

## International Volunteer Info

**The Ssejinja Children's Foundation**  
**P.O Box 775**  
**Pleasant Grove, UT 84062-0775**  
**Voice 801-687-2003**  
**[www.ssejinja.org](http://www.ssejinja.org)**

### **Updated 1/2007**

We need your help to accomplish our mission, to nurture and care for orphaned and vulnerable children. The people we serve live in the most extreme poverty. We have found these people to be resourceful and hard working. They are not looking for a hand out, they are looking for a 'hand up.' Your gifts of time and money will help THEM change the conditions under which they live.

And for many of the children we serve, having a caring adult to guide and nurture them is a rarity. Your time and talents can serve to teach a child a skill or improve a talent, understand their value and offer hope to an otherwise hopeless existence. Many of these children have lost all that we hold dear, family, home, security and expectation of a brighter future. Just knowing you care makes a difference!

It is our experience that everyone has SOMETHING to offer. Young and old and everyone in between, single or married, those wishing to share professional skills and others who will share their favorite hobby. We have need for you!

### **Be a Volunteer**

The Ssejinja Children's Foundation coordinates volunteer experiences to Uganda throughout the year. An application can be downloaded from our web site, ([www.ssejinja.org](http://www.ssejinja.org)) which you can complete and return to the address listed above. Check the web site often for updates on where and when the next trip is scheduled.

**1. Volunteer Expeditions:** are wonderful, life changing experiences for individuals, families or couples. Expeditions are typically 2-4 weeks in length, and take place in the spring or summer. The group is made up of 15-20 men, women and teenagers, (children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent) and two team leaders from The Ssejinja Children's Foundation. We offer expeditions to Uganda.

Each expedition is unique in its focus, and we tailor our projects to the interests and skills of the team members.

An example of the type of work you may do:

- Tutoring and teaching children in English, music, art and recreation at a local community or government school.
- Teaching health and hygiene to school children and to women in a local village.
- Holding, feeding and caring for preemie babies in the hospital.
- Teaching and building raised gardens for widows in the village.

- Simple construction, i.e. one room schools, poultry houses, dormitories & village homes.
- Teaching life skills to the orphans living at The Ssejinja Children's Foundation Children's Village.
- Teaching AIDS awareness and prevention to widows and orphans.
- Teaching sewing, knitting, crocheting and other simple skills.
- Medical screenings in a local village.
- Assisting with micro-credit and micro-finance training.

**The Ssejinja Childrens Foundation will arrange all travel, lodging, food, visas, etc. The cost for the expedition is \$2,500 and includes airfare, ground transportation, food, lodging, water, visas, translators, and a side trip to Victoria Falls or similar adventure spot.** If you are interested in joining us in what will be one of the most worthwhile experiences of your life, please download and complete an application and return it to: The Ssejinja Children's Foundation, P.O Box 775 Pleasant Grove, UT 84062-0775. As a volunteer you will be responsible for raising the funds to cover your expedition costs. The only costs not covered in the program fee of \$2,500 are your personal items, souvenirs and shots.

Most of our volunteers raise money through contributions from friends and family. **The Ssejinja Children's Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation and all contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. We can assist you with sample letters and letterhead for your fundraising efforts. We can also provide you with a list of fundraising ideas. Please note that 100% of the money you raise goes towards your trip.** Most volunteers have been able to cover some, if not all of their volunteer expenses through fund raising.

### **Traveling to Africa**

Uganda is located in East Africa. Once inside the country you will be pleased to note that many people speak English. English is the official language and is taught in all the schools. Most people in the villages do NOT speak English and we will rely on the services of translators to assist us in communication.

You must obtain a current passport for travel. The passport can take up to 2 months to process and will cost between \$60 and \$100. You need to carry your passport with you at all times, we recommend using a money belt to be worn inside your clothing.

There are many things to be considered if traveling to Africa. Many infections are caused by contact with polluted water so bathing and washing must be done in 'safe' places. If you are spending time in a village setting, you will need to exercise caution. In the city you are completely safe using the water in the rooming houses and at our Children's Village. Please follow the advice of your team leaders and we can keep problems to a minimum! A few other things that those coming from the US or Canada usually take for granted. A good phone line is rare and the mail system is completely unreliable. Do not plan on making telephone calls home, but be assured that in case of emergency we can phone out and we will provide emergency contact information for your family and friends at home. E-mail is slow and sometimes not

available. In Uganda, you may use the local cyber-cafe to send and receive e-mails at a reasonable cost. But because of your work schedule, your family may not hear from you for days at a time. The e-mail service in Africa is reliable 50-70% of the time.

Simple and modest clothing is the appropriate dress. There will not be room for many different outfits, you will be limited to one carry on for personal items and clothing, as your two pieces of checked baggage will be reserved for service items to be used by the expedition. (more details and a packing list will be given once you are placed on a team)

### **Lodging:**

The living conditions can be quite primitive if traveling outside major cities... think camping! In Uganda we stay in a more rural setting. Your accommodations will either be in a rooming house, with 2-4 people in a room (sometimes we have private bathrooms, and sometimes a shared bath), or in our dorms at the children's village. You will not have a bedroom to yourself and you may not be able to have a daily bath or shower. Don't count on hot water being a consistent thing. There are frequent electricity outages and in some areas no electricity at all, so electrical grooming aids are not practical. The electric currency in Africa is different than the US so you will need a transformer and adaptor plugs for any electric items like battery chargers, etc.

### **Food:**

Your housing and meals will be taken care of by SCF, you will not be doing any of your own grocery shopping. A typical day's meals are:

Breakfast – coffee, tea, orange juice, eggs, milk

Lunch – peanut butter or tuna sandwiches, apples or other fresh fruit when available

Dinner – (in Uganda) Kawunga (corn porridge), beans, cooked green vegetables, chicken, beef or fish

You may wish to pack snack items to supplement your meals. Some popular items are granola bars, trail mix, nuts, candy, dried fruit, etc.

### **Medical Health**

According to the Center for Disease Control ([www.cdc.gov/travel/africa.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/africa.htm)) there are several health risks associated with travel to Africa that can be avoided if you are immunized in advance, understand your responsibility to prepare ahead of time and adhere to safety advice during your stay. Take special care with regards to drinking water and food preparation in order to avoid the parasites that cause '**travelers diarrhea**'. **All water should be boiled or bottled, including water used for brushing teeth.** Sealed, bottled beverages are usually safe. Food must be cooked properly and thoroughly. It's better to skip a meal than be unsure of what you are eating. We will provide food that is safe, DO NOT eat food from street vendors, and if offered food in a village setting always check with a team leader before eating.

**Malaria** is a prevalent disease in Africa. **It can be prevented or cured** by proper medication. All SCF volunteers must adhere to the following:

- Visit your health care provider 4-6 weeks before foreign travel for any necessary vaccinations and a prescription for an anti-malarial drug.

- Take your anti-malarial drug exactly on schedule without missing doses, including after your return home.
- Bring and use insect repellent that contains DEET.

### **Recommended Vaccinations:**

Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Meningitis, Tetanus and Polio booster.

(Note: Hep A and Hep B are a series of vaccinations so get started on these as soon as possible). Check with a doctor that specializes in travel to determine the need for a Meningococcal vaccination. In certain areas of Africa there are outbreaks of Cholera and some incidents of snake bites. Cholera can be avoided by drinking safe water **ONLY**. **Avoid home made fruit drinks, food items sold on the street, frozen treats made with water, etc.**

### **Health Insurance:**

US Health insurance is probably NOT going to be valid outside the US. Some companies have additional policies or coverage that you may purchase for the dates of your travel. We recommend you contact your insurance agent for details. You may also wish to search the WEB for an international health insurance policy that you feel will meet your needs

### **Respecting the Culture and the People**

Please remember that we go to help the people, not to force cultural changes. We want to teach them skills that will enable them to have a better existence in their own country, in their own culture, and in their own tradition. Please remember that our ways are not always their ways and **OUR WAYS ARE NOT NECESSARILY BETTER**. Avoid sounding arrogant or becoming impatient with their desire to do things in the way that is most familiar and comfortable to them. Those who have been there before or who are in authority (program coordinators) know the best ways for us to serve without causing suspicion and concern on the part of the people or their governments.

### **Please remember:**

- We respect the African way of life as being different but **NOT INFERIOR**.
- **We respect local wisdom**, local people most often know the best solutions for the problems they face.  
What they need from us is help to obtain the necessary resources.
- You will be most successful and helpful if you follow the advice of team leaders and coordinators.
- We are not giving handouts; we are promoting and encouraging self-sufficiency.
- **Don't give money or buy items for individuals at the work sites. This causes jealousy and often violence. No exceptions please.**
- **Don't give money or make promises to SCF staff, volunteers or the local people.**
- **Don't make promises on behalf of the organization** or for things you will do after you leave.
- Typical American phrases can cause big problems. "I wish you could meet my family in America" can be interpreted as "I will bring you to America." "I will do whatever I can to help you" can lead to expectations that you will help them in any way they ask!

This can be a life changing experience for you as you work to serve the good people of Uganda and offer hope to the countless number of children hungry for your attention and care. You will work hard, you will probably cry, you will laugh and you will gain a deeper appreciation of what you have been blessed with and greater insight into what **you** can offer the world. Most of all, we hope you will come away with the belief that **one person can make a difference.**

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your interest in our volunteer programs in Uganda !

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