

Krizevac Project International Volunteering Policy

Krizevac Project International Volunteering Policy Statement

Krizevac Project works with the poorest of the poor providing people, resources and funds to transform the community of Chilomoni township in Malawi. Those who can give their time and talents in voluntary service find it challenging and rewarding. It may be easy to sign up for service, but adjusting to a culture and work outside of your comfort zone may prove to be more difficult than imagined.

However, volunteers overcome these challenges by keeping three points in mind:

HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Krizevac encourages volunteers to be enthusiastic about whatever work needs to be done, at any time.

BE FLEXIBLE

Volunteers need to be prepared to adjust as needed, including in the areas of working, living, traveling, dietary issues, and interacting with the host organization.

HAVE THE NECESSARY PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES

No matter how great volunteer intentions, their body may not be willing to accommodate the task at hand. Volunteers must be sure they are able to perform duties that complement a given project's objectives.

This policy and procedure outlines expectations, guidelines and limitations on all aspects of Krizevac Project volunteering.

1 - Recruiting Volunteers

From time-to-time Krizevac funded projects may require assistance and expert input from a range of professionals in order to achieve the aims of the project. If these skills cannot be found within Malawi, project managers may request that an international volunteer be sought to fulfil the role. It is the intention that volunteers will work as part of the local team to achieve specific tasks; while doing so they will endeavour to assist with the training and professional development of the team, ensuring sustainability and continued improvements. It is not the intention of Krizevac Project to become an 'adventure working holiday' based project and volunteers will only be recruited at the request of Malawian project managers.

1.1 - Recruitment Guidelines

On identifying the need for a volunteer, Project Managers need to develop a job description, clearly outlining expected tasks, person specification and timeframe of the post, this should be sent to the UK Coordinator by email ideally at least three months before the volunteer is required. The duration of a placement will be a minimum of six months, ideally a year. As a first step job descriptions will be matched to any CV's already on file, if a match can be found the CV will be returned for approval by the Project Manager. If no match can be found:

- Non-urgent job descriptions will be held on file until a volunteer can be found
- Urgent vacancies will be advertised to attract interest

When recruiting volunteers Krizevac Project will consider:

- Skills match
- Attitude and aptitude
- Availability
- Physical Capability

Krizevac Project will encourage the volunteer to consider:

- Their readiness in terms of the job and ability to work fairly independently
- Their preparedness to adapt to life in a developing country
- Financial implications and whether they can realistically afford the placement

Volunteers must be aged over 25 years. Every volunteer will need to supply employment references. Every volunteer will need to complete a police check (DBS). Volunteers who cannot provide references or complete a police check will not be considered.

Related documents: Recruitment Process

2 - Support and Induction

2.1 - Pre departure support

Each volunteer is expected to prepare themselves for their trip through research and seeking advice from appropriate sources such as their GP, travel clinic, travel guides etc. Krizevac Project is happy to provide guidance when sought and will happily advise on living conditions, local facilities and to pass on lessons learned from previous volunteers. Krizevac Project does provide a brief guide which will assist the volunteer but anticipates that all volunteers will research and plan their own trip to meet their own needs.

2.2 - Induction

On arrival in Malawi induction will take two forms:

- 1- A welcome tour, this may be given by another volunteer or member of staff. Volunteers will be shown their accommodation and be given a brief overview of how everything works. A welcome pack will be in each volunteer house with further information on issues such as local mini- buses, hiring vehicles etc. Volunteers will also be shown around the closest town and given initial assistance to organise money, a local phone, find health facilities and the like.
- 2- A workplace induction will be given by the direct line manager; volunteers should gain an understanding of their role, working hours and terms, the annual leave system, absence reporting, their place of work. If a volunteer is working for a non- Krizevac Project organisation such as the church or school, Krizevac Project will liaise to ensure that an induction is arranged.

Related documents: Induction checklist

3 - Ethos and philosophy

3.1 - Ethos

The principles, insights and guidance from the Catholic Church have inspired us since our foundation and remain a vital underpinning of our work.

We work to enact Christian values, within and beyond the Church, including:

- concern for our neighbours and the well-being of future generations
- serving the common good to enable everyone to develop equally
- fighting for social justice and ensuring everyone's basic needs are met
- acting on the basis of need, not greed, and acting in solidarity with those living in poverty
- promoting the values of human dignity, community and stewardship

Those committing to volunteer for Krizevac Project do not have to be Christian but do agree to sympathetically and proactively uphold these values.

3.2 - Conduct and the volunteering philosophy in practice

Volunteers will offer their services and input for a huge variety of reasons, for some it may be to further their career, some will be driven by a desire to do good, for others it will be to experience working in another culture and build on their own life experiences. Whatever the reasons a volunteer wishes to work with Krizevac the focus must remain on achieving project aims and tasks.

Out of office hours, volunteers are able to enjoy their free time as they wish. However, Krizevac Project and Beehive are notable community projects and as with any close-knit community, gossip and chatter is common. Therefore, Krizevac asks all volunteers to remember that even out of work hours, they should continue to uphold the ethos and values of the Krizevac. Conduct which is not in line with the values outlined above (the social teaching of the Catholic Church) or an extravagant lifestyle may reflect badly on the standing Krizevac Project in the local community and the local church and must be self-governed if volunteers wish to remain in post.

International Volunteers, particularly those who are clearly not from Africa, are often given automatic or unqualified respect and have a very high level of influence, whatever their age, capability and experience. International Volunteers will also be automatically high-profile people. This influence and high profile put a greater than usual level of responsibility on all to maintain appropriate conduct. For example, the Catholic Church teaches that it is wrong to co-habit outside of marriage or engage in casual sexual relationships and volunteers doing so will undermine the reputation of The Charity or host organisations and such behaviour will mean it is impossible for you to be accommodated by The Charity.

Think hard about your own lifestyle choices and whether they fit with those of a catholic charity prior to accepting a placement with Krizevac Project. The demands of being isolated, away from support networks will mean volunteers will need to be resilient and clear about being able to live in a simple, dignified way for an extended period.

4 - Good working practices

4.1 - Organisational structure and reporting systems

Each volunteer will be appointed to an appropriate line manager depending on which project they are working on. Your appointed line manager will hold an up-to-date list of all volunteers' names, main

tasks, working hours and reporting guidelines. During working hours, all volunteers will be treated as valued members of staff and will come under the same terms and conditions as paid staff. We know that all volunteers will be supportive team members treating those around them with respect and courtesy.

When a line manager is not available to deal with any urgent issues, or complaints, volunteers may seek advice from the HR department of Beehive, or for those working outside of the Beehive project to the Managing Director of Krizevac Project.

4.2 - Terms and Conditions

Volunteers work under the same terms and conditions as their Malawian colleagues in whichever organisation they are placed in. Line Managers will clearly explain the terms at induction.

Unless otherwise stated, working hours are full time.

Volunteers are entitled to take Malawian public holidays. In addition, volunteers can take some leave:

- For placements of up to three months: no leave, but once a month volunteers may work a short day on Friday to enable a weekend trip, this must be agreed at least one week in advance with the appropriate line manager and will be dependent on completion of tasks. Volunteers fill out a leave form available from administration.
- For placements longer than three months: a proportion of 25 annual leave days pro rata to the length of stay. Leave must be booked at least one week in advance and approved by the appropriate line manager and a leave form must be completed (this replaces the short-day system as described above).
- Separate arrangements will be in place for teaching staff placed in schools, they will work to school timetables and term dates.

4.3 - Vehicle Allocation

It is expected that all volunteers will be able to travel around independently to suit the role they are undertaking and that volunteers will be able to communicate with a wide range of people, organisations and businesses. This will include using minibuses and other forms of local transport. Within Beehive vehicles are allotted to roles not people. It may be that a volunteer will fulfill a role that has a vehicle allocated to it, but this is not guaranteed and will be made clear throughout the recruitment process. If a vehicle is allocated to a volunteer role, they must uphold the Beehive Vehicle Policy (ie. They are responsible for this vehicle and must ensure that it is maintained fit for work). If a volunteer role does not have a vehicle allocated to it, they must make their own arrangements for all personal travel needs.

4.4 - General Working Considerations

We ask that all volunteers work with consideration and respect for their team throughout their volunteering placement. In theory this means the same as it does within any organisation volunteers may have worked within the UK (or country of residence). In practice, it can also mean that there is a need to be aware of cultural or value differences that are often implicit or unsaid. As an example, it is common in Malawi to begin meetings at work with a prayer, it is expected that whatever beliefs a volunteer holds, that they will respect this moment and join with their team. Cultural differences can also apply to the way volunteers appear, speak and act. Countries such as Malawi can hold fairly traditional standards; women may need to cover their legs. Language and tone need to be polite, especially when talking with a senior member of the community. Volunteers need to be aware of their appearance, read the signals that may be given by team members who are too polite to discuss issues openly and be prepared to alter their dress or appearance to suit. If volunteers have any doubts about this, they should seek the guidance of their line manager.

4.5 - Handover



Each volunteering placement must contain an element of sustainability and capacity building, whenever a volunteer starts a new project; they need to be mindful of how it will continue beyond the lifetime of their stay. If a volunteer is working as part of a team, they can aim to share skills through coaching and mentoring other team members. At the end of each placement, each volunteer will hand over their project, either directly to other team members, or in written form for future team members.

Related documents:

Beehive Centre for Social Enterprise Employees Handbook, Beehive Vehicle Policy

5 - Living as a volunteer

5.1 - Accommodation

Krizevac Project aims to support volunteers through the provision of basic but private and secure accommodation. This is most likely to be within our 'volunteer village' (known as Mitsidi) a mixture of staff, student and volunteers housing. If no accommodation is available at Mitsidi, alternative community accommodation will be provided to a similar standard. If accommodation at Mitsidi does not suit the volunteer they are free to seek housing elsewhere, however no recompense will be provided for this, and the volunteer must recognise that they are responsible for their own security, health and wellbeing.

Volunteers will be provided with the basic necessities to self-cater and care for themselves independently, although where possible evening meals will be provided on working days. Beds, bedding and bed nets are all provided. All houses have water and electricity, although service fluctuates and can be inconsistent.

NB: If volunteers wish to invite friends and family to stay in charity accommodation this must be approved in advance by Vince Owen and will depend on room availability. Visitors' rates are agreed by Beehive and must be paid in advance to the finance team.

5.2 - Support

Volunteers will live an independent life; part of the adventure of volunteering in an unknown community is to seek new networks of friendship and support. Often there will be a group of international volunteers sharing facilities at the Mitsidi Volunteers Village; communal mealtimes are a good opportunity to debrief after a hard day at work. At other times volunteers may find they more isolated and will need to rely on their own resourcefulness to form new support mechanisms. Krizevac endeavours to offer practical support and assistance in the following situations:

- Medical emergencies
- Emergency repatriation
- Where the volunteer is a victim of crime

5.3 - Expenses

Krizevac Project aims to provide for basic needs to be met (2/3 x meals per day, some agreed workplace expenses) but volunteers must ensure that they have sufficient financial capacity to support themselves throughout their trip. Stipends/ pocket money is not generally available to volunteers.

Related Documents: Malawi Volunteers Guide, Beehive Vehicle Policy, Mitsidi House Manual

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