catered for with the donation you make to the centre, though most of the projects are within a walking distance, some are quite far and some volunteers are not used to walk long distances, if this is the case then you will need a mode of transport to take you to such places, usually a Boda-Boda (Motorcycle) is used, at times the centre could pay for this or you can pay for this transport.

You may also want to go to place like Kampala, here you can use the public means and you will know the transport you need before using the mini bus.

As part of the orientation we give you when you arrive at the centre, we shall direct you on how to use the Ugandan Currency so you are not cheated anywhere.

For all other expenses, eg transport, airtime and any other expenses you may incur on a personal level, about USD\$50 would be sufficient for a month. So you could have this as your pocket money for each month.

Airtime:

In case you have a phone, you may need to load airtime to communicate with the project leaders in case you get problems or need any help.

You can also communicate with your Family.

Internet:

The centre has one USB modem which it uses as an internet source, you could use this when David is around, as it is the main means of communication for the centre.

Alternatively there is an Internet Cafe in the neighboring town which you could go and use at some cost. The Centre USB, will atleast be available once in a week which means it is possible to rely on it and avoid the hectic costs in a cafe.

Tourism

Uganda has great tourist sites, eg Game Parks, Rivers, among others, if you have interest in visiting any of these then you can let us know, so we can plan the sites you can visit depending on your budget, that we can do when you are here.

Others;

You may also want to buy some materials to support a project you are working on, it would be good to ask a centre staff to help you.

In case you want to make any form of donation or give money for any cause while working with the centre, it is important that you do this through the centre only.

Your Program:

As soon as you arrive you will be inducted and a program for your stay discussed with you, remember that there are no restrictions to start up your own project, it would be great to share some of the things that you want to do with the centre.

Wishing you a good stay.