

VUMC ISC at Lwala: In-country Logistics

Below are some details not included in the Lwala Community Alliance Visitors Handbook and specific to Vanderbilt Medical Students doing a rotation in Lwala. Please refer to Visitor's Handbook, Pre-trip material packet or contact the Lwala Volunteer coordinator for other general information and questions.

Arriving in Kenya:

Visa

- [Apply for a Kenyan Tourist Visa online](http://evisa.go.ke/evisa.html) (<http://evisa.go.ke/evisa.html>), which takes about one to two weeks to process and costs \$50. When you receive the visa, print out the electronic confirmation and carry it with you for entry into the country.
- When filling out the visa application, please indicate that you are in Kenya as a tourist to **volunteer** (do not say you are working or studying). Please use the following information for the contact address in Country of Residence:
Lwala Community Alliance
Kameji Sub-location, Rongo District, Migori County
P.O. Box 24 Rongo, Kenya 40404
Robert Kasambala 0711360609

Lost luggage

- After purchasing your visa, you will go down to baggage claim. If your bags are lost there is a lost luggage desk within the baggage claim area (if someone is meeting you at the airport and your bags are lost, please either call them or step outside the baggage claim area to find them to notify them of the delay. You WILL be allowed to go back into baggage claim to the lost luggage desk even if you have left the area). Please use Robert's phone number above as the contact for delivering your bags (they will be delivered by courier and we will pick them up in Kisii). Ask them to deliver the bags to the **G4S office in Kisii** with Robert's name on it so that he will get a call when they arrive.

Customs

- When you leave baggage claim, your driver should be waiting for you just outside the glass doors. Customs is very relaxed in Kenya and often you will not get stopped. If you do and you have any letters provided by Lwala Community Alliance about medical equipment or medication being carried, you can show them the letter.

Logistics of living in Lwala:

Many of the logistics of living in Lwala are covered in the Visitor's Handbook. Please be sure to read through it carefully.

Accommodations

- You will be staying at a guesthouse with other students and expat staff. There is a Kenyan staff member who will wash dishes, clean the guesthouse and prepare meals (unless occupants decide to cook for themselves). We will visit the grocery store in Kisumu where you can buy additional snacks and food as you wish.
- Your stay at the guesthouse will cost **\$100 per week**, which covers room, food at the facility (except alcohol) and laundry (though we suggest doing some of your own if you are staying more than a week). You will pay the full balance in cash while in Kenya.

Internet and phone

- Internet is provided at no cost. The reliability of internet is moderate. When the system is working well, you will be able to easily Facetime/Skype. At times, it is slow or not working

altogether, so just be prepared. Since you are generally able to use the internet for communicating with the U.S. it is not necessary to purchase a phone in Kenya. One of the U.S. expat staff will be able to loan you his or her phone if necessary.

Health issues

- The pre-trip materials have a list of immunizations, malaria medications and other medicines to consider prior to departure.
- The Lwala Community Hospital has a pharmacy where you can get most general medications.
- *Due to the nature of daily life in Lwala, if you fall ill it will often necessitate that Lwala staff will have to take care of you, taking them away from their regular jobs. While we are more than happy to do this, please help us do what is possible to prevent major illnesses. This includes not eating unwashed foods, drinking only treated water, and taking any antibiotics, anti-malarials, or any other medication even if you don't think it is necessary. While it may not be standard practice in the US to begin medication before confirming a diagnosis, starting on an early course of medication will often help to reduce the burden of care that may come if the illness does progress.*

Local travel and weekends

- Due to the short duration of your stay we ask that you plan to stay at Lwala over the weekends, except for one weekend when you are free to travel as you wish. Weekends are a good time to visit community members, hike or walk around the area, attend church (if you wish) with the community, or plan day trips to visit nearby sites.
- Due to safety concerns, volunteers are not allowed to ride on motorcycles on major roads (you will have to ride motorcycles on the dirt roads around Lwala). You may use public transportation (matatus), but you should be aware that road travel is very dangerous in Kenya and take all the precautions necessary to protect yourself.

Dress at the hospital

- Hospital staff wear a combination of scrubs, dress clothes (men: button downs, slacks, and dress shoes/women: slacks/blouses or skirts/dresses), and business casual outfits on Fridays, often with a lab coat. You should plan for the same. Please also bring some clothes that you will be comfortable wearing on a motorbike or walking through the community, possibly in the mud/rain.

Language

- English and Swahili are the national languages for Kenya and the local language in Lwala is Dholwo/Dhluwo. Clinic workers and most people speak English, but often patients use their local language during clinic visits, so it's helpful to know a few phrases and words.
- These Dhluwo words and phrases were compiled by a student who recently returned from working at the Lwala clinic. They are spelled phonetically and most are not true to actual spelling.

(Pronunciation tip: vowels sound the same as vowels are pronounced in Spanish.)

English	Dhluwo
Greeting	Amosi
Greeting a group	Amosou
Greeting response	Amosi ahinya
How are you?	Nang'o
How are you?	In-ti-ay (singular) or Un-ti-ay (plural)
Ok.	Onge
I'm ok.	A-di-ma-bere
I'm fine.	Wan-ti-ay ("w" is mostly silent)

And you?	A in
Good morning.	Oy-a-or-ay
How did you wake? (How did you sleep?)	A-chi-ooo
I woke fine.	A-chi-oo-ma-bear
We will meet tomorrow.	Wanera kinyi
Good bye	Oriti
Thank you, I am finished.	Erekamano ahinya
Thank you	Erekamano
I love you	Aheri ahinya
Well done	Bere (sounds like “bear”)
Hot	Moto
Chew (command)	Moudi
Milk	Maji
Rain	Koth
Namesake, if born in the evening	Adhiambo
I’m going to the field.	Wa-dee-a-pop

Food

- In the clinic, when advising patients and mothers on nutrition and feeding, it’s helpful to know what people typically eat in the region. Below are some common foods.
 - Chapati and green grams (a lentil cooked with tomato, onions, and curry)
 - Chai tea (milk, sugar, chai masala spice, tea leaves) and mandazi (fried dough) – often enjoyed as a group during morning work break
 - Skuma wiki/kales (dark leafy greens), ugali (a starch with a play-doh like consistency, made of maize and water), and a protein (typically fish, beef or eggs, chicken seemed to be most expensive and saved for special events) – ugali is eaten daily and often at every meal
 - Rice and beans
 - Sugar cane (either raw or prepared as juggy)

Lwala Community Alliance

- LCA originally started as just a clinic but quickly grew to include comprehensive wrap-around programs to support the whole person. Below is LCA’s model and you can find more information on their website, lwalacommunityalliance.org. You will have opportunities to learn more about each area while you are there.



IMPORTANT THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- The Lwala staff and Lwala Volunteer Coordinator have a responsibility to the community and organization to empower the people of North Kamagambo. These staff have lived in the area

for a significant amount of time and will be aware of norms, cultural practices and issues that you will not know or have time to learn during your stay. For this reason, please use them as a resource at all times. Cultural practices can change dramatically from tribe to tribe, let alone country to country and even if you have previous experience in Africa or Kenya, things may be different than you expect in Lwala.

- For this reason, if any member of Lwala staff questions, suggests, or directly advises you against doing something, please respect their position and experience even if you feel it is okay.
- You are always welcome to ask about anything that you are uncertain about. Lwala has been host to many visitors over the years and most staff will be very straightforward with you concerning any issue. If you need to confirm something you have heard from a staff member, please ask the Kenya Program Director, Volunteer Coordinator, or Clinical Care Manager.
- Kenya has much more relaxed patient confidentiality and consent rules than the US, however Lwala is making great strides in encouraging clinical staff to adopt improved practices in these areas. We ask that you be an example of high quality patient care by ensuring proper consent for taking photographs, being present for HIV testing, etc. We hope that our staff will learn as much from you as you will from them.
- Please feel comfortable to be as open as possible about any issues or concerns that come about, regardless of how trivial they may seem. Small annoyances can taint your entire experience and often they are things we can easily fix if it is known. Anything that you discuss with the Volunteer Coordinator will be confidential unless you consent to that person sharing the information.
- Finally, remember that while the hospital will be a much more laid back setting than hospital facilities you are used to working in, we are striving to provide the highest quality care available to our patients. For that reason, we ask you not to take on any tasks or activities that are outside your purview as a fourth-year medical student. Please follow the rule that you should not do anything in a Kenyan hospital that you wouldn't be allowed to do in an American one.

Lwala Med Student Rotation Course Schedule

Monday-Friday:

We will ask that you keep a log of your activities, what you learned in different areas of the hospital, questions you have and other observations so that we can continue to improve the hospital and the Immersion Course experience for future students. It can be written or typed and is due at the end of the course.

8:00am-1:30pm

- 8am: In-patient rounds (Tuesday: CMEs with clinical staff at 7:30am; Wednesday: all-staff meeting at 8am)
- 9-11am: Shadowing/working with clinical staff. Rotating through maternity/ANC, pre-natal/post-natal, out-patient/in-patient/triage, child wellness/immunizations, HIV care, pharmacy and laboratory departments. Focus on objectives and skills described in syllabus.
- 11am-11:30am: tea break
- 11:30am-1:30pm: continued clinical work
- 1:30pm: lunch

2:30pm-5pm:

- Either outreach activities with other LCA programs, one-on-ones with clinical staff for case studies and training, continued clinical work with patients, or engagement in individualized projects at the hospital (the latter will be discussed/assigned by the Volunteer Coordinator during your first week in Lwala)
- Weekly mentoring session with Dr. Doug Heimburger (day to be assigned)

Capstone:

- Prepare and present a CME on the topic for presentation to Lwala staff during fourth week. CME should include a 30 minute presentation, 3-6 slides and a discussion with staff (total time of 60 minutes). Also, please prepare a 1-2 page document about your CME topic for printing and hanging up in the hospital.

Other:

- We encourage students to be as engaged in the hospital, organization and community as much as possible. You will be scheduled to be on-call at the hospital in the evenings/weekends a couple times. You can join a referral by traveling in the ambulance with a clinical officer or nurse to take a patient to a nearby hospital. If you are particularly interested in public health issues, you will have opportunities to join the Public Health or Education team in visiting community groups and schools. Simply visiting community members in the evening and weekend can provide much insight into their lives and health.