

Visiting Funsani Hospice

Information for Gap Year participants



Thank you for choosing to spend some time at Funsani Hospice. Below is some information that I hope you will find useful to help you plan and organise your trip.

Introduction

Funsani Hospice is a relatively new project. It was set up in December 2002 to cater for children orphaned by AIDS and since 2005 has been supported by Funsanikids4kids; a charity registered in the UK. Recently the charity has been renamed “Funsani” and we now have 11 children at the home and support about 100 children in the community.

The idea of a Gap Year at Funsani was suggested by John MacFarlane, a teacher at the European School in Culham. At the moment we are piloting the idea with students going out on short attachments of 2 – 12 weeks. We hope that when the project is well under way we will be able to accommodate students and visitors for longer periods of time.

Age range: 16 to 65 years. We believe people of all ages have something to offer so long as they are physically and mentally fit enough to withstand the rigours of such an undertaking. The project is yours. We will therefore need your full participation to make it a success.

I would like to ask all those who visit the Hospice whether as part of a gap project or simply as visitors to put down as much information as they can collect, both positive and negative, including tips on how to “survive” the trip. We hope to use as much of that information for our brochure which we are working on. Enjoy!





The trip

To avoid disappointment and nasty surprises, start to organise your trip at least 6 to 12 months before you are due to travel. Book your flights early to get the best possible deals. There are a lot of websites offering reasonable rates.

Generally you could get away with tickets ranging from £600

to £800. Preferably book out of peak season which unfortunately may be a problem for students.

Shop around and be well informed before booking your flight.

Vaccinations

Make sure you have your full immunisation schedule. Most importantly arrange your malaria prophylaxis in good time. There is nothing like a nasty bout of malaria to spoil your entire holiday. See your GP at least 2 months before you are due to travel.

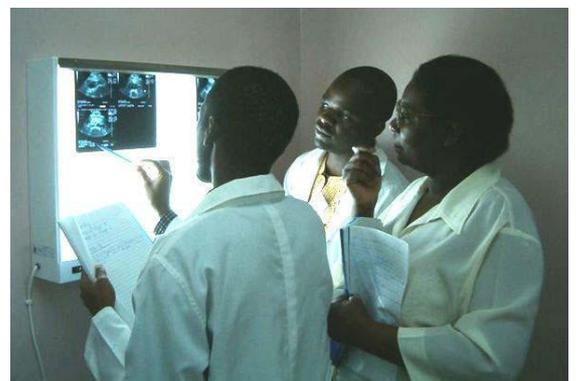
Visas

Holders of UK and most European passports will need visas to travel to Zambia. These can be obtained from the Zambian High Commission in London and can be arranged by post.

Remember to ask for multiple entry if you intend to visit neighbouring countries while you are in Zambia. You will also need to obtain individual visas for each country you visit. If in doubt contact the respective embassies.

Travel insurance

Please make your own individual arrangements for travel insurance to and from Zambia. Read the small type carefully to make sure you are paying for what you need. In particular ask specifically what provisions there are for early return to the UK in case of illness and what illnesses are covered. The dearer the insurance the more will be covered but remember if you look after yourself you will not need to be too worried.



For minor ailments you may need to obtain treatment locally. In Zambia medical treatment is generally provided at a reasonable cost from most state hospitals. However they may sometimes be inadequately staffed, poorly equipped and overcrowded. You may choose to obtain medical help from private surgeries which are generally quite accessible but tend to be dearer. Please obtain advice from your hosts in your choice of private treatment as these are not of uniform standards.



Money

A holiday to Zambia is not cheap!

Whatever you do be careful with your money and possessions. Remember you are a target! Simply consider this like being in a large

cosmopolitan city such as London. If you wouldn't do it in London don't do it in Zambia.

As far as possible have a trusted guide with you to chaperone you.

You will be surprised how inflated prices will be on the street for foreign nationals!

The Zambian banking system has come in leaps and bounds but is not quite there yet. Take some cash with you I would suggest maximum £100. Both dollars and pounds are widely accepted in the Bureaux de changes. I would caution against changing any money on the black market unless you know exactly what you are doing and who you are dealing with! In addition, either carry the rest of your holiday money as travellers cheques or arrange for money to be sent to you when you have reached your destination. Travellers cheques are safe but attract substantial charges.

My experience is that the safest way to have a substantial amount sent to you is by Western Union money transfer. That way the whole amount is with you within seconds of being sent.

You should be able to withdraw money from Zambian ATMs using any major UK bank card. You need to find out from your bank whether this will attract bank charges.

What to take with you

Zambia has 3 main seasons:

Hot/Dry August – October

Hot/Wet November – May (also mosquito season)

Cold/Dry June – July

Average temperatures in the hot season range from 20 – 35C (could reach 40C) . In June and July temperatures are generally 10 – 15C but you could have night frost too.

What you take depends on when you visit. As a rule of thumb have your sunscreen lotions and creams whatever time of the year you visit. One never knows what global warming throws at you. Be sensible and protect yourself from direct severe sunlight by using a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and light clothing. Excessive body exposure in Zambia is considered indecent and frowned upon.

Michael Sata who ran for presidency at the last election promised to outlaw the wearing of all items of clothing that exposed tummies, bums and thighs and he got a lot of support!



For the evenings make sure your arms and legs are covered and don't forget your mosquito repellants.

A good mosquito net is a good investment as most nets in the majority of Zambian homes have holes that could let a bottlefly through never mind mosquitoes. There is no experience worse than being trapped under the net with an angry mosquito trust me! Ask for one impregnated with pyrethrum if possible. In Europe mosquito nets are generally on sale in the summer so do look for one in good time.

If you are visiting Zambia in the colder months, do not underestimate the impact of the cold nights and days. Take a light coat and a jumper. Better safe than sorry. In the wet season, you will need that umbrella and raincoat. The tropical downpours tend to be extremely heavy but shortlived, leaving a lot of destruction, especially soil erosion in their path.

Before the rains, you will smell the earth as the heat rises from the earth mixing with the various odours of the countryside. You will recognise the red streams of running water after the rains gushing down the gulleys and waterways leaving large gaping holes which have made a lot of roads practically inaccessible.

Arrival

You will arrive at Lusaka International Airport and may be met by a representative of Funsani Hospice, who will be assist you with further transport arrangements to Kitwe (D 300 miles from Lusaka).

Coaches run regularly between Lusaka and Kitwe and may cost up to £10. In Kitwe your hosts will be Mr Chema Chisuse and his wife Mwaba.

Things to do

Kitwe – Funsani Hospice

Activities

Playgroup

Maintenance, painting, repairs

Chicken run

Kwacha Township and Mutende Basic School

Leisure: Chimpanzee sanctuary

Lusaka

Leisure: Munda wanga botanical gardens

Livingstone

Leisure

Mosi oa Tunya (Victoria Falls)

Open Air Museum

National museum in town

White water rafting, Bungee jumping, elephant back rides, helicopter rides, river cruises, game park

School linked up with Funsani: Maanu Mbwami

School in Libuyu Township.

Contact Name: Pastor Smoke Chewe

Address: Nazarene Compassionate Ministry, Orphans and Vulnerable Children, PO Box M29, Livingstone, Zambia

Tel. No.+260 (0)97 691248



Game reserves: Mfuwe, Luangwa, Kafue National Parks

Tip

People are very poor yet very hospitable and welcoming. Do offer to pay for your stay and even if they decline cash payment, they appreciate the occasional supermarket trip where essentials are obtained. Do not worry

about giving kids sweets and biscuits it is more important to offer the family cooking oil, bread, or to pay for the mealie meal usually 25kg bag lasts a family for a month.

Most of all fuel is very expensive. So do offer to pay for the fuel when you are offered a lift on say long distances.

Be careful not to offend with your offers of material help. Strike a balance but it only comes with practice and being as astute and as observant as you can. Look out for the garden boy's and maid's children. They may need your help more.

Take some good quality old clothes, shoes, toys and books for them.

Whenever you can, ask for help and advice.

Have a wonderful time

Apakombwele