



***LIGHT GIVES HEAT***  
*UGANDA VOLUNTEER  
INFORMATION*



This information packet is designed to give you, the potential applicant and volunteer, some information about Light Gives Heat (LGH), who we are and what we do. Please see the LGH website "Past/Present/Future" section for more info about where we come from. This packet is divided into 3 sections. Section 1 is Light Gives Heat: our staff and what we do. Section 2 is Being a Volunteer: what it's like here and what we will ask you to do. Section 3 is Details: about Jinja and what you can do to prepare to come here and work with us.

## SECTION 1: WHO WE ARE

### LIGHT GIVES HEAT VISION AND MISSION

#### MISSION:

Empowering Africans through the encouragement and economic sustainability and creative endeavors. Motivating people in the West to "be the change they want to see in the world."

#### VISION:

To see Africa rebuilt and renewed from the inside out and to see people in the West living with hope.

### UGANDAN STAFF AND WHAT THEY DO

#### IN COUNTRY DIRECTORS:

The directors run the show in Jinja. They are the face of LGH and Suubi in Africa. As a volunteer, these are the people you will interact with the most. They are responsible for coordinating Suubi and EPOH in Uganda (everything from obtaining materials to purchasing necklaces and paying staff), managing the volunteer house, staff, and van, and working with you, the volunteer. The In-Country Director works with the Volunteer Coordinator to support and guide you through the experience of volunteering in Africa.

#### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Their main job is to organize activities with the volunteers. The VC has a good understanding of what the Suubi ladies' current needs/issues are and helps volunteers coordinate to work with the ladies. The VC will speak with you, the volunteer, to determine how you would like to contribute to LGH and Suubi. The VC organizes English and literacy classes, dance groups, and other activities with Suubi ladies and volunteers

## ACHIRO BETTY

Betty is the Compound Manager at the Volunteer House. Betty and her son Kymbi live with us in Jinja, Uganda. Kymbi is two years old and enjoys making beeping noises early in the morning :) Betty plays an essential role in LGH taking care of our staff/volunteers. Betty's amazing life story starts in Northern Uganda and continues today with her constant hard work, laughter, and desire to learn. She recently returned to school to study sewing, language, and cooking.

## GEORGE

George is our security guard extraordinaire. He arrives at the compound on his bicycle in the evening and keeps our grounds safe and clean all night. George is a great conversationalist and always up for tea and a late night chat.

# SECTION 2: VOLUNTEERS AND WHAT THEY DO

A volunteer is a person who desires and is able to give their time, energy, and other resources to Light Gives Heat so that both the volunteer and the organization may learn and grow together by engaging in meaningful activities that economically empower and partner with Ugandans.

Volunteers can work with LGH in America or Uganda (and sometimes both!)

Volunteers in AMERICA work with the LGH staff in Colorado. Past volunteers have helped package and ship necklaces, organize promotional/fundraising events, and do general office work, as well as many other activities.

Volunteers in UGANDA travel to Jinja for 3-6 months. They are committed to stepping outside of their comfort zone (in many, many ways) and forming real relationships with Ugandans. These volunteers are self-motivated and independent. They have a strong desire to challenge themselves and have intense, dynamic experiences. Volunteers can expect to have a wide variety of experiences from attending Suubi meetings to shopping in crowded markets. Volunteers work together to discuss and reflect; they challenge and support each other with the assistance of the Volunteer Coordinator and In-Country Director.

Our volunteer program in Uganda is very loose and flexible. We work with volunteers (before, during, and after they come) to help them figure out what they would like to accomplish while they are here, but there are very few "group" activities.

During a volunteer's first week, they will receive a thorough orientation about living and working in Jinja. After that, we expect volunteers to move around and interact in Jinja independently.

We are constantly discussing new tasks, projects, issues as they arise and expect volunteers to be ready to be ready to assist us in a variety of ways as well as create their own "program" by choosing a topic or issue to address and working with us to figure out how best to address it.

In general, volunteers do many, many things. Some volunteers have a very clear idea of the skills they bring and the activities they would like to engage in. Others only have a strong desire to help and interact with Ugandans. No matter which category you feel you fall into, planning and preparation will help you feel ready to jump in and work with us in Jinja. We (the Ugandan Staff) are ready and willing to help volunteers figure out how they would like to interact in the exciting, challenging Ugandan environment. We understand the potential anxiety that comes with moving to a new place, especially one far from home and in a foreign culture.

## SUUBI PROJECT GUIDELINES

As a volunteer in Uganda, you are expected to explore the place where you live and also the places where the Suubi women live (in villages like Walukuba and Danida). Genuinely loving these women is an integral part of our project, and this means getting to know them. One way to do this is to visit them in their own homes. You can set up times to meet with certain women, or just stop in on a whim. Either way, these women love company and will be more than welcoming to you into their homes and their lives. Later, you'll find a map of Jinja and the villages in which we are working.

While visiting women, they will often cook/bring you food. It is considered slightly offensive and insulting to refuse their food. You are encouraged to at least try it. Also, they will probably not ask you to help them with anything, but if you so desire, feel free to offer your services to them (cooking, cleaning, digging gardens, etc.)

During the course of your life here, you will probably be asked by multiple women for monetary assistance (especially for school fees for their children). We strongly discourage showing favor to any of the women in this way. All of the women struggle in some way or another, so if you'd like to do something for all of the women, that is fine (like buying a kilo of beans for every woman), but please don't show favoritism. Word gets around and jealousy spreads within the Suubi group and we want to avoid this if possible.

We buy necklaces from the women every week on Saturday at 3pm. You are expected to attend these meetings and help with the buying process.

The Suubi women are divided into three subgroups: Group A, Group B, and Group C. Each week we have separate orders from each group. Volunteers are asked to visit women in a specific group to ensure that they understand what they are asked to make and assist them with their necklaces.

On Mondays we conduct Necklace Class at 3pm to review the specific orders for the following week, teach new flavours and beads, and assist the ladies by answering any questions.

On Wednesdays, we have English Class at 3pm. We provide school supplies: notebooks, pens, chalk and other learning tools. We also bring refreshments. Class lasts until around 5:00pm.

On Fridays, we have Breakfast Club at 10am. Each week we visit a different neighborhood and bring the Suubi women/EPOH tailors breakfast. This is a chance to meet with women in a smaller, more informal setting.

## **EPOH PROJECT GUIDELINES**

We currently have seven tailors and 3 support staff support staff. They work from 9am-5pm Monday through Friday at a tailoring compound on Clive Rd, a 10 minute walk from the house. Epoch is rapidly growing and changing.

Please feel free to stop in and converse with the tailors. But on their workdays be aware that they need to be working so it is best for you to arrange time on their days off to get to know them better.

Epoch is a new project so things will be changing while you are here, please be patient as we work out the kinks. Your role in Epoch can be as small or large as you desire.

There are always jobs to help with: counting bags or supplies, filling out shipping forms, etc. We may elicit your help in running errands for Epoch. As an LGH volunteer, you are expected and encouraged to be involved in as much as you possibly can with all projects and people we work with.

## **ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

There are also many optional activities available to you as a volunteer including spending time at a local boys home, feeding children in a nearby village, and working with any number of other NGOs here in Jinja.

You are encouraged to start your own project here with the Suubi women. Whether it is art, one on one tutoring, bank accounts, or health and nutrition, we will work with you to create a project of your own. All of the people we work with face a variety of challenges in their lives; from health care to education for their children to safety as well as obtaining secure housing and healthy food. Like all people, they face these challenges with hope and joy as well as anger and sadness. As a volunteer, you will face these and other issues together. You will be asked to challenge yourself and step outside of your comfort zone in many, many ways.

## **COSTS TO VOLUNTEER**

As a volunteer, you will pay between \$1500 and \$2000 for your flight. You will pay approximately \$400 one time for Volunteer Costs and \$125 per week for living expenses including food. We will assist you in booking your flight. All funds must be given to LGH no later than 4 weeks before departure. LGH purchases your ticket for you and cannot do so until your funds are submitted. You are responsible for the cost of additional food, transport, and other activities while in Jinja.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

You will need money for rides on pikis (mopeds/motorcycles) or bodas (bicycles) to get you around town if you choose not to walk. Piki rides are anywhere from 500-2,000 shillings (\$0.30-\$1) and boda rides are cheaper. Rates vary depending on how far you go and if you ride solo with your driver or with another person.

## **INTERNET**

You will need to pay for the Internet access at the cafes in town. It is generally about 25 UGX for every one minute on the Internet (which can be slow depending on where you are, so be prepared to wait for downloads). FYI: For 20 minutes it's about 1,500 UGX, which is not even a dollar.

## **COMMUNICATION**

If your cell phone doesn't have an international SIM card, you can purchase an international cell phone for about \$30 (55,000 UGX) and buy airtime to talk within Uganda and calling cards to talk internationally (10,000 UGX (\$6) for 25 minutes). If you want to keep in contact with the States, it is a lot cheaper per minute to have people in the States purchase an international calling card to call you, than it is for you to call them. Incoming calls are free on Ugandan cell phones.

We recommend the Mega Clean & Stable card from Union Telecard: [www.uniontelecard.com](http://www.uniontelecard.com) because it has 1 minute rounding, no connection fees and no monthly maintenance fee and it's about 10-12 cents/minute to call Uganda.

## FOOD

The amount of money you spend on additional food and drink depends on your lifestyle and budget. A meal at a nice Western restaurant is around \$10. Eating local food is significantly cheaper at around \$2 per meal. Imported foods like cheese, spaghetti sauce, and deli meats are available from supermarkets and are considerably more expensive than locally grown, fresh food.

## OPTIONAL EXPENSES

You can also bring money if you choose to do any outside giving (i.e. bringing food to a village or hospital). You can feed 150 people for about \$50 USD. If you choose to take language lessons they are around \$3 per hour. If you want to buy souvenirs, bring money for that as well. Prices are very reasonable and Uganda has great baskets, scarves, wooden carvings, jewelry, and art.

## WHERE YOU WILL BE LIVING

The address of the volunteer house is:

Plot 65 Magwa Crescent  
Jinja, Uganda East Africa

The mailing address is:

P.O. Box 1905  
Jinja, Uganda East Africa

(Please note that sending/receiving mail is unpredictable)

The volunteer house is safe, clean, spacious, and comfortable.

## WHAT TO BRING

About 2 weeks worth of clothes. Uganda is a warm climate, so bring linen or cotton clothes because these dry much faster. Women should not wear short shorts because it is not culturally appropriate. Long shorts, pants, dresses & skirts are recommended. A helper hired by LGH washes clothes regularly. Your clothes will go through a beating getting washed because they get really dirty and are hand scrubbed. They will be stretched out and faded by the time you leave so don't bring your favorites!

## LGH'S PACKING LIST

- Sandals(with strong soles like Chacos/Tevas), flip flops are great for around the house
- Pair of sneakers
- Bathing suit
- Beach towel
- Toiletries (you can get some things in Jinja, but it's slim pickin's!)
- Insect repellent with at least 30% deet
- Sun block
- Aloe Vera
- An outfit in case it gets chilly (i.e. pair of jeans and a hooded sweatshirt)
- One nicer outfit for special occasions like wedding celebrations, parties, or a church service (girls-skirt/nice top, guys-collared shirt and khakis)
- Raincoat(especially if you arrive during rainy season)
- You can bring your own laptop if you want to use it at internet cafes. The cafes have their own computers as well.
- Camera
- Extra batteries
- Flashlight/battery lantern or headlamp with extra batteries
- Hand sanitizer
- If there is anything you cannot live without, then bring it! You can bring packaged food, gum, snacks, etc. in your luggage.

## WHAT LGH PROVIDES FOR YOU

- Pillow
- Sheets and blanket
- Bed
- Shower(not always warm), flushing toilet, sink
- Running water
- Electricity (occasionally it might go off for a few hours)
- Refrigerator
- Stove

- Bath towels
- Converter for electronics
- Purified drinking water
- Community items like toilet paper, soap, and basic cooking supplies (sugar, oil, etc.)

## SECTION 3: THE DETAILS

### VACCINATIONS

Required: Yellow Fever Recommended vaccinations: Hepatitis A (2 rounds), Hepatitis B (3 rounds), Typhoid, Polio, MMR, Meningitis, Tetanus/diphtheria (Booster)

### MEDICATION

Daily anti-malarial orals: Make sure to speak with your doctor for clinical recommendations that will be best for you. There are 3 types of anti-malaria pills: Doxycycline, Malarone, & Lariam – each have different pricing, dosage & side effects, so check and see which one your doctor suggests. Just an FYI: if you go down the doxycycline route, it is available at the pharmacies in Uganda in Jinja for a very reasonable price (however you would need to get a prescription for your first month before you leave and then get the remainder after you arrive).

Recommended orals: Acidophilus for regular digestion. An anti-diarrhea medication is recommended for reactions to food (and sometimes water). Other recommendations: You also may need medications for normal life like headache, allergy, and cough medicine.

### VISA

You will fly into Entebbe Airport (airport code EBB) and you will purchase your visa once you get off the plane. Visas are \$50 (make sure the bill is dated 2003 or newer). They may ask for a letter of intent for entering the country (this will be provided to you by Light Gives Heat).

### PASSPORT

You will need a passport, if you do not already have one, try to allow 4 months for processing if you do not want to pay for rush processing.

## TRIP REGISTRATION

It is not required to register your trip with the U.S. Department of State, but it is for your protection in the unlikely circumstance of something happening to you. You can register your trip at: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> For your information, the Embassy of the United States of America in Uganda is located at: U.S. Embassy Kampala Plot 1577 Ggaba Road. Email: [KampalaUSCitizen@state.gov](mailto:KampalaUSCitizen@state.gov)

\*If you are interested in volunteering and not a US citizen, please check with your country's registration & Embassy.

## INSURANCE

It is a good safety measure to purchase travel insurance. We recommend HTH WorldWide's Trip Protector: <http://www.hthtravelinsurance.com> If your health insurance doesn't cover you overseas HTH WorldWide has TravelGap insurance: <http://www.hthtravelinsurance.com>

## DOCUMENTS

On the plane, you will need:

- Passport
- I.D./driver's license
- Proof of yellow fever vaccination

It is a good idea to keep a copy of each of these in your luggage in case your originals get lost. If you lose your passport, it is a lot faster to get it replaced if you have copies. Also, you may want to insert a sheet of paper in the front pocket of your luggage and on the top of your things when you open your luggage that says your name, your permanent address, email, phone number, and your destination. This will make it faster and easier if your luggage should get lost.

You may want to call your bank to notify them of your destination and travel dates so your debit card won't get denied as you may be using it on flight layovers and in several countries within a single day.

## MONEY

Conversion Rate The conversion from dollars to Ugandan shillings is roughly 2,000 Ugandan Shillings (UGX) for every one US dollar (the exchange rate fluctuates daily: <http://finance.yahoo.com/currency-converter>)

## BRING CASH AND EXCHANGE FOR SHILLINGS

If you bring your US dollars to exchange, then make sure to bring \$50 or \$100 bills because the exchange rate is better on higher bills. Also, those bills must be 2003 or newer due to some counterfeiting problems. We recommend the ForEx on Main Street in Jinja.

## WITHDRAW WITH DEBIT CARD FROM ATM

There are 4 banks in Jinja that have an ATM machine where you can make withdrawals. Just make sure that you inform your bank of your travel plans and make sure it is a Visa Debit card. Depending on your banking arrangements you will have a fee for use of ATM and a possible conversion fee – but we are only talking \$4-\$7 USD fee for up to a \$1,000 USD withdrawal, so try to withdrawal as much as possible for each transaction.

Most banks allow withdrawals up to 800,000 UGX per transaction (about \$450 USD) and how many transactions are allowed each day is dependent on your banking institution's maximum per diem withdrawal limit.

## TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Jinja is nicely situated between Lake Victoria and the start of the River Nile. There are many, many fun activities in and around Jinja.

- White water rafting on the Nile for \$125 (second time is half off)
- Bungee jumping over the Nile for \$90 (3 jumps)
- Safaris, depending on how many people you go with and how many days you go for, range from \$250-\$700
- Gorilla tracking in Western Uganda/Rwanda ranges from \$700-\$900
- There are many places to explore and hike around for free
- There is a great eco-resort in the Mabira Rainforest - the Rainforest Lodge is only about 30 minutes from Jinja and its incredible food and luxurious accommodations are a great way to relax for a day/night. Email [info@geolodgesafrica.com](mailto:info@geolodgesafrica.com) for rates (make sure you tell them you are living in Jinja for a local rate).

## FACTS AND INFO ABOUT JINJA

- There is a post office if you choose to mail letters (packages or not recommended because the risk of it getting lost and/or taking too long).
- There are grocery stores, fresh food markets, internet cafes, restaurants and tourist shops.

- There are a handful of hospitals/clinics with well-trained physicians. One street over from the volunteer home is the Jinja branch of The Surgery [www.thesurgeryuganda.org](http://www.thesurgeryuganda.org) – where Dr. Debbie resides and runs the clinic.
- There is a place to exchange money (The ForEx)
- There are very poor villages within walking distance where poverty is prominent. English is more widely spoken than you might expect. Most people speak Luganda and a lot of people speak English as their second language. Most of the women of Suubi are from the Acholi tribe and their native tongue is Luo. Several can speak Luganda , English, and Swahili as well.

## OUR CONTACT INFORMATION

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