

# **Kijana Kwanza (Young People First)**

## **Information Pack for International Volunteers**

### **Country Information**

Tanzania is situated in East Africa, across a wide area that includes 120 different tribes and native tongues. Originally colonised by the Germans, the area now known as Tanzania was part of wider territory referred to as German East Africa, which included modern day Kenya and Uganda. After the First World War, the area ceded control to the British, who divided the territories into its current setup. At the time, the mainland area of modern Tanzania, known as Tanganyika, and the islands of Zanzibar were governed separately. After independence in 1961, the mainland and islands united in 1964 to create modern day Tanzania. Despite this union, the mainland and islands have separate government institutions and quite distinct cultural and religious identities.

The capital of Tanzania is Dodoma, a relatively new city, in the central part of the country. The largest city, former capital and centre of commerce, Dar es salaam, is better known amongst foreigners and tourists. Despite some reluctance, more and more government services are moving from Dar es salaam to Dodoma, where the national parliament is based and a new international airport is under construction.

Tanzania is dividing into 31 regions, 26 on the mainland and 5 on the islands. Each region has an administrative capital, often carrying the same name as the region.

### **Moshi Town, Kilimanjaro Region**

Moshi, where Kijana Kwanza's HQ is based, is the capital of Kilimanjaro Region. The region is named after Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest summit, on the slopes of which the town is based. Despite its status as capital of the region, it is the only regional capital not designated as a city because of its comparatively small size. The town's population is estimated to be no more than 120,000.

Moshi is predominantly a market town, distinguished only by its famous landmark and the coffee trade, which has in recent years collapsed due to increased competition in international markets. Otherwise, 3 large industries dominate: TPC, an 8,000 hectare sugar plantation, Serengeti Breweries and Bonite Bottlers, which manufactures Coca-Cola products. Tourism also plays an important role, but with many more visitors interested in wildlife safaris than mountain climbing, the nearby city of Arusha, attracts many more tourists, due to its proximity to the most popular national parks.

Locally, Moshi is also known for its significant student population with many well-known universities and private colleges based in and around the town.

### **Language**

The official national language of Tanzania is Swahili (known as Kiswahili). English is a secondary language used in higher education, business and some parts of government. Outside of the tourist

industry, there is limited understanding of the English language and it is helpful to pick up some basic phrases and words, particularly if you are travelling outside of city hubs.

## **Arriving in Moshi**

Tanzania has 3 main international airports in Dar es salaam, Zanzibar and Kilimanjaro. The latter is the entry point for most safari tourists and the closest to Moshi Town. A taxi ride from Kilimanjaro International Airport to Moshi takes 45 minutes to 1 hour depending on traffic. For ease and convenience, we can arrange airport transfers on your behalf.

## **Visas**

Most European and Western passport holders will require a visa to enter Tanzania. For stays of less than 3 months, it is easy to apply online via the government website. An ordinary visa costs \$50 and is suitable for both tourism and volunteering.

NOTE: US citizens must purchase a multi-entry visa which costs \$100. For stays longer than 3 months, it can become complicated as you will need to apply for a Work Permit (even as a volunteer) and a Residency Permit. This can easily cost in excess of \$1,000, plus administrative fees and can take some time to process.

You should leave at least 2 weeks to apply for your visa online. If you are late, you can purchase your visa on arrival at the airport, but there are often long queues.

## **Accommodation**

Moshi Town offers a range of accommodation from budget hostels and B&Bs to 4-star hotels, many of which are advertised online. We can sometimes arrange favourable rates for long-term volunteers. We recommend that volunteers choose accommodation within walking distance of our town centre headquarters.

For a LIMITED number of volunteer roles, we can provide free or subsidised accommodation on site. This is basic ensuite accommodation, normally suitable for single travellers. You should be aware that most volunteers prefer to live off-site because our volunteer room is located away from town amenities such as shops and restaurants.

## **Local Transport**

If you are living in the centre of town, you will find most amenities within walking distance. There are several forms of local transport including local taxis, *dala dala* (minibus), *bajaji* (diesel powered tuk-tuk) and *boda boda* (motorcycle taxis). The most convenient and affordable mode of transport for making your way around town is the *bajaji*. Motorcycle taxis should be used with caution as many drivers are unlicensed or careless. Accidents are common and if you decide to use a *boda boda*, it is best to select someone with whom you are comfortable. Avoid using *boda boda* at night, unless you personally know the driver.

## **Safety & Crime**

Generally, Moshi is a very safe town and much safer than many deprived areas of European capitals. Poverty naturally attracts small crime, and you should beware of pickpockets in crowded areas, especially valuables like wallets and phones.

It is not advisable to walk alone at night outside of the very centre of the town. There are few street lights and tourists and foreign visitors can attract the attention of robbers. If you are travelling at night, it is always useful to have the number of a taxi driver or *bajaji* at hand.

## Faith & Values

Tanzania is, in comparison to European countries, a more conservative country, where religious practice and adherence to traditional values are the norm. The two dominant faiths are Christianity and Islam, and churches and mosques of all denominations can be found in most parts of town. There is also a Hindu temple and a Sikh gurdwara in the centre of town.

## Dress Code

There is no specific dress code required, but both men and women are advised to wear modest and loose clothing. Women in particular, should avoid sleeveless tops (short sleeves are acceptable) and skirts above the knee. Male teaching staff should also not wear shorts.

Since many roads in Moshi are unpaved and full of stones, you are advised to bring shoes with a strong grip.

## Cuisine

Tanzanian cuisine is heavily influenced by Arab and Indian spices, particularly around the coastal regions. Further inland, the food becomes more basic and Moshi is not exactly well known for haute cuisine. Local staples include *ugali* (a maize dough) with *maharage* (beans) and *mboga* (green leaf vegetables), *ndizi nyama* (a plantain and meat stew) and *pilau* or *biryani* (a spice infused rice) served with *kuku* (chicken), *samaki* (fish) or *nyama ya n'gombe* (beef). The traditional fast food is *chipsi yai* (an omelette baked with chips/fries) and you can find street vendors selling *mahinidi* (sweetcorn) and *mihogo* (cassava). You can also find some wonderful snacks - referred to as bites and normally eaten at breakfast with *chai* (tea) - such as *maandazi* (a sweet bread), *vitumbua* (rice cakes) and *sambusa* (triangular shaped pastries filled with mince meat or potato), all deep-fried.

Whilst many basic Tanzanian foods are vegetarian, and some are vegan, a diet that voluntarily excludes all meat or animal products is less understood, but can usually be catered for.

At Kijana Kwanza, we serve basic local cuisine, with meat, fish or chicken served twice a week.

If you prefer to prepare your own meals, there are several "supermarkets" (small shops) around town which sell some international ingredients, although it will be difficult to find very specific items.

Around town you can find several restaurants and eateries that cater for tourists, but do not expect the same standards as equivalent outfits back home. We suggest you avoid eating at informal

street vendors known as *mama nitilie*, which often lack water supplies for hygienically washing dishes and hands.

By law, all meat slaughtered and sold in Tanzania should be halal (ritually slaughtered according to Islamic principles). However, this does not apply to frozen meats imported from abroad and in some rural areas without Muslim populations, this may not be universally applied.

## **Medical & Healthcare**

Getting sick, especially stomach aches, is a normal part of travelling to Tanzania! Thankfully clinics and pharmacies are plentiful and relatively cheap to access for basic remedies. Moshi also boasts one of Tanzania's oldest and biggest hospitals, KCMC, which regularly hosts international doctors and surgeons. If you require specialist medicine, you are recommended to bring a supply with you that will last the duration of your trip.

You do not require any specific vaccinations to enter Tanzania unless you have passed through a Yellow Fever infected area. This includes transit stops which last more than 12 hours. Note that Ethiopian Airways and Kenyan Airways are popular routes into Tanzania and are part of this zone.

Malaria is commonplace in Tanzania, although apparently less so in Kilimanjaro Region, and some visitors decide to take antivirals during their trip. Visitors should be reassured that Malaria is easily and quickly diagnosed in all local clinics and treatment is cheap and efficient.

## **Weather**

Since Tanzania is a large and varied country, the climate can be quite different from one region to another. The country is located south of the equator; summer takes place from December to February when temperatures can reach 35 degrees Celsius and winter takes place from June to August. Compared to Europe, winters are quite mild with temperatures rarely falling below 16 degree Celsius. For most of the year you can expect to wear summer clothes, with an additional sweater or jacket for some of the cooler nights.

There are two rainy seasons in Tanzania. March-May are the heavy rains, when it can pour heavily for up to 12 hours and the lighter rains take place from October-November. During rainy season it is not unusual to find the roads filled with mud and some untarmaked roads and pathways on the outskirts of town are difficult to pass, even with a 4-wheel drive.

## **Laundry**

Washing machines are unheard of in most of Tanzania and even the middle classes employ domestic help to assist with handwashing clothes. If you need help with washing clothes, we can help you find suitable assistance.

## **Currency & Money**

The national currency of Tanzania is the Tanzanian Shilling (abbreviated TZS or Tsh). It is a restricted currency, which means it cannot be purchased outside of the country.

You are therefore recommended to bring approximately \$200 in any major international currency (GBP or EURO are advised) to exchange immediately on arrival at the airport. Thereafter, there are plenty of banks and ATM machines located around town.

Credit and Debit cards are acceptable in some tourist locations such as hotels, but this is not a common service available across town. Tanzania is still predominantly a cash-based economy.

### **Telephone, WiFi and Internet**

On arrival, you should arrange to purchase a local SIM card (locally referred to as a line). This can take a while since you will need photographic ID and you will be required to register your fingerprints.

Once you have a SIM card, you can purchase bundles via money transfer service or by purchasing a voucher. Bundles can last for 1 day, 1 week or 1 month and the number of minutes, texts and data included depends on the value of the bundle. NOTE: if you have any unused minutes, texts or data at the end of the duration of your bundle, these will automatically be lost. Loading vouchers or purchasing bundles can be complicated at first, so be sure to ask for help.

WiFi is not commonly available in public venues and you may often find the need to hotspot off your phone to access the internet on your laptop. Landline connections are sometimes available, but tend to be slower than mobile networks. Whilst a 4G Internet connection is available across Moshi Town, this can be patchy as you move further out. Internet speeds are generally slower than other countries.

International calls from a mobile phone, including a local line, are prohibitively expensive. You are recommended to use an VOI service such as WhatsApp or Signal to make calls abroad.

A SIM card also acts as a quasi-bank account and can be used to send and receive money.

### **Water & Electricity**

Generally, running water and electricity is available in all parts of town. Electricity is subject to power cuts, which is a normal part of life in Tanzania. Some places have generators but even hotels occasionally struggle through extended periods of power cuts due to the cost of powering a diesel generator.

You should avoid drinking tap water. Mineral water is available in most local shops for Tsh. 1,000 for a 1.5L bottle.

Tanzania uses a 3-point plug, similar to the UK.

### **Cultural Sensitivities**

Every country and culture has its own norms, traditions and sensitivities. Visitors are advised to consider these to avoid offending locals or come across as imposing foreign values. Be aware that the impact of colonisation can still be felt in Tanzania to this day.

The Tanzanian people are some of the kindest and most generous people you are likely to meet. Wherever you go, you are likely to be greeted with "*Karibu*", which means welcome. Whilst generally quiet and emotionally reserved, Tanzanians are very sociable, where almost every activity of the day is done as part of a group or community. It is very unusual in Tanzania to live alone or spend prolonged times alone, outside the company of others. Below are some pointers in how to navigate aspects of Tanzanian culture, including some sensitivities and warnings:

- Tanzanians are always impressed when you try to use even a few words of their language. You are encouraged to pick up some basic greetings and introductions in Swahili.
- Avoid any conversations related to sexuality. Homosexuality is illegal in Tanzania and a politically charged topic.
- Gift-giving is an important Tanzanian tradition, especially during holidays and as signs of appreciation. It is also not unusual for locals to proactively ask for a *zawadi* (gift), which may come across as rude in other cultures, especially if the recipient expresses dissatisfaction after receiving an amount that does not meet his or her satisfaction. Tipping for a service, is also referred to as *zawadi*, and is encouraged, especially for low-skilled workers whose daily wage may be insufficient to meet their essential needs. As a guide, in restaurants your tip should value 10% of the bill. Children, young people and staff at Kijana Kwanza are regularly reminded that they should not request gifts from visitors. If you are asked by a child, young person or member of staff for a gift, please inform your line-manager.
- Smoking, whilst legal, is considered to be a major social taboo. You should avoid smoking in public or crowded areas or whilst walking through town. This applies, in most cases, to vaping. You should ideally find a quiet or secluded space to smoke or vape, or do so in your private quarters. At Kijana Kwanza, you are kindly requested to avoid smoking in public areas. A member of staff can direct you to an appropriate location. You should not smoke in front of the children or request children to purchase cigarettes or alcohol on your behalf.
- Many Tanzanians still subscribe to traditional gender roles, so don't be surprised if you see women overseeing the majority of domestic chores or that certain social functions are considered unsuitable for a particular gender group.
- Whilst sharing cultural stories or understandings of different social norms is part of your volunteer experience, you will undoubtedly hear opinions that do not conform to your own, or which you may even consider offensive. Try not to take things personally, and recognise that these interactions enable introspection on the part of both locals and visitors. People of all cultures are more complex than a single point of view.
- Sometimes Tanzanians can appear laid back in their approach to life, and you may not get the service you expect or the same level of efficiency you are accustomed to. This is part of the cultural experience and it works best when you embrace the chaos. Everything normally works out!

## Helpful Things to Bring

- A Powerbank (for back up supply during power cuts)
- Regular or routine medication
- Mosquito Repellant
- Sun cream (your favourite brands may not be available locally)
- A Pen (to complete your immigration card on arrival at the airport)
- A Swahili Phrase Book