

Zanzibar Medical Volunteering & Internships



📍 Stonetown, Zanzibar

✚ Medical volunteering

✚ Medical volunteering

✚ Gain experience as a medical student

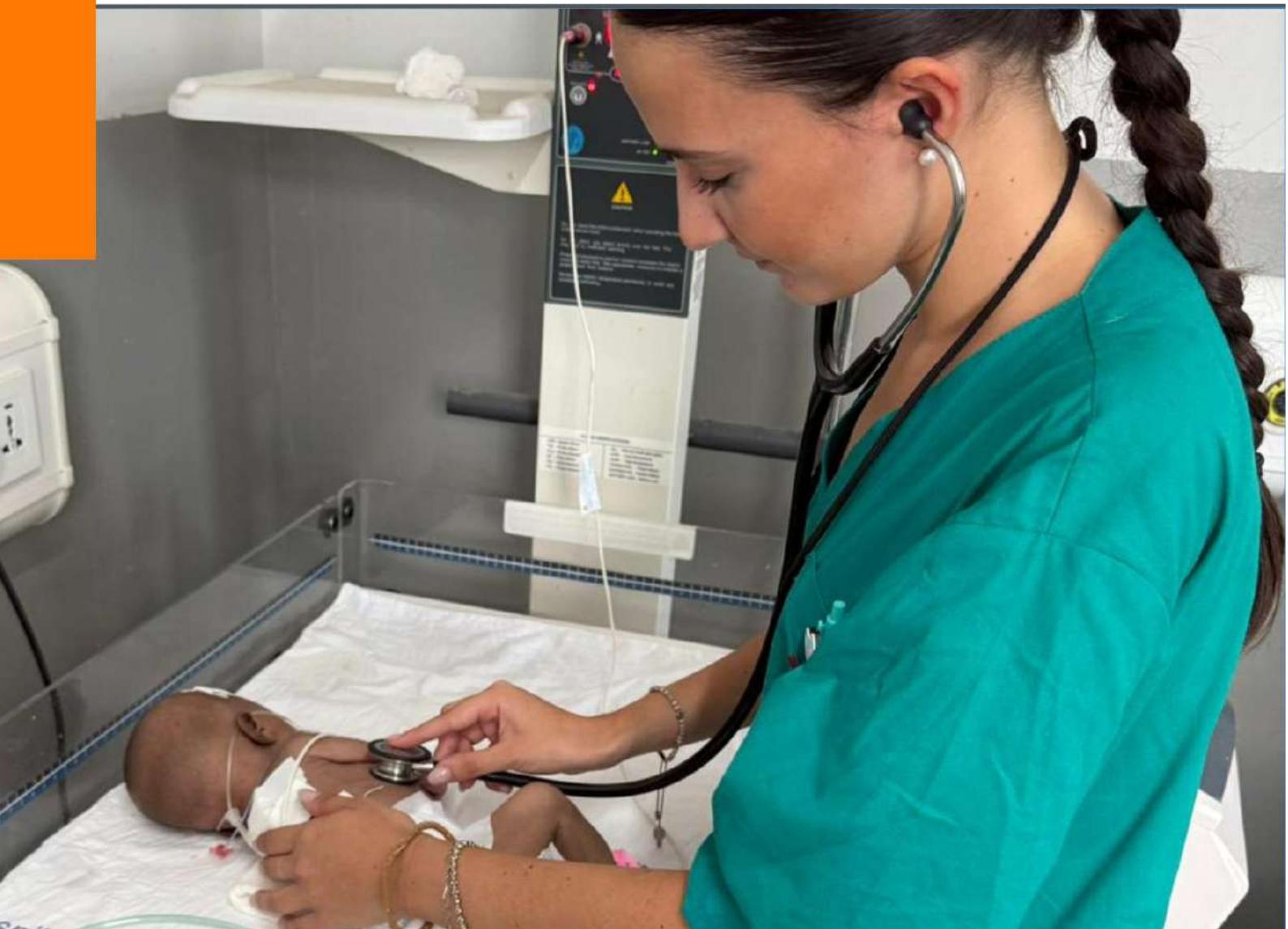




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I. What is the program about?

The tropical island of Zanzibar has much to offer for visitors and tourists but at the same time the community faces several health challenges including early arranged marriages, and high teen pregnancies. There is also limited open discussion about HIV/AIDS and women's health issues as Zanzibar is an island where 95% of people are Muslim and certain subjects remain difficult to discuss.

Volunteering at one of the hospitals means shadowing and helping the medical staff with their daily work. Your responsibilities will depend on your level of medical knowledge and whether you are a student or a qualified professional. You will always work under supervision until you prove your capabilities to your supervisor, who remains responsible for your actions. Building trust with your supervisor is very important and will greatly improve your volunteer experience.

This experience will be quite different from healthcare in your home country! Past volunteers have helped deliver babies, taken blood samples, changed wound dressings, and assisted with small surgeries. The work can be challenging, which is why this program works best for people who are independent and flexible. If you come with an open mind, you will learn a lot about how healthcare works in Tanzania.

Please keep in mind that medical students are generally not allowed to perform all medical tasks that may bring any risk of liability so medical volunteers can gain much insight and observation, especially if you come for a shorter period of time of 2-3 weeks and generally only get more responsibility when staying a longer period of time where personal relationships with the staff and doctors will allow for more freedom and responsibilities.





Programs offered

The Khaya Medical Project in Zanzibar offers volunteers the possibility to assist in different Government Hospitals and Clinics. It is important to note that qualified medical professionals will only be allowed to actively practice medicine if certified by the Zanzibar Medical Council. Please check with us regarding this process.

The Hospitals and Clinics offer the following clinical units:

Obstetrics	Gynaecology
Internal medicine	Emergency
Critical Care Unit	Orthopedic
General Surgery	Minimally Invasive Surgery
Paediatrics	Neonatal
Radiology	Laboratory
Renal Care	Dialysis
Pharmacy	Physiotherapy
Dermatology	Urology
ENT (Ear, Nose, Throat)	





2. What do volunteers do?

As no day will be the same, expect the unexpected and keep an open mind. You may assist with a variety of medical services where needed the most. Your personal input and experience will create a situation where you can find those activities suiting you best, and where your support makes the biggest impact within the biggest need and opportunities at that time.

Expect however to be able to observe and assist with general medical care and more specialized work relating to your background and capability. Volunteers have assisted with changing dressings, handing out medication, giving injections, taking blood, assisting with deliveries and even minor surgeries, so be open-minded, and during your first days of work you will see where you will slot in best.

Good communication is very important. Sometimes the work may be different from what you expected or what you normally do so when this happens:

- Talk with your supervisor respectfully and ask for what you would like to see or experience
- Accept that 'African Time' may be challenging and extended periods of waiting may happen due to availability of supervising doctors and the demand on them to assist patients.
- Suggest changes if needed, but don't demand them as you are a volunteer and even though you pay to volunteer here, this does not warrant demanding what you want. Open, calm and respectful conversation will always bring better results!
- Remember that in a short volunteering visit of a few weeks it will be hard to have all the experiences you may want so please keep this in mind.
- Your positive attitude and flexibility will make this a more rewarding experience for everyone.



3. Working hours and supervision

Working days & hours

Depending on the time of the year and weather, you will work generally 5 days a week from 8h00-15h00 with weekends off to explore the island or to assist the mobile clinic of course. Please keep in mind that during the rainy season it may be more challenging at times but it is all part of local life and it is up to you to go with the flow and experience local life as much as possible in all aspects.

Your Support Team

During your stay in Zanzibar, you will receive support from our volunteer coordinator who will provide general guidance and support throughout your stay, while hospital staff supervisors will give you specific daily direction during work hours.

The Volunteer Coordinator will:

- Welcome you upon arrival at the airport
- Take you to your accommodation
- Give you an introduction to Zanzibar and show you around to see where shops, pharmacy and other facilities are located
- Accompany you to the hospital on your first day and show you how to use public transport
- Support you throughout your volunteering period with your travel needs and other questions

Good communication with your coordinator is essential. Please share your questions, needs, or concerns with them regularly so they can help you. If you wait until the end of your stay before discussing certain challenges, it will be challenging to act on this as needed.



Zanzibar Coordinator - Jessica

"My name is Jessica, I am in my thirties, born and raised in Zanzibar, Tanzania. Currently a law student at Zanzibar Law School. I'm passionate about making a tangible difference in communities that face unique challenges. I love working with international volunteering because I believe it's important to give back to the community and help those who are less fortunate. I also enjoy volunteering because I get to collaborate with people from all walks of life and get the chance to step out of my comfort zone and experience different cultures firsthand, learning



new skills and gaining a broader perspective on global issues. And it is an amazing opportunity for me, for I believe that I will gain personal growth and self-discovery."

At the hospitals and clinics, experienced healthcare professionals will supervise your work. These supervisors:

- Have extensive medical experience
- Will guide you despite their busy schedules and heavy workloads
- Will start you with observation only so don't expect to be performing medical tasks that may bring the challenge of liability to the hospital
- Will allow more independence once they trust your abilities and see your performance

Working with Local Staff

Working alongside local medical staff can present some challenges: Language differences may create communication barriers and/or both you and the staff may have different expectations. As Zanzibar is a popular destination for volunteering you may meet other volunteers from other organizations and during July-September this may create a situation where many volunteers can be present at the hospital. If you are looking for a quieter time with more opportunity to learn and observe, please consider volunteering in other months of the year.

For a successful experience, remember to communicate openly, build trust gradually, practice patience, show respect for local practices and circumstances.



4. About Zanzibar

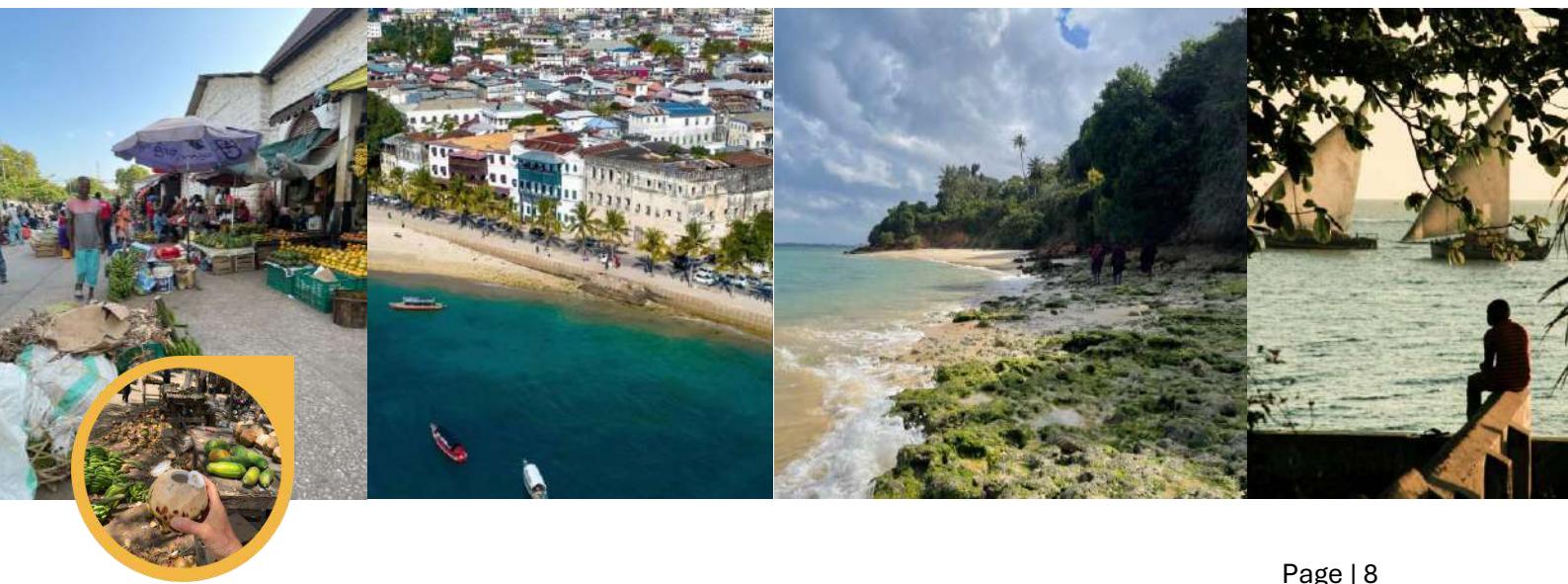
In Zanzibar, time seems to have stood still and people still live traditional lives. Zanzibar has been the entrance of Eastern Africa for centuries and it was here that most slaves were sold, and Indian, Chinese, and Arabic merchants would arrive to trade their fares and buy spices, ivory and slaves.

The history of Zanzibar has created a unique mixture of Indian, African, and Arabic influences which can be seen in its people, food, culture and building styles.

Stone Town in Zanzibar, Tanzania is magical, a labyrinth of alleys and walkways barely wide enough for bicycles and pedestrians. Beautifully carved doors lead entrances to a hidden world of carpenters, sewing shops, and Zanzibar family life. Street vendors sell pre-cut mango's, coffee in little porcelain cups, zamzam (sugared nuts and seeds) and souvenir shops try to lure you in their paradise of beadwork, Maasai dukkas (colourful robes the Maasai wear), 'pole pole' (slowly slowly) T-shirts and beautifully made wood carvings.

It can be hot and humid but a feast to the eye, especially in the evenings when Forodhani Gardens at the seafront transforms in an open-air restaurant, where you can buy grilled squid, miskhaki's (kebabs of fish and meat), fresh tuna, lobster and all the seafood you can imagine. All this is washed down with freshly squeezed sugarcane juice mixed with lemon and ginger.

Stone Town and the surrounding villages offer volunteers the unique opportunity to enjoy the white beaches, clear blue water, coconut palm trees and the unique Zanzibar culture and food. The island is a popular backpacker's destination and has a variety of small beach villages, within 30 minutes travel, to enjoy long weekends under the palm trees. The influences of India, Africa and Arabia can be seen in its inhabitants, the food and building styles of the houses. Zanzibar is a dreamy place and will surprise you constantly when you volunteer there.





5. Safety

Zanzibar is generally considered reasonably safe for travellers and volunteers, but like any destination, it's important to be aware of certain considerations:

Zanzibar experiences relatively low rates of violent crime compared to many other tourist destinations. Most visitors have trouble-free experiences, particularly in areas frequented by tourists and volunteers. The volunteer house is based in a safe area where you can also find the international embassies and other international organizations and companies and despite this creating a need to travel to and from work a little longer, your safety is more important than anything.

Be aware of:

- Petty theft: Pickpocketing and bag-snatching can occur, especially in crowded areas and tourist spots
- Beach safety: Be cautious when swimming as some beaches have strong currents
- Transportation: Road safety standards may differ from what you're used to
- Health concerns: Take standard precautions with food and water, wash your hands frequently and don't eat street food that has not been prepared fresh.

Safety Tips

- Always follow your supervisor's guidance
- Don't travel alone at night, especially in unfamiliar areas
- Keep valuables secure and be discreet with expensive items
- Respect local customs and dress modestly. Women should not show much of their legs and chest. (exception to this rule would be when you are at the beach, but no topless sun bathing)
- If you are diving or snorkelling, you may be tempted to collect some pretty shells from Zanzibar's many coral reefs. Please do not, as this kills entire reefs, the devastating effects of which can be seen in the well-trodden areas of the East African coast. Although there are shell sellers, you are asked not to buy shells from them, as it simply encourages this harmful industry.
- Zanzibar is an amazingly photogenic place but if you want to take photographs of people, please ask for their permission first out of respect for them
- If you are not Muslim do not enter any of Zanzibar's mosques.
- Keep in mind that your safety comes with your own behaviour and looking after your personal items. Lock your room, if possible, give valuables to the coordinators to keep for you and be aware of your surroundings.
- Stay aware of your surroundings
- Zanzibar is alluring to many different tourists and many women from the west will find their African lovers here. Be aware of the smooth-talking beach boys that you will encounter and can organize everything for 'free' for you or very cheap, there usually is a price to pay somewhere down the line.



6. How much does it cost?

Included in fees:

- Personal collection upon arrival from the airport or harbour of Stone Town
- Accommodation: shared dorm style rooms in our volunteer house
- All meals (local standards) included including safe drinking water
- Guidance and supervision during your stay from our volunteer coordinator
- First day introduction at your project
- Offer of tours and outings in the weekends

Excluded from your fees:

- Air tickets
- Insurances
- Own drinks including bottled mineral water and luxury items
- Transport on the island with local taxis, bicycle, or private transport
- Visa of 50 USD (upon arrival) and volunteering permit of 200 USD (after arrival)
- Inbound Insurance Zanzibar (mandatory since October 2024), ONLY from Zanzibar Insurance Corporation by visiting - www.visitzanzibar.go.tz The cost of the policy is USD44 per visitor.

DURATION:	USD
2 Weeks	\$ 765
3 Weeks	\$1 055
4 Weeks	\$1 285
Extra Weeks	\$ 300
Donation to Hospital (compulsory) per week	\$100 p/week



Accommodation

Volunteers will be staying at our volunteer house which can accommodate up to 12 volunteers. The volunteer house has 3 large bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and large kitchen, as well as dining room and lounge area. The house has a garden with a secure wall and gate to make sure you are as safe as possible.

Bedding is provided in the form of sheets but bring a towel for personal use. Mosquito nets are not provided so you can bring one if you choose to. There is no malaria on the island so a mosquito net is for your comfort and not needed for health. If you don't have enough space in your suitcase: it is cheap to buy things locally.

The accommodation can be basic, standards are very different on Zanzibar then back home most probably, and showers do not have hot water, but the weather is hot enough to shower cold!

Within easy reach you will find the main road with food stalls to buy fresh juices, Mandazi (local doughnuts) and any other basic needs. Our team will also show you the popular bars with fast internet and a supermarket with some imported (and expensive) goodies to treat yourself to every now and then.





Meals

3 Basic Meals per day are provided at the volunteer house. These will be local food, and should you want to supplement with your own luxury items you are welcome to do so at your own cost.

Meals are based on local ingredients and breakfast will offer bread, coffee and tea, omelette, sausages, jam, peanut butter, margarine and fruit. Lunch and dinners are cooked and will include meat, chicken, seafood, and vegetarian dishes, as well as the favourite 'chips' (fries) and pancakes. You can bring lunch to work by making sandwiches in the morning. Safe boiled drinking water is supplied in the house. If you would like bottled mineral water, you can buy this at TSh 800 per 1.5 liter = 0.35 USD. (Please note that exchange rates can change on a daily basis.)

Please note that the standards of western food compared to Zanzibari food can be quite different and that it is hard to keep everyone happy with specific personal needs and wants, so like the rest of your experience; be flexible and please do not waste food. We will try to accommodate you as much as possible within the local standards and possibilities.

Transport

Zanzibar is semi-autonomous and as part of Tanzania you can fly straight to Zanzibar or fly to Dar es Salaam. If you fly to Dar es Salaam you need to take a cab to the ferry to Zanzibar, where you can buy a ticket for the relaxing 40-minute boat ride to the island. It is very important that we know of your travel arrangements in time so we can be ready for you to arrive.

Upon arrival at either the airport or ferry terminus, you will be welcomed by the Volunteer coordinator who will show you around and take you to your accommodation. After freshening up and getting to know the staff, you will be given an introduction and go through some rules and regulations.

Your coordinator will also show you how to use the daladalas (local taxis). In your first week you will be shown a bit of Stone Town and explore the narrow alleys of this beautiful and atmospheric town to really get an impression of Zanzibar.

Most volunteers use the daladalas, which have specific routes from your accommodation to Stone Town and onto other destinations. It can be time consuming but also a great start of the day to experience transport the local way; livestock and big mamas all squeezed into a small minibus. The first day of volunteering, the coordinator will take you to your project and show you how to get home, at times with support from volunteers who already know the route, but after that you will need to do it by yourself.



The daladala is very cheap and runs often so fit in and do things like a local.

Private transport with a taxi to and from the volunteer house to the hospital can be offered if you prefer. This will cost you roughly 60 USD per person per week, based on a minimum of 2 people. This will be a local payment if you choose this option and you can discuss this after arrival with the local coordinator.

7. When can I start?

Volunteers have the option to start or finish with their project at any given time. Keep in mind that we only work with full weeks of volunteering and a minimum duration of the project is 2 weeks.

Ramadan

If you decide to volunteer during this time you need to be aware of the following:

What is Ramadan all about?

Ramadan is regarded as the holiest month of the year for Muslims as it was the month in which the Quran was revealed to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) on the night of Laylat Al Qadr, one of the last ten nights of Ramadan. The annual observance of Ramadan is considered one of the 'Five Pillars of Islam'. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Hijri (Islamic) calendar.

How long does it last?

Ramadan lasts for one complete moon cycle, which is usually 29 or 30 days. The moon sighting determines the duration. Nowadays, astronomical calculations have started taking precedence over the age-old tradition of moon sighting by the naked eye to determine the dates.

How do we know exactly when it starts?

A moon-sighting committee in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, will make an official announcement.

How do you greet each other?

Greet people by saying "Ramadan Kareem". This roughly translates into "Happy Ramadan".

How do Muslims observe Ramadan?

Adult Muslims are required to fast from dawn to dusk every day throughout Ramadan. Those who are ill, elderly, diabetic, pregnant, menstruating, or breast-feeding are not required to fast. Those who travel or are unwell during the period of Ramadan may fast on different days at a later point. Children are not required to fast unless they have reached puberty, although many still do out of choice.



In addition to abstaining from eating, drinking, and smoking, Muslims also refrain from sexual relations as well as sinful speech and behaviour.

During Ramadan, Muslims pray every night for 30 days, reciting different chapters each day until the Quran is completed by Eid Al Fitr. This is called the Taraweeh prayer, which is recited after Isha prayers mid-evening

When do Muslims break their fast?

Fast may be broken at sunset before Maghrib prayers after 'Azaan' (call for prayers). This occurs just after sunset. Dates are traditionally the first food to be eaten each evening. The fast-breaking meal is called Iftar.

Do non-Muslims have to fast?

No. While Muslims don't expect non-Muslims to fast as well, it remains important to show respect and follow basic etiquette in daily behaviour.

Basic Ramadan etiquette:

- Do not eat, drink, or smoke in public during the fasting hours. This includes chewing gum.
- Do not dance or play music in public. You may listen to music quietly with headphones.
- Do not wear inappropriate clothing in public. Dress respectfully. Men should avoid wearing sleeveless tops, while women should cover their shoulders and knees.
- Do not swear.
- Accept gifts, from a simple date to something more exotic, and try to politely accept it. Further, if invited, it would always be an honour to join someone at Iftar.

More info on [Ramadan](#)





8. What is expected of me?

It is important that volunteers of this project understand the importance of the following:

- Be flexible and expect the unexpected, this is part of the adventure!
- Be patient to create a good working schedule with the hospital, this can take some time.
- To show respect towards the people and culture of the local community. You might not agree with certain ways of conduct during your term here, but don't forget you are a guest here and as Zanzibar is a Muslim community you will have to commit to follow rules regarding clothing and appearance.





9. Things to consider

Visa

Most nationalities will be able to obtain a 'visitors permit' or 'holiday visa' upon arrival at Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam or Kilimanjaro International Airports. This visa allows you to be in Tanzania as a visitor but will not allow you to do any work, even volunteer work. You will need to obtain a 'Volunteer Permit' to legally be allowed to take part in volunteering activities.

You can apply for the Volunteer Permit and Tourist Permit upon arrival at Zanzibar International Airport. Unfortunately, these permits cost 50 USD and an additional 200 USD, but this will allow you to legally volunteer at our projects.

All volunteers will need a permit allowing volunteering, however if you are coming as a student or for research; there is a cheaper Student Visa available.

As visa requirements can change, we suggest that you contact your nearest Tanzanian Embassy to enquire about your visa or check online on the official [Tanzania e-Visa](#) where you can apply before arriving.

Passport

Your passport must have enough pages for any visa. Your passport should have 2 pages free for every country to be visited.

Please note that Tanzania insists on people having 2-free pages available when you enter. Keep this in mind if you are going to fly home from Tanzania after completing a tour to multiple African countries.

Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months after your date of departure from Africa. You are personally responsible for ensuring that passports, visas, vaccination certificates and other travel documents are in order and for all costs relating thereto.

Vaccinations

Zanzibar has a cool breeze all year round, but people can forget that one is in the tropics. We advise you to be careful in the sun and use strong protection in the first days of your stay.

Zanzibar is a malaria free area but please take advice from your doctor at home regarding what malaria tablets to take if you travel to the mainland or other destinations. The symptoms of flu are very similar to those of malaria and, in the weeks after your return home, should you have flu symptoms, inform your doctor that you have been in the tropics.



There are no legally required vaccinations for Zanzibar or Tanzania but visitors heading off to Tanzania, who have visited countries where you need a Yellow Fever vaccination to enter, will need to show this mandatory certification for yellow fever before entry into Tanzania. If you have a previous stay in a country where yellow fever is required, you may be required to show your certificate.

HIV / AIDS

Education and awareness are vital in preventing HIV spread and obviously avoidance of activities and behaviours that can transmit HIV.

HIV can be transmitted by unprotected sexual intercourse; Mother-to-child transmission during pregnancy, at the time of birth and through breastfeeding; intravenous injection of infected blood. HIV cannot be transmitted by saliva, sweat, urine or faeces. It cannot be transmitted by touching, hugging, kissing, shaking hands, sharing food utensils, towels, bedding, baths, swimming pools, telephones, or toilet seats.

Insurance

Accidents can happen to anyone. Make sure to get comprehensive travel and medical insurance.

Since October 2024 there is a [mandatory Local Insurance](#) required for all who want to visit Zanzibar. The cost of the policy is USD44 per visitor and you can apply online before arrival or get one at arrival in Tanzania.

Weather

As Zanzibar is tropical and the weather and seasons dictate everyday life you should bring clothing that is non-synthetic (cotton or linen is more comfortable), plenty of shorts and flip-flops.

Summer	(Dec, Jan and Feb)	27 - 28 ° Celsius
Autumn	(Mar, April and May)	24 -26 ° Celsius
Winter	(June, July and Aug)	24 - 25 ° Celsius
Spring	(Sep, Oct and Nov)	25- 26 ° Celsius

Clothing

For working hours however it is strongly advisable to bring loose fitting smart casual clothing with long sleeves and trousers/skirts that cover the knees. Try to avoid synthetic materials as you will sweat. Wearing a scarf to cover your hair and arms is also very much appreciated for women as that is what the locals wear.

The more you adjust; the easier people will accept you, but Zanzibari's are very welcoming



and understand that westerners have different ways of dressing. Keep in mind however that tank tops and very short pants, bikinis and other revealing wear is not respectful to wear in public, except the beaches and very touristic areas and especially not accepted during work at any of the projects.

Alcohol

Volunteers under the age of 18 are not allowed to drink alcohol as per the Law.

We do not allow any parties or gatherings at the house where alcohol is consumed and advise you to go out to enjoy yourself and drink responsibly.

Drugs

Using or possessing drugs such as marijuana is illegal as are the obvious hard drugs.

We have a zero-tolerance policy for such usage and if we become aware of this you will unfortunately be no longer welcome at the volunteer house and project.

Disclaimer

Go with Khaya commits itself to always offer accurate and correct information, but please keep in mind that information can change, and all projects can be subject to change regarding their programs and/or accommodation arrangements. Go with Khaya is a facilitating organization and does not run its own projects. Therefore, Go with Khaya cannot take responsibility whatsoever, for any changes concerning any program we offer. You will participate solely at your own risk.

10. Let's stay connected

We'd love to stay connected! Please follow & subscribe to our social media platforms below.



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