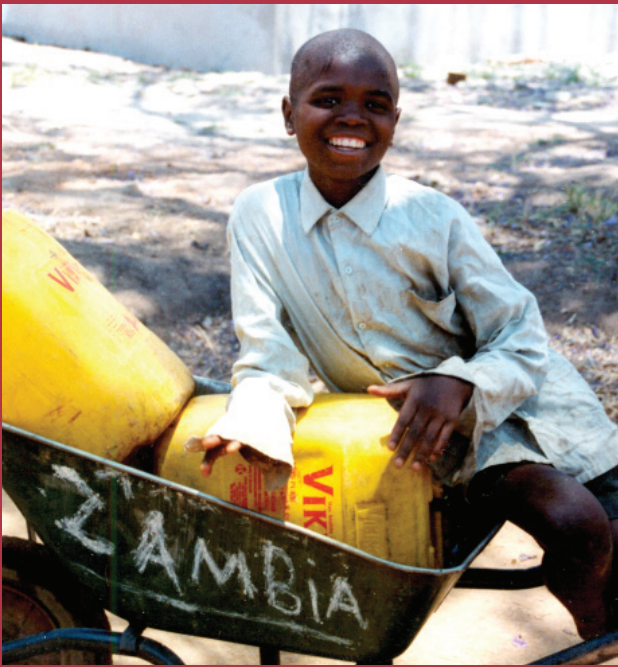


THE PEACE CORPS WELCOMES YOU TO

ZAMBIA



A PEACE CORPS PUBLICATION
FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS



July 2007



A WELCOME LETTER

Dear Invitee,

Greetings from Lusaka, Zambia! On behalf of the staff of Peace Corps/Zambia, I want to congratulate you on your invitation to pre-service training in Zambia. This is the first step in what we hope will be a gratifying and fulfilling experience in Volunteer service to Zambia and its people.

I am sure you are excited and have many questions. This *Welcome Book* was prepared by Volunteers and staff to provide you with current information, friendly advice, and resources to help you start on your path of discovery. It is not designed to answer all of your questions; it will likely raise many more. There are as many perspectives on Zambia as there are people living here. With time, you will ask your own questions and find your own answers.

A commitment to the Peace Corps is not made easily or casually. It is a commitment you will make repeatedly and in many ways throughout your service as a Volunteer. You will be challenged in every way imaginable; you will experience new highs and, perhaps, new lows; you will make friends that will last a lifetime; and your view of the world and its inhabitants will change. But if you come with an open mind, a warm heart, and a good sense of humor, you will thrive, and realize the rewards of being a part of the richness of another culture.

Pre-service training is extremely important. It will be the foundation for your success. Our current Volunteers are grappling with the fundamental issues of primary healthcare delivery, HIV/AIDS education and prevention, fisheries income generation, natural resource conservation, interactive radio education, and livelihood security. These are not simple issues. The more energy you expend in learning the local

customs, language, and the needed technical skills, the more rewarding your two years will be. Peace Corps/Zambia expects a certain proficiency in these areas before you are sworn in as a Volunteer. During the training, you will be staying at the home of a Zambian family so that you can begin to learn about and better understand the culture. Our trainers and staff are here to support you, but you are the primary architect and judge of what success as a Volunteer will look like.

All of us here in Lusaka are excited by the prospect of your arrival. See you at the airport!

Sincerely,

Cynthia Threlkeld
Country Director

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PEACE CORPS/ZAMBIA HISTORY AND PROGRAMS



History of Peace Corps in Zambia

In April 2004, the Peace Corps celebrated its 10th anniversary of service in Zambia. This was a very big occasion and high-ranking government officials including the vice president were in attendance. Following the formalization of a country agreement in 1993, Peace Corps/Zambia opened its program in 1994 with a group of water and sanitation/hygiene education Volunteers. In 1996, the program expanded to include projects in community health and rural aquaculture. The program expanded again in 2001 to encompass an income, food, and environment project. In 2003, a new education project was launched. Using emergency HIV/AIDS funding, a separate HIV/AIDS project was launched in 2005.

Since the first Peace Corps Volunteers arrived 1994, approximately 700 Volunteers have served in Zambia, which is now one of the larger Peace Corps programs in Africa. Volunteers live and work in all nine provinces of Zambia.

Program Focus

Rural Aquaculture Promotion (RAP) Project

Volunteers are helping the Department of Fisheries to develop fish-farming projects that will improve livelihoods in rural communities. After determining rural farmers' needs and resources, Volunteers provide technical assistance in establishing dams, furrows, fishponds, and integrated agriculture. In addition to providing an excellent source of nutrition for rural families, surplus fish and agricultural

products are sold to provide substantial supplementary income. Volunteers provide training in small agribusiness skills to assist farmers in applying a business orientation toward their farming activities. Volunteers also help build the organizational development capacity of fish-farming associations.

Community Action for Health (CAHP) Project

Volunteers work with counterparts from rural health centers to build and strengthen the capacity of neighborhood health committees to address health problems at the village level. Volunteers share leadership and organizational skills and strengthen communication skills. They also facilitate better links among the committees, the rural health center, and district health management boards. Additionally, Volunteers help communities implement cost-effective, sustainable health interventions.

Linking Income Food and Environment (LIFE) Project

In 2004, the Forestry Department invited Peace Corps/Zambia to join a new environmental initiative to help communities living near protected forests gain an economic stake and a voice in managing protected areas. Working in five provinces, Volunteers help strengthen the civil participation of rural communities in natural resource management and economic resource allocation. Volunteers have helped community groups develop the decision-making skills necessary for this new responsibility and provided education on environmental and conservation issues. Volunteers have also worked in schools to enhance environmental education curricula and to deliver lessons to pupils in schools near protected forests. Other significant Volunteer activities address food insecurity and livelihood diversification of these communities, thus reducing pressure on forest habitat and natural resources.

Rural Education Development (RED) Project

Initiated In 2003, the Peace Corps' education project builds on the initial success of a national radio education program called "Learning at Taonga Market." This interactive program, produced by the Ministry of Education (MoE), is broadcast over the national radio station and covers the primary school curriculum in a fun, engaging way. The program helps deliver education that does not require a trained teacher or a school building, allowing for improved access to basic education in Zambia's rural areas. Volunteers work alongside district and zonal (grassroots) level MoE officials to successfully implement zonal activities, including the "Learning at Taonga Market" program in rural communities They train and coach teachers (mentors) who use the radio program to teach children in rural areas; sensitize communities to the radio program and the importance of basic education; assist in the development of radio schools; and train school committees in their responsibilities regarding supporting these schools. Recently, the project focus expanded to include more work with government schools and other educational initiatives implemented at the zonal level.

HIV/AIDS Project (HAP)

Using HIV/AIDS emergency plan funding, Peace Corps/Zambia is developing and implementing a new project focusing on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. In May 2005, the first full-cycle of Volunteers arrived to participate in this project. The program, delivered at the district and community levels, focuses on awareness, education, prevention, and nutrition as a means of reversing the tide in the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

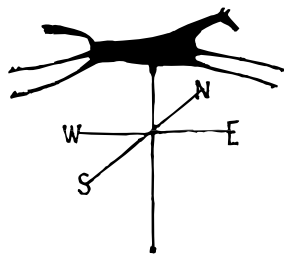
The AIDS pandemic strikes across all social strata in many Peace Corps countries. The loss of teachers has crippled education systems, while illness and disability drains family income and forces governments and donors to redirect limited

resources from other priorities. The fear and uncertainty AIDS causes has led to increased domestic violence and stigmatizing of people living with HIV/AIDS, isolating them from friends and family and cutting them off from economic opportunities. As a Peace Corps Volunteer, you will confront these issues on a very personal level. It is important to be aware of the high emotional toll that disease, death, and violence can have on Volunteers. As you strive to integrate into your community, you will develop relationships with local people who might die during your service. Because of the AIDS pandemic, some Volunteers will be regularly meeting with HIV-positive people and working with training staff, office staff, and host family members living with AIDS. Volunteers need to prepare themselves to embrace these relationships in a sensitive and positive manner. Likewise, malaria and malnutrition, motor vehicle accidents and other unintentional injuries, domestic violence and corporal punishment are problems a Volunteer may confront. You will need to anticipate these situations and utilize supportive resources available throughout your training and service to maintain your own emotional strength so that you can continue to be of service to your community.

NOTES



COUNTRY OVERVIEW: ZAMBIA AT A GLANCE



History

Zambia lay relatively untouched by the outside world until the mid-19th century when it was visited by Western explorers, missionaries, and traders. In 1855, David Livingstone became the first European to see the magnificent waterfalls on the Zambezi River. Known locally as Musi-o-tunya, or the “Smoke that Thunders,” Livingstone renamed the falls after Queen Victoria. The Zambian town near the falls is named after him, and served as the capital of what was then called Northern Rhodesia until 1935. In 1888, Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe, respectively) were proclaimed a British sphere of influence. Southern Rhodesia was annexed formally and granted self-government in 1923; the administration of Northern Rhodesia was transferred to the British colonial office in 1924 as a protectorate. In 1953, both Rhodesias were joined by Nyasaland (now Malawi) to form the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The Republic of Zambia gained its independence from Britain on October 24, 1964. Kenneth Kaunda, the leader of the United National Independence Party, was named the first president and remained in power until 1991. After nearly three decades of one-party rule and worsening economic conditions, the Kaunda era came to an end. In November 1991, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) won Zambia’s first free presidential and general elections since 1968. Frederick Chiluba was subsequently sworn in as the nation’s second president and he was reelected in 1996. In 2001, Levy Mwanawasa was elected president under the banner of the MMD. He is the current president.

Historically, copper has provided the majority of the country's foreign exchange earnings and been the leading source of employment. However, the drastic decline in copper market values, a slow rate of industrialization, and a high dependence on foreign imports drove Zambia's economy into an extended decline. Through the early 1990s, Zambia experienced one of the worst economic growth rates in the world. In an effort to halt two decades of economic decline, the country undertook an ambitious economic recovery program. A cornerstone of this program has been the privatization of parastatal industries (including copper mines). However, the nation's extremely high rate of HIV/AIDS infection, along with an unstable food supply and drought, continues to hamper development efforts.

Economy

Zambia is one of sub-Saharan Africa's most highly urbanized countries. Approximately half of the country's 11 million people are concentrated in a few urban zones strung along the major transportation corridors. Unemployment and underemployment are serious problems. Compared to other African countries, Zambia has a relatively low per capita income at \$1,000 U.S. (2006). It has a mixed economy with an urban public sector dominated by government, nonprofit nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and parastatal organizations (many of which have been privatized or are being privatized), and a predominately private rural agricultural sector. Maize (corn) is the principal cash crop as well as a staple. There have been positive macroeconomics results with a decline in the inflation rate to 9 percent and an appreciation of the kwacha to U.S. dollar exchange rates.

People and Culture

Zambia is divided into nine provinces and 72 districts. There are 73 ethno-linguistic groups, the predominant ones being Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Bemba, Luvale, Kaonde and Lunda. English is the official language throughout the country; however, in rural areas, it is common to find those who do not speak English. Most Zambians are Christians, and they belong to a wide variety of denominations. Other major religions include Hinduism, Islam, and indigenous beliefs. Ninety-nine percent of the population consists of Black Africans, the rest being European, Asian, and mixed origin. Half the population is 15 years old or younger. At 36 years, Zambia's life expectancy is one of the world's lowest.

Zambians are very welcoming, open, and friendly people with interesting and diverse cultures and traditions. That said, one of the challenges of finding your place as a Volunteer is fitting into the local culture while maintaining your own cultural identity and professionalism. As a guest in Zambia, you will be expected to respect culture and traditions, and to tolerate or adapt to differences you may encounter. Cultural adaptation is a great opportunity and a rewarding experience.

Environment

Named after the Zambezi River, Zambia is a landlocked country in central-southern Africa, and it is surrounded by Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zaire, and Zimbabwe. It is roughly the size of Texas and covers 2.3 percent of Africa's total area. Much of Zambia lies on a plateau with an average height between 3,500 and 4,500 ft (1,066 to 1,371 meters). The huge valleys of the upper Zambezi and its major tributaries, including the Kafue and Luangwa Rivers, incise this plateau. The climate consists of

three distinct seasons: a warm, wet season from November to April; a cool, dry season from May to August; and a hot, dry season in September and October. The relatively high altitude tempers the humidity so that the climate is generally pleasant. The diversity of climatic conditions also allows for the cultivation of a wide range of crops.

NOTES

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A ACE

B BUCKET

C CUP

D DOOR

E EGG

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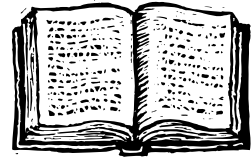
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RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



We offer a list of Web sites for you to search for additional information about the Peace Corps and connect you to returned Volunteers and other invitees. Please keep in mind that links change. We have tried to make sure all these links are active and current, but we cannot guarantee it.

A note of caution: As you surf these sites, please also remember that you will find bulletin boards and chat rooms in which people are free to give opinions and advice based on their own experiences. The opinions expressed are not those of the Peace Corps or the United States government. You may also find opinions of people who were unhappy with their choice to serve in the Peace Corps. As you read these comments, we hope you will keep in mind that the Peace Corps is not for everyone, and no two people experience their service in the same way.

www.countrywatch.com

On this site, you can learn anything from what time it is in Tashkent to information about converting currency from the dollar to the ruble. Just click on your country of service and go from there.

www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations

Visit this site to learn all you need to know about any country in the world.

www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/

This site is part of the U.S. State Department, which issues background notes periodically about countries around the world. Find your country of service and learn more about the social and political history.

<http://zambia.usembassy.gov/>

The website for the U.S. embassy in Lusaka, Zambia.

www.psr.keele.ac.uk/official.htm

This site includes links to all the official sites for governments of countries around the world.

<http://geography.about.com/library/maps/blindex.htm>

This online world atlas includes maps and geographical information about countries around the world. Each country page contains links to other sites, such as the Library of Congress, that contain comprehensive historical, social, and political backgrounds.

www.un.org/pubs/cyberschoolbus/

This United Nations site allows you to search for statistical information for member states of the U.N.

www.worldinformation.com

This site provides an additional source of current and historical information about countries worldwide.

Connect With Returned Volunteers and Other Invitees:

<http://clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/peacecorps>

This Yahoo site hosts a bulletin board where prospective Volunteers and returned Volunteers can come together.

www.rpcv.org

This is the site of the National Peace Corps Association, made up of returned Volunteers. On this site you can find links to all the Web pages of the “friends of” groups for most countries of service, made up of former Volunteers who served in those countries. There are also regional groups who frequently get together for social events and local volunteer activities.

www.peacecorpswriters.org

This site is hosted by a group of returned Volunteer writers. It is a monthly online publication of essays and Volunteer accounts from countries around the world.

Online Articles/Current News Sites About Zambia:

<http://www.times.co.zm>

Times of Zambia

<http://www.zambia.co.zm>

Zambia Online

<http://www.thezambian.com/>

The Zambian

<http://www.postzambia.com>

The Post

International Aid Organizational Sites About Zambia:

http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/index.html

USAID's work in sub-Saharan Africa

www.fews.net/

USAID Famine Early Warning Systems Network

<http://www.worldbank.org/>

World Bank

Recommended Books:

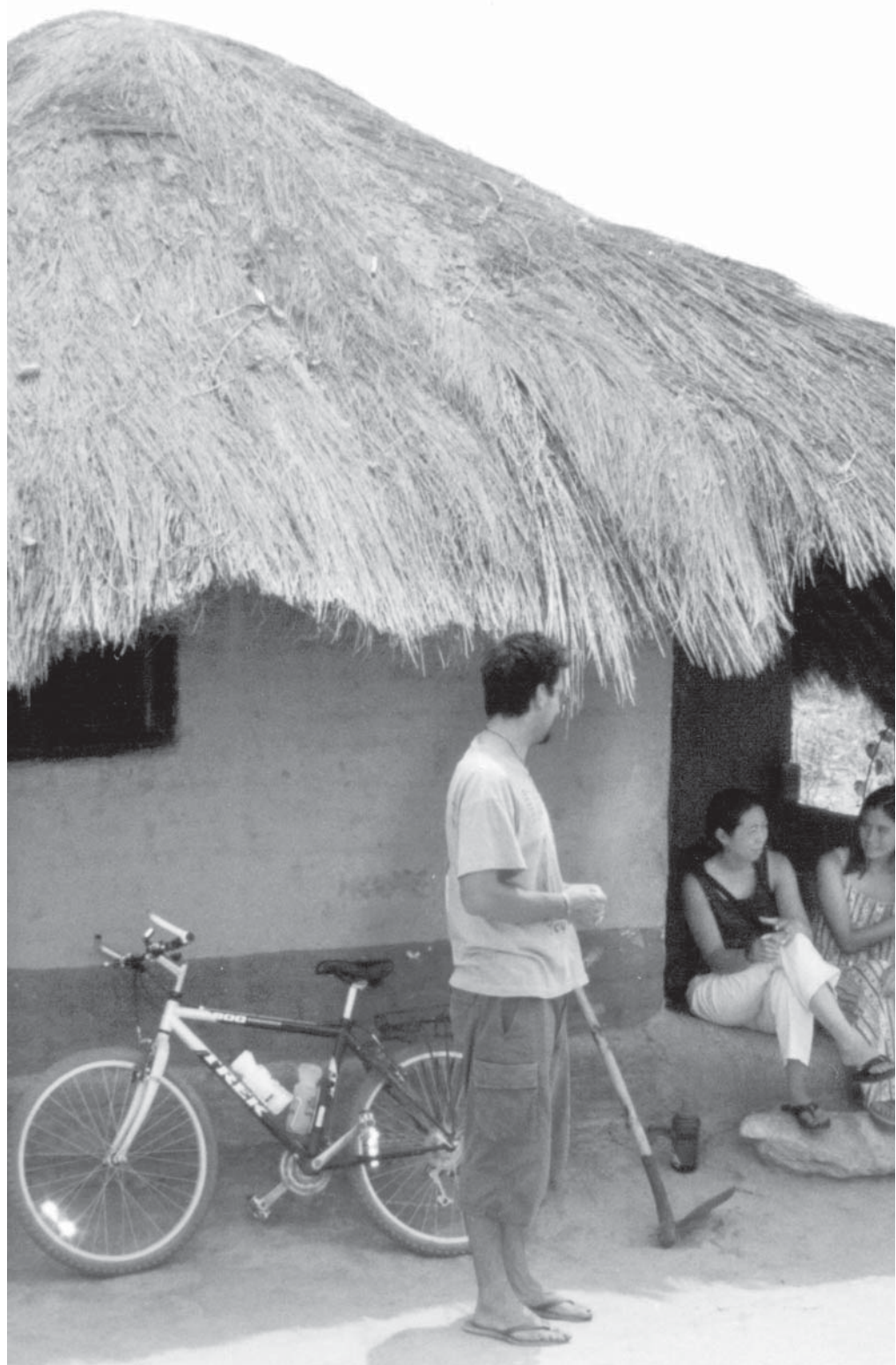
1. Baylies, Carolyn L. and Janet Bujra. *AIDS, Sexuality and Gender in Africa: The Struggle Continues*. Routledge Publishers, 2001.
2. Bull, Schuyler and Alan Male. *Along the Luangwa: The Story of an African Floodplain (Nature Conservancy Habitat)*. Soundprints, 1999.
3. Burdette, Marcia. *Zambia: Between Two Worlds*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1988.
4. Hansen, Karen Tranberg. *Salaula: The World of Secondhand Clothing and Zambia*. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, August 2000.
5. Kelly, Robert C. (editor), et al. *Zambia Country Review*. CountryWatch.com, December 1999.

Books About the History of the Peace Corps

1. Hoffman, Elizabeth Cobbs. *All You Need is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960's*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000.
2. Rice, Gerald T. *The Bold Experiment: JFK's Peace Corps*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985.
3. Stossel, Scott. *Sarge: The Life and Times of Sargent Shriver*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2004.

Books on the Volunteer Experience

1. Banerjee, Dillon. *So You Want to Join the Peace Corps: What to Know Before You Go*. Berkeley, Calif.: Ten Speed Press, 2000.
2. Casebolt, Marjorie DeMoss. *Margarita: A Guatemalan Peace Corps Experience*. Gig Harbor, Wash.: Red Apple Publishing, 2000.
3. Dirlam, Sharon. *Beyond Siberia: Two Years in a Forgotten Place*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: McSeas Books, 2004.
4. Erdman, Sarah. *Nine Hills to Nambonkaha: Two Years in the Heart of an African Village*. New York, N.Y.: Picador, 2003.
5. Herrera, Susana. *Mango Elephants in the Sun: How Life in an African Village Let Me Be in My Skin*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1999
6. Hessler, Peter. *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze*. New York, N.Y.: Perennial, 2001.
7. Kennedy, Geraldine ed. *From the Center of the Earth: Stories out of the Peace Corps*. Santa Monica, Calif.: Clover Park Press, 1991.
8. Thompsen, Moritz. *Living Poor: A Peace Corps Chronicle*. Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1997 (reprint).



LIVING CONDITIONS AND VOLUNTEER LIFESTYLE



Communications

Mail

Few countries in the world offer the level of service we consider normal in the U.S. If you bring with you U.S. standards for mail service you will be in for frustration. Mail takes a minimum of two to four weeks to arrive in Lusaka. Surface mail may take up to five months to be delivered and is highly unlikely to be insurable. Duty fees must be paid on all packages received; the amount depends on the value (or perceived value) of the contents. Though not frequent, some mail may simply not arrive. We recognize that when we are thousands of miles from our families and friends, communication becomes a very sensitive issue. Advise your family and friends to number their letters and to write “Air Mail” and “*Par Avion*” on their envelopes.

Despite delays, we strongly encourage you to write to your family regularly, perhaps weekly or biweekly. Family members will typically become worried when they do not hear from you, so please advise your parents, friends, and relatives that mail is sporadic and that they shouldn’t worry if they don’t receive your letters regularly.

As a trainee, you will receive mail at the training center near Lusaka.

Your address during training will be:

(Your Name)/PCT
Peace Corps
P.O. Box 50707
Lusaka, Zambia

Telephones

Long-distance telephone communication is available, though it can be difficult and frustrating, especially during the rainy season with its electrical storms. It is also expensive. A call from Zambia to the U.S. can cost about \$3 per minute. Calling cards can be used on private phones with the assistance of an operator and costs considerably less. Many Volunteers use this method when they are in Lusaka or in their provincial capitals. Each of the provincial houses, situated in six provinces, has a phone, so it is possible to arrange a time to receive a phone call. Most post offices in the major cities have international services but only during their regular hours.

In recent years, Zambia has drastically improved its cellular telephone network and offers a choice between three cellphone companies: Zamtel, MTN, and Celtel. Though coverage in some areas is spotty outside of Lusaka and the provincial capitals, it is available in 75 percent of the districts. The cellphone network has improved over time and trainees are encouraged to buy cellphones soon after arriving in-country.

Computer, Internet, and E-mail Access

There are several Internet service providers in Zambia. The number of Internet cafes around the country is also growing. The cost of access varies but tends to be relatively expensive. Due to the nature and quality of the landline connections, all companies offer both digital and analog dial-up numbers.

Computer and e-mail access are available at the provincial houses though occasionally do not work due to infrastructure or power issues. Internet access is also available and free at the Volunteer resource library in the Peace Corps office in Lusaka. You should prepare yourself and your friends and family to expect limited access to e-mail. Your main sources of communication with home will be via text messaging and handwritten letters.

Due to the lack of electricity and potential for theft, very few Volunteers keep laptop computers at their sites. It is not recommended. If you do bring a laptop, make sure to insure it.

Housing and Site Location

Most Volunteers live in earthen houses lighted by kerosene lamps. Meals are cooked over wood or charcoal. Typically, Volunteer sites are in villages where there is neither plumbing nor electricity. You will have your own mud brick/thatch roof house, pit latrine, outdoor cooking area, and shower area. Drinking/washing water may need to be carried from as far as 30 minutes away on foot. Some sites will be very isolated and the closest Volunteer may be 40 kilometers or more away. A select number of Volunteers may live in these same conditions, but within five kilometers of a small town center.

Within the first week of arriving in Zambia, you will have the opportunity to choose the language that you will be speaking. Volunteers from the various provinces will give you presentations to help you decide what language you want to learn. The associate Peace Corps director (APCD) of your program may offer advice based on the various skills and interest of individuals in your group. Your final placements are made in cooperation with the training staff and are based on their assessments and recommendations regarding your skill levels in the technical, cross-cultural, and language areas. Your APCD can discuss particular preferences concerning a site. *You will not be able to choose your site.* Site placements are made using the following criteria (in priority order):

- Medical considerations;
- Community needs;
- Site requirements matched with demonstrated technical, cross cultural, and language skills;
- Personal preference of the Volunteer.

Living Allowance and Money Management

The local currency is the Zambian kwacha (Zkw). Between 2005 and 2007, the value of the kwacha has fluctuated between 2,500 and 4,900 Zkw per one U.S. dollar.

As a Volunteer in Zambia you will receive five types of allowances: a living allowance, vacation allowance, travel allowance, settling-in allowance, and readjustment allowance.

The living allowance covers your basic living expenses. The living allowance is reviewed at least once per year through a market survey to ensure that it is adequate. In Zambia, this is typically about \$220 each month, and it is paid in local currency. This allowance is disbursed to Volunteers through locally established personal bank accounts on a quarterly basis. It is intended to cover expenses including food, household supplies, clothing, recreation, transportation, reading materials, and other incidentals. By comparison, your local Zambian peers working for the government will be making about \$150 a month.

A standard Peace Corps vacation allowance amounting to \$24 a month will be added to your living allowance. This is also paid on a quarterly basis in local currency.

A travel allowance is paid to you on a quarterly basis together with your living allowance. This allowance is to cover all planned events such as travel to in-service training, provincial meetings, mid-term medicals, and the close-of-service conference. When on official Peace Corps/Zambia travel, you will be given additional money for transportation and meals.

A one-time settling-in allowance, also paid in ZKw at an equivalency of roughly \$260, is given to buy basic household items when you move to your site. In addition, a security upgrade fund, equivalent to \$35, is added to be used for Volunteers' homes.

A readjustment allowance of \$225 is accumulated each month. One-third is given to you prior to your departure and the balance is sent to your home of record after you return.

If you do bring cash for travel and vacation, only bring a limited amount because of the potential for theft. Cashing personal checks or checks family or friends may want to send is extremely complicated and should be avoided. Peace Corps/Zambia cannot facilitate any personal banking transactions.

It is also advisable to bring U.S. dollars because traveler's checks are becoming harder to cash. Some foreign exchange posts do not accept \$1 or \$5 bills, and you will receive a lower exchange rate for \$10 and \$20 notes. If you plan to travel outside of Zambia on vacation, some U.S. currency may be needed for airport fees, visas, and other expenses, which must be paid in U.S. dollars.

Food and Diet

Your access to Western-style foods may be very limited, but you will soon become familiar and even enamored with *nshima* (cornmeal porridge), cabbage, and *kapenta* (fish), as well as other staple foods like local leaf sauces and smoked fish. Fruits such as mangoes, guavas, and especially bananas, can be found commonly everywhere, but mangoes are seasonal; vegetable variety is generally good, but can be seasonally difficult, and meat is not easily available for Volunteers while at their site.

Ideally, mealtime should be a time of relaxation, but, in an unfamiliar country, mealtimes will, at first, be an unsettling challenge. The available food may seem strange in type and appearance; it may even initially appear unpalatable. Yet, you may feel obligated to demonstrate your friendliness and willingness to accept local customs by eating food that

doesn't appeal to you. You'll need to stay within your comfort zone, but remember that the local cuisine, customs, and expectations are very different from your own. If you are not prepared to make some major adjustments in your lifestyle, you will very likely experience a great deal of frustration.

During pre-service training, you will have many opportunities to become familiar with what is available, as well as how to prepare and cook a wide variety of foods. Some Volunteers will lose weight during training. This is to be expected; it is not unusual to lose up to 10 pounds during the nine-week period conversely, some Volunteers can gain weight due to the carbohydrate-based diet.

Volunteer Comment

"I have had no trouble whatsoever being a vegetarian. The Peace Corps staff was very helpful and accommodating during training—they went out of their way to explain to the host families of the vegetarians about our diets. Zambians have been really understanding as well. There are times when meat is prepared for special occasions, and guests of honor are sometimes given the gizzard of a chicken to eat, but I haven't had any trouble with politely declining meat. Food access varies depending on where you're posted in the country, but I haven't had any trouble maintaining a healthy diet, free of meat."

Transportation

All Volunteers will be expected to travel in Zambia using local means of transportation as your Zambian peers do (foot, bicycle, bus, van, or train) starting during your first days of training until the end of your service. Rural travel is very limited and difficult due to the condition of the roads and public transportation. Every trip is an adventure. Transportation from your post to your provincial capital may

be sporadic, may take a full day or more, and will generally be crowded and dusty. Volunteers may find it necessary to travel on trucks carrying produce or livestock or hitch rides on one of the district or community vehicles. It may take two days or more by crowded public transportation to reach the capital city, Lusaka. Some Volunteers walk or ride their bikes up to 50 kilometers or more to catch a ride at a main road. Some roads are not easily passable by bicycle in the rainy season. All Volunteers will be provided with a bicycle and helmet, which they must wear when riding. Riding motorcycles is prohibited.

Social Activities

Social activities will vary depending on where you are located. These may include taking part in various festivities, parties, storytelling, and sitting around at fire at night talking with your neighbors. Some Volunteers visit nearby Volunteers on weekends and make occasional trips to their provincial capital, although we encourage Volunteers to remain at their sites to accomplish the important Peace Corps goal of cultural exchange.

Professionalism, Dress, and Behavior

One of the challenges of finding your place as a Volunteer is simultaneously fitting into the local culture, maintaining your own cultural identity, and acting like a professional. It is not an easy act to balance, and we can only provide you with some guidelines to dress and behave accordingly. While some of your counterparts may dress in seemingly worn or shabby clothes, this will be due to economics rather than choice. The likelihood is that they are wearing their “best.” A foreigner wearing raggedy, unkempt clothing is more likely to be considered an affront.

Zambians regard dress and appearance as part of one's respect for one another. They value neatness of appearance, which is much more important than being "stylish." You are expected to dress appropriately, whether you are in training, traveling, or on the job. Not doing so may jeopardize your credibility and that of the entire program.

Dress guidelines have been formalized based not only on advice from Zambians, but also on the experiences of current Volunteers. Dresses and skirts should fall below the knees. Appropriate undergarments should be worn, including slips. Men and women should wear shorts only at home, when exercising, or when doing work where Zambian counterparts are also wearing them. If shorts are worn in public, they should be of "walking" length. Hair should be clean and combed, and beards should be neatly trimmed. Men should never wear a hat indoors unless custom in the area allows, and they should always be removed when speaking to an elder. Sunglasses should also be removed indoors.

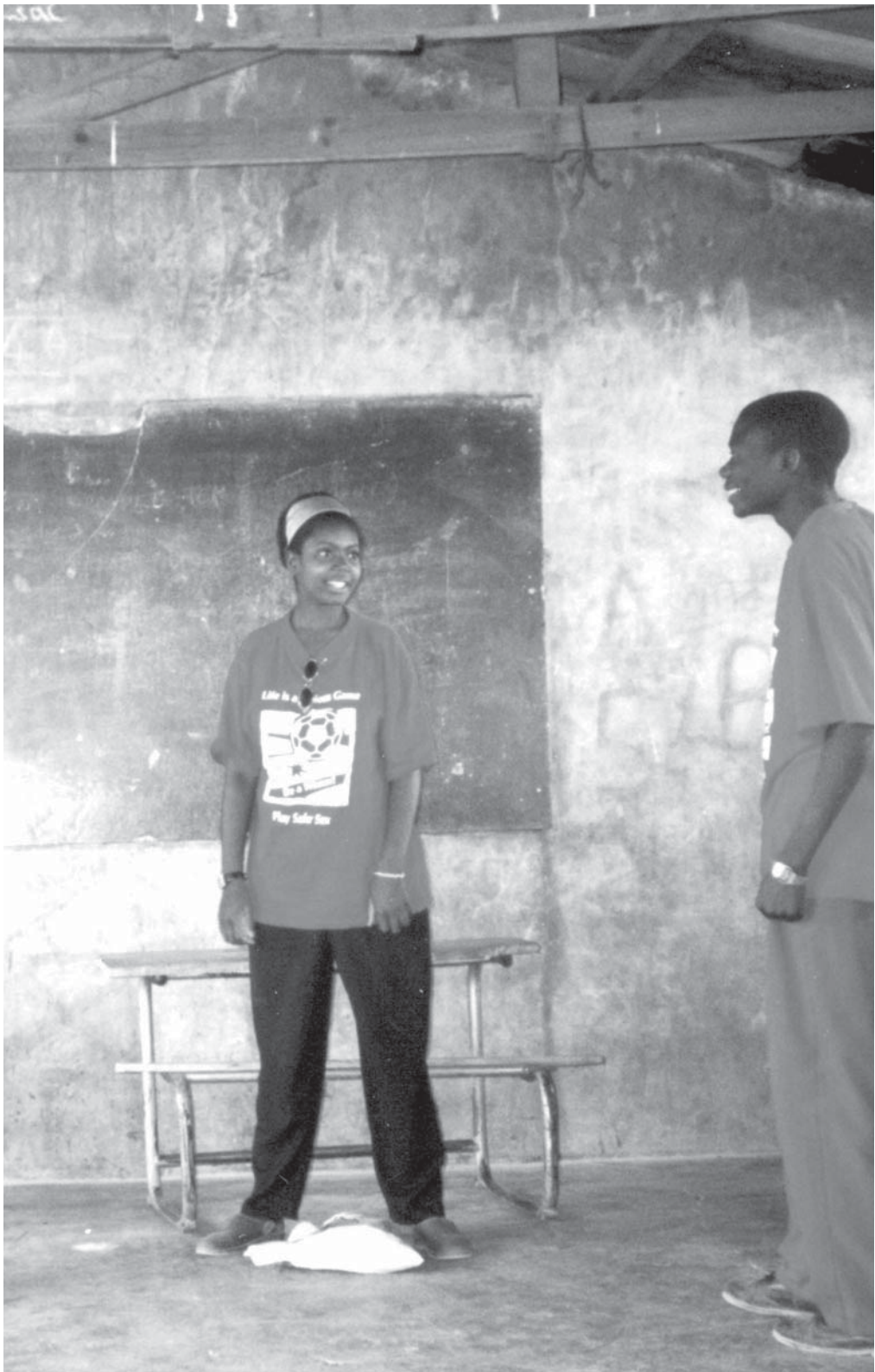
Personal Safety

More information about the Peace Corps' approach to safety is outlined in the Health Care and Safety chapter, but it is an important issue and cannot be overemphasized. As stated in the *Volunteer Handbook*, becoming a Peace Corps Volunteer entails certain safety risks. Living and traveling in an unfamiliar environment (oftentimes alone), having a limited understanding of local language and culture, and being perceived as well-off are some of the factors that can put a Volunteer at risk. Many Volunteers experience varying degrees of unwanted attention and harassment. Petty thefts and burglaries are not uncommon, and incidents of physical and sexual assault do occur, although most Volunteers complete their two years of service without personal safety problems. The Peace Corps has established procedures and policies

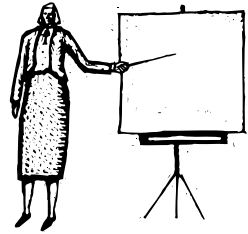
designed to help Volunteers reduce their risks and enhance their safety and security. These procedures and policies, in addition to safety training, will be provided once you arrive in Zambia. At the same time, each Volunteer is expected to take responsibility for his/her safety and well-being.

Rewards and Frustrations

The excitement and adventure of the Volunteer experience are, in some measure, due to its unpredictability. There will be unexpected joys as well as unexpected disappointments. You could find plans for a health clinic canceled at the last minute because the Ministry of Health has been reorganized. Your plan to dig a well may be held up by a quarrel between local groups over who is to do the digging or because the required materials cannot be delivered as scheduled. The official to whom you were supposed to report may be replaced by a successor who knows little about a scheduled project. Such variables can erode the enthusiasm, the patience, and the idealism of a Volunteer. Your success will often depend upon determination, patience, and the ability to find another way. A Peace Corps Volunteer always has to be able to come up with a Plan B and many times, a Plan C, D, or even E! A big part of Peace Corps is the challenge to remain flexible, energetic, and hopeful at a time when it would be easy to give in to cynicism or indifference. Accepting the community and being accepted by it is essential for success. In both your daily life and in your work, Volunteers must take care to avoid the appearance of superiority or arrogance that can be associated with an outsider bringing “change” and “improvements.” Volunteers find that as they live and work in their communities, they learn as much or more from the people of their host country than they share in return.



PEACE CORPS TRAINING



Overview of Pre-Service Training

Pre-service training is the most intensive period of your Peace Corps service. During your nine weeks of training time, you will need to accumulate the knowledge and experience necessary for the first several months of service. Before being sworn in as a Volunteer, you will also need to demonstrate that you meet the criteria to qualify for Volunteer service.

Following a brief orientation program, you will be taken to a current Volunteer's site to spend a few days observing firsthand what the next two years have in store for you. Following this first site visit, you will proceed to the Peace Corps training center in Chongwe District for two days of orientation and then move into your villages with your host families. While pre-service training is extremely busy, it is also a time of excitement, discovery, and self-fulfillment. Drawing on your reserves of patience and humor, the effort and frustrations of functioning in a different culture will be rewarded with a sense of belonging among new friends. The long hours of study and practice will pay off in your ability to work effectively in a challenging job that will directly benefit a great number of people.

Trainees in all program sectors will follow a community-based training model. You will live with homestay families in villages within 15 to 20 kilometers of the training center. Your language, cross-culture and technical sessions will take place in your surrounding villages. Once a week, you will travel by bike to the training center for medical and other sessions and travel back to your homestay family at the end of the day. The living situation with your families will be similar to what you will experience as a Volunteer.

Technical Training

Technical training will prepare you to work in Zambia by building on the skills you already have and by helping you to develop new skills in a manner appropriate to the needs and issues of the country. The Peace Corps staff, Zambian experts, and current Volunteers conduct the training program. Training places great emphasis on learning how to transfer the skills you have to the community in which you will serve as a Volunteer. You will be supported and evaluated by experienced Zambian trainers, current Volunteers, and Peace Corps staff throughout the training to build the confidence and skills you will need in order to eventually undertake your sub-sector activities and be a productive member of your community.

Technical training includes sessions on general environmental, economic, and political situations in Zambia and strategies for working within such a framework. You will review your technical sector's goals and will meet with the Zambian agencies and organizations that invited Peace Corps to assist them. You must successfully meet the minimum technical competencies in order to complete training and become a Volunteer.

Language Training

Language skills are key to your personal and professional satisfaction as a Volunteer. These skills will often be critical to your job performance; they will help you integrate into your host community; and they can ease your personal adaptation to the new surroundings. For these reasons, language training is the heart of the training program, and you must successfully meet minimum language requirements in order to complete training and become a Volunteer. Experienced Zambian language instructors give formal language instruction five and a half days a week in small classes of four to five people. The Zambian languages that are taught are also introduced in the health, culture, and technical components of training.

Your language training will incorporate a community-based approach. You will have classroom time and will be given assignments to work on outside of the classroom and with your host family. Our goal is to get you to a point of basic social communication skills so that you can practice and develop linguistic skills more thoroughly. Prior to swearing in as Volunteers, you will work on strategies to continue language studies during your two years of service.

Cross-Cultural Training

As part of your pre-service training, you will live with a Zambian host family. The experience of living with a Zambian host family is designed to ease your transition into life in the countryside. Families have gone through an orientation conducted by Peace Corps staff to explain the purpose of the pre-service training program and to assist them in helping you adapt to living in Zambia. Many Volunteers form strong and lasting friendships with their homestay families.

Cross-culture and community development will be covered through a variety of training activities to help improve your skills of perception, communication, and facilitation. Topics such as community mobilization, conflict resolution, gender and development, and traditional and political structures are some examples.

Health Training

During pre-service training, you will be given basic medical training and information. Volunteers are expected to practice preventive healthcare and to take responsibility for their own health by adhering to all medical policies which can help reduce their risk for illness and injury. The topics are presented with enough in-depth information to enable trainees to understand the condition and know how to recognize and treat it accordingly. All the major health issues such as malaria, diarrhea, how to cope at site and other issues are covered during pre-service training.

Safety Training

During the safety training sessions, you will learn how to adopt a lifestyle that reduces risk in your home, at work, and during your travels. You will also learn appropriate, effective strategies for coping with unwanted attention, and learn about your individual responsibility for promoting safety throughout your service.

Additional Trainings During Volunteer Service

In its commitment to institutionalize quality training, the Peace Corps has implemented a training system that provides Volunteers with continuous opportunities to examine their commitment to Peace Corps service while increasing their technical and cross-cultural skills.

Over the two-year Volunteer term of service, there are usually three kinds of training events. The titles and objectives for those trainings are as follows:

- *Pre-Service Training*: Provides trainees with solid technical, language, and cross-cultural knowledge to prepare them for living and working successfully in Zambia.
- *In-Service Training*: Provides an opportunity for Volunteers to upgrade their technical, language, and project development skills while sharing their experiences and reaffirming their commitment after having served for three to six months. There are typically two in-service trainings during a Volunteer's tour of service.
- *Close-of-Service Conference*: Prepares Volunteers for the future after Peace Corps service and to review Volunteers' respective projects and personal experiences.

NOTES



YOUR HEALTH CARE AND SAFETY IN ZAMBIA



The Peace Corps' highest priority is maintaining the good health and safety of every Volunteer. Peace Corps medical programs emphasize the preventive, rather than the curative approach to disease. The Peace Corps in Zambia maintains a clinic with three full-time medical officers who take care of Volunteers' primary healthcare needs. Additional medical services, such as testing and basic treatment, are also available in Zambia at local hospitals. If a Volunteer becomes seriously ill, that person will be transported to either South Africa, the designated regional medical evacuation center, or to the United States.

The Peace Corps medical officers and health unit support your health needs in-country. The Volunteer health program emphasizes prevention and self-responsibility. Although medical care overseas differs significantly from the healthcare you may be familiar with in the U.S., your medical care during Peace Corps service is designed to meet your basic needs. It is important that you share your health concerns with a medical officer, including any discomfort you might have about your diagnosis and treatment.

Trainees and Volunteers with medical problems beyond the expertise of the medical officers or host country medical community are sent to a location with more advanced medical care, either to South Africa or to Washington, D.C. Peace Corps/Zambia medical officers are supported by an area medical officer, who is a U.S. board-certified physician. Medical officers also receive ongoing guidance and support from the Office of Medical Services at Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Helping You Stay Healthy

The Peace Corps will provide you with all the necessary inoculations, medications, and information to stay healthy. Upon your arrival in Zambia, you will receive a medical handbook. You will receive a first-aid kit with supplies to take care of mild illnesses and first-aid needs and the contents of the kit are listed later on in this section.

During your first nine weeks in Zambia, you will have access to basic first-aid supplies through the medical officer. However, during this time, you will be responsible for your own supply of prescription drugs and any other specific medical supplies you require, as we will not order these items during training. Please bring a three-month supply of any prescription drugs you use, since they may not be available here and it may take several months for new shipments to arrive.

You will have physicals during mid-service and at the end of your service. If you develop a serious medical problem during your service, the medical officer in Zambia will consult with the Office of Medical Services in Washington, D.C. If it is determined that your condition cannot be cared for in Zambia, you may be sent out of the country for further evaluation and care.

Maintaining Your Health

As a Volunteer, you must accept responsibility for your own health. Proper precautions will significantly reduce your risk of serious illness or injury. The old adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" becomes extremely important in areas where medical diagnostic and treatment facilities are not up to the standards of the United States.

Zambia is a very healthy country to live in provided you use your common sense and pay particular attention to situations that could easily be prevented. Commonly encountered health problems here are colds, coughs, flu, strep throat, diarrhea, and fevers. Depending on your immunization history, you will receive immunizations against rabies, hepatitis A and B, meningococcal meningitis, and typhoid.

Many illnesses that afflict Volunteers worldwide are entirely preventable if proper food and water precautions are taken. These illnesses include food poisoning, amebiasis, giardiasis, and dysentery,. We will discuss specific standards for water and food preparation during your pre-service training.

One significant illness you could be exposed to is *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria. During pre-service training, you will be fully informed about its life cycle, the steps you need to take to prevent getting it, how to diagnose it, what to do for self-treatment, and when you should contact the medical officer. Malaria can be a fatal disease, so we take it very seriously. Taking malaria prophylaxis is not a negotiable issue; Volunteers are expected to take it as prescribed, and failure to do this could result in administrative separation. Mefloquine is the main anti-malarial taken by Volunteers. For those who do not tolerate it, doxycycline (taken daily) is an alternative. The Peace Corps, in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has determined that mefloquine is the preferred malaria prophylaxis in chloroquine-resistant areas; and given data collected from the many Volunteers who have taken it for two years or more, it has been deemed very safe. If, however, you feel you will NOT want to take mefloquine, you may want to consider going to a non-malarial country, remember, noncompliance with your malaria prophylaxis is viewed very seriously.

Nutrition is the cornerstone not only to a healthy body, but also to a healthy service. It is therefore imperative that you eat nutritionally. Throughout pre-service training, you will learn how to maintain a well-balanced diet. Once you get to your site, you will need to allow yourself the time for “hunting and gathering.” Changing your mindset from a fast food culture to one in which significant time and energy must be expended can be challenging. However, this can be done in ways that will allow you to also develop and secure your status as a respected and valued member of your community and village.

Zambia currently has one of the highest incidences of HIV/AIDS in Africa. In a country with a population of 10 million, the Zambia Ministry of Health reports that an estimated 950,000 adults and 70,000 children are currently infected with the HIV virus. Approximately 16 percent of men and women between the ages of 15 and 49 are HIV positive. More than 75 percent of Zambian AIDS cases come from sexually active young adults and children under five who were infected by their mothers at birth. The country is experiencing an alarming rise in the number of children left orphaned because of AIDS. The effect of HIV/AIDS on Zambia is widespread, affecting not only the family structure, but also the country’s economy and education system. The disease will continue to adversely affect the country’s already low life expectancy.

Abstinence is the only certain choice for prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). You are taking risks if you choose to be sexually active. To lessen the risk, use a condom every time you have sex. Whether your partner is a host country citizen, a fellow Volunteer, or anyone else, do not assume this person is free of HIV or other STDs. During pre-service training, you will receive more information from your medical officer about this important issue.

Volunteers are expected to adhere to an effective means of birth control to prevent unplanned pregnancies. Your medical officer can help you decide on the most appropriate method to suit your individual needs. Contraceptive methods are available without charge from the medical office.

Your health in Zambia should not be an issue if you make sensible, healthy choices.

Women's Health Information

Pregnancy is a health condition that is treated in the same manner as other Volunteer health conditions requiring medical attention, but may also have programmatic ramifications. Peace Corps is responsible for determining the medical risk and the availability of appropriate medical care if the Volunteer remains in-country. Given the circumstances under which Volunteers live and work in Peace Corps countries, it is rare that the Peace Corps medical and programmatic standards for continued service can be met. The majority of Volunteers who become pregnant are medically separated.

Feminine hygiene products are available from the medical office. If you require a specific feminine hygiene product please bring a three-month supply with you.

Your Peace Corps Medical Kit

The Peace Corps medical officer provides Volunteers with a first-aid kit that contains basic items necessary to prevent and treat illnesses that might occur during service. Kit items can be periodically restocked at your Peace Corps medical office or at provincial Volunteer leader houses.

Medical Kit Contents

Ace Bandage
Adhesive Tape
American Red Cross First Aid & Personal Safety Manual
Antacid Tablets (Tums)
Antiseptic Antimicrobial Skin Cleaner (Hibiclens)
Bacitracin/Neomycin/Polymycin B Ointment
Band-Aids
Butterfly Closures
Calamine Lotion
Cepacol Lozenges
Condoms
Dental Floss
Diphenhydramine HCL (Benadryl): 25 mg tablets
Insect Repellant Stick (Cutter's)
Iodine Tablets (Water Purification Tablets)
Lip Balm (Chapstick)
Oral Rehydration Salts and Gatorade
Oral Thermometer (Fahrenheit)
Pseudoephedrine HCL (Sudafed): 30 mg tablets
Robitussin-DM Lozenges (Cough Calmers)
Scissors
Sterile Gauze Pads
Tetrahydrozoline Eye Drops (Visine)
Tinactin Cream (Tolnaftate)
Tweezers

Before You Leave: A Medical Checklist

If there has been any change in your health—physical, mental, or dental—since the time you submitted your examination reports to the Peace Corps, you must immediately notify the Office of Medical Services. Failure to disclose new illnesses, injuries, allergies, or pregnancy can endanger your health and may jeopardize your eligibility to serve.

If your dental exam was done more than a year ago, or if your physical exam is more than two years old, contact the Office of Medical Services to find out whether you need to update your records.

If your dentist or Peace Corps dental consultant has recommended that you undergo dental treatment or repair, you must complete that work and make sure your dentist sends requested confirmation reports or X-rays to the Office of Medical Services.

If you wish to avoid taking duplicate vaccinations, you should contact your physician's office, obtain a copy of your immunization record, and take it to your pre-departure orientation. If you have any immunizations prior to Peace Corps service, the Peace Corps cannot reimburse you for the cost. The Peace Corps will provide all the immunizations necessary for your overseas assignment, either at your pre-departure orientation or shortly after you arrive in Zambia. You will be given malaria prophylaxis at pre-departure to start taking prior to arrival in-country.

Bring a three-month supply of any prescription or over-the-counter medication you use on a regular basis, including birth-control pills. Although the Peace Corps cannot reimburse you for this three-month supply, we will order refills during your service. While awaiting shipment—which can take several months—you will be dependent on your own medication supply. The Peace Corps will not pay for herbal or non-prescribed medications, such as St. John's wort, glucosamine, selenium, or antioxidant supplements.

You are encouraged to bring copies of medical prescriptions signed by your physician. This is not a requirement, although it might come in handy if you are questioned in transit about carrying a three-month supply of prescription drugs.

If you wear eyeglasses, bring two pairs with you—a pair and a spare. If a pair breaks, the Peace Corps will replace it, using the information your doctor in the U.S. provided on the eyeglasses form during your examination. To reduce the risk of developing a serious infection or other eye disease, we discourage you from using contact lenses during your Peace Corps service. Most Peace Corps countries do not have appropriate water and sanitation to support eye care with the use of contact lenses. The Peace Corps will not supply or replace contact lenses or associated solutions unless an ophthalmologist has recommended their use for a specific medical condition and the Peace Corps' Office of Medical Services has given approval.

If you are eligible for Medicare, over 50 years of age, or have a health condition that may restrict your future participation in healthcare plans, you may wish to consult an insurance specialist about unique coverage needs before your departure. The Peace Corps will provide all necessary healthcare from the time you leave for your pre-departure orientation until you complete your service. When you finish, you will be entitled to the post-service healthcare benefits described in the Peace Corps *Volunteer Handbook*. You may wish to consider keeping an existing health plan in effect during your service if you think age and/or preexisting conditions might prevent you from reenrolling in your current plan when you return home.

Safety and Security—Our Partnership

Serving as a Volunteer overseas entails certain safety and security risks. Living and traveling in an unfamiliar environment, a limited understanding of the local language and culture, and the perception of being a wealthy American are some of the factors that can put a Volunteer at risk.

Property thefts and burglaries are not uncommon. Incidents of physical and sexual assault do occur, although almost all Volunteers complete their two years of service without serious personal safety problems. In addition, more than 85 percent of Volunteers surveyed in the 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer survey say they would join the Peace Corps again.

The Peace Corps approaches safety and security as a partnership with you. This *Welcome Book* contains sections on: Living Conditions and Volunteer Lifestyle; Peace Corps Training; and Your Health Care and Safety. All of these sections include important safety and security information.

The Peace Corps makes every effort to give Volunteers the tools they need to function in the safest and most secure way possible, because working to maximize the safety and security of Volunteers is our highest priority. Not only do we provide you with training and tools to prepare for the unexpected, but we teach you to identify and manage the risks you may encounter.

Factors that Contribute to Volunteer Risk

There are several factors that can heighten a Volunteer's risk, many of which are within the Volunteer's control.

Based on information gathered from incident reports worldwide in 2006, the following factors stand out as risk characteristics for assaults. Assaults consist of personal crimes committed against Volunteers, and do not include property crimes (such as vandalism or theft).

- Location: Most crimes occurred when Volunteers were in public areas (e.g., street, park, beach, public buildings).
- Time of day: Assaults usually took place on the weekend during the evening between 5:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m.—with most assaults occurring around 11:00 p.m.

- Absence of others: Assaults usually occurred when the Volunteer was unaccompanied. In 73 percent of the sexual assaults the Volunteer was unaccompanied and in 48 percent of physical assaults the Volunteer was unaccompanied.
- Relationship to assailant: In most assaults, the Volunteer did not know the assailant.
- Consumption of alcohol: Fourteen (14) percent of all assaults involved alcohol consumption by Volunteers. Twenty-six (26) percent of all assaults involved alcohol consumption by assailants.

Summary Strategies to Reduce Risk

Before and during service, your training will address these areas of concern so that you can reduce the risks you face. For example, here are some strategies Volunteers employ:

Strategies to reduce the risk/impact of theft:

- Know the environment and choose safe routes/times for travel
- Avoid high-crime areas per Peace Corps guidance
- Know the vocabulary to get help in an emergency
- Carry valuables in different pockets/places
- Carry a "dummy" wallet as a decoy

Strategies to reduce the risk/impact of burglary:

- Live with a local family or on a family compound
- Put strong locks on doors and keep valuables in a lock box or trunk
- Leave irreplaceable objects at home in the U.S.
- Follow Peace Corps guidelines on maintaining home security

Strategies to reduce the risk/impact of assault:

- Make local friends
- Make sure your appearance is respectful of local customs; don't draw negative attention to yourself by wearing inappropriate clothing
- Get to know local officials, police, and neighbors
- Travel with someone whenever possible
- Avoid known high crime areas
- Limit alcohol consumption

Support from Staff

In March 2003, the Peace Corps created the Office of Safety and Security with its mission to “foster improved communication, coordination, oversight, and accountability of all Peace Corps’ safety and security efforts.” The new office is led by an Associate Director for Safety and Security who reports to the Peace Corps Director and includes the following divisions: Volunteer Safety and Overseas Security; Information and Personnel Security; Emergency Preparedness, Plans, Training and Exercise; and Crime Statistics and Analysis.

The major responsibilities of the Volunteer Safety and Overseas Security Division are to coordinate the office’s overseas operations and direct the Peace Corps’ safety and security officers who are located in various regions around the world that have Peace Corps programs. The safety and security officers conduct security assessments; review safety trainings; train trainers and managers; train Volunteer safety wardens, local guards, and staff; develop security incident response procedures; and provide crisis management support.

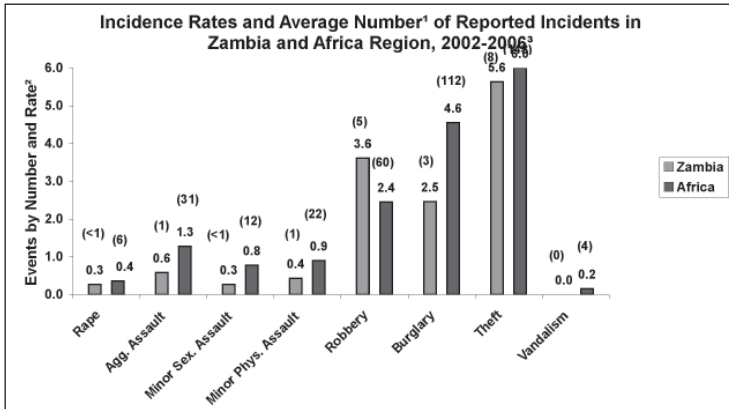
If a trainee or Volunteer is the victim of a safety incident, Peace Corps staff is prepared to provide support. All Peace Corps posts have procedures in place to respond to incidents of crime committed against Volunteers. The first priority for

all posts in the aftermath of an incident is to ensure that the Volunteer is safe and receiving medical treatment as needed. After assuring the safety of the Volunteer, Peace Corps staff provides support by reassessing the Volunteer's work site and housing arrangements and making any adjustments, as needed. In some cases, the nature of the incident may necessitate a site or housing transfer. Peace Corps staff will also assist Volunteers with preserving their rights to pursue legal sanctions against the perpetrators of the crime. It is very important that Volunteers report incidents as they occur, not only to protect their peer Volunteers, but also to preserve the future right to prosecute. Should Volunteers decide later in the process that they want to proceed with the prosecution of their assailant, this option may no longer exist if the evidence of the event has not been preserved at the time of the incident.

The country-specific data chart below shows the incidence rates and the average number of incidents of the major types of safety incidents reported by Peace Corps Volunteers/trainees in Zambia as compared to all other Africa region programs as a whole, from 2002–2006. It is presented to you in a somewhat technical manner for statistical accuracy.

To fully appreciate the collected data below, an explanation of the graph is provided as follows:

The incidence rate for each type of crime is the number of crime events relative to the Volunteer/trainee population. It is expressed on the chart as a ratio of crime to Volunteer and trainee years (or V/T years, which is a measure of 12 full months of V/T service) to allow for a statistically valid way to compare crime data across countries. An "incident" is a specific offense, per Peace Corps' classification of offenses, and may involve one or more Volunteer/trainee victims. For example, if two Volunteers are robbed at the same time and place, this is classified as one robbery incident.



¹The average numbers of incidents are in parenthesis and equal the average reported assaults for each year between 2002–2006.

²Incident rates equal the number of assaults per 100 Volunteers and trainees per year (V/T years). Since most sexual assaults occur against females, only female V/Ts are calculated in rapes and minor sexual assaults. Numbers of incidents are approximate due to rounding.

³Data collection for Zambia began as of 2002

Source data on incidents are drawn from Assault Notification Surveillance System (ANSS), Epidemiologic Surveillance System (ESS), and Crime Incident Reporting Form (CIRF); the information is accurate as of 05/29/07.

The chart is separated into eight crime categories. These include vandalism (malicious defacement or damage of property); theft (taking without force or illegal entry); burglary (forcible entry of a residence); robbery (taking something by force); minor physical assault (attacking without a weapon with minor injuries); minor sexual assault (fondling, groping, etc.); aggravated assault (attacking with a weapon, and/or without a weapon when serious injury results); and rape (sexual intercourse without consent).

When anticipating Peace Corps Volunteer service, you should review all of the safety and security information provided to you, including the strategies to reduce risk. Throughout your training and Volunteer service, you will be expected to

successfully complete all training competencies in a variety of areas including safety and security. Once in-country, use the tools and information shared with you to remain as safe and secure as possible.

What if you become a victim of a violent crime?

Few Peace Corps Volunteers are victims of violent crimes. The Peace Corps will give you information and training in how to be safe. But, just as in the U.S., crime happens, and Volunteers can become victims. When this happens, the investigative team of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) is charged with helping pursue prosecution of those who perpetrate a violent crime against a Volunteer. If you become a victim of a violent crime, the decision to prosecute or not to prosecute is entirely yours, and one of the tasks of the OIG is to make sure that you are fully informed of your options and help you through the process and procedures involved in going forward with prosecution should you wish to do so. If you decide to prosecute, we are here to assist you in every way we can.

Crimes that occur overseas, of course, are investigated and prosecuted by local authorities in local courts. Our role is to coordinate the investigation and evidence collection with the regional security officers (RSOs) at the U.S. embassy, local police, and local prosecutors and others to ensure that your rights are protected to the fullest extent possible under the laws of the country. OIG investigative staff has extensive experience in criminal investigation, in working sensitively with victims, and as advocates for victims. We also, may, in certain limited circumstances, arrange for the retention of a local lawyer to assist the local public prosecutor in making the case against the individual who perpetrated the violent crime.

If you do become a victim of a violent crime, first, make sure you are in a safe place and with people you trust and second, contact the country director or the Peace Corps medical officer. Immediate reporting is important to the preservation of evidence and the chances of apprehending the suspect. Country directors and medical officers are required to report all violent crimes to the Inspector General and the RSO. This information is protected from unauthorized further disclosure by the Privacy Act. Reporting the crime also helps prevent your further victimization and protects your fellow Volunteers.

In conjunction with the RSO, the OIG does a preliminary investigation of all violent crimes against Volunteers regardless of whether the crime has been reported to local authorities or of the decision you may ultimately make to prosecute. If you are a victim of a crime, our staff will work with you through final disposition of the case. OIG staff is available 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. We may be contacted through our 24-hour violent crime hotline via telephone at 202.692.2911, or by e-mail at violentcrimeline@peacecorps.gov.

Security Issues in Zambia

When it comes to your safety and security in the Peace Corps, you have to be willing to adapt your behavior and lifestyle to minimize the potential for being a target of crime. As with anywhere in the world, crime does exist in Zambia. You can reduce your risk of becoming a target for crime by avoiding situations that make you feel uncomfortable and by taking precautions. Crime at the village or town level is less frequent than in the large cities; people know each other and generally will not steal from their neighbors.

Tourist attractions, especially in large towns, are the favorite work sites for pickpockets. To deter pickpockets, make sure your backpack has well-secured pouches and do not keep anything of value in them. To prevent theft, don't carry large amounts of cash on your person or leave large amounts of cash or items of value in a hotel room or in your house. Do not keep your money in outside pockets of backpacks, in coat pockets, or in fanny packs. Keep money out of sight by using an undergarment money pouch, such as the kind that hangs around your neck and stays hidden under your shirt or inside your coat. Although assaults are very rare, don't walk anywhere alone at night. Use of alcohol is a factor in most safety incidents, so you must be cautious when drinking alcohol. Your ability to make safe decisions is impaired, your sense of a safe environment becomes blurred, and you become an easy target for any unsafe situation.

Staying Safe

You must be prepared to take on a large responsibility for your own safety. Only you can make yourself less of a target, ensure that your house is secure, and develop relations in your community that will make you an unlikely victim of crime. In coming to Zambia, do what you would do if you moved to a large city in the States: be cautious, check things out, ask lots of questions, learn about your neighborhood, know where the more risky locations are, use common sense, and be aware. You can reduce your vulnerability to crime by integrating into your community, learning the local language, acting responsibly, and abiding by Peace Corps policies and procedures. Serving safely and effectively in Zambia may require that you accept some restrictions to your current lifestyle.

Volunteers attract a lot of attention in large cities and their sites alike, but receive far more negative attention in highly populated centers where they are anonymous than in smaller towns where “family,” friends, and colleagues will look out for them. While whistles and exclamations are fairly common on the street, this behavior can be reduced if you dress conservatively, avoid eye contact, and don’t respond to such negative and unwanted attention.

Preparing for the Unexpected

The Peace Corps’ approach to safety is a five-pronged plan to help you stay safe during your two-year service and includes the following: information sharing; Volunteer training; site selection criteria; a detailed emergency action plan; and protocols for responding to safety and security incidents. Zambia’s in-country safety program is outlined below.

The Peace Corps/Zambia office will keep Volunteers informed of any issues that may impact Volunteer safety through **information sharing**. Regular updates will be offered in the newsletter and in memoranda from the Country Director. In the event of a critical situation or emergency, Volunteers will be contacted through the emergency communication network.

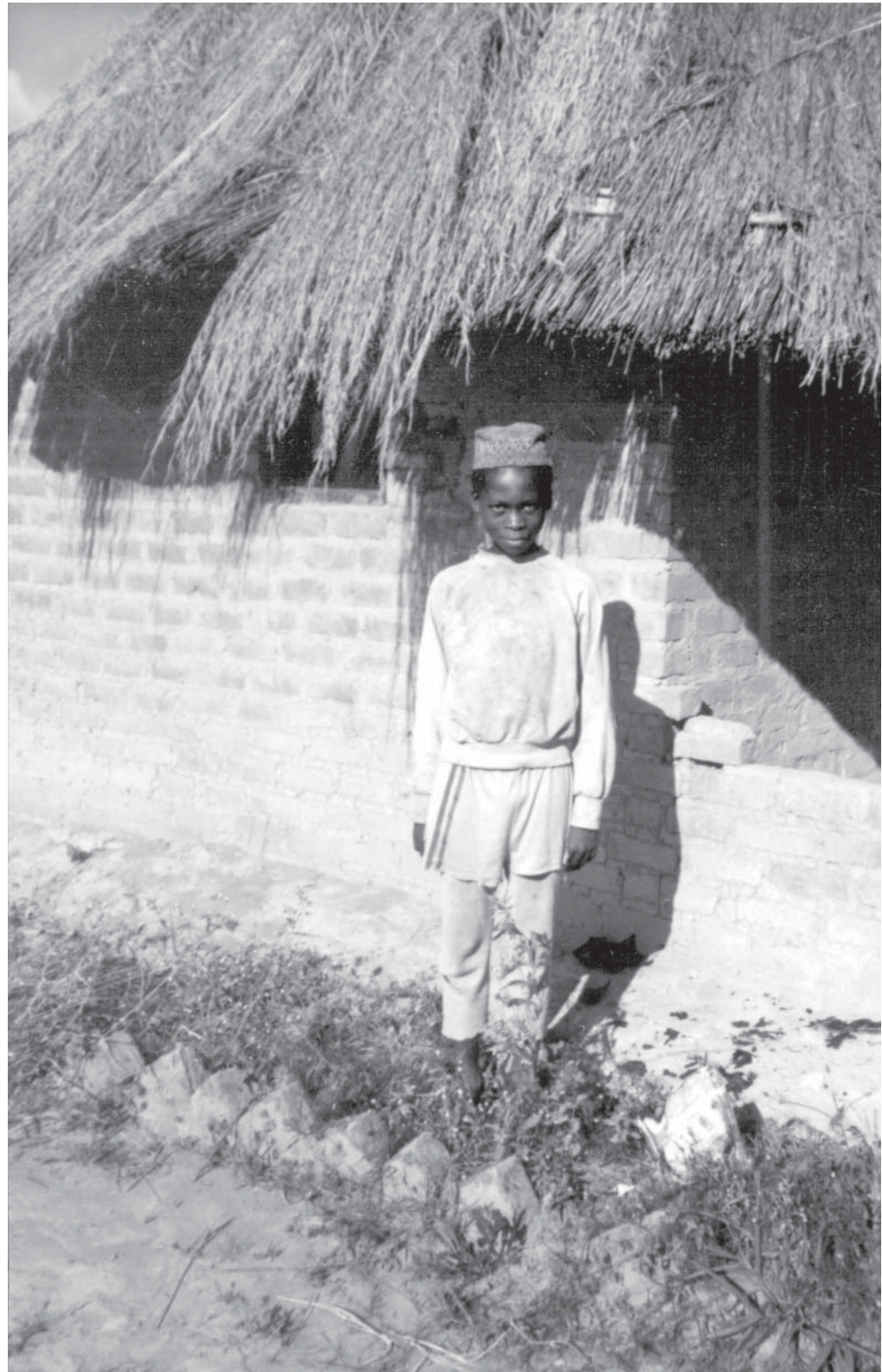
Volunteer training will include sessions to prepare you for specific safety and security issues in Zambia. This training will prepare you to adopt a culturally appropriate lifestyle and exercise judgment that promotes safety and reduces risk in your home, at work, and while traveling. Safety training is offered throughout your two-year service and is integrated into the language, cross-cultural, health, and other components of training.

Specific **site selection criteria** are used to determine safe housing for Volunteers before their arrival. Peace Corps staff works closely with host communities and counterpart agencies to help prepare them for the Volunteer's arrival and to establish expectations of their respective role in supporting the Volunteer. Each site is inspected before the Volunteer's arrival to ensure placement in appropriate, safe, and secure housing and work sites.

You will also learn about the country's detailed **emergency action plan**, pertaining to events of civil or political unrest or a natural disaster. When you arrive at your site, you will complete and submit a site locator form with your address, contact information, and a map to your house. If there is a security threat, Volunteers in Zambia will gather with other Volunteers at a pre-determined location until the situation resolves itself or the Peace Corps decides to evacuate.

Finally, in order to be fully responsive to the needs of Volunteers, it is imperative that Volunteers **immediately report** any security incident to the Peace Corps medical officer and safety and security coordinator. The Peace Corps has established **protocols for addressing safety and security incidents** in a timely and appropriate manner. In addition to responding to the needs of the Volunteer, the Peace Corps collects and evaluates safety and security data to track trends and develop strategies to minimize risks to future Volunteers.

NOTES



DIVERSITY AND CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES



In fulfilling the Peace Corps' mandate to share the face of America with our host countries, the Peace Corps is making special efforts to see that all of America's richness is reflected in the Volunteer population. More Americans of color are serving in today's Peace Corps than at any time in recent years. Differences in race, ethnic background, age, religion, and sexual orientation are expected and welcome among our Volunteers. Part of the Peace Corps' mission is to help dispel any notion that Americans are all of one origin or race, and to establish that each of us is as thoroughly American as the other, despite our many differences. Our diversity helps us accomplish that goal.

In other ways, however, our diversity poses challenges. In Zambia, as in other Peace Corps host countries, Volunteers' behavior, lifestyles, background, and beliefs will be judged in a cultural context very different from our own. Certain personal perspectives or characteristics considered familiar and commonly accepted in the United States may be quite uncommon, unacceptable, or even repressed in certain host countries.

Outside of Zambia's capital, residents of rural communities have had relatively little direct exposure to other cultures, races, religions, and lifestyles. What is advertised as "typical" cultural behavior or norms may also be a narrow and selective interpretation, such as the perception in some countries that all Americans are rich and have blond hair and blue eyes. The people of Zambia are justly known for their generous hospitality to foreigners; however, members of the community in which you will live may display a range of reactions to differences that you present. We ask that you be supportive of one another.

To ease transition and adapt to the ways of your host country, you may need to make some temporary, yet fundamental compromises in how you present yourself as an American and as an individual. For example, female trainees and Volunteers may not be able to exercise the independence available to them in the United States; political discussions will need to be handled with great care; and some of your personal beliefs may best remain undisclosed. You will need to develop techniques and personal strategies for coping with these and other limits. The Peace Corps staff will lead diversity and sensitivity discussions during pre-service training and will be on call to provide support, but the challenge, ultimately, will be your own.

Overview of Diversity in Zambia

The Peace Corps staff in Zambia recognizes the adjustment issues that come with diversity and will endeavor to provide support and guidance. During pre-service training, several sessions will be held to discuss diversity and coping mechanisms. We look forward to having male and female Volunteers from a variety of cultures, backgrounds, religions, ethnic groups, ages, and sexual orientations, and hope that you will become part of a diverse group of Americans who will take pride in supporting one another and demonstrating the richness of American culture.

What Might A Volunteer Face?

The comments that follow are intended to stimulate thought and discussion. The issues discussed may or may not have an impact on your own Volunteer experience. Rather, they are here to make all Volunteers aware of issues that one particular group or another may face.

Possible Issues for Female Volunteers

Zambia is a paternalistic society. Young female Volunteers may experience some frustration when Zambian men do not take them seriously at first or view them as children. Female Volunteers may also receive more unwanted and inappropriate attention from Zambian men. They may have to work harder than male Volunteers to gain the respect of colleagues in the workplace. They may not be accorded the respect they are normally used to receiving.

Volunteer Comment

“Being a female Volunteer in Zambia isn’t always easy. Concepts of ‘gender equality’ and ‘sexual harassment’ aren’t what they are in the States. Work situations can be difficult, particularly if you are young, because you often find yourself working with men who aren’t used to taking women as seriously as you are probably used to being taken. You may find yourself plagued with marriage proposals, questions about boyfriends, or inquires about your cooking abilities, rather than questions related to work. Despite these challenges, it is possible to develop great friendships with men here and show the men that you know and work with that women are capable of much more than they might have thought.”

Possible Issues for Volunteers of Color

In Zambian cities and towns, it is fair to say that most Zambians are aware of some of the different racial and ethnic groups that exist in the United States. However, among rural populations, this level of knowledge and understanding greatly diminishes.

African Americans may not be recognized as Americans and may be asked what their tribal language and customs are. They may be expected to learn local languages more quickly than other Volunteers. They may be accepted more readily into the culture than other Volunteers or treated according to local social norms because it is assumed they are African.

They may not be recognized as Americans or they may be perceived as considering themselves superior to Africans. They may be discriminated against by white Africans.

Hispanic American Volunteers may also be perceived as not being American; they may be labeled as Cubans or Mexicans. Zambians may expect Hispanics to automatically assume different role patterns or to interact socially with more ease. Asian-American Volunteers may be subject to stereotypes based on behavior Zambians have observed in films, such as being assumed to be experts at kung fu, and based on Zambia's current or historical involvement with Asian countries. They may also be seen as not American.

Volunteer Comment

“As a Volunteer of color, I have really enjoyed my experience. However, there are challenges here that may have never occurred to you. Constantly being asked where you are from and then being told that you can't be an American because Americans are white, does get tiring after a while. There is also the ‘*Muzungu* Factor.’ You may be told that *muzungu* means white person, and then promptly afterwards you will have small children running after you screaming *muzungu*. I get called *muzungu* all of the time. They know that I am not white, but they also see that I am not Zambian. What I have done to combat this is to ensure that, at least where I live, everyone calls me by name, and if someone from another area happens to be visiting and calls me *muzungu*, they are corrected by my friends, neighbors, and work partners. Don't let this get to you; it is just another aspect of life here. Also, rap music and martial arts movies are popular here, so be prepared for some assumptions based on stereotypes and being greeted in terms that you might find offensive. Finally, you can find support from fellow Volunteers and staff, so please do come and join us. It is well worth it.”

Possible Issues for Senior Volunteers

In Zambia, older members of society are viewed and treated with a great deal of respect. Issues for older Americans are more likely to be in relation to their younger fellow Peace Corps Volunteers. Older Volunteers may work and live with individuals in the Peace Corps community who have little understanding of or respect for the lives and experiences of senior Americans. Senior Volunteers may not get necessary personal support from younger Volunteers and may be reluctant to share personal, sexual, or health concerns with them or with members of the Peace Corps staff. They may find that younger Volunteers look to them for advice and support; a role they may not enjoy assuming. During pre-service training, senior Volunteers may need to be assertive when developing an effective approach to language learning.

Volunteer Comment

“The village life here is rigorous, with lots of bike riding and fairly harsh living conditions. Being, on average, 20 to 30 years older than the next Volunteer can get tiresome sometimes. Also, you have to determine your place in your training group and in the larger Volunteer community. If you want to be seen in a surrogate parent/grandparent role or if you do not, it is up to you to establish those parameters. Some Volunteer activities you will want to be left out of; others you won't. Be vocal and let other Volunteers know what you do like to do so that they will include you. I've found that many assumptions are made based on age in the Peace Corps and Zambian communities. The respect that you will receive because of a few gray hairs is, I must admit, quite nice, but being left out of something because they figure you wouldn't be interested is annoying, but can be avoided. Language learning is the biggest challenge here.

If you have never learned one before, once you've figured it out, you will need to explain to the training staff your learning style. Ask for extra instruction, study and practice speaking as much as you can! It does make a difference."

Possible Issues for Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual Volunteers

In general, Zambians view homosexuality as immoral and as something that has been "imported" from Europe. Homosexuality is against the law in Zambia and although few cases are brought before the courts, it still requires that homosexuals be mindful that anti-gay laws and sentiment exist. While there are certainly homosexuals, the level of tolerance will probably not be what it was in the States. Due to cultural norms, homosexual Volunteers may discover that they cannot be open about their sexual preference in their community. Volunteers may serve for two years without meeting another gay Volunteer. Lesbians will have to deal with constant questions about boyfriends, marriage, and sex (as do all women). Most Zambian homosexuals have probably migrated to the larger cities, while most Volunteers are posted in rural sites. Gay men must deal with machismo: talk of conquest(s), girl watching, and dirty jokes.

Volunteer Comment

"Homosexuality is illegal here, and generally not spoken about nor widely recognized. Depending on where you come from in the U.S., the level of tolerance here probably won't be what you're used to back home. Zambians will often ask you about your fiancé/husband/wife/girlfriend/boyfriend, and as other Volunteers come from a range of backgrounds, you'll find within them a range of levels of support/acceptance/etc. Although being gay here presents unique difficulties, keep in mind that: a) It *is* possible to find support (there's a diversity committee made up of Volunteers and staff) and find love(!); and b) this

experience as a whole is incredible and, I think, worth whatever difficulties you face as an un-heterosexual. Everyone faces their own challenges here, even if they're not gay!"

Possible Religious Issues for Volunteers

Zambia is a declared Christian nation; most Zambians have some religious affiliation and attend church regularly. Zambia has a wide variety of Christian faiths, a very small number of Muslims (mainly in the Asian community), and a few other religions such as Hindu and B'hai. In Zambia, the questions, "Are you a Christian?" and "Do you pray?" are conversation starters. Volunteers may be chastised for not observing Christian beliefs or asked to explain why they don't practice a certain Christian denomination. They may be expected to attend church with their communities or they may be actively recruited by a Christian group. Volunteers may have difficulty conveying their beliefs due to language and cultural barriers.

Volunteer Comment

"Religion is an important part of the culture in Zambia, and I am often asked which church I belong to. I never went to church back home, but I thought I would go at least once during my service. It was a long service, and as it was in local language I understood very little. However, it was an enjoyable experience as there was a great deal of singing and dancing. Zambians are very loud, joyful, and outspoken during church service, and that is easy to appreciate regardless of which language you speak."

Possible Issues for Volunteers with Disabilities

There is very little infrastructure to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Volunteers with disabilities may also find that some people hold prejudicial attitudes about individuals with disabilities and may discriminate against them. Peace Corps Volunteer sites in Zambia are also very remote and isolated,

with very little to no public transportation. Disabled Volunteers may find the rural living situation particularly challenging. However, the Office of Medical Services determined that you were physically and emotionally capable, with or without reasonable accommodation, to perform a full tour of Volunteer service in Zambia without unreasonable risk to yourself or interruption of your service. The Peace Corps/Zambia staff will work with disabled Volunteers to make reasonable accommodations in training, projects, housing, job sites, or other areas to enable you to serve safely and effectively.

Possible Issues for Married Volunteers

Married couples may face the challenge of one spouse being more enthusiastic about the Peace Corps, one spouse being better able to adapt to the new environment, or one spouse being less or more homesick than the other. A married man may be encouraged by Zambians to be the more dominant member in the relationship, to make decisions independent of his wife's views, or to socialize without his wife. He may be ridiculed if he performs domestic tasks or refuses to have a mistress. A married woman may find herself in a less independent role than she is accustomed to. She may have a more limited social life in the community than single female Volunteers because of Zambians' assumption that she is busy taking care of her husband. She may be expected to perform more domestic chores than her husband.

Volunteer Comments

“My husband and I are agriculture/environment Volunteers in the southern province. As a married couple, we benefit from the convenience of processing our daily experience together, an elevated status in the village, and of having someone to take care of you when you've got a bout of horrendous diarrhea. The challenging part has been finding answers to questions and statements such as: ‘Why don't

you have children?’ ‘Why is your husband cooking? That’s your role.’ ‘Does your husband beat you?’ and ‘Why do you wear pants? Women are supposed to wear *chitenges*.’ The way you choose to answer these questions is entirely personal and may change over time. People here are sincerely curious about American ways, and I remind myself daily the cross-cultural experience goes both ways. Although your experience as a married couple, and as individuals, may be challenging, it will also be exciting, fun, rewarding, and provide a new opportunity for relationship development. Even in the short time we have been here, people are starting to accept (maybe not understand) that my husband and I are equals in our relationship. We do equal housework, and we are both here to work with the community. This experience has given our relationship a deeper level of trust and confidence. It has provided us the opportunity to become truly comfortable with who we are in the face of hard questions and cultural differences.”



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



How much luggage will I be allowed to bring to Zambia?

Most airlines have baggage size and weight limits and assess charges for transport of baggage that exceeds this allowance. The Peace Corps has its own size and weight limitations, and will not pay the cost of transport for baggage that exceeds these limitations. The authorized baggage allowance is two checked pieces of luggage with combined dimensions of both pieces not to exceed 107 inches (length + width + height) and a carry-on bag with dimensions of no more than 45 inches. Checked baggage should not exceed 80 pounds total with a maximum weight allowance of 50 pounds for any one bag.

Peace Corps Volunteers are not allowed to take pets, weapons, explosives, radio transmitters (short-wave radios are permitted), automobiles, or motorcycles to their overseas assignments. Do not pack flammable materials or liquids such as lighter fluid, cleaning solvents, hair spray, or aerosol containers. This is an important safety precaution. Please check the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website for a detailed list of permitted and prohibited items at <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>.

What is the electric current in Zambia?

The local current is 220 to 240 volts, 50 cycles. You will need a transformer to use American appliances here. There are also power surge fluctuations and outages that take a toll on equipment. A solar battery recharger may be useful.

In general, most Volunteers recommend against bringing electrical appliances because 95 percent of Volunteers do not have electricity at their sites. The exceptions are Volunteer leaders in the provincial capital and a few Lusaka-based Volunteers.

How much money should I bring?

Volunteers are expected to live at the same level as the people in their community. They are given a settling-in allowance and a monthly living allowance, which should cover their expenses. Often, Volunteers wish to bring additional money for vacation travel to other countries. If you decide to do this, do not bring more than \$250. Credit cards and ATM cards are available throughout Lusaka and are preferable to carrying cash.

When can I take vacation and have people visit me?

Each Volunteer accrues two vacation days per month of service (excluding training). Leave may not be taken during training, the first three months of service, or the last three months of service, except in conjunction with an authorized emergency leave. To allow for more cross-cultural experience, Volunteers are also allocated an additional four days per quarter for in-country travel. Your associate Peace Corps country director must approve all leave. The country director must approve out-of-country travel. Family and friends are welcome to visit you after pre-service training and the first three months of service as long as their stay does not interfere with your work. Extended stays at your site are not encouraged and may require permission from your country director. The Peace Corps cannot provide your visitors with visa or travel assistance.

Will my belongings be covered by insurance?

The Peace Corps does not provide insurance coverage for personal effects. However, such insurance can be purchased before you leave. Ultimately, Volunteers are responsible for the safekeeping of their personal belongings. If you wish, you may contact your own insurance company; additionally, insurance application forms will be provided, and we encourage you to consider them carefully.

Volunteers should not ship or take valuable items overseas. Jewelry, watches, radios, cameras, and expensive appliances are subject to loss, theft, and breakage, and in many places, satisfactory maintenance and repair are not available.

Do I need an international driver's license?

Volunteers in Zambia do not need to get an international driver's license. Operation of privately owned vehicles is prohibited. Rural travel ranges from buses to mini-buses to trucks to lots of walking. On very rare occasions, a Volunteer may be asked to drive a sponsor's vehicle, but this is only with prior written permission of the country director. Should this occur, the Volunteer may obtain a local driver's license. With the approval of the country director, you may also rent a vehicle for use away from your site during approved leave. Your U.S. driver's license will facilitate the process, so bring it with you just in case.

What should I bring as gifts for Zambian friends and my host family?

This is not a requirement. A token of friendship is sufficient. Some gift suggestions include: knickknacks for the house; pictures, books, or calendars of American scenes; souvenirs from your area; hard candies that won't melt or spoil; or photos to give away.

Where will my site be when I finish training and how isolated will I be?

Peace Corps trainees are not assigned to individual sites until after they have completed their pre-service training. This gives the Peace Corps staff the opportunity to assess each trainee's technical and language skills prior to assigning sites, in addition to finalizing site selections with ministry counterparts. If feasible, you may be able to provide input on your site preferences, including geographical location, distance from other Volunteers, or living conditions. However, many factors influence the site selection process and the Peace Corps cannot guarantee placement where you might ideally like to be. Most Volunteers live in rural villages, usually within three to four hours from the nearest Volunteer. Some sites will require a two- to three-day public transport trip from the capital.

How can my family contact me in an emergency?

The Peace Corps' Office of Special Services provides assistance in handling emergencies affecting trainees and Volunteers or their families. Before leaving the United States, you should instruct your family to notify the Office of Special Services immediately if an emergency arises, such as a serious illness or death of a family member. During normal business hours, the number for the Office of Special Services is 800.424.8580, ext. 1470.. For non-emergency questions, your family can get information from your country desk staff at the Peace Corps by calling 1.800.424.8580, ext. 2334 or 2333.

Can I call home from Zambia?

Long-distance telephone communication is available, but it can be difficult at times and it will always be very expensive. A call from Zambia to the U.S. will cost about \$3 per minute. Calling cards can be used on private phones with the assistance of an operator and the cost will be considerably less. Many Volunteers use this method when they are in

Lusaka or in their provincial capitals. Each of the Peace Corps Volunteer leader houses, situated in five provinces, has a phone, so it is possible to arrange a time to receive a phone call. Most post offices in the major cities have international services, but only during their regular hours. Within Zambia, telegrams take two to three days, are inexpensive, and are sometimes the best way to communicate.

Should I bring a cellular phone with me?

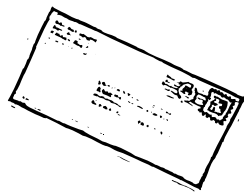
Most cellphones from the U.S. are not adapted for use in Zambia. You can easily buy one here at an affordable price when you arrive. In addition, the cellular service is expensive and, though expanding, remains limited. If you would like to bring a phone from the United States, be sure it is an unlocked quad band, GSM cellphone. Ask the person from whom you are buying the phone whether it can be used in the United Kingdom. If it will work there, it will work here.

Will there be e-mail and Internet access? Should I bring my computer?

Computers and e-mail access are available at the Peace Corps Volunteer leader houses situated in each of the provinces where Peace Corps Volunteers work. Internet access is more difficult because there are only a few Internet cafes around the country. The cost of accessing the Internet in these cafes varies but tends to be relatively expensive. Internet access is available free of charge in the resource library in the Peace Corps office in Lusaka.



WELCOME LETTERS FROM ZAMBIA VOLUNTEERS



Dear Invitee,

On a cold morning in January, my husband and I received a phone call from the Peace Corps in Washington, D.C., regarding our Peace Corps invitation, which we were impatiently awaiting. In short, the caller said, “You have been invited to Zambia for an agriculture and environment program. Let us know within 10 days if you would like to accept.” The brief conversation ended with a definite “Yes!” Admittedly, we only knew Zambia was in Africa, no clue exactly where in Africa. Dazed and heads spinning, we both headed off to work, unable to concentrate, unsure of what we just agreed to.

Accepting the invitation was only the beginning of our anticipation, excitement, and feelings of being overwhelmed. The four months that followed until our departure were filled with preparation. Preparation for what though? Which is probably what you are wondering. How do I prepare for the experience of a lifetime? Rest assured about two things. First, no matter how you pack, you will always bring more than you need (a lot of supplies and comforts are available in-country). Second, you will be amazed at the amount of wonderful people you will meet! Be certain we are all excited for your arrival, especially the people in your future village. These are the same people who you will come to depend on for friendship, emotional support, village living skills, language skills, and information on navigating cultural differences.

Leaving the comfort of our home, friends, family, jobs, and culture has been exciting, energizing, and filled with daily challenges. Washing clothes by hand, hauling water, cooking over charcoal or a three-rock fire, not understanding the language, trying to explain why you are there in local

language, missing home, making friends, riding a bike through sand, learning new plants and birds, getting dirty and then taking a splash bath, eating with your hands, being stared at, laughing then crying... All this in one day!!! Peace Corps has captured the realness of being a Volunteer in the motto, "The toughest job you'll ever love!"

Remember, you are not alone in the feelings you are experiencing now, or the feelings you will experience while in-country. You will become one of 180,000 returned Peace Corps Volunteers who have experienced another culture from the inside! Although you are joining the ranks of many who have Volunteered before you, your experience will be unique. If you come with a willingness to learn about yourself and others, an open mind, and a positive attitude, you are primed and ready for the Volunteer experience.

We are excited to have you join the Peace Corps family in Zambia. No other experience will be like the one you are about to have.

Mweende Kabotu (safe journey in Tonga) and *Tulabonana* (we will see each other)!

—Jena Price

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Dear Invitee,

One year ago at this time I was in your shoes, preparing for two years of Peace Corps service in Zambia. I tried to imagine the sound of the language I'd soon be speaking. I wondered about the daily images of Zambian life. Most of all I tried to picture the cast of people who would inevitably touch my life living in a rural Zambian village. Well, if you want my advice, don't trouble yourself! If I can guarantee one thing about coming to Zambia as a Peace Corps Volunteer, it is that your experience will be far wilder and different than even the greatest imaginations can conceive.

Nevertheless, I'll do my best to quench some of your curiosity. I advise every one of you to begin to roll around on a lawn on a daily basis. It is important that you begin to develop

an intimate relationship with mud and grass as you will soon find comfort in your mud brick and thatched roof house. Also, begin washing your hands more than normal. Since *nshima* (the staple food; a sticky cornmeal mush) is balled up and eaten with your hands, hygiene takes on a whole new meaning. Picture women breastfeeding with sleeping children slung to their backs as they carry water (and any other imaginable item) on their heads for kilometers. Brace yourself for long bumpy bus rides, reaching a common ground with the spiders that become your roommates, and befriending, working and grieving with people and communities fighting the ravaging effects of AIDS. Best of all, imagine a year from now when these things strike you as normal and you wake up dreaming in Tumbuka!

It's not always a walk in the park though. Training is intense. Learning the language can be frustrating. Zambia's infrastructure is lacking considerably. The challenges faced by local communities trying to enhance their health with only local resources can seem daunting. Bit by bit, though, changes can and do become visible and you're filled with a special feeling of accomplishment. Then, if that weren't enough, it's not a coincidence that visions appear of rafting the "mighty" Zambezi at Vic Falls as your efforts in your village begin to materialize.

Zambia is a place of unique beauty. It is filled with breathtaking mountains, lakes, rivers and wildlife. Moreover, its people are unmatched in their kindness, generosity, and hospitality. For the past six months, I have sat nearly every day with the children of my village gazing at the horizon playing my guitar as the sun sets. While the sunsets in Zambia are spectacular, the difference is the fact that my new pace of life allows me to enjoy the small things that so easily zoom by living in the States.

We are excited to have you as a part of the Peace Corps/
Zambia family.

Tizamuonana (We'll be seeing each other in Nyanja)!

—Sam Ridders

Greetings!

I live in eastern province. To be more specific, I am due west of Lilongwe, Malawi, in an area of Zambia that is bordered by both Mozambique and Malawi. While I was preparing to come to Zambia, one of my most pressing thoughts was what should I bring? So here is a list of the main essentials I would recommend you bring: A good combination knife and tool kit, a good point-and-shoot camera and lots of extra film (black and white, slide, and color), good portable CD and cassette player with lots of extra blank tapes, rechargeable batteries and a solar battery charger, a couple of pairs of good walking shoes and tevas, and last, but not least, an acoustic guitar with plenty of strings and music (if you play that is).

Well that is the list of all I would bring; so just bring the clothes on you back.

p.s. Do not bring travelers checks because you will have trouble cashing them.

—Chris Gallagher

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Greetings!

My service in Zambia as a Peace Corps Volunteer has proved to be more interesting, rewarding, and challenging than I ever imagined it could be. I remember my arrival in-country as an anxious and excited trainee. As we drove up the Great North Road into the bush, I silently marveled at the women who elegantly balanced large jugs of water on their heads. I was amazed by the large fires that swept through the brush for the *chitemene* (slash-and-burn) season. I also felt awkward and out of place as we were surrounded by energetic children with no shoes who wanted sweets. I guess my feelings in the past year have changed from awe to satisfaction as I have learned to live in the village and been accepted by an understanding and benevolent community.

I'd have to say that the work is the most enjoyable and rewarding part of my experience. I'll never forget the first time I helped my neighbor harvest his fishpond. We stood knee deep in thick muck, caked and splattered with mud, laughing as we held the fish that would be feeding his family and paying for his children to attend school. Your Peace Corps experience will be an incredible and difficult journey, and it will be your most rewarding. Good luck, and hope to see you soon.

—Jeremy Mull

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Greetings from Zambia!

I will never forget the day that I got home from work and found that fat invitation envelope from Peace Corps waiting in my mailbox. I was hoping to be sent to Latin America or somewhere in Asia, so when I tore into the envelope and saw the map of Africa with Zambia highlighted, I was more than a little disappointed.

Little did I know what was in store for me. I accepted the invitation to Zambia figuring that everything happens for a reason, and have never felt disappointed or regretted my decision for a second. Nor have I ever wished that I'd wound up in a different country! To all of you who are trying to decide whether or not to accept your invitation to this wonderful, amazing, crazy, colorful country, I assure you that Zambia offers a fantastic experience for those who are ready for it! It's hard to believe that I could have ever wished to be sent anywhere else—I love it here and can't imagine what my life would have been like if I'd chosen not to come here!

Sitting at home and anticipating Zambia and all the changes that lie ahead can be a little overwhelming. The best way to approach the adventure that lies before you is to leave your expectations at home, be flexible, and jump wholeheartedly into what will soon become your new life. Although leaving loved ones and familiar places behind is always difficult, a

whole new set of wonderful people and experiences await you here. If you're ready to embrace the challenge of coming here, you won't be disappointed by what this experience has to offer!

An assignment in Zambia offers you what some consider the "real" Peace Corps experience: You'll live in a rural village, without running water and electricity, and most likely live in a mud brick house with a thatched roof over your head. You'll experience the endless mud of the rainy season, possibly cultivate your own plot of maize or sweet potatoes, and form unique friendships with people in your village who may not speak English or even have ever been to the nearest town. You'll eat *nshima* (if you don't know what that is, you soon will) for days, pick mangoes from trees, ride your bike through the bush, experience the endless waits of public transport (and maybe ride buses with goats or chickens on your lap), see incredible sunsets, possibly bungi jump from the bridge at Victoria Falls, and learn to love this incredible corner of the world that tourists have yet to conquer.

Life in Zambia as anywhere else isn't always easy. Conditions here can be frustratingly difficult at times. You won't have frequent access to things (like e-mail) that you would ordinarily have at home, and things that are easy in the States aren't always easy here! But although the going gets tough at times, I have found that being here is *always* worth whatever challenges arise, and that whatever you "give up" when you leave the States, you get back tenfold, in different and surprising forms, here in Zambia. All of the clichés about Peace Corps—"Toughest job you'll ever love," etc.—are true. This really is the experience of a lifetime. We all hope that you'll come and see for yourself.

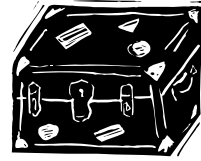
Happy packing!

—Marie Murphy

NOTES



PACKING LIST



This list has been compiled by Volunteers serving in Zambia and is based on their experience. Use it as an informal guide in making your own list, bearing in mind that experience is individual. There is no perfect list! You can always have things sent to you later. You obviously cannot bring everything we mention, so consider those items that make the most sense to you personally and professionally. As you decide what to bring, keep in mind that you have an 80-pound weight restriction on baggage. Pack things that will help you to be content at your post. Used clothes markets or *salaulas* (places to “rummage through piles”) are plentiful here and most Volunteers shop for clothing here or have items made. All projects require a great deal of field work, so bring clothes that can get dirty. You will be attending office meetings with counterparts, so a pair or two of easy-care slacks and appropriate shirts are necessary. For women, skirts must not be shorter than the knee; blouses and dresses need to be modest. Slips need to be worn.

Lastly, keep in mind that you can get almost everything you need in Zambia.

General Clothing

- A good raincoat.
- A fleece or light jacket (it does get cold)
- A couple of long sleeved shirts of choice.
- A sweater
- 3–4 good-quality T-shirts.
- 2-year supply of cotton underwear and socks
- 1 bathing suit

- Lots of bras (especially sports bras)
- Sweat pants/shirt for warmth, running, sleeping.
- 2–3 shorts for athletics or in your house (these can be bicycle shorts, but no short running shorts)
- 2–3 pairs of jeans, zip-off, or other comfortable pants.
- A couple pairs of dressy, easy-care, trousers (khaki is good) and dressy shirts
- Hat (baseball or safari-type to shade you from the sun)

Men should bring nice pants, a button-up shirt, and at least one jacket and tie for meeting government officials or to attend important meetings or functions. Women should bring shirts with collars and short sleeves (not sleeveless, low-cut or revealing), one or two dresses and three or four skirts of cotton/polyester at or below the knee, and an outfit for meetings or official functions.

Shoes

- 2 pairs of good sandals (e.g., Tevas or Birkenstocks)
- 1 pair of boots
- 1 pair of sneakers/low-top hiking shoes.
- A pair of shoes that can be worn when trying to look nice (male Volunteers suggest bucs or loafers; female Volunteers suggest nice sandals/flats)

Note: Volunteers with large feet may have a hard time finding shoes that fit in Zambia.

Personal Hygiene and Toiletry Items

Unless you have favorite brands you can't do without, you should be able to buy what you need in Lusaka and provincial capitals. These include cosmetics, soap, toothpaste, general cleaning products and deodorants, hair conditioner, good razors and razor blades, Q-tips, and hair-care products.

Bring only enough to get you through training. Peace Corps provides brand-name tampons; bring only enough for training.

Kitchen

- Spices
- Can opener
- Basic cookbook
- Ziploc storage bags (although ants and roaches can eat through them)
- Packaged mixes for rice, pasta, sauces, and drinks (e.g., Kool Aid), etc.

Miscellaneous

The following are general items you may wish to have, but you will need to prioritize and choose for yourself. Remember that it is a composite list; for each person perhaps only a few items will be critical:

Highly Recommended

- Umbrella
- Headlamp
- Flashlight
- Sleeping bag
- Tent
- Leatherman or Swiss army knife
- Music (CDs, tapes, iPod, etc.) (Note that CDs tend to get scratched up easily)
- CD player or Walkman
- Mini-speakers
- Shortwave radio (3–7 band)
- Games (cards, chess, Scrabble, etc.)

- Hair elastics
- Two sturdy water bottles (e.g., Nalgene)
- Good-quality sunglasses
- Camera with accessories
- Travel alarm clock
- Small backpack/bag
- Money belt
- Journal
- Bicycle saddlebags
- At least eight color photos of you (photo booth-type is okay) for visas, work permits, and ID cards. You can purchase photos here if necessary

Optional (depending on your interest)

- Camel-back canteen
- Bed sheets (since bed sizes vary, double-size flat sheets are the best choice)
- Binoculars
- Small sewing kit
- Pictures or posters for hut decoration
- Bandana
- Guitar (bring lots of extra strings and picks)
- Sports equipment (football, volleyball, basketball, Frisbees, etc.)
- Fishing equipment
- Batteries (you can buy them here, but they are expensive)
- Film (you can buy this here, but it's cheaper in the U.S.)
- Sleeping pad
- Bicycle handlebar extensions

- U.S. stamps (letters may be mailed in the States by people traveling home from post)
- Maps of the United States and the world (good teaching aids and wall hangings)
- Art supplies, sketch book
- Film mailers



PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST



The following list consists of suggestions for you to consider as you prepare to live outside the United States for two years. Not all items will be relevant to everyone and the list does not include everything you should make arrangements for.

Family

- Notify family that they can call the Peace Corps' Office of Special Services at any time if there is a critical illness or death of a family member (telephone number: 800.424.8580, extension 1470).
- Give the Peace Corps' *On the Home Front* handbook to family and friends.

Passport/Travel

- Forward to the Peace Corps travel office all paperwork for the Peace Corps passport and visas.
- Verify that luggage meets the size and weight limits for international travel.
- Obtain a personal passport if you plan to travel after your service ends. (Your Peace Corps passport will expire three months after you finish your service, so if you plan to travel longer, you will need a regular passport.)

Medical/Health

- Complete any needed dental and medical work.
- If you wear glasses, bring two pairs.
- Arrange to bring a three-month supply of all medications (including birth control pills) you are currently taking.

Insurance

- Make arrangements to maintain life insurance coverage.
- Arrange to maintain supplemental health coverage while away. (Even though the Peace Corps is responsible for your healthcare during Peace Corps service overseas, it is advisable for people who have preexisting conditions to arrange for the continuation of their supplemental health coverage. If there is a lapse in supplemental health coverage, it is often difficult and expensive to be reinstated for insurance. This is especially true when insurance companies know you have predictable expenses and are in an upper age bracket.)
- Arrange to continue Medicare coverage if applicable.

Personal Papers

- Bring a copy of your certificate of marriage or divorce.

Voting

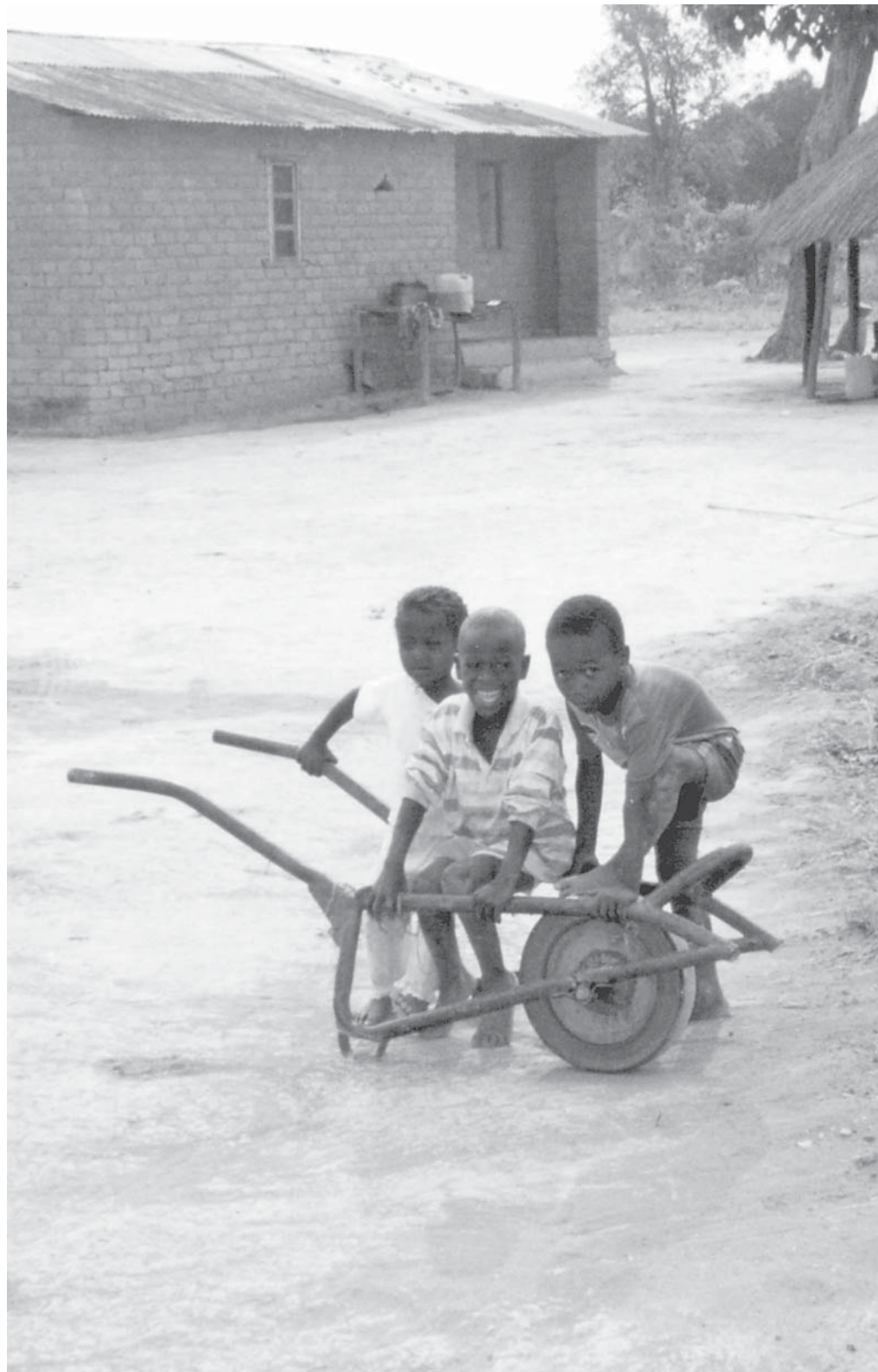
- Register to vote in the state of your home of record. (Many state universities consider voting and payment of state taxes as evidence of residence in that state.)
- Obtain a voter registration card and take it with you overseas.
- Arrange to have an absentee ballot forwarded to you overseas.

Personal Effects

- Purchase personal property insurance to extend from the time you leave your home for service overseas until the time you complete your service and return to the United States.

Financial Management

- Obtain student loan deferment forms from the lender or loan service.
- Execute a power of attorney for the management of your property and business.
- Bring necessary banking/routing information for deductions from readjustment allowance to pay alimony, child support, student loans and other debts. These deductions may be set up after swearing-in as a Peace Corps Volunteer.
- Place all important papers—mortgages, deeds, stocks, and bonds—in a safe deposit box or with an attorney or other caretaker.



CONTACTING PEACE CORPS HEADQUARTERS



The following list of numbers will help you contact the appropriate office at Peace Corps headquarters with various questions. You may use the toll-free number and extension or dial directly using the local numbers provided. Be sure to leave the Peace Corps' toll-free number and extensions with your family so they have them in the event of an emergency during your service overseas.

Peace Corps Headquarters

Toll-free Number:

800.424.8580, Press 2, then
Ext. # (see below)

Peace Corps' Mailing Address:

Peace Corps
Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Headquarters
1111 20th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20526

For Questions About:	Staff	Toll-free Extension	Direct/Local Number
Responding to an Invitation	Office of Placement Africa Region	Ext. 1850	202.692.1850
Programming or Country Information	Desk Officer Email: zambia@peacecorps.gov	Ext. 2334	202.692.2334
	Desk Assistant Email: zambia@peacecorps.gov	Ext. 2333	202.692.2333

For Questions About:	Staff	Toll-free Extension	Direct/ Local Number
Plane Tickets, Passports, Visas, or Other Travel Matters	Travel Officer (Sato Travel)	Ext. 1170	202.692.1170
Legal Clearance	Office of Placement	Ext. 1845	202.692.1845
Medical Clearance and Forms Processing (including dental)	Screening Nurse	Ext. 1500	202.692.1500
Medical Reimbursements	Handled by a Subcontractor		800.818.8772
Loan Deferments, Taxes, Readjustment Allowance Withdrawals, Power of Attorney	Volunteer Financial Operations	Ext. 1770	202.692.1770
Staging (Pre-departure Orientation) and Reporting Instructions <i>Note: You will receive comprehensive information (hotel and flight arrangements) three to five weeks before departure. This information is not available sooner.</i>	Office of Staging	Ext. 1865	202.692.1865
Family Emergencies (to get information to a Volunteer overseas)	Office of Special Services	Ext. 1470	202.692.1470

PEACE CORPS

Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Headquarters

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