



INFORMATION BOOKLET

This booklet provides information on Zimbabwean culture, visa requirements, and a typical day as a volunteer in the Nakavango Conservation Programme.

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This booklet has been compiled to help prepare you for your volunteer placement within the Nakavango Conservation Programme.

It is difficult to describe what it is like to experience volunteer travel in Victoria Falls. Perhaps, it can be summed up as an adventure with like-minded individuals from around the world, amidst awe-inspiring landscapes, warm-hearted locals, and customs and traditions dating back centuries.

This booklet provides you with general information about what to expect in Victoria Falls, local customs, safety tips, the volunteer programme, your arrival, what to pack, and other essential information.

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact us.

Get ready for one of the most amazing experiences of your life!

Siyabonga kakulu
(We thank you)

THE VICTORIA FALLS TEAM



Contacts

Nakavango Conservation Programme is a local organisation based at Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve, Old Ursula Road, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

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Contact Information for Family and Friends

Please provide your family and friends with the above contact details so they are able to get in touch with you should they need to. On arrival at Nakavango, remember to let everyone know that you have got here safely.

VOLUNTEER CHECKLIST



- ✓ **Read this booklet:** This booklet has been compiled by the team to answer volunteers' most frequently-asked questions, and share everything you need to know about your upcoming trip.
- ✓ **Send us your information:** We have emailed you an application form, as well as a travel plan and profile. Please ensure you complete these and email them back to Justine after confirming of your bookings.
- ✓ **Book your flights:** Book your flights as soon as possible to secure a cheaper fare.
- ✓ **Apply for a visa:** All volunteers will be required to obtain a **BUSINESS VISA**. All volunteers are considered to be working, so you are not legal if you get a Holiday Visa or KAZA UniVisa. Zimbabwe has three visa categories. Categories, by country of residence, can be found at www.evisa.gov.zw/#/VisaRegime
 - Category A: no visa required (this really means that you get a 30-day visa and it is free)
 - Category B: You will pay for and receive your visa at immigration on the day you arrive
 - Category C: **You must apply for your visa online and obtain it before departing your home country – www.evisa.gov.zw/#/VisaRegime.** More info about visa's can be found on page 12.
- ✓ **Obtain a criminal background check:** To participate in the programme, all volunteers are required to present a criminal background check to our Facility Manager at orientation.
- ✓ **Consult a travel doctor:** This booklet provides you with a list of recommended vaccinations for discussion with a travel doctor at least eight weeks before you depart from home.
- ✓ **Purchase travel insurance:** It is mandatory for all volunteers to purchase travel insurance when volunteering abroad.
- ✓ **Pay your programme fees:** Upon receiving your initial inquiry, we will send you an application form. Once we receive your completed form, we will send you an invoice. A deposit of 50% will confirm your placement, and we will require the balance to be paid 30 days before the programme start date.
- ✓ **Get prepared:** The better prepared you are for this experience, the more you can relax and enjoy your time in country. Do some research on Zimbabwe and Victoria Falls, and learn a few phrases in the Shona or Sindebele languages so you can impress the locals.
- ✓ **Pack appropriately:** Use the packing list in this booklet to guide you, and do not bring too much. Often, volunteers wish to pack items to donate to the local people they will be working with. While we encourage donations, we recommend volunteers purchase these items in-country. This means you are not only investing in the economy of your host country, but also freeing up your baggage space.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



Each volunteer brings a different set of skills, knowledge and values to the programme. Therefore, the role of your volunteer placement will largely be decided after your arrival and consultation with Nakavango. We appreciate the time and money you have chosen to invest in this programme, and we hope it will be as rewarding and satisfying for you as it will be for the people you help. The placement will not always be easy. It will challenge and test you, but this is all part of the volunteer experience in a developing country.

While you are volunteering in Victoria Falls, remember that you are a representative of your family; friends; country; Nakavango; and, most importantly, yourself. You are a guest here, and it is important to keep in mind that the people, traditions, cultures, and general way of life will be different from those of your home country. Do not try to force your ways on the people you will be working and living with. Instead, be open-minded and embrace the new cultures you will be exposed to (both those of Zimbabweans and of your fellow volunteers). This will allow you to have a rich and authentic experience.

Volunteer Requirements:

- ✓ Volunteers must be over 18 years of age at the beginning of the programme
- ✓ Volunteers must present a recent criminal background check to the Operations Manager at orientation
- ✓ Fluency in English is required to participate in the programme as all staff members speak English

Criminal Background Check

To participate in the programme, all volunteers are required to provide a criminal background check at orientation. A basic disclosure check from your local police is sufficient and can be obtained by visiting or contacting your local police department. Please ensure you allow sufficient time to acquire this document before you depart from home as processing times vary. A background check is important to determine whether any serious criminal offence has been recorded against your name. The check must be issued within 12 months of your programme start date and is required to be presented in English. If your background check cannot be issued in English, a translated and verified copy will be accepted if presented along with the original. Anyone with a criminal record or caution for other offenses should also contact us before proceeding further.

Location of Programme and Placements

The programme is based in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Volunteers arrive at Victoria Falls International Airport (VFA) and are transported to the Nakavango Conservation Centre on the Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve. Projects are located on the reserve and in rural areas surrounding Victoria Falls town.

Start and Duration of Programmes:

- ✓ The Victoria Falls programme begins on the **first and third Monday** of every month

- ✔ Please be sure to arrive on **the Sunday before** your programme starts
- ✔ Volunteers can choose to volunteer for periods ranging **from two to 12 weeks**

Accommodation

Volunteers are accommodated in single rooms at the conservation centre. Being situated on a game reserve, it is not uncommon to see wildlife throughout the day!

The rooms are comfortable and each is equipped with a single bed, ceiling fan, desk, chair, and storage shelving. Bathrooms are shared by up to four volunteers of the same gender, and offer western toilets and hot showers. Bed linen is provided, and during the warmer months, a sheet should be sufficient as there is no air-conditioning in the rooms. During the cooler months, a duvet and warm blanket are provided.

In addition to the sleeping quarters, the accommodation also offers an open-air communal area. There is a swimming pool, braai (barbecue) facility, and picnic tables where volunteers can socialise and enjoy meals. Volunteers must bring their own swimming towels. On-site staff clean the accommodation and common areas throughout the week. However, volunteers are also required to keep these areas tidy.

The conservation centre has a 24-hour security guard, and a safe is available in the office for volunteers to store small valuables. As the reserve is a Big Five area (home to lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and Cape buffalo), the property is protected by an electric fence. Volunteers are required to ask permission before leaving the property.

Laundry

A weekly laundry service is provided for volunteers by the housekeeping staff at the conservation centre. Please ensure that all of your clothing and towels are labelled with your name to ensure that you receive all of your items back in your laundry bag. Laundry bags are provided.

Meals

Volunteers are served three meals a day, except for on weekends when brunch and dinner are served. Fruit, bread and cereal are available all day, and snacks on weekends. All meals are prepared by an on-site chef, and are a mix of western and traditional Zimbabwean food. Breakfast includes cereal, porridge, fruit and toast, accompanied by coffee and tea. Lunches will be a mix of sandwiches, quiches, burgers, salads, and other similar foods. Dinners will commonly comprise of pastas, fish, meat, starches and/or vegetables. Snacks are typically muffins, pastries, or biscuits. The chef is happy to accommodate special dietary requirements (vegetarian, vegan, dairy or gluten free etc.) – please inform the Operations Manager in advance should you have any.



Social Media

Social media provides an excellent platform for our past, present and future volunteers to network with each other. As we are unable to give out individual volunteer details, we manage a number of networks where volunteers can connect with each other before, during, and after their programmes.

Get Recognised For Your Work

Many volunteers choose to share their experiences with their local newspapers and community magazines to inspire others within their community to volunteer abroad. This means we are constantly finding stories about our volunteers in media from all around the world! Some volunteers also chose to use this media coverage to help fundraise for their volunteer placements. If you are interested in gaining recognition for your work and promoting awareness of volunteering abroad, we encourage you to contact your local media outlets that, in our experience, are generally interested in and willing to share our volunteers' stories.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



Conservation

Volunteers have the unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in conservation management and assist with on-going conservation research, which are vital for the successful operation of the reserve, its surrounding areas, and their ecosystems. The reserve is home to an abundance of indigenous wildlife, including the Big Five – lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and Cape buffalo – and serves as an Intensive Protection Zone for the critically endangered black rhino.

Conservation management and research activities may include:

- ✓ Alien vegetation removal
- ✓ Soil erosion control
- ✓ Fence patrols
- ✓ Bush walks
- ✓ Waterhole creation, maintenance, and monitoring
- ✓ Game and bird monitoring, tracking, and counting
- ✓ Road maintenance
- ✓ River crossings upkeep
- ✓ Reserve clean-up operations
- ✓ Game census
- ✓ General clean-up of reserve and surrounding areas
- ✓ Animal tracking
- ✓ Observe supplement feeding
- ✓ Camping out on the reserve

Volunteers work with members of the game reserve team and anti-poaching unit, with their efforts also benefitting partner organisations, including Birdlife Zimbabwe, Endangered Wildlife Trust and Zimbabwe National Parks Authority.

Our Wildlife Manager is available throughout the programme to hold discussions and debates. This enhances volunteers' knowledge and understanding of nature conservation issues in Africa and assists volunteers in making a real contribution to conserving the environment in Victoria Falls.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE



Arrival and Departure

The programme begins on the first and third Monday of every month, and we ask that volunteers arrive in Victoria Falls for pick-up on the Sunday before their chosen start date.

Accommodation is provided from the Sunday before your start date through to (and including) the Friday night of your final week. You can then depart at any time on the Saturday. We collect from Victoria Falls International Airport on the Sunday between 2 and 3pm from the downstairs coffee shop or from Wild Horizons office (310 Parkway Avenue, Victoria Falls town) at 11am. Transfers by taxi (about US\$30) to the centre are for volunteers' own accounts.

Arriving by Flight

As soon as your flights are booked, please email us your flight details. Please note: it is important to specify your airline and flight number so that if your flight is delayed, our staff will be aware of changes to your arrival time. **Should you miss any flights, please advise us as soon as possible.**

Arriving Overland

If you are traveling prior to joining the programme and plan to arrive in Victoria Falls by road, please be sure to arrive in Victoria Falls the Sunday before your start date. We collect from Wild Horizons office (310 Parkway Avenue, Victoria Falls town) at 11am.

Post Pickup

Once you have been picked up, you will be transported to the centre's accommodation (a 15-minute drive from the airport). The programme for the next few days will be explained with regards to meeting the staff and other volunteers, and your orientation.

Orientation

Orientation is hosted by our Victoria Falls team at the conservation centre. It begins on the morning of your chosen start date and covers everything you need to know about the volunteer programme – introduction to Victoria Falls and Zimbabwe, culture and customs, rules and expectations, safety, travel opportunities, introduction to the programme, and placement. Orientation will also give you a chance to meet the other volunteers and swap contact details for weekend travel and socialising.



Volunteer Week

Orientation is on the Monday after your arrival. The morning starts with an orientation game drive, departing at 6:30am and returning at 11am. The orientation debrief will then take place in the lounge for about 2 hours. Lunch is taken during the heat of the day and, after a short rest, you will be taken on another game drive to show you the balance of the reserve.

For the remainder of the programme, you will generally go out between 7am and 11am, or 8am and 12pm. After lunch and a rest during the heat of the day, work begins again from approximately 3pm to 7pm. There is no typical daily schedule, so a general guideline for summer is 6:30am start, back for lunch, go out again at 4pm; and for winter is 8am start, back for lunch, go out again at 3pm. Please note: during the summer rainy season, we may delay starts if it is raining hard.

Volunteer Weekends

There is no shortage of things to do in and around Victoria Falls town, with activities ranging from white-water rafting to sunset cruises. Victoria Falls is one of the largest and most spectacular waterfalls in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, situated within three separate national parks: Victoria Falls National Park (Zimbabwe), Zambezi National Park (Zimbabwe), and Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park (Zambia).

Nature enthusiasts and animal lovers will have the unique opportunity to see these areas on safari and guided tour, exploring rainforests that are home to many endangered species. The town of Victoria Falls offers many popular tourist spots for sampling Zimbabwean cuisine and buying handicrafts from local artisans. Extreme sports are also plentiful in Victoria Falls, with white-water rafting, bungee jumping, abseiling, zip lining, and gorge swinging on offer. Outdoor enthusiasts can take part in fishing, horseback riding, canoeing, and cycling – there is no shortage of options for adventure. Victoria Falls' advantageous location also allows volunteers to easily visit the neighbouring countries of Zambia and Botswana on the weekends. Volunteers staying in Zimbabwe after completing their programme and who wish to travel further afield, can explore the ruins of the Great Zimbabwe, check out the unusual rock formations in Matobo Hills National Park, or go diving in the cobalt-blue water of the Chinhoyi Caves. There is a wealth of national parks in Zimbabwe, too.

ZIMBABWE COUNTRY INFO AND GUIDELINES



Climate

The climate is tropical, although markedly moderated by altitude. There is a dry season, including a short cool season during the period of May to September when the whole country has very little or no rain. The rainy, hot season is typically a time of heavy rainfall from November to April.

General

Victoria Falls is a town is located in the province of Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe, on the border with Zambia. It lies on the southern bank of the Zambezi River at the western end of the Victoria Falls. While it is neither the highest nor the widest waterfall in the world, Victoria Falls is claimed to be the biggest. This claim is based on a width of 1 708m (5,6ft) and height of 108m (354ft), forming the largest sheet of falling water in the world. Zimbabwe is the 61st largest country in the world – just larger than Japan but smaller than Paraguay, with a total area of 390 580km².

Topography

Most of Zimbabwe is rolling plateau, with over 75% of the country lying between 600 and 1 500m above sea level. The area of high plateau, known as the highveld, is around 650m long and 80km wide, and stretches northeast to southwest at 1 200 to 1 675m. This culminates in the northeast in the Inyanga Mountains, reaching the country's highest point at Mount Inyangani (2 592m). On either side of the highveld is the middleveld – a plateau at about 600 to 1 200m. Below 610m, are areas making up the lowveld – wide and grassy plains in the Zambezi basin. The highveld is a central ridge forming the country's watershed, with streams flowing northwest into the Zambezi. Only the largest of the many rivers have an all year-round water flow.

Demographics

Zimbabwe has an estimated population of 13.12 million people, and nearly 98% of Zimbabwe's populace is of African origin. The Shona ethnic group comprises approximately 82% of the population, and occupies a large part of eastern Zimbabwe. The Ndebele make up about 13% of the population, and primarily live in the southwest of the country. Approximately 5% of the population is made up of other ethnic groups. Zimbabwe has 16 official languages, with the prominent dialects being Shona and Sindebele. English is also an official language, which is widely used in administration, law, media, and schooling. Only 4% of the population lives in urban areas. About 50% of the population has syncretic religious beliefs (part Christian, part indigenous beliefs), while 25% of the population follow Christianity, 24% follow Islam, and 1% follow other religions.

Zimbabwean Visa Requirements

Upon arrival at the immigration desk in Victoria Falls, please list your destination as:

Nakavango Conservation Programme
The Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve,
Old Ursula Road,
Nakavango Estate,
Victoria Falls,
Zimbabwe

Please indicate that the purpose of your visit is 'Business'. If an explanation is required, state that you will be visiting Victoria Falls in the capacity of an ecotourist and staying on the Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve, where you'll be participating in the Nakavango Conservation Programme.

You must get a Business Visa, which you will have to pay for in cash US\$ – approximately US\$55 – card payments are not accepted. Please note that Business Visas are valid only for 30 days. This will cover the duration of your placement with us.

If you would like to leave Zimbabwe at any time during your stay to go into Botswana or Zambia – many volunteers wish to see the falls from both the Zimbabwe and Zambia sides – we recommend you rather get a Double Entry Business Visa. This visa costs approximately US\$80, and you will need to pay in cash US\$.

Unfortunately, Canadian passport holders can only be issued with a Single Entry Business Visa. They can still go across to Botswana or Zambia, but upon their return, will have to obtain another Business Visa.

To confirm, regardless of the duration of your stay in Zimbabwe (e.g. 2 weeks, 4 weeks) all volunteers are to apply for a Business Visa/Double Entry Business Visa. Volunteers who wish to stay longer than 4 weeks will be required to obtain a Temporary Work Permit (approximately US\$500) before their initial 30-day Business Visa expires.

Required documentation for visa applications:

- ✓ Payment, as detailed above
- ✓ Passport, valid for at least 6 months after your return home, and with 4 blank pages
- ✓ One copy of your passport details page
- ✓ Two recent colour passport photographs of yourself, plus one copy
- ✓ Invitation letter from Nakavango (sent to you once we have your arrival details) addressing the Department of Immigration Zimbabwe to request a Double Entry Business Visa (Single Entry Business Visa for Canadians) – this letter should be used when applying online or upon arrival in Zimbabwe, depending on the requirements for your nationality
- ✓ If you are required to apply online, please print out your visa confirmation letter to bring with you to Zimbabwe – please do not rely on the Internet to be working on the day of your arrival
- ✓ Business letter from International Volunteer HQ
- ✓ Proof of your scheduled departure from Zimbabwe – 2 copies of your flight itinerary or ticket

Required documentation for work permit application

In addition to the above-listed requirements, you will also need:

- ✓ A certified copy of your birth certificate
- ✓ A chest x-ray certificate confirming that you are free from tuberculosis

Zimbabwean Embassies Abroad

To find the contact details of embassies and consulates of Zimbabwe, visit www.goabroad.com

Travel Documents

It is highly recommended that you make two copies of all your important travel documents (passport, flight tickets, and travel insurance) before you leave home. Leave one set of copies with a friend or family member, and bring the spare copies with you. Bring your passport, as well as an identification card (e.g. driver's license or student card) as you may be asked to present this when making tour bookings or checking in for flight/bus trips. To enter Zimbabwe, your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the date of your departure from the country.

Getting There

Several airlines fly into into **VICTORIA FALLS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (VFA)**.

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA	Ethiopian
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA	South African Airways; Kenya Airways
HARARE	Fast Jet; Air Zimbabwe; Fly Africa Zimbabwe
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA	British Airways; South African Airways; Fast Jet
NAIROBI, KENYA	Kenya Airways
WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA	Air Namibia

Money

The currency of Zimbabwe is the US Dollar – please visit www.xe.com to check the exchange rate at the time of your programme. Please note that the US Dollar is the most widely accepted currency here. Be wary of schemers who try to take advantage of tourists by offering 'currency exchange' for Zimbabwean notes in the trillions of dollars – this is an obsolete currency. We recommend taking around US\$200 in cash to keep in case of emergencies, and a Mastercard or VISA credit/debit card to withdraw cash as you need it.

It is strongly advised that you notify your bank of your plans to travel in Zimbabwe so they do not put a hold on your account due to activity that may appear suspicious. ATMs that distribute US Dollars are readily available in Victoria Falls. You will need cash for public transportation, as well as for weekend travel, shopping, and personal expenses.

- ✔ Weekend activities can be paid for with VISA and Mastercard credit/debit cards
- ✔ Taxis and curio shops will require cash
- ✔ Staff gratuities are given in cash (at your discretion)
- ✔ Budget ± US\$200 per week for personal shopping and taxis
- ✔ Budget ± US\$10 per week for gratuities (at your discretion)

Communication

Most parts of Zimbabwe have a reasonably good communications infrastructure. Wi-Fi access is available at the conservation centre, as well as at many cafes and restaurants throughout the country – however periodic outages are common. If you bring a SIM lock-free mobile phone, you will be able to buy a local SIM card for about US\$5 and airtime credit in US\$5 increments. Both international and local calls can be made. The country code is +263.

Zimbabwe Wall Plugs and Adapters

The socket type at the conservation centre is the square three-prong plug (Type G), as is commonly used in the UK. Please bring an adaptor for any items that are not compatible with this plug type. The voltage in Zimbabwe is 220V and the frequency is 50Hz.



Clothing and Culture

Casual, modern clothing is permitted as suitable attire in Victoria Falls. However, it is advisable to dress neatly and wear clean, conservative clothing that covers the shoulders and knees while volunteering in the programme. Clothing should not be overly tight or show excessive skin. Volunteers love to go out socialising in Victoria Falls on the weekends, so bring something you like to wear out. Please note: camouflage clothing is illegal in Zimbabwe.

Transport

The most common methods of transport for volunteers in Victoria Falls are taxi or Nakavango's vehicles. Volunteers travel to and from the work sites by the programme's vehicles or walking – depending on the activities for the day. Volunteers will use taxi transport in their free time. A return Victoria Falls town taxi transfer will typically cost US\$30.

Shopping

There are grocery stores, pharmacies, markets, and shopping centres in Victoria Falls town, where you will be able to purchase everything that you need – from toiletries, to snacks and drinks, and other personal items. If you want to eat out on the weekends, there are a selection of restaurants and bars in town – Justine is happy to provide recommendations.

What's Happening in Victoria Falls?

After registering, volunteers often like to know what is happening in the country they will be traveling to – victoriafalls24.com contains up to date news and information from Victoria Falls.

Culture and Customs

Zimbabweans are warm, friendly people and will typically greet you enthusiastically. A handshake greeting is common in Zimbabwe, which typically comprise of three stages: a normal handshake, followed by a connection of hooked fingers (thumbs raised and touching), and ending in a normal handshake. Ask a local to show you how! Speaking to someone with your hands in your pockets is considered very rude. When you wave hello, be sure to rotate your wrist – please note: a simple palm-outward raised hand is a sign of opposition to the president and government. Gratuities of 10% are customary.

GENERAL HEALTH AND VACCINATIONS



It is expected that all volunteers have their own health insurance. Vaccinations are not typically required to enter Zimbabwe, however this can vary depending on your travel path. If you plan to travel before or after your volunteer programme, we recommend carrying out independent research and talking to a travel doctor about the required vaccinations. Please see below our list of recommended vaccinations.

On the off chance that you fall sick and need a doctor's attention, Nakavango has access to an emergency medical service. There are good and reputable hospitals where you can be treated. It is important to note that in the unlikely event you require medical care, doctors and hospitals require immediate payment. Although you will be covered by your travel insurance, it is recommended to take a credit card or US\$250 cash to cover any unforeseen medical care. This can be claimed from your travel insurance provider upon your return home.

It is important that you discuss your trip with a travel doctor – ideally four to six weeks prior to your departure from home. You may wish to get vaccinations or prophylactics against some illnesses. Please see the list below as a guide on those to discuss with your doctor.

Recommended vaccinations and prophylactics for Victoria Falls are as follows:

- ✓ Polio
- ✓ Hepatitis A
- ✓ Hepatitis B
- ✓ Diphtheria/tetanus
- ✓ Typhoid
- ✓ Rabies
- ✓ Yellow fever (required for entry in many African nations)
- ✓ Malaria (please consult your doctor about how to prevent malaria while traveling)

PACKING GUIDE



General Packing List:

- ✓ Copies of important travel documents, such as passport, passport photos, visas, criminal background check, travel insurance, and plane tickets
- ✓ Medical kit with aspirin (or a similar pain reliever); an antihistamine for relief from allergies and insect bites; an antidiarrhoeal; scissors; tweezers; band aids; antiseptic cream for cuts and grazes; and any personal medications
- ✓ Toiletries, including toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, soap/body wash, sunscreen, lip balm, insect repellent, and contact lenses
- ✓ Towel(s)
- ✓ Work gloves
- ✓ Laptop, tablet, or smartphone
- ✓ You can buy a SIM card for around US\$5 to make/receive local/international calls, and send texts and emails
- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Plug adapters and chargers for your electronics
- ✓ A set of nice clothes – you will probably want to go out for dinner or dancing
- ✓ Sun hat and sunglasses
- ✓ Swimsuit
- ✓ Swimming towel

Clothing Packing List:

- ✓ Neutral-coloured clothing – camouflage clothing is banned in Zimbabwe
- ✓ Collared, khaki-coloured shirts – both short- and long-sleeved
- ✓ Khaki-coloured pants and shorts
- ✓ Comfortable walking shoes – preferably hiking boots
- ✓ Sun hat/cap and a warm hat/beanie
- ✓ Sweatshirt/fleece pullover and windbreaker/rain jacket
- ✓ Casual and smarter clothing for evening wear
- ✓ Underwear and socks
- ✓ T-shirts are fine and they do not have to have a collar



Day Packing List:

- ✓ A small padlock for securing bags and valuables
- ✓ Torch, binoculars, and water bottle
- ✓ Sleeping bag for weekly camp out
- ✓ Books, music, and other entertainment for travel and downtime
- ✓ Travel guide (many volunteers find *Lonely Planet* to be very helpful)
- ✓ This information booklet
- ✓ Journal and pens to keep a diary

Volunteer Supplies

It is difficult for volunteers to travel abroad with supplies due to baggage-weight limitations. However, you will have access to shopping centres in Victoria Falls where these items can be bought. This is also our recommended and preferred way to contribute to your project – you do not have to carry supplies with you, and you will be contributing to the local economy. As community development initiatives are carried out in conjunction with conservation activities in the programme, some volunteers choose to bring supplies to the local schools they will be working in. Below is a list of supplies that are needed, and volunteers can choose any number of items to bring with them.

- ✓ First-aid supplies
- ✓ Flip-flops/shoes
- ✓ Children's clothing
- ✓ Bubble-blowing solution
- ✓ Face paint
- ✓ Music player and some children's music
- ✓ Musical instruments
- ✓ Stickers and stamps
- ✓ Group games – without small pieces – e.g. Twister
- ✓ Coloured drawing paper
- ✓ Pencils/pens/markers/crayons
- ✓ Books (any type)
- ✓ Posters
- ✓ Coloured pavement chalk
- ✓ White and coloured chalk

SAFETY AND SECURITY



Safety

Traveling abroad can bring out a mixture of excitement and nervousness. However, when you are immersing yourself in a foreign culture, through volunteering and living amongst a local community, this apprehension can be compounded. If you have not travelled much before, it is difficult to know what to expect and often volunteers (and their loved ones) are concerned for their safety and security. Although it would be foolish of us to try and guarantee your safety, we do everything we can to ensure you are kept safe and secure during your time in the programme. Every programme offered has been personally inspected and selected by a director from Nakavango. We have lived in the accommodations, experienced the orientations, worked on the projects, and built strong and trusting relationships with our local staff. If we did not believe the programmes were safe enough to send our own children on, we would not offer them.

Volunteers have various layers of support they can go through and people who will help them in the event of an accident:

- ✓ Victoria Falls Volunteer Co-ordinator
- ✓ Placement staff
- ✓ Accommodation Managers
- ✓ Nakavango Programme Manager
- ✓ Programmes are monitored on an ongoing basis to gauge volunteers' experiences, and we are continually improving our projects through this feedback
- ✓ The safety and security of our programmes is constantly being reviewed, and if you have any concerns, we encourage you to discuss these with the local staff during the programme orientation
- ✓ During orientation, the local staff will also provide guidance in the areas of safety and security

General Safety Tips:

- ✓ Avoid wearing jewelry on the streets – especially gold neck chains, or other items that would be appealing to would-be thieves
- ✓ Handbags are always a temptation – a backpack is better, and if you must carry one, keep it in front of you
- ✓ Be alert
- ✓ Always tell someone where you are going before you attempt long journeys, and ensure you know your way to and from your destination
- ✓ Be especially careful at night
- ✓ Use taxi drivers you know (keep their telephone numbers), or who are connected to the place where you are traveling from or to; our local staff will recommend some reputable drivers during orientation; if you are unsure of who to use, always ask local staff.

- ✓ Stay in a group at night and never walk down dark, empty streets – if possible, use door-to-door transport after dark
- ✓ Keep in mind that recognised tourist areas can be considered potentially high-risk spots for pickpocketing
- ✓ Leave your valuables behind when going out at night
- ✓ For traffic safety, look to the left, then to the right, and to the left again before crossing the road
- ✓ Always keep an eye on your drinks when out socialising

Security

Victoria Falls is a relatively safe area, compared with those in other developing nations. Theft is a relatively low risk in Victoria Falls, but snatch-theft on the street and from hotel rooms are not uncommon.

You are cautioned to keep valuables somewhere on your person where you can feel them at all times - especially when you are in crowded marketplaces or nightclubs. Our local staff will also inform you of areas to stay away from during orientation. Most tourists in Victoria Falls never experience any trouble, and so long as you stay alert and more use common sense, you should not either. Our local staff will guide you on safety and security during orientation. If you are ever unsure of anything, ask the local staff – they are only too happy to help.

Security Warnings

The following governments publish useful travel advisories – highlighting entry requirements; medical facilities; areas with health and safety risks; civil unrest or other dangers – and are generally up to date:

UNITED STATES	www.travel.state.gov
UNITED STATES	www.mft.govt.nv
CANADA	www.voyage.gc.ca
UNITED KINGDOM	www.fco.gov.uk/travel
AUSTRALIA	www.smarttraveller.gov.au

Responsible Drinking

It is natural that you and the other volunteers will want to go out together and socialise. While we encourage this, all we ask is: please drink responsibly! It can be exciting to be in a foreign country – the nightlife is great, the people are different, you have new friends – but it can be easy to lose control of how much you are drinking. When you are drunk, you start to lose awareness of your surroundings and your judgment is impaired, which can be incredibly dangerous – especially in an unfamiliar environment. Always chose, at least, one person in your group to remain sober. Enjoy your night, but drink responsibly!



Drug Use

It goes without saying that the consumption of illegal and prescription drugs (if you do not have a prescription for them) is forbidden. Our local staff will outline our rules regarding this during the orientation. However if a volunteer is caught using illegal drugs, he/she will be removed from the programme immediately with no refund. To consider buying or taking illegal drugs is extremely foolish and the consequences are extreme. We do not want our volunteers having their volunteer holiday turned into life imprisonment in a third-world jail. It is important that all volunteers are aware of the consequences, should they be silly enough to buy or consume any illegal substances.

Travel Insurance

It is mandatory to purchase travel insurance when participating in the programme. Things may not always go to plan while you are traveling and, although Nakavango does everything it can to ensure your trip abroad goes smoothly, it is essential to ensure you have adequate insurance to cover you against illness, lost baggage, theft, etc. Nakavango has therefore partnered with travel insurance provider, World Nomads to ensure volunteers have access to the best insurance deals, specifically designed with volunteer travellers in mind. World Nomads are recommended by *Lonely Planet* and are underwritten by insurance giants Allianz, IHI, BCS Insurance Group, BUPA, Mondial Assistance, and Millstream. This insurance covers medical emergencies, emergency evacuation, trip, cancellation, personal belongings, and personal liability. World Nomads quotes are extremely competitive, and they are one of the only insurance companies that allow travellers to claim whilst traveling, or extend their policy if they decide to stay longer. Visit www.worldnomads.com to find out more and for a free no-obligation quote.

MORE INFORMATION



Movies About Zimbabwe

Everyone's Child (1996) – Tsitsi Dangarembga
Spell My Name (2005) – Tsitsi Dangarembga
White Hunter Black Heart (1990) – Clint Eastwood

Websites About Victoria Falls and Zimbabwe

Victoria Falls Travel Guide: www.victoriafalls-guide.net
Lonely Planet: www.lonelyplanet.com/zimbabwe
National Geographic: intelligenttravel.nationalgeographic.com/2015/07/24/victoria-falls-for-dummies/

Books About Zimbabwe

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight – Alexandra Fuller
Rainbow's End – Lauren St John
The Last Resort – Douglas Rogers
The Elephants and I – Sharon Pincott
The Boy Next Door – Irene Sabatini
Evolution and Innovation in Wildlife Conservation – Brian Child and Helen Suich
Lonely Planet Zimbabwe – Tione Chinula and Vincent Talbot
Mukiwa – Peter Godwin

