

Volunteer with South Africa's HIV Orphans



Highlights

If you like finger painting, reading books and singing nursery rhymes, then a fun and intensely rewarding experience awaits you on this volunteering holiday in Kwazulu Natal. Work with pre-school children whose lives have been shattered by HIV and help to educate older children and adults on how to avoid succumbing to the disease.

In some communities in the St Lucia area of South Africa (in the Kwa-Zulu Natal province) it is estimated that up to 70% of people have been infected with HIV. The implications of this are clear, a whole generation of children is growing up under the shadow of the disease, with many losing one or both parents. This project supports a local day care centre where around 80 orphaned toddlers and pre-schoolers can play and learn in a caring and nurturing environment, whilst their carers are out working.

Whilst you are volunteering here, you will spend your mornings helping out at the day care centre. This will involve playing with the children and giving them some much needed one on one attention. You might want to read books, sing songs, get the crayons out and draw and even teach them a bit of English. You may also help out with bathing and feeding, so prepare to get messy!

In the afternoons, you will be helping out at local community centres and schools, addressing the issues behind the high HIV infection rates. Working with a local organization, you will be educating young people and adults about the transmission of HIV and how to prevent infection.

Your practical skills (and if you don't any, you will soon learn some!) will come in handy here too as there are several building projects to get your teeth into. You will help to paint, repair and generally give a bit of TLC to classrooms in local schools.

You will also be encouraged to make the most out of your time off. The Hluhluwe and Umfolozi National Park is on your doorstep, home to over 1600 white rhino, let alone the lions, elephants and leopards that also roam the savannah. On the coast, you can go snorkeling to your heart's content, or sit back and spot the dolphins playing in the surf. Further a field, you have Kruger National Park and Mozambique which you could visit over a weekend.

Is it for me?

We know it's a cliché, but the more you put in, the more you will get out of this volunteering holiday. You will only be here for a few weeks, so you will need to throw yourself into the work with a lot of energy and really get stuck in. This is a very genuine opportunity to meet local people and gain an insight into their lives and culture. And there is always the chance to extend your trip so that you can have some R & R afterwards – which you will have well and truly earned!

You will be spending a lot of time with young children, so enthusiasm, energy and a degree of patience would be helpful. The other projects that you will be involved in, the HIV education and classroom repairing don't require any specific skills – you will be briefed on everything you need to know when you're out there.

Accommodation

Prices from

825 GBP (2 weeks) per person

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When you are not working, you will be living with other volunteers in a comfortable house in the middle of St Lucia. You will have all of your meals here and the laundry and cleaning will also be taken care of. The house is comfortable and fully furnished and has some great facilities such as a swimming pool, Jacuzzi and bbq facilities. It is, however, all about communal living. Meals are eaten together and you will be sharing a room with between one and three other volunteers. So whilst it is still perfectly reasonable to expect to get some 'me time' reading a book by the pool, there will be a good deal of time spent with other people. See this as a great opportunity to make some really good new friends, contribute to a local community and be inspired by an amazing place.

Itinerary

Your itinerary may vary, depending on your own experience and the number of other volunteers on the placement at the same time. Below is a sample itinerary.

07:30

Get up, eat breakfast, and start getting ready for your project.

08:30

Head off to the Orphan Day Care Centre.

08:45

Start your work at the centre. You will be able to use lesson plans and ideas created the previous week. This learning and bonding is essential to the children's development and to prepare for their next steps proceeding to primary school.

12:30

Lunch break. You will be picked up from the centre, and taken to your volunteer house, where lunch will be waiting for you.

14.00

Start of your afternoon projects. You may visit communities to teach people HIV/AIDS awareness, feeding and playing with the orphans when they have finished school, refurbishing an orphanage or school, or farming to promote healthy living.

16.30

End of the working day. You will be picked up from your project and taken home, where we evaluate the day and discuss the schedule for the next day.

18.30

Dinner at your volunteer house.

Details

Price includes

The project fee entails financing that goes directly back into the project that you are involved with. It facilitates funding for items such as books for the orphans, building materials, and educational resources.

Price also includes the following;

- Transport between Richards Bay Airport and St. Lucia
- Comprehensive orientation program
- All daily transfers to and from your projects during your stay
- Full board and lodging, which includes 3 meals a day at our volunteer house
- Laundry service during your stay
- Assistance at your projects by African Impact staff and volunteer coordinators
- Any visits to other African Impact programmes based in St. Lucia

Comfort level

Reasonably comfortable (Inns, B&Bs, luxury camping etc.)

Experience required

A reasonable interest is all that is needed