

## **REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

1. **Passport:** Your passport is the most important document that you have. Be sure to have a couple of photocopies of it, and have a copy in each piece of your luggage. If you currently have a passport, check NOW to be sure it will be valid on your dates of travel. Note that some countries will not permit you to enter if the remaining passport validity is less than six months. You should not carry your passport on your person when you are out in the city or village. It is best to keep it in a safe place in your room.
2. **Tanzanian Visa:** A VISA permits you to visit a country for a specified purpose and a limited time. It will be stamped into your passport upon entry into Tanzania. These cost \$100 USD and are valid for one year of travel. Payments can only be made with cash. Make sure to use unmarked, crisp, clean bills dated after 2004. No paperwork is required prior to entry because US citizens are readily issued travelers visas. Use the following information on your visa application: **Note: Be sure to mark visitor, NOT volunteer or unpaid worker on your application.**

### Contact Information:

Lorien Knapp, Director Kwetu Faraja Children's Home  
+255-763468616  
Box 713  
Mwanza, Tanzania

3. **Travelers' Insurance:** It is a good precaution to register with an international travelers' insurance program for the duration of your trip – especially one that provides evacuation insurance.
4. **Vaccination Record:** An international certificate of vaccination may be required to enter or exit the country. It is a yellow card, created by the WHO (World Health Organization), and should be available wherever you get your yellow fever vaccine.

## **STAYING HEALTHY**

See your doctor before you go. When you do, there are a number of things for you to discuss. Vaccinations and immunizations should be planned well in advance to allow time between visits for certain series that require it. Public health officials recommend that foreign travelers be current on polio, measles, diphtheria, and tetanus vaccinations. For most up-to-date information about health considerations please visit the CDC website:

[wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/tanzania.aspx](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/tanzania.aspx)

### **Vaccinations:**

You are required to have the following vaccinations/immunizations prior to coming to Tanzania: Yellow Fever, Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Meningitis,

Malaria is a very common illness in Sub-Saharan Africa. For a short-term trip it is recommended to take prophylaxis to limit the chances of getting malaria. The following medications are effective in Tanzania:

- A) Malarone - expensive, low occurrence of side effects, begin taking 1-2 days prior to travel, taken daily while in country, taken for one week after leaving the country.
- B) Larium - cheap, taken once a week, common side effects like hallucinations and bad dreams.
- C) Doxycycline – cheap, few side effects but you must take precautions in the sun, begin taking 1-2 days prior to travel, taken daily while in country, taken for one week after leaving the country.

### **Additional Medications:**

Your physician can also recommend special medications for motion sickness, traveler's diarrhea, possible infections and the infrequent headache – just in case. Allergy sufferers... beware! Discuss your allergies with your doctor, and make sure you're prepared for potential problems! Get your new prescriptions filled, and make sure other regular prescriptions are refilled, so you'll have enough for your entire trip. Keep a copy of the prescription with you when you travel. Also, be sure and have all medications in their original containers. Take medications with you on the airplane; do not pack them in your checked luggage.

### **A Note about Water:**

Don't trust the water unless specifically told it is safe. Drink bottled beverages without ice (it's water, too!) Use bottled water to brush your teeth. Your host knows how to prepare foods so that they are safe for you, but take caution with street vendors and at restaurants. Salads and fruits need special consideration. Food washed in water, such as lettuce, may not be safe. It is best not to eat raw vegetables unless you are sure they have been cleaned properly.

Only swim in a treated swimming pool. Schistosomiasis is a parasitic infection that can be obtained by swimming in Lake Victoria. It is best to avoid contact with the lake water.

## **TRAVELING SAFELY**

### **U.S. Department of State Travel Information:**

It is essential that you read The U.S. Department of State information for the country to which you will be traveling. Also take note if there are travel alerts or other important messages.

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/tanzania.html> [studentsabroad.state.gov](http://studentsabroad.state.gov)

### **Embassy Information:**

It is a good idea to keep a copy of your Embassy contact information in case of an emergency. You can also **sign up** with the Embassy to let them know you will be in Tanzania.

#### **U.S. Embassy Dar Es Salaam**

686 Old Bagamoyo Road, Msasani

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Telephone: +255-22-229-4122

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +255-22-229-4000

(Dial 1 for an emergency operator)

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

### **Packing:**

- Travel light! You will be able to move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand.
- Dress conservatively. Avoid the appearance of affluence.
- Avoid handbags, fanny packs and outside pockets that are easy targets for thieves. One of the safest places to carry valuables is in a pouch or money belt worn under your clothing.
- Leave valuable jewelry, irreplaceable family objects, electronic items, and unnecessary credit cards at home.
- Put your name, address and telephone numbers on the inside and outside of each piece of luggage.
- While there are many items that can be purchased in Tanzania – like personal hygiene products, batteries, etc. They are very expensive and you will have a hard time finding the brands you are used to. It's best to bring these items with you.

### **Money:**

Tanzania is a “cash only” land. There are VERY few instances where a credit card or debit card can be used. It is best to plan to only use cash. There are ATM machines available in the city, but you can expect for your home bank to charge you a fee of about \$7.00 for the international transaction. It is good to plan to travel with all of the cash that you expect to use while in Africa, and only use the ATM machine in extreme circumstances. Traveler's checks will not be understood or accepted. Pay attention to the following guidelines:

- Carry a minimum amount of cash when out in the city or village. Be discrete with your money so that you are less likely to attract pick-pockets or thieves.
- There are very few locations where credit cards and/or traveler's checks are accepted. ATM machines are available, but your bank will charge an international service fee for all transactions. The exchange rate with ATM machines is generally very poor.
- Your host will help you exchange Dollars for local currency at the best available rate. **Note that the dollar bills must be printed after 2004, and be unmarked and without defect in order to be accepted. Denominations of \$50 or \$100 will get a better rate than lower denominations. Some places will not accept anything lower than \$20.**

### **Safety:**

Tanzania is a relatively safe country. It has had a stable government for many years, and is a haven for refugees from nearby countries during times of war. Being in an urban setting, you should be aware of your surroundings, but there is no need to be nervous! Some ways to increase your personal safety are listed below:

- Watch your personal belongings at all times.
- Do not wear anything flashy, like expensive or precious jewelry.
- Don't flash your cameras, phones, money or other expensive property in front of people. It could target you for theft.
- Do not go out at night unless you are with a group.
- Do not travel alone
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances. If you see crowds gathering go the other direction. Crowds often mean trouble and you don't want to get mixed up in it.
- Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments. Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- Avoid scam artists. Beware of strangers who approach you, offering bargains or to be your guide.
- If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to your host.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will jostle you, ask you for directions or the time, point to something spilled on your clothing, or distract you by creating a disturbance. A child or even a woman carrying a baby can be a pickpocket.
- Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse snatchers.
- Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. When possible, ask directions only from individuals in authority.

### **CULTURAL INSIGHTS**

## **Poverty**

Tanzania is a very poor nation, though rich in natural resources. Much of the poverty is due to corruption in the government. Most of the wealth of the nation comes from the mines (gold, diamonds, natural gas). Some of the major issues of the country are HIV, malaria, lack of medical care, lack of infrastructure. National literacy is around 70%, which means that especially in rural areas, there are many citizens who have never had an education and can't read or write. There are more than 1 million orphan children in Tanzania, and at least that many vulnerable children who have no place to call home. Electricity and water are not dependable, medical care is scarce, the roads are mostly dirt. If you have been to a developing nation, many of the things you see will be familiar but it is still important to prepare yourself for the sad situations you will likely witness.

## **Photography**

Tanzania is a beautiful place, and you will want to take lots of pictures. Unfortunately there are many situations where photography is not permissible. It is illegal to take pictures of any government buildings (like airports, banks, ports, jails) or official government workers such as police officers, military figures, anyone in uniform of any sort. You should not take pictures in public places such as the markets. Africans are very suspicious of people with cameras and will think that you are trying to "steal" their identities in order to sell them. They see the National Geographic pictures and think we are trying to make a profit from their suffering. Others will think that you are a spy or CIA agent, even though it may sound strange. When taking photos try to put yourself in the other person's shoes – how would you feel if someone aggressively attempted to take photos of you, your home, or your children? It is always best to ask for permission before taking pictures. Any photography in the city will be problematic. Ask before you act. While on the Kwetu Faraja campus you can feel free to take pictures – but also be aware that many of our kids will want to play with your camera. Let them play at your own risk!

## **Gestures**

There are many common gestures in the USA that have different meanings in East Africa. Thumbs up signs are good and mean that things are good. Resting your head on your hand will make people think that you are sad. Yawning will make people think that you are hungry (but yawns are hard to avoid). If you wave your hand to someone to say hello they might think that you are asking them to come to you if your wave is palm out with fingers waving downward... it is better to wave "queen style" rotating your hand from side to side rather than up and down.

## **Body contact**

Hugging is not common among people of opposite genders unless there is a very strong friendship. It is common for people of the same gender to hug. Handholding is the most common form of physical contact. Men hold hands with one another as a sign of brotherhood. Women also hold hands with one another. When greeting someone people always shake hands and sometimes they will hold your hand for a few minutes as part of the greeting. Many foreign people who first see hand holding think that the people are homosexuals, but homosexuality is not publically accepted by the majority of Africans.

## **Magic**

Tanzania is a land full of Witch Doctors, and magic is perceived to be everywhere. It is a unique country because of the prevalence of Witchcraft. Most African nations have outlawed magic and being a witchdoctor is considered a capital offense. In Tanzania these people are often revered and seen as the leaders of society. People associate personal hardship with Witch Doctor involvement. This is a very difficult bridge for Christians to cross in helping people understand the power of Jesus over the power of magic. The Muslim culture of East Africa has embraced magic, but the Christian culture is at odds with it. It is important to be sensitive to people's perceptions of magic, but also to offer them the truth that the Holy Spirit is bigger than the Witch Doctors. Generally, discussions about magic should take place in a private setting. Having a spiritual background will open the doors for more meaningful interaction with people. You can feel free to share your faith at any moment.

## **Religious Affiliations**

Tanzania is a majority Muslim country (Muslims 35%, Christian 30%, "Pagan" 35%), but the people are very moderate "Folk" Muslims meaning they have mixed in parts of their traditional religions with the Muslim religion. In the city you can expect to hear the call to prayer five times a day. Even though it is a Muslim nation, there is freedom of religion. You can feel free to share your faith openly and to have frank discussions about spiritual matters. People will often ask your religion and you should feel free to explain why you believe the things you do. You can expect to have many wonderful religious conversations.

That being said, we do ask for you to show respect of all religions. Whatever your personal beliefs are, we ask that you are respectful of the fact that the Kwetu Faraja community and many of our surrounding community members are Christians. Faith is an extremely important part of our culture and lifestyle. Please be tolerant of other people's beliefs and view even if they differ from your own.

## **Dress Code**

The dress code in East Africa is very modest. Please make an extra effort to abide by the following guidelines. If you are found to be wearing inappropriate clothing you will be asked to change so that you don't embarrass yourself, and you don't offend other people

### ***FEMALES***

Women must wear dresses or skirts that come to the calf or longer and should cover the knee when sitting. In the big cities there will be more women who wear trousers, but they are often looked down upon by society. Most women who wear trousers are considered to be prostitutes. Showing any skin above the knee is offensive to others. Shirts can be sleeveless, but please do not wear spaghetti straps or shirts with open backs or those that show your stomach or excessive cleavage. Make sure that your clothing is not transparent. It is good to test your clothing in full sunlight to see if it can be seen through!

### ***MALES***

In Tanzanian society Men wear trousers and children wear shorts. However, clothing restriction for males is pretty relaxed. If going someplace formal it is best for males to wear trousers.

## **Role of Women**

In much of Africa, women are considered lower class citizens. They work very hard but are underappreciated and often they are not given the same opportunities for education. Women generally walk behind their husbands. For the most part women's opinions are not wanted except in the case of foreign women who have a higher status. Women in Africa are some of the strongest people you will ever meet. They work tirelessly with babies strapped to their bodies while carrying loads on their heads. They are friendly, sisterly, and usually happy to help.

## **Education**

The education is based on the British system where there are 7 "standards" (what we call grades) for primary school. Secondary school consists of "O-levels" (Form 1-4) and "A-levels" (Form 5 and 6). Upon completion of "A-levels" a student can attend the university. There are standard tests throughout the schooling process. Failure to pass the exit exam from Primary school prevents a student from attending secondary school. Such students must find other alternatives in their lives such as learning a trade. They only get one chance to take this test. Primary schools are taught in Swahili and secondary schools are taught in English. Women are less likely to have an education because boys are more often favored to receive school fees, especially when a family has a very small income. School is not free, though government schools are significantly cheaper than private schools.

## **Names**

Names are a very important part of African culture. During rites of passage a person may take on a new name. For example when a person is baptized they choose a Christian name and people often stop using their old name. When a relative dies it is also common for a person to begin using the name of that relative as a way of keeping their memory alive. When a person has their first child, they receive a new name as the parent of that child. People can have a dozen different names, so it is really hard to learn a person's "name". There is really no concept of standard spelling in Swahili culture, so you really can never misspell someone's name. They are very flexible with spelling because the people were traditionally oral communicators. This can make it frustrating when trying to use a dictionary.

## **Children**

Overall, children have a very high degree of respect for their elders. When you speak with children they may not want to make eye contact and this is considered a respectful behavior, even though we might perceive this as shyness. People believe that children belong to an entire community rather than to an individual, so it is okay to hold children and pick up babies that you don't know. Children enjoy physical contact with people and will often want to hold hands or touch your hair. Feel free to interact with children as you would like, respecting any boundaries that they set forth.

## **Shopping**

You can ALWAYS barter. White people are often charged higher prices than Africans so it is good to have help when shopping so that you can make sure you are getting fair prices. It is important to watch your possessions when in the markets because there are often people who will pick your pocket... Watch your surroundings when in public places like the market.

### **Animal care**

One of the more difficult things for Americans to see is how animals live in places like Tanzania. It is not common for people to have pets. Animals who are cared for have specific jobs to do and are not cared for as pets. It is common to see starving animals wandering the streets, and you might see people hit or kick animals... this is not done out of cruelty but as a way of exerting to those animals that they are not on the same status as humans. Animals like livestock and guard dogs have an important place in society here, but you will not see these animals being treated as members of the family as they often are in the West.

### **Food**

Food is an important part of African life – because it means the difference between life and death. Snacking is not part of this culture, and meals are served with the purpose of nourishing and providing sustenance rather than as entertainment. In African culture, most meals are eaten with your hands, or sometimes with a spoon. Foods are hearty and big to fill you until the next meal. If you require snacks you can purchase them on your own, but it is important to try to eat when food is provided, and to eat until enough to carry you along till the next meal. It is also important to eat what is given to you and not to discriminate against what you are offered. Tanzanian food is much different than food in the West, but it is healthy and provides nourishment. It is important to try to appreciate the foods of this culture so that you can show unity with your fellow Africans.