

Medical Outreach and HIV/AIDS

ST. LUCIA, SOUTH AFRICA



At African Impact, we see ourselves as the on-the-ground AFRICAN SPECIALISTS in volunteering. Founded in 2004, we have so far hosted over 6000 volunteers on our exciting Conservation and Community Volunteer Projects in Africa.

We are also immensely proud to have been nominated as Finalists for the following Responsible Tourism Awards in 2009: The World Travel Awards; The British Youth Travel Awards and the prestigious South African Imvelo Responsible Tourism 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 Awards.

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...



African Impact

PHYSICAL ADDRESS 6 Carlton Close, Noordhoek, 7985, Cape Town, South Africa.

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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
 - Help improve living conditions, nutrition, school equipment and vegetable gardens for the most needy families and help them become self sustaining
 - Immerse yourself in the local Zulu culture and learn the language
- Make friends for life

'Aids is clearly a disaster, effectively wiping out the development gains of the past and sabotaging the future'

'Those who are infected with this terrible disease do not want stigma, they want love'
Nelson Mandela

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. 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.

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 (with parental consent), 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.



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"Home based care was amazing, and was the project that I probably enjoyed the most. I felt privileged being able to see patients at home, and it was really rewarding when we could do something to help them. It was an absolutely fantastic experience."

Jenna Crook, UK, May 2009

Project Achievements so far:

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 Eswenalisha 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.

Each week, 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.



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More about our Medical Outreach and HIV / AIDS Education Programme:

HOME BASED CARE

As a volunteer you will predominantly spend your mornings with a locally trained care giver out in the surrounding villages, helping sick people in their homes. 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 care giver 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 caregiver 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.



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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



Once 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.

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10 FAMILIES COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME

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:

1) 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.



2) 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 buildings 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.

3) 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.

4) 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.



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Project Cost:

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 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:

Personal travel 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 “Day in the life” of an African Impact Volunteer:

Here is how a typical day in the life of a St. Lucia Medical outreach and HIV / AIDS Education volunteer might take shape. 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; this is simply to give an example:

07:00 Get up, eat breakfast, and start getting ready to depart for your project

08:30 Head off to meet the local care giver and drive to the local homes that need medical assistance

09:00 You may visit 2-5 homes in the morning giving medical assistance and care in the rural villages around St Lucia

12:30 Lunch break. You will be transported back to your volunteer house, where lunch will be waiting for you

13:30 Start of your afternoon projects. You may help the painting or refurbishment projects to help on 10 Families

16.30 End of the working day. You will be picked up from your project and taken home, where we clean tools, evaluate the day’s work and discuss the schedule for the next day

18.00 Dinner at your volunteer house



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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 you 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
- At the orientation, you will also receive and be talked through our detailed “Welcome Pack”, which will contain further useful information for your time with us and is available for you to read at any time

Project Support:

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

Project Meals:

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.



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Project Location:

St. Lucia is situated within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, a beautiful area that was declared as South Africa's first Natural World Heritage Site by UNESCO, and which is called by many "Africa's premier bush-and-beach destination". Encompassing almost half a million acres, it is a stunning and ecologically diverse area, where five different eco-systems join, and where you find savannahs, wetlands, swamps, beaches, and a great wealth of wildlife. The area is home to the Zulu tribe; a group of people with a very lively and colourful culture. It is within this impressive setting, we offer you the opportunity to gain a unique insight into the rural South African medical field, and to make a positive impact on the local community through our specially structured Health and community assistance programme. You will also get involved in a wide range of community outreach community initiatives...an unforgettable life-changing experience.

Project Accommodation:

During your placement, you will stay at our large and comfortable project house situated in the middle of St. Lucia. It is a fully furnished house with a large lounge, satellite television, barbeque area, garden, and a swimming pool in a very safe residential area. The volunteer house is approximately a 10 minute walk to the town and a 15 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.



Members of our African Impact team will be staying on the same property, so that they are always available to assist you with any questions or issues you may have. We find that volunteers living together and working closely together with their volunteer coordinators is the surest way of ensuring their safety, and of being able to attend to their most pressing needs. For this reason, we expect all volunteers to stay only in the accommodation provided for them and do not allow volunteers to spend nights away in the town or nearby villages, unless they are away on pre-arranged sightseeing excursions.

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How to get 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.flysax.com. One of our African Impact staff members will meet you at the airport and transport you to the volunteer accommodation.

10 Reasons to volunteer in St. Lucia at our Medical Project:

1. Become a source of love and encouragement - care for the many ailing people in the surrounding communities.
2. Share knowledge of health and medicine - and in exchange learn from the experiences of the local care givers.
3. Enlighten the local community - with life-saving information, such as HIV prevention and infant care.
4. 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.
5. Help improve life for local families - through refurbishment, farming, building and providing advice we can improve the lives of some of the needy families in the communities
6. 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.
7. Embrace the Zulu culture - sample Zulu cooking, taste the local beer, put your Zulu dancing skills to the test, and learn about their fascinating history and traditions.
8. Make friends for life - the people you meet and the experiences you share as volunteers will last a lifetime, transcending age nationality, and background.
9. Observe South Africa's magnificent wildlife – see the Big 5 in their raw and natural habitats, and if you happen to be very lucky, witness the thrill of a lion hunt or the tenderness of a mother caring for her young.
10. When it's time for you to go, leave Africa with a Zulu accent, countless photographs, and memories to last forever.

St. Lucia Travel Highlights:

It would be unforgivable to be living in such stunning scenery without exploring your surroundings! Here are some of the highlights for you to do in 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 booking arrangements:

Game drives in the beautiful Hluhluwe and Umfolozi National Parks (US\$

100)

Hire a car and visit the beaches that surround St Lucia and snorkel at Cape Vidal

Whale, dolphin and sea turtle viewing (seasonal) US\$130

Hippo and crocodile cruises on the St. Lucia Estuary (US\$22)

Weekend trips to the stunning Phinda Private Game Reserve

Dolphin Swimming in Mozambique (overnight) – US\$300

Photographic Tour in the dramatic Drakensberg Mountains (3 nights) – US\$650



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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.



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