



Chance Of a Lifetime Travel

COLT are proud partners of African Impact, on-the-ground leaders in African Volunteering and winners of the 2011 Imvelo Award for Responsible Tourism

Medical Outreach and HIV/AIDS Education Project St Lucia, South Africa



*Responsible Tourism Awards in 2009: The **World Travel Awards**; The **British Youth Travel Awards** and the prestigious South African **Imvelo Responsible Tourism***

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Awards. In 2010 we were once again nominated for a World Travel Award and were proud Winners of an Africa-wide Imvelo Responsible Tourism Award. An accolade awarded in 2009 to Sir Richard Branson's Ulusaba Eco-Lodge in South Africa. In 2011 so far we are nominated for a World Travel Award and are entrants once again in the Imvelo Awards, British Youth Travel Awards and Virgin Responsible Tourism Award.

Our head office is in Cape Town, South Africa, with supporting operations offices in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia. We are determined to make a difference in the amazing communities and conservation areas in which we work. And so can you...



Location: St. Lucia, North East Coast of South Africa. A safe and charismatic town within walking distance of the beach

Age limit: Minimum 17 years, maximum decided on potential participants' health

Required experience: For this project no specific experience is required, although any medical or pharmaceutical training/experience would be useful. An interest in medicine or caring for others and a first aid certificate are strongly encouraged. Some prior reading on HIV is also highly recommended to get the most from your time on this project.

Project Highlights:

- Assist with much needed home based care for sick patients in their rural homes and help them get the treatment they need from the local clinic
- Help raise awareness on preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS virus and how people can live positively with HIV in the local community
- Attending support groups and helping to empower members of the group through friendship, education, gardening and craft-making.
- Help improve living conditions, nutrition, school equipment and vegetable gardens for the most needy families and help them become self sustaining
- Enable proper nutrition - deliver food parcels to those who need them most: the poor, the infirm, those on ARVs, and those who can otherwise not provide for

themselves or their families.

- Immerse yourself in the local Zulu culture and learn the language
- Experience St. Lucia - with its remarkable proximity to the Indian Ocean and its beaches, the estuary and its countless hippos and crocodiles, and iSimangaliso Park and its collection of buffalo, rhino, leopard, and elephant.
- Gain basic medical experience in local clinics and on home based care with supervision from nurses and our staff
- Make friends for life

Medical Outreach and HIV/AIDS Education Programme

Surrounding the beautiful area of St Lucia are rural villages which have little resources for healthcare for the thousands of people that live there. Through working with care givers in the community we aim to increase the support available and make a difference to peoples' lives and health. This is through the direct assistance given on home based care visits and by educating and supporting people to live healthier, in a sustainable way. We offer you the opportunity to become involved at the grass roots level by assisting care givers to offer basic medical treatment and care, provide people with advice on health matters and helping them build a better life in their homes. We also work along side nurses in the local clinics. With HIV being such an impact on the communities, raising awareness and educating people on this virus to people young and old is also an important part of



this project. This project with its variety and direct positive impact on individuals and families really is an unforgettable, life changing experience.

In the last 2 years African Impact volunteers contributed over 3,000 hours to health outreach in the St Lucia area of South Africa. Our project structures, together with the support and advice of our charitable foundation team at The Happy Africa Foundation, are continuously assessing our work and projects to ensure the hours are meaningful and making a difference.

Our Medical and Health Outreach project started in early 2009 based on helping local care givers with home based medical assistance in the rural communities. Through donations and volunteer help we worked alongside the local clinic to improve the facilities and to make it more hygienic and organised for the staff and patients – we replaced missing tiles, repaired the roof and built shelves in the medical supply room, made furniture and provided seating for more patients.

We have helped at the local clinic at times when staff levels are low. African Impact volunteers have taken blood pressures, weights, and temperatures of hundreds of patients which assist the nurses to attend to the patients more quickly and be able to concentrate on more advanced treatment.

Home based care has given hope and care to many sick people in Khula and Eswenlisha Communities. In partnership with locally trained care givers we have provided basic medical care, nutrition and food to over a hundred people. Volunteers have visited these homes in the area to care for chronically ill or injured patients that are too sick or poor to get to clinics for treatment. We have treated wounds and sores, delivered food parcels and vitamins to fortify nutrition, offered remedies to those who are ailing, and transported many to the local clinic.

The volunteers have been running weekly HIV Education classes for adults and school children to help raise awareness of the HI virus. We have organised HIV events at the local high school working in partnership with 'peer educators' and football matches to help deliver HIV messages to more men in the community.

Twice weekly, our volunteers meet with a community Support Group, consisting of about 15 regular members. Volunteers provide upliftment to their lives through the provision of health and nutrition information, alongside the discussion of all aspects of positive living and encourage the members to support each other. In addition, we have sold approximately ZAR 50,000 of crafts made by members of the support group to our volunteers at weekly craft sales in the volunteer house, with 100% of the proceeds going directly to the maker of each craft.



This project has succeeded in refurbishing community buildings in desperate need of repair including the local clinic, houses of poorer families in the villages and helped build a place for orphans to stay. This not only helps improve local buildings for the community but is a great upliftment for the people working or living in these buildings.

Home Based Care and Clinic work

As a volunteer you will predominantly spend your mornings at a medical clinic or with a locally trained care giver out in the surrounding villages, helping sick people in their homes. The clinic is the first point of call for many people and is often very busy. The nurses struggle to consult all of the patients each day and the caregivers are limited on the number of patients they can visit in the community and the resources they have to help, so the help from volunteers is gratefully received. Volunteers will never be required to make decisions regarding patient treatments, but will be immeasurable in helping with basic medical tasks and providing improved care to people who need it. You will build rewarding relationships with the nurses at the clinics. You may also spend time training the nurses to assist them with the paperwork and recording statistics of the clinic. This is a fantastic way to experience all aspects involved in running a rural clinic.

During the home based care, volunteers help provide basic care and attention to those that are too sick or poor to get to a clinic for much needed treatment. This is a unique opportunity to gain hands on medical care experience, make an impact on the lives of disadvantaged families and an insight into Zulu village life.

As a volunteer you will visit homes with the project coordinator to meet new patients or visit patients we already support.

You will be involved in enquiring about their health and making a plan with the project coordinator on how we can help the patient. This can include assisting with medical treatment, giving health advice, providing items to make the patient more comfortable (blankets, mattress, hot water bottle etc.), ensuring they are taking medication correctly and helping around their home. You will also give out much

needed food parcels and donations to these patients to encourage positive living and better nutrition. Your visit on its own is something that patients look forward to as it is the only help they may be getting. For some patients on Home Based Care visiting a clinic or hospital is a critical step. With minimal transport available or people not having the money for transport this is an area we also help with.

After your daily visits you will update records on each patient so we can keep a history on the health and care we have given.

HIV/AIDS Awareness Education

In St. Lucia's local community, many myths about HIV/AIDS still prevail. A large percentage of local South Africans believe that the virus is a result of witchcraft, and people infected with it are often rejected from their own communities and families. As a result, many people who are infected do not admit to having the virus. Not many people know how to prevent infection, and even fewer people know how to



deal with the virus once they have it.

Working together with our Volunteer Coordinator with experience in teaching this subject you will be involved in teaching adults and children about the virus. During your placement, you will visit both schools and community centres, and do the following:

- Explain, through a simple method approved by the United Nations what the HIV/AIDS virus actually is, and how it affects a human body
- Educate people about how the virus is transmitted, and how infection can be prevented
- Explain how, after infection, life can be prolonged through medication, healthy food, and a more healthy lifestyle

Twice a week volunteers will be given the opportunity to become involved in a community Support Group. In this community upliftment programme, volunteers help deliver health and nutrition information and provide healthy foods to a group

of adults many of whom are HIV positive. This is an incredibly rewarding project which makes a difference to their lives as well as providing weekly support from each other.

10 Families Community Outreach Program

The Ten Families Project was established in May 2009 and aims to improve the quality of life in a sustainable way for 10 families urgently in need of assistance. Help can take many forms including food provision, education, property repairs, building a house, farming, finding access to medical attention and income generation. This amazing community outreach programme is only made possible through the help of volunteers and is a unique insight into how traditional Zulu families live and a chance to make strong bonds with each family. Besides providing much needed medical assistance to the wider communities and raising awareness about the HIV/AIDS virus, you will be involved in the following community projects:

Ezwenalisha Orphanage Project

African Impact volunteers are currently assisting in serving lunch and after school playtime activity for approximately 40 orphans in Ezwenalisha community. You will be involved in playing educational games and sports with these energetic children.

Building and Refurbishment

Community buildings in the local villages tend to be run down, particularly in the more rural and remote areas. As a volunteer, you will visit these building which may be a school, day care centre, a church, orphanage, community centre or the house of someone in need, by helping to fix roofs and windows, paint walls, and help build new rooms. You will find that the community greatly appreciate your presence and support, and your work will be highly rewarding.



Farming

To help encourage positive and healthy living, volunteers will help local people create and maintain vegetable gardens. These will supply people with much needed healthy food and encourage them to be more self sufficient for them and their family. The farming activities may include digging, weeding, fencing, planting and watering. Watching the vegetables grow and be used by more and more people is a great way to make a difference

First Aid Care in Community Creches

Volunteers will also have the opportunity to help at one of the community crèches in which the St Lucia Orphan Day Care volunteers work, to administer first aid and help care for young children.

A day in the life of a St Lucia volunteer...

Please note that your itineraries may differ from this, depending on your own experience and the number of other volunteers on the placement at the same time, school holidays etc. and this is simply to give an example.

08:30 - Depart to your project after a help-yourself breakfast of cereals, yoghurt, toast, tea and coffee

09:00 - Start work at with your Project Coordinator. You will spend your mornings going out on Home Based Care, Clinic support or to Support Groups in our communities.

12:00 - Lunch break - You will be picked up from your project, and taken to your volunteer house, where lunch will be waiting for you

13:30 - Afternoon Session: leave for one of the community projects. You will spend the afternoon teaching HIV education, 10 families outreach project, building, painting, or farming

16:30 - Home time - You will be collected by your coordinator / driver and taken back to the volunteer house.

17.50 - Dinner at your volunteer house. Evenings are very sociable affairs. Volunteers discuss their day's work with each other whilst taking supper together at the house. Then prepare for your project the next day, and occasionally venture out to one of the local night spots.

Project Support:

Throughout your placement you will have the support and guidance of our experienced project managers. They are part of our greater African Impact support team, which will provide you with competent 24-hour field support and assistance.



Project Accommodation and meals:

- During your placement, you will stay at our comfortable project house situated in the middle of St. Lucia.
- It is a fully furnished house with a large lounge, barbeque area, garden, and a swimming pool in a very safe residential area.
- The volunteer house is approximately a 5 minute walk to the town and a 20 minute walk to the beautiful St Lucia beach and river estuary.
- The house is staffed with a full time cook, laundry / cleaning staff and a maintenance person.
- All bedding is provided, so you will not need to bring a sleeping bag with you, although sometimes it is useful in the colder months (June – September) or if you are planning going on excursions. You will however need to bring your own beach towels please.
- You will be sharing a bedroom with one to four people.
- You will be provided with three meals a day except Saturday dinner and Sunday lunch (when the cook has her days off).
- We invite volunteers to try the local restaurants for dinner and there is a small supermarket and cafes available for lunch.
- Dinner costs around GB£ 6-8 so is very reasonably priced. Please allow for this in your budget.
- Breakfast is on a help-yourself basis and usually consists of cereals, yoghurt, toast, tea and coffee.
- Lunch and dinner are full meals, and will be cooked for you by our cook at the volunteer house.

Getting there:

The nearest airport to St. Lucia is **Richards Bay Airport**, which is about a forty five minute drive from St. Lucia. There are daily flights from Johannesburg to Richards Bay and these can be booked online at www.flysaa.com. One of our African Impact staff members will meet you at the airport and transport you to the volunteer accommodation.

Project Cost Includes:

- The project fee entails financing that goes directly back into the project that you are involved with. The donation facilitates funding for items such as medical supplies, food parcels, vitamins and building and farming materials.

- Transport between Richards Bay Airport and St. Lucia
- Orientation programme upon arrival



- All daily transfers to and from your projects during your stay
- Full board and lodging, which includes 3 meals a day at our volunteer house (except Saturday evenings and Sunday lunchtimes)
- Laundry service during your stay
- Assistance at your projects by African Impact staff and volunteer coordinators
- Any visits to other African Impact programmes based in St. Lucia

Project Cost Excludes:

- All items of a personal nature, such as curios, gifts, clothing (work and other)
- Personal insurance for the duration of your placement, which must include cover for evacuation and repatriation
- All transport by air or bus to Richards Bay
- All items of a personal nature, such as curios, gifts, clothing (work and other)
- E-mail / Internet and telephone calls
- Soft drinks, wines and spirits
- All visas for border crossings
- Any excursions over-and-above your planned itinerary in St. Lucia (see below for more information on some of the great travel options available in and around the area you will be staying)

Project Orientation:

Upon arrival in St. Lucia you will have a comprehensive orientation programme, which is included in your fee. This is facilitated by your project volunteer coordinator and includes:

- An introduction to St. Lucia and the surrounding area
- An overview of the health outreach programme and the needs of the local community
- An introduction into the syllabus we use for HIV/AIDS education and an HIV/AIDS question and answer session to help with any concerns or questions you have for your own safety
- An introduction and visit to the projects to see where you will be working

- A basic language course - You will learn some basic words and sentences in Zulu, the local language in St. Lucia

We look forward to welcoming you for a unique, rewarding and unforgettable experience!

Project Travel Highlights:

It would be unforgivable to be living in such stunning scenery without exploring your surroundings! Here are some of the highlights you may be able to participate in during your spare time at weekends. These are not included in your volunteering fee, but our coordinators are able to assist you with making the necessary arrangements (depending on demand and availability):



Day trips:

- Zulu Cultural Night – R115
- Hippo and Croc tour – R170
- Isimangaliso Night game drive – R325
- Surfing/snorkelling at Cape Vidal (introduction lesson) – R300
- Whale watching (Seasonal: June – November) – R850
- Crocodile kayaking – R275
- Hluhluwe/Umfolozi Game drive - R750 (half day)/R825 (full day)
- Elephant Interaction/Cheetah Centre – prices subject to number of participants (min 4 pax)

Weekend Trips:

- Thanda Private Game Reserve – R1740 per person sharing per night (single supplements apply) + R1400 transport
- Mozambique dolphin swim – R3195 per person – includes visa (min 4 pax)

Other weekend trip options include: Turtle tours (seasonal: November – March), Kosi Bay, Sodwana Bay, Swaziland, Battlefields, Drakensberg

Please note that prices given are a guideline only and are subject to change. They

are accurate as of November 2011.

St. Lucia Medical Outreach and HIV Education Project notes:

We have found in the past that the more you as a volunteer put in to your involvement, the more you will get out of your experience. You are welcome to contact a member of staff to find out how you can best prepare for your stay to assist the local community.

You will be living with volunteers working on another project Orphan Care and Teaching Project. You will at times be working alongside the Community volunteers on activities and we do encourage all volunteers in the house to share their daily activities, stories and photos to everyone in the house.

Please also understand that our projects are continuously evolving, being improved, and adapting to the needs of the local communities that we are involved with, so involvement areas do change from time to time. Rest assured your work will be necessary, rewarding and exciting. We invite you to be more than a tourist...

African Impact Quality

African Impact first set up the St Lucia project in Sept 2007. Being an African Impact initiatives means we can assure a high quality experience on our projects . We have a fantastic support team based on the ground and available to support and assist our volunteers at any time.

Our head office is in contact with the on the ground staff almost daily ensuring and providing a well structured and well supported system.



Our Partners

[The Happy Africa Foundation www.happyafricafoundation.org](http://www.happyafricafoundation.org) African Impact is proud to have been instrumental in the establishment of The Happy Africa Foundation in 2007 and continues to be one of the Foundations major supporters. UK Registered Charity Number: 1123529. The mission of The Happy Africa Foundation is to empower the African people through the support of community and conservation based initiatives that operate at grass roots level.

We are proudly affiliated to the UK-based **Know Before You Go** campaign that promotes education and knowledge-sharing amongst travellers.

African Impact is delighted to have been nominated as a **2009 World Travel Awards Finalist** and see this as exciting recognition of our position as African specialists in Volunteering, with over 5 years experience in sharing Africa with travellers who have a passion for making a difference.