

quest overseas

MALAWI ORPHANS & COMMUNITY PROJECT

- Work closely with rural communities in Malawi
- Help develop and improve living conditions for the future of Malawian children and their families
- Construct new buildings for a sustainable future
- Visit Lake Malawi, explore the Mulanje Massif or take a boat safari past hippos and elephants in Liwonde National Park

Malawi is an incredibly poor country. It is estimated that up to seven million people, from a population of 12 million, may be on the edge of famine. Even with these problems though, the country still claims to be the 'Warm Heart of Africa'. For once, the hype is true. These amazing people are some of the most welcoming you will ever meet.

In Malawi today an estimated 560,000 children have been orphaned by AIDS alone. Each village community often supports over 100 of these orphaned and vulnerable children. Your help is needed to provide food and shelter to these orphans; by giving financial support to buy maize and physical help to build important community centres. These may include canteens for the orphans, classrooms for all the village children, or clinic buildings. Accommodation is also needed to attract the best doctors and nurses to the region. The beauty of this project is that it exposes you directly to the warmth and unforgettable welcome of the Malawian people.

Activities: Community development work in rural African village, work with children, work with Youth groups, trekking on Mount Mulanje, traditional dancing, 4x4 and boat safaris in Liwonde National Park, Lake Malawi.

Team size: 8-16 people

Duration: One month, including weekend activities

Departs: July each year; contact the office for more details

Cost: £1,030 cost to Quest Overseas + £700 donation
Includes all accommodation, food, activities, in-country travel, local tipping, airport transfers, Quest leaders, personal travel insurance .

Excludes international flights.



Project Details

Where

The Joshua Orphan Care Trust project is based in the south of Malawi, just outside the town of Blantyre in a district called Pen Sulo. You will be living closely with local communities in a very rural environment. The Pen Sulo district is classic Africa. The villages are mud walled huts with thatched roofs and the village hall is a mat under a wide spreading tree.

Main Aim

The Joshua communities are in desperate need of buildings that can act as a meeting point, a base for health workers, a classroom for local children and as a 'canteen' to provide at least one substantial meal per day for the hundreds of local orphans and vulnerable children whose families are unable to support them.

Working together with local craftsmen and members of the local community the Malawi project focuses on building these much needed community centres, classrooms and accommodation.

Joshua has also recently purchased a piece of land to expand the Secondary School which caters for many of the children from the surrounding communities, who currently cannot afford or manage the huge travelling distances to reach the other secondary school. At present classes are hugely overcrowded with around 80 students per class. As such the school could lose its status as an exam centre. Quest Overseas team has been involved in constructing a new classroom block to relieve this overcrowding and improve the quality of education available.

Other Projects

There will also be more opportunities to get involved with the community, such as working with the local scout groups and local school kids - helping with workshops on health and hygiene, HIV, environmental education - the options are endless! Whilst having a break from cement mixing or waiting for the mud bricks to dry, you will also get the chance to spend time with the local Youth Group, supporting their efforts to raise awareness and help provide solutions to the ever increasing impact of HIV on their community. You will also spend a couple of days a week helping in one of the Joshua Orphan Feeding Centres and organising activities for the children there.

What you'll be doing

Work includes rural construction- cement mixing, carrying rocks and sand, making mud bricks, carrying water. You will also get involved in educational work in local schools, organising local activity days for local schoolchildren and even helping with dancing or first aid lessons.

Weekend activities may include:

Trekking, Boat safaris, Relaxing on the stunning beaches at Lake Malawi.

Project Itinerary

Day 1: Departure from UK

Day2: Lilongwe & Blantyre, Malawi

Orientation Days. Talks on extra health & safety, cultural differences and group rules. Detailed preparation for your Project.

Days 3: Transfer to Project site, Pen Sulo, Blantyre

Tour of the villages and welcoming ceremony from the local community.

Days 4-14: Project site, Pen Sulo, Blantyre

Project work. Free days each Sunday.

Days 15-16

Long weekend off, activities are included and you can choose as a team from trekking on Mount Mulanje, visiting the hippos and elephants of Liwonde National Park or chilling out by the blue waters of Lake Malawi.

Days 17-29: Project site, Pen Sulo, Blantyre

Project work. Free days each Sunday.

Day 31: Transfer to Lilongwe Airport

Transport is arranged to airport.

Food & drink

You will be eating food that you and your team will cook such as a rice or potato-based dish with vegetable stew and/or sausages/chicken with salad. We provide purified water for the Project phase.

Accommodation

Accommodation is in the middle of the Pen Sulo community in rural Africa. You will share a room with the rest of your team. It will be basic but comfortable, with beds and latrine toilet facilities.

Weather

The dry season in Africa lasts from April to September. Most of the time the weather will be mild and dry, around 15-20 degrees, but towards the end of the Project it will get gradually hotter.

Leaders

You will have two leaders with you for the entire 5 weeks. They are there to make sure everything runs smoothly, safely and to give maximum reward to all those involved. We are incredibly picky about selecting our leaders and you can guarantee that they will be some of the most experienced, passionate and enthusiastic people you will ever meet. Leaders receive Quest training every year. All leaders are Wilderness First Aid trained.

Preparation

Quest provides Pre-Departure Training in the UK for all team members. This is in addition to the in-country Orientation Days you will receive when you arrive in Africa. Our UK volunteer training covers Responsible Travel, Cultural Awareness, Health & Hygiene, Risk Assessment, Teamwork and Onward Travel. It also provides you with the opportunity to meet the rest of your team and your leaders before going overseas.

Vaccinations

We provide a full list of vaccinations required for this expedition. You will also need to take malarial prophylactics for the entire 4 weeks. All team members for this Project should be aware that there is a risk of Bilharzia in Lake Malawi and all activities undertaken in the Lake can risk exposure to this parasite. We recommend all volunteers seek medical advice on preventative and post-exposure medication from your GP.

How much does it cost, and where does my money go?

Project: £1,030

70% - payment for your trip; what is spent overseas during your trip.

15% - staff, both UK and overseas

15% - office costs, project and expedition research, boring admin

Donation: £700

This goes straight to Joshua Orphans & Community Care and every penny gets spent overseas.

Responsible Travel

Responsible Travel is an ethos that should be at the heart of all travel. For all of us at Quest it is about making a tangible 'positive impact' on both man and the environment with everything that we and our clients do. We ensure that we make a positive impact on communities and environments that we are lucky enough to visit.

Recommended reading

Out of Africa by Karen Blixen

The Other Side of Silence by Andre Brink

The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency by Alexander McCall Smith

Dark Star Safari by Paul Theroux

I Dreamed of Africa by Kuki Gallman

Survivor's Song by Mark & Delia Owen



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