

Bududa Development Center Limited
Bududa Vocational Institute
Children of Peace
January 2010

SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

About our Programs

Bududa Development Center Limited is a collaboration between concerned Ugandans and African Great Lakes Initiative, a U.S. 501 (c) (3) corporation. The programs are supported by the generous donations of individuals and foundations in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Bududa Vocational Institute

Bududa Vocational Institute was opened in February 2008, offering vocational training to improve the economic opportunities for our students. The Institute presently offers programs leading to National certification in Brick Laying and Concrete Practices, Tailoring, Carpentry, and Nursery Teacher Training. In addition we offer short course computer training programs and crafts. Essential to our courses are training in Entrepreneurship, healthy living and life skills. Plans are under consideration to expand our course offerings to increase the job opportunities for our students.

Children of Peace

The **Children of Peace** is a child sponsorship program providing Saturday and holiday supplemental education to 200 orphans and other vulnerable children. Students are provided with educational and enrichment programs, a weekly health check, weekend meal, and access to school supplies, uniforms, and school fees, where needed.

Both programs operate from a facility in Konikoya, a village on the main road through Bududa district. Bududa lies on the slopes of Mount Elgon, an extinct volcano straddling the border between eastern Uganda and Kenya.

The school facility encompasses 5 double classrooms, covered workspaces for the Carpentry and Brick Laying and Concrete Practice practical work, an office, pit latrines for girls and boys, outdoor practice space, and a cookhouse. A Guest House was recently built by our students to house visitors to the school. Electricity is provided at the school by a recently installed solar system, with supplemental generator backup. Water is obtained from a bore hole a short distance away.

About The Local Area

Culture

Uganda is a conservative country, as is Bududa district. Women typically wear long skirts and blouses or t-shirts. Men typically wear long trousers and a shirt or t-shirt. Short skirts and skimpy clothing will attract attention. We advise that all volunteers consider this when bringing

clothes. Most locals walk barefoot, or flip flop type sandals, but North Americans or Europeans may prefer comfortable walking shoes or sandals when traversing the dirt paths on steep hills. In rainy season, mud tends to cake on shoes with treads. Local residents use "wellie" style boots that wash easily.

Most people attend church on Sundays, including the children and staff of the school. Volunteers are welcome to attend as well, however it is advisable that volunteers wear appropriate clothing (such covered shoulders and knees and clean shoes.)

In Bududa, there are a number of local schools, both private and government-funded, with class sizes as large as 150 not unusual.

The local area is very conservative with regards to behavior. It is illegal to smoke in public in Uganda. Volunteers (particularly women) are encouraged not to drink in public as this will attract attention from local men.

Language

The local language spoken in the area is Lugiso, in the Bantu family of languages. Wikipedia estimates are that the language spoken by about 750,000 members of the Bagisu tribe, living in eastern Uganda, of which about 200,000 live in Bududa district. English is the official language of Uganda, although 40 different languages are spoken in the country. Children are taught English beginning in primary school. Secondary school students generally can understand and communicate adequately in English. English language competence varies widely among the adult population in Bududa depending on where, and if, they attended school.

Bududans are generally very friendly and helpful, and greet friends and strangers alike with "Malembe", when passing.

About Uganda

Visa

Tourist visas can be purchased upon arrival (with cash) at the airport for US\$50.00 or in advance from Ugandan consulates in most countries.

Currency

The local currency is Ugandan Shillings (UGX). At present, the current exchange rate is:
US\$1 = 1800 UGX

Power Supply

Uganda operates on 240V power supply – with square 3-pin sockets. This is the same as the British power supply plug. We recommend that volunteers from countries other than the UK bring a universal power adapter, that can be purchased from most hardware stores.

Weather

A general guide to weather is as follows:

December to February and June to September: Daytime temperatures range between 70 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit. In Bududa, elevation in excess of 5000 feet make evening and early morning temperatures as cool as 50 degrees.

March to May is the long rainy season, and from October to November is the short rainy season. Temperatures are generally cooler during rainy seasons. Roads and steep paths may be more difficult to walk during rainy season due to the slippery mud.

Travel and Costs

Program Fee

The Program Fee is \$800 per person to support AGLI's Bududa programs. This fee covers the cost of the mid-day meal when school is in session, but most importantly is a critical component of our fundraising that enables us to improve the programs we offer to our students and the community. The Program Fee should be paid in advance by U.S. residents to Friends Peace Teams, c/o Geri Fitzgerald 2 Charlton St. Apt 5C, NY, NY 10014 or by Canadian residents to Canadian Friends Service Committee, c/o Sally Bongard, 54 Aberdeen, Toronto, ON M4X-1A2, Canada. (UK volunteers may be provided with a UK charity who acts as our conduit if you prefer). Please note, only Africans are employed at our facilities in Uganda, all others are volunteers. Some volunteers have found they can raise the cost of the Program fee from friends, relatives, or house of worship, prior to coming to Bududa.

Accommodation Fees

Home stay price is \$12 per person per day, whether you are staying at our Guesthouse or with a local family. This includes lodging, bathing water, and the meals to be eaten at home. Generally this amount is paid in local currency to the bursar in the Vocational Program.

Spending Money

It is difficult to make a generalization about how much money you should be prepared to spend during your time in Bududa, but this information may help you plan. Transport to and from Entebbe/Bududa including one night stay at a hotel in Entebbe or Kampala in each direction, and restaurant meals en route can range from approximately \$200-\$550 per person, depending on whether you choose the cheapest hotels and public transport versus the more comfortable hotels and private hire taxis. These amounts are based upon one person arriving alone. Group cost will be lower because of shared accommodations and splitting taxi fares. You may wish to plan an extra \$5-10 per day for water, local phone minutes, errand fees for children (carrying your backpack, running to the shop for you), laundry fees, and a parting "tip" to the cook in the household, if you choose. An additional \$10-20 per week will enable you to travel once a week to Mbale for a restaurant meal, transportation, and snacks. Should your visit include additional travel, please plan accordingly.

US Dollars can be changed in Kampala or Mbale. However it is advisable to bring \$100 bills, issued after the year 2000 and in good condition to get the best exchange rate. Most ATM cards, if part of a major network, can be used for a fee in Mbale or Kampala. Access to a bank account with an ATM card is recommended for emergencies. Mbale is the nearest town to Bududa where you will be able to access a bank including ATM machines, post office, internet

and other facilities. **Please arrange to convert US dollars to local currency, in Kampala or Mbale, but in any case, before arriving in Bududa as there are no facilities to do so there.**

We know that arriving in a country for the first time can be intimidating and we will gladly make arrangements for hotels, taxis, etc. Please make sure we are aware of your arrival plans well in advance, so we can assist in meeting you at the airport. If there is any change of plans please try to email Barbara Wybar at bwvybar@yahoo.com and call 011 256 773 92 3376. In Uganda, dial 0 773 92 3376.

Safety

Like any country, when you travel in larger cities such as Kampala or Mbale, it is important to be aware of your surroundings to avoid pickpockets. We have been blessed that none of our volunteers have experienced crime in Uganda. It is very important not to wear expensive jewelry or display cash.

Bududa is a rural area, with a handful of kiosk type shops in various locations along the main circular road that travels through the district. Footpaths extend through the hillside to the homes and farm plots. We do not recommend that volunteers walk or travel alone at night.

Tourism

Uganda has places and activities of interest to visitors and we understand that volunteers may want to take time away from the program to experience more of Uganda and Africa. We are always able to assist with suggestions however we ask that you let us know in advance of any intended travel.

What Volunteers Can Expect

Prior to your Arrival

Prior to departing your home country, we are available to discuss your placement and potential volunteer work ideas that match your skills and interests.

If you would like to contact past volunteers to hear about their experiences and ask questions about placements, there is an active support network of past volunteers available. We have had volunteers of all ages, and we will endeavor to put you in contact with someone.

Supplies

Supplies in Bududa are quite limited, so it is best to anticipate your needs and bring what you require from home. Once a week or so, we make a supply run to Mbale where a wider array of supplies is available. Refer to the "What to pack" section below for suggestions of what to bring. Should you have any question about what is available in Mbale, feel free to contact us.

Medical services

Medical care in Bududa is very limited, and even in Mbale it is not of the quality or service found in the developed world. Should you experience serious illness or accident, it might be worthwhile to have procured travel medical and evacuation insurance before you leave.

Alternatively, a service called Flying Doctors is available for medical evacuation to Kenya for a reasonable cost. For details go to their website, and click on the membership tab.

<http://www.amref.org/>

Check with your local travel medicine doctor or clinic about what vaccinations you require for your travel plans. Be sure to inform the doctor about any other travel plans you have in the region, because immunizations requirements may differ by country.

Malaria is prevalent in Uganda and in Bududa. It is most important to obtain and begin your malaria medicine prior to coming to Uganda. Please obtain the medicine in your home country because recent batches of locally available medicine have been found to be deficient. Even if you are taking the preventive medicine, it is important to take precautions not to get bit, by sleeping with a bednet, and being covered when mosquitoes are present.

Medicine

Medicines are available at pharmacies in Mbale, however it is advisable that volunteers bring their own first aid kit, and any prescribed medication. It is advisable to carry a prescription antibiotic such as Cipro for severe bacterial infections, and for upset stomachs is available, as are basics such as band aids, hydrogen peroxide or other wound cleaning solution, wipes, antibiotic ointment, Imodium, should you have to travel while sick, sanitary items, and any over the counter or prescription medicine you take.

Contact with home

Internet service: We do have a finicky dial up internet service that is available to be shared using the school's computers when in Bududa. In Kampala and Mbale, a slow internet service is also available for a fee. If you wish to communicate with a group of people at home, be sure to set up your groups before you leave home because doing so with our slow service is time consuming.

Phone service:

Phone calls from Uganda to locations outside the country are quite expensive. Prepaid minutes can be bought in the local shops to activate the phone. Past volunteers have found that having friends and family back home set up Skype accounts on their computers is a cost efficient way for others to contact you by calling a Ugandan cell phone. (Skype generally will not work on our computers because the connection is too slow)

The phone number of our loaner phone is 256 779 15 8095. Mobile phones in Uganda are GSM, and there is generally good reception. You can bring a mobile phone from your home country or an international phone, provided you are permitted by your service provider, GSM-enabled phones will work on this network. Also, it is possible to purchase sim-cards for a GSM mobile phone when you arrive in Uganda, or even purchase a mobile phone relatively easily. We do have a phone available for loan to individuals while in Bududa. If our "loaner" cell phone is already committed, you can purchase a phone for about \$30.

When You Arrive

We will arrange for a representative to meet you at the Entebbe International Airport (airport code: EBB). If you are arriving via other transportation, please contact us so we can make the necessary arrangements to meet with you. Accommodations are available in Entebbe, or Kampala, about an hour from the airport.

Given the time it takes to travel from Kampala to Bududa, it is preferable to stay overnight upon arrival before traveling to Bududa. We can assist you with making overnight accommodations.

Once you have arrived, a representative of AGLI's Bududa projects will accompany you to the guest house, or your local homestay in Bududa, and introduce you to the family and help you get adjusted to the facilities and to enable you to become acquainted with the local culture and language. On the following school day, an orientation will be conducted at the Bududa Vocational Institute, to include meeting staff at the school and the Children of Peace orphan sponsor program, a tour of the local area, discussion of the volunteer role, upcoming events and plans.

Home Stay

The programs operate a Guesthouse on the school property where some visitors can stay. When we have more than a few visitors, or if you prefer, a Homestay will be arranged with a local family. Your accommodations will be with a family in a private room, with a bed and mosquito net. Families selected for the Homestay are known to the management of the project. Fees for the Guesthouse or Homestay are \$12 per person per night. This fee provides a financial boost to the family (or in the case of our Guesthouse helps us repay the cost of construction, and covers the cost of meals you will take at home. (see Meals: What to expect). The family will also haul a modest amount of water for you to bathe. While the family will provide sheets and pillows, if you get cold, particularly in rainy season, you may wish to bring a light blanket or sleeping bag. You are more than welcome to bring your own sheets if you wish, contact us to determine what the bed size is.

Most homes and our Guesthouse have only a pit latrine (hole in the ground) that is generally located away from the house. Toilet paper can be purchased at the local shops, but is not generally used by Ugandans. Bathing is usually accomplished using a basin of water. In some cases, a camp type shower may have been arranged and sun heated water may be available. In all cases, your water consumption must be much less than you are used to at home because of the time and effort involved to bring water to the home.

At the Guesthouse or Homestay laundry may be washed for an extra fee. Otherwise be prepared to fetch your own water to do so.

During your Stay

Staying Healthy

Traveling in the less developed world presents more challenges than you experience at home. Some time-tested advice follows. Washing hands before eating or putting your hands near your face is recommended. It is particularly helpful to carry a small bottle of waterless alcohol wash to use before meals. Water and soap are often not available to food preparers, so it is recommended to eat only cooked foods, and fruit that you peel yourself. Drink only bottled water or water that has been boiled adequately. Ugandans also eat with their hands, so you may wish to carry a spoon or fork. If the cleanliness of the plates or utensils is in question, you can surreptitiously wash them with tea water or alcohol wash.

Meals: What to Expect

Breakfast

Breakfast is generally roasted groundnuts (similar to peanuts), banana, and an occasional egg all served with African black tea. Some volunteers purchase white bread in the shops, and buy peanut butter, margarine, jelly, or Nutella to supplement what may be available.

Typically volunteers have tea and lunch at school Monday through Friday, and with the Children of Peace program on Saturday. Tea is served mid-morning at school, along with roasted groundnuts and sometimes bananas.

Lunch usually consists of rice, beans, posho (stewed cornmeal and water), and braised cabbage. On occasion there might be cooked greens, matoke (steamed unsweetened fruit that looks like bananas), tomatoes or avocados.

Tea is generally served again in the afternoon at school or at home. If you are in need of a snack, a few of the shops sell small packs of biscuits, or consider peanut butter and jelly on banana or bread.

Dinner is typically served late in the evening, often after dark. Dinner items may vary but may include rice, potatoes, matoke, chapati (similar to Indian nan bread), cooked greens and/or tomatoes and cabbage, avocado and a fruit. Infrequently, a small amount of meat or beans may be served.

If you like to snack, you may consider bringing food bars with you, or purchasing boxes of cookies in Mbale.

As a consideration to your host family or our Guesthouse cook, if you are not going to be present for a meal, please advise them as much in advance as possible because cooking even simple meals takes a lot of work in Bududa, and what they prepare for guests may be more extensive than the would eat themselves.

Water

Water used in the homes and at the school is from a well that is believed to be safe. However, given that western bodies are not used to the microbes in the tropics, is in NOT advisable to drink the water until it has been adequately boiled. We treat our water at the Guesthouse, however some guests prefer to use bottled water for drinking, toothbrushing etc. Bottled water is available most places. Coca-Cola is readily available at the shops, although it is most often warm. Diet drinks are not available.

Access to Electricity

Most of our home stays including our guest house do NOT have electricity at all or most of the time. On occasion, electricity may be available, but it is not reliable. At school we have a reliable source of solar power augmented when needed by a generator for charging cell phones, laptops, flashlights, cameras, etc. Please plan in advance if you require charging as a limited number of devices can be charged at a time.

Local Animals

In addition to the animals kept by local families -cows, chickens, turkeys, goats, cats and dogs, there are numerous birds in the area.

After your Stay

We would like to remain in contact with all past volunteers and you are welcome to join our email newsletter list. We encourage you to be available to advise others who may wish to join us in the future. Past volunteers have helped with friend raising on behalf of our projects, fundraising, website content, newsletters, administration and other activities. We also welcome your reflections and suggestions to help us improve the effectiveness of others' visits.

Be sure to finish your malaria medicine for the prescribed time frame.

See below for list of "What to Bring"

WHAT to BRING

Below is a list of recommended supplies to have with you during your experience in Bududa as suggested by past volunteers. These things are not required, but will help make your stay more comfortable. Please keep in mind that biodegradable supplies are best, as we have no means of disposal.

For Yourself

- Comfortable shoes or sandals
- Flip flops to wear inside the house
- First aid kit
- LED Flashlight/torch with extra batteries
- Headlamp for nighttime latrine visits
- Sunglasses
- Pocket Knife and eating utensils
- Durable Water Bottle (such stainless steel)
- Sun hat
- Small battery operated fan and extra batteries
- Day pack
- Your malaria medicine and whatever you may require
- Passport and medical insurance copies packed away from original
- Herbal or decaffeinated tea bags (not available locally)
- Waterless alcohol wash (pocket sized)
- Biodegradable scentless baby wipes (plus a travel sized pack)
- Pocket packs of tissues
- Notebook, pen, reading books
- Insect repellent
- Sun screen
- Inside wallet for valuables
- Snack bars (good for traveling when meal is not available)
- Concentrated liquid soap (I like Dr. Bronner's lavender-smells good even when you don't!)
- Travel style Underclothing concealed waist or shoulder wallet

For your family

- Bar soap is always appreciated
- Small gifts if there are children in the house- lollipops, crayons, books