



Volunteer Handbook

Hello!

Thank you for deciding to volunteer with Umoja Tanzania, we hope you have an exciting, inspiring and memorable experience! Remember to go with the flow, things may not work as fast as you are used to, things will certainly be a bit different, but if you maintain a positive attitude you will have a great time and know that you are assisting to transform the lives of Tanzanian youth.

This Volunteer Handbook is designed to give you basic information before you arrive and when you get to Tanzania. The information provided is advice collected from the knowledge and experience of previous volunteers and Umoja's management. We cannot be responsible for changes in prices, fares, schedules, availability and other changes – take it as advice only. There are no guarantees and you are responsible for your own welfare. We are happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Commitment

For most volunteers / interns we ask for a minimum commitment of 3 months. This is to ensure continuity and consistency in our work and in dealing with Umoja's youth. For some skilled positions, we can accept volunteers for a shorter time period. If you are unsure, please contact us for further information.

Cost

There is no cost to volunteer at Umoja, however you are in a unique position to assist Umoja in fundraising before you set off to join us in Tanzania and we suggest you give it a go and aim to raise at least \$500 USD. Many volunteers have had great success simply by setting up a Justgiving page and stating their intent to volunteer. For ideas on fundraising please see our website: www.umojatanzania.org or contact us.

Packing

Here are some suggestions of what to bring:

- First Aid Kit – also bring antiseptic cream and mosquito repellent
- Torch
- Camera
- Laptop (for work and watching DVDs)

- Books / Kindle
- Cool clothes for hot days (you can buy some clothes here – but expensive and poor quality unless you shop at the local second hand market) and a jacket/cardigan/jumper for chilly nights and early mornings
- Swimming things, sunscreen
- Travel adaptors (Plugs are the 3 prong English type)

Sheets and towels are provided in most accommodation, however you can bring your own if you are particular about the quality. Many home comforts are available (dark chocolate, cheese, milo), but others are not and imported goods can be fairly expensive, so if there are things you cannot live without, bring them from home! (By the way, the Umoja staff are also impartial to some treats during our team meetings if you choose to bring something for us!!!)

If you have space in your luggage – then please email us (caroline@umojatanzania.org) to see what we currently need at Umoja. We always need clothes, white board markers, pens, small back packs (school bags), footballs and laptops (if you have a spare to donate).

Also, you may be asked to run a club or assist with extra tuition – so let us know your other skills and talents. You may like to bring some resources from home. The students will love to do more music, art, sport or just practise speaking English!

NOTE: From June 1st 2019, Tanzania banned plastic bags, which is fantastic news. However, this also affects travellers coming in to Tanzania as plastic bags are not permitted in luggage, so please make sure your luggage is plastic bag free as you enter, or you may be held up at customs. In addition, you may wish to bring reusable shopping bags with you for souvenirs and bags for your washing. The small clear plastic bags that you use for toiletries for security reasons are permitted as they will remain with you.

Getting to Arusha

We recommend that you fly directly into Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO), which is about 1.5 hour's drive from Arusha. We can arrange a trusted taxi to meet you at the airport and transfer you to your accommodation for a fee of \$50 USD. KLM and Qatar are two airlines who fly into KIA.

Please check the current advice from your government about entering Tanzania / Kenya as there are times when entering certain countries is not advised.

Accommodation

Unfortunately, we do not offer accommodation on site as we do not have the space! Depending on your taste, requirements, length of time and budget, there are a variety of options available in Arusha. These range from shared housing, apartments, small lodges and hostels. We recommend Baraka Lodge (www.barakalodge.com) for your stay or until you get a house / apartment sorted. You can contact Baraka Lodge directly and inform them that you are volunteering at Umoja.

Water

Water directly from the tap (inside or out) at Umoja or anywhere in Tanzania is not safe to drink, however all staff, students and most volunteers drink the filtered water provided at Umoja. We cannot guarantee the safety so if you are worried you can buy bottled water that is available all over Arusha. If you do decide to buy bottled water, please consider buying the largest bottles, rather than lots of small ones so that you can save on plastic pollution. If you are here for a while you may consider buying the large refillable bottles, available at most supermarkets.

Most volunteers however follow these rules:

- Drink the filtered water that is available at Umoja.
- Use straight from the tap for washing and brushing teeth
- Use straight from the tap for cooking

The water in Arusha is also high in naturally occurring fluoride which causes fluorosis (the brown stained teeth the obvious sign) if drunk for a long time when young. It is not advised to drink the tap water (filtered or not) if you are pregnant or under the age of 4 (while bones and teeth are developing).

Medical

It is Umoja's policy that you have full medical insurance before arriving into Tanzania.

See your GP and/or a specialist travel doctor for advice a few months before coming and get the appropriate vaccinations, tablets, and a first aid kit.

Yellow Fever vaccination (and a certificate) is a requirement for travellers who are arriving from, or have transited through [countries with risk](#) of yellow fever transmission.

There are adequate medical facilities in Arusha to deal with all common ailments including malaria. More serious problems will require evacuation to Kenya or beyond. We recommend the following hospitals:

NSK Hospital (day only) – Dr Yassar
ALMC Hospital (24 hrs) (also known as Selian)

Insurance

Take advice and get appropriate cover for travel and property insurance

Visas

Visa information changes all the time so it is best to contact us and the Tanzanian Consulate in your home country a couple of months before arriving for up to date information. Depending on where you are coming from, you may be able to get a Volunteer Visa from the Tanzanian Consulate in your country of origin.

NOTE: Officials in the airport have been known to ask for 'taxes' for donations volunteers are bringing in. Our advice is to not carry too many of the same thing (i.e. 50 school bags!), but to bring variety as 'gifts' rather than 'donations'.

Travelling around Arusha

The Umoja Centre grounds are rather uneven so take care when going down to the classrooms. Have walking shoes / trainers with you – the roads are rough and dusty (or muddy!) Only the main roads are tarmacked.

The *daladala* (public minibus) costs around TZS 400 per trip, depending on your destination, however it is often uncomfortably crowded and rather a bumpy ride! There can be pickpockets on the dala - so be careful with your possessions and try to avoid being the only passenger. **Never** use the *daladala* at night.

At night only use Taxis, even if you are going a short journey. All fares are negotiable. You must use trusted taxi's and not take taxis from the street. The following are the drivers that we recommend, (but you will still need to negotiate the price):

Abdul	075698 0310
Burhani	075475 6700

Self-drive car hire is available in Arusha, which you would need to organise yourself upon arrival.

You may be offered a ride by a motorcyclist – the *pikipiki* or *bodaboda* drivers. This is a very cheap way to get around but **is not permitted by Umoja as it is not safe**. The traffic in Arusha can be crazy, and there is absolutely no guarantee about the driver's ability. Helmets are not provided and **collisions are common**. There are many reports about dangerous drivers and theft (or worse, serious crime like rape). You only have to drive through Arusha once to see how dangerous it can be as a passenger on a motorbike.

Out and About in Arusha

The touts on the street are generally harmless and only mildly annoying. You will have to develop your own method of politely brushing them off. They are only trying to make an honest shilling and eventually they get to recognise you and go in search of fresh targets. Say “*Hapana Asante*” (no thank you), and keep on walking!

As a *Mzungu*, you will get attention when out and about. Most people will be polite and respectful to you, and say hello to you in the street. Some people might ask you for more information than you're comfortable giving, such as your mobile number, or where you're staying in Arusha. You will need to find a way of brushing people off politely that works for you.

Money

We suggest a minimum budget of \$500 USD per month if you are living off-site, for housing alone, to be able to afford secure accommodation.

We recommend that you bring some cash (USD) and VISA Cards. You have to take care using credit cards, there have been incidences of credit card fraud even at the major airports. We recommend that you do not bring Travellers Cheques as they are not accepted widely and can be difficult to change.

There are many ATMs in Arusha where you can withdraw the local currency Tanzanian Shilling (TZS). If possible, let your bank know that you will be using your card abroad.

The largest note is 10,000 TZS. The most can withdraw from the ATM in one transaction 400,000 TZS (but you can do multiple withdrawals.) Most major hotels and operators accept both USD and TZS. You can also change USD into TZS in the banks in Arusha (there are no currency exchange bureaus at this time).

NOTE: USD bank notes dated 2001 and before are not accepted in Tanzania. Please ensure you carry newer notes.

Food supplies

Breakfast of *ugali* (“porridge” made from flour and water) is provided at around 10am on school days (Monday-Friday) to students and staff. Lunch is also provided at 12:15pm, and usually consists of rice or thick *ugali* with beans and vegetables, or *makande* (maize and beans).

There are various supermarkets in Arusha, including a the large Shoppers Supermarket. If you are staying in Njiro or nearby, we suggest Allmart in Nanenane (for most of your groceries) and VSM in the Njiro Complex (for fresh bread and treats!). Vegies are available opposite Allmart or Simba Farm Shop on Jandu Road just before Impala Roundabout. You also can brave the central market in town - which is an experience and an adventure!

Electricity

Tanzania has historically been dependant on hydro-electric generation. Climate change has made the rainfall unreliable and reduced the capacity available. The result of an expanding population and a shortage of capital to build new generating stations is that energy rationing is a fact of life.

In addition to regular power cuts for rationing, power will also be cut without notice to allow maintenance work to be carried out.

We have a generator at Umoja so there will be electricity during power cuts, but it is expensive to run, so will not be on at all times. The generator is not powerful enough for you to use the kettle, toaster, shower or other high power items. It is fine for computers, lights, fridge etc.

Even when the power is on the voltage will fluctuate more than would be normal in the west. Electronic equipment is best protected by a voltage stabiliser; these are fitted in the office and computer classroom.

Laptop batteries give some protection to the laptop itself but the charger is potentially at risk from surges or low voltage dips.

Internet

Umoja has access to the Internet and (slow) Wi-Fi is available if you bring a laptop or tablet. Please be careful with downloading and ask for advice. Please DO NOT download films etc. There are many Internet cafes in town from 500 TZS to 2,000 TZS per hour – but be warned – many viruses come from these places! Plugging USB sticks that have been used in external computers (except those from home that are safe) into Umoja computers is prohibited.

If you want extensive personal internet access, for example for extensive downloading, you will have to look in to this yourself on arrival, to find out latest rates. Local mobile internet services are available and Airtel or Vodacom are said to be helpful. SMILE and HALOTEL are recommended internet service providers if you wish to have your own internet access.

Phones

There are effectively no landline phones in Tanzania but mobile phones are widespread.

Bring an unlocked phone and purchase a local SIM card for around 2,000 TZS – pay-as-you-go is the best bet, with Airtel or Vodacom being widely available. Top up vouchers are widely available including from the little shops around Umoja or your accommodation. Everyone is required to register their new mobile number so take a copy of your passport along with you when you purchase your SIM card.

3° south

You may be 3° south of the Equator but it does get cool, or perhaps even “cold” (but not by the standards of a European winter) at certain times of the year particularly in the mornings and evenings; so bring at least one long sleeved warm top and a light jacket.

The hours of daylight are consistent through the year - 12 hours of day and 12 hours of night. The transition from night to day and from day to night happens quickly over about 30mins. We often get beautiful sunsets.

As you would expect, it will rain in the rainy seasons! Unsealed roads get muddy. But in the rest of the year – dust dust dust! You ought to bring hiking boots or decent trainers.

If you plan to climb any mountains (e.g. Mount Kilimanjaro, Mount Meru) you will need to take advice on what to bring and what to hire locally.

Entertainment

- Many of the large hotels have swimming pools which you can use for a day fee (approx 10,000 TZS at time of writing)
- There are two cinemas in Arusha, (Aim Mall and Njiro Complex)
- Tanzania Mailing List and the Facebook group All About Arusha can let you know of upcoming events
- Twende hiking group run a hike every Sunday morning which is a good way to get some exercise, see Arusha and meet new people; they charge TZS 10,000
- Monthly farmers markets (Oikos on Hailie Selassie Road, organic market on the 1st Saturday of the month)
- Lake Duluti (walking / canoeing)
- Snake Park
- Arusha National Park (day trip)
- Shanga at Arusha Coffee Lodge
- Shopping – Maasai Market (local souvenirs), Aim Mall, Sable Square (shops and restaurants), Njiro Complex, central market (fresh produce) and the town centre for a variety of shops.
- Visit a waterfall – ask local staff

There are many cafes and restaurants in Arusha including, Blue Heron, George's Tavern, Andrews, Fifi's, Africafe, Bravo Pizza and many more local eateries and bars. At Njiro Complex there are many restaurants serving the main courtyard.

If you are interested in going on safari, climbing a mountain (Meru or Kilimanjaro) or visiting Zanzibar, please email: info@taswiraafricasafaris.com. Taswira Africa Safaris financially support Umoja with a donation being given for each booking. They are safe, trusted and will provide you with a fantastic experience! See more here: www.taswiraafricasafaris.com

Please note: due to the risks associated with drinking alcohol and being out at night in Arusha, Umoja volunteers are not permitted to drink alcohol or take any form of drugs. This is to keep you safe and to protect Umoja's reputation.

Volunteer Contract, Rules and Policies

You will be required to sign a Volunteer Contract, Volunteer Policy and read and adhere to our staff policies, including Staff Code of Conduct and Child /Youth Protection Policy. These are not onerous and are largely common sense.

Dress Code

You need to be culturally sensitive when it comes to clothing. What you are used to wearing at home may not be ok here. We have had volunteers inappropriately dressed due to the heat, and have received comments / unwanted attention from local staff and the community. During the week when you are working at the centre, modest, clean and conservative dress is required.

- Shoulders should be covered (no tank tops / vests)
- No tight clothing (i.e. leggings - unless worn with a skirt / dress)
- No low cut tops
- No tops that expose the midriff / stomach area
- Skirts / Shorts must at least cover the knees when sitting
- Clothing must be modest and not transparent!

Please remember that Tanzania is a conservative country in many ways and dressing in an appropriate and modest way will grant you greater respect and cause you less hassle and unwanted attention.

Security

Tanzania, like most developing countries has certain security risks, largely due to poverty. Arusha is a fast-growing city, with problems relating to urbanisation, underdevelopment and unemployment. We advise you to exercise caution at all times.

- Do not carry your passports, cards, large amounts of cash etc.
- Do not walk down side streets.
- At night, do not get a *daladala* and do not walk ANYWHERE - even a couple of blocks – get a taxi!
- Be aware of pick-pockets
- When possible, keep your valuables under your clothes in a travellers pouch or in secure pockets, rather than in your bag.

You may wish to check your government's travel advice for up-to-date news regarding security. For example UK visitors can look at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/tanzania>, Australians can find useful and up to date information here: <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Tanzania>

The main streets of Arusha are reasonably safe during the day – but be alert as bag snatchers and pickpockets are not uncommon. Backstreets and lanes are to be avoided at all times. When possible, travel with at least one other person.

Photography

We politely request that you do not take photos of people / houses / communities without asking for permission.

What to expect on arrival:

During your first few days at Umoja we suggest you just get to know us, get to know the staff and students, sit in on some classes etc. You will meet with management early on to go through the contract and volunteer policy. If you would like, we can arrange one of our team to take you into town, catch a local bus and show you the shops and help you get a SIM card.

If you have any concerns or worries during your time with Umoja, please do raise them with either Caroline, Benson or our Social Worker, Chuki. We are here to help you get the most from your experience!

For further information prior to your arrival into Tanzania, please email Caroline Goody: caroline@umojatanzania.org

KARIBU! You are welcome!