



# Lake Malawi Child-care Project

SUPPORT TEACHERS & LOCAL VOLUNTEERS IN  
IMPROVING THE FOUNDATION PHASE EDUCATION OF  
MALAWI'S YOUNGEST LEARNERS

**Mangochi District, Malawi**

VA32 working in Malawi with project partners



## Who Should Apply?

Those with a passion for sharing their love and time with disadvantaged, orphaned and vulnerable children, to assist local teachers in improving the foundation phase education and quality of care in rural day care centres. This project is also ideal for teaching students looking for teaching practice and people considering a career in nursery teaching or education.

## Project Highlights

- ⇒ Assist local teachers in a rural Malawian nursery school
- ⇒ Assist in the daily running of the school which includes helping to feed the children on the school feeding scheme and assisting with the brushing of teeth and promotion of basic hygiene
- ⇒ Help to teach English to pre-school aged children and prepare them for primary school
- ⇒ Work with disadvantaged, orphaned and vulnerable children
- ⇒ Plan and facilitate structured play activities for the children
- ⇒ Organise and run afternoon sports and arts activities for older children in the village

**VOLUNTEER AFRICA 32° SOUTH**

PHYSICAL ADDRESS Shop 3, Atalaia Centre, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

POSTAL ADDRESS PO Box 20, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

Tel: +27 (0)43 738 5523 | Fax: +27 (0)86 600 6808 | Email: [info@volunteerafrica.co.za](mailto:info@volunteerafrica.co.za)



## Project Background

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, with over half of the population living below the poverty line and an average daily income of less than 50 pence in rural areas. Poor health care and malnutrition is widespread and the infant mortality rate is high.

In Malawi, children usually start primary school aged 6. Below this age, there is little access to education or nursery schools, especially in rural areas and there is no formal preschool system set up. There are some private nursery schools, where parents can pay to give their children a head start in education, but most people cannot afford this and the best are generally located in large towns or cities. Some rural communities establish groups, run by local volunteers, in order to bring children together and provide basic care and education, but these are typically under-resourced and understaffed.

Research has shown a direct link between good preschool education and performance of students at primary school. A basic introduction to English at a young age is also invaluable in preparing students for lessons, which are taught in English from Standard 5 in primary schools in Malawi.

The local preschool teachers and carers that run these nurseries are very rarely qualified and often speak limited English themselves. You can therefore provide vital support, improving the standard of education offered and also helping the carers to develop their teaching and English skills.

## Your Role As A Volunteer

The preschool groups that we support are run by just a single or small number of dedicated local volunteers, typically looking after 50-100 children who attend daily. Your help is therefore very welcome to keep the children entertained, assist with basic education in preparation for school and daily feeding.

Volunteer tasks include:

- Teaching basic English, including the alphabet, counting, days of the week, shapes and songs
- Serving porridge to malnourished children daily as part of a feeding programme
- Recording weights of children to monitor their improvement
- Promoting the benefits of good health and hygiene and teaching children how to brush their teeth

Since the start of this project volunteers have helped repaint the nursery to create a colourful space and we have provided toys and games that the children can play with. We have also introduced a feeding programme, providing a supplemented porridge mixture to reduce malnourishment. Breakfast times can get messy, so the more help we have the better!



### VOLUNTEER AFRICA 32° SOUTH

PHYSICAL ADDRESS Shop 3, Atalaia Centre, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

POSTAL ADDRESS PO Box 20, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

Tel: +27 (0)43 738 5523 | Fax: +27 (0)86 600 6808 | Email: [info@volunteerafrica.co.za](mailto:info@volunteerafrica.co.za)

Project Partners





## Afternoon Activities

Having spent the morning at the nursery, you will assist in various extra-curricular community projects in the afternoon. Dependent on experience and interests, you can get involved in the following projects:

- **Library Workshops** Daily workshops for primary school aged children in the library. These sessions give the children the opportunity to do activities they would not usually have the chance to, such as art and crafts and reading, as well providing extra English and maths tuition.
- **Wildlife & Environment Club** Educate pupils about the environment, conservation and how to preserve the wildlife of Malawi.
- **Sports** Coach a variety of sports, including football, netball, volleyball and rounders. There are also more informal activities, such as ball games, skipping or parachute games and obstacle races, which the children love!



### Volunteer Profile

A minimum age of 18 applies for all **VA32** placements. Depending on your previous experience you may be required to complete a basic weekend, or online TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) course. If you have limited teaching experience we would recommend this anyway, as your experience and the value you bring to the project will be improved by the teaching ideas and confidence that you will gain. There is no maximum age, as long as you are fit and healthy enough to participate in project activities.

Malawians believe that appearance is important and whilst teaching, females are expected to wear long skirts that come well below the knee and tops that cover your shoulders and cleavage. Males should wear smart trousers and a shirt with a collar.

Please remember to be respectful and considerate if you wish to suggest any improvements, or new ideas that you feel would benefit the project. Staff at the schools and projects may have different cultural expectations and values to those that you believe to be right, or appropriate. They may work to Africa time, which at times may seem relaxed to the point of being horizontal. However, the co-ordinators have much more experience at managing local project relationships than you, so ask for their advice if you are unsure about something and please listen to it. Who knows you may even learn to relax a little more yourself!



### VOLUNTEER AFRICA 32° SOUTH

PHYSICAL ADDRESS Shop 3, Atalaia Centre, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

POSTAL ADDRESS PO Box 20, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

Tel: +27 (0)43 738 5523 | Fax: +27 (0)86 600 6808 | Email: [info@volunteerafrica.co.za](mailto:info@volunteerafrica.co.za)

Project Partners





# Volunteer Life

## Accommodation & Meals

You will stay in a comfortable, shared house in a rural village in the Mangochi District. The house is located on the shores of the stunning Lake Malawi. The area in which volunteers are based (and Malawi in general) is very safe, but the house is fenced and gated for additional security and privacy.

The bedrooms in the volunteer house are large shared rooms, generally with single or bunk beds. Mosquito nets are provided and the rooms either have en-suite facilities, or an adjacent bathroom; all with western style flush toilets and showers.

The staff at the house includes a cook to prepare meals for you and a housekeeper to clean. Three meals a day are provided. Breakfast is on a self-service basis and usually consists of toast, or pancakes, and tea and coffee. Lunch usually consists of sandwiches, pasta, soups, salads, or similar; or a packed lunch can be provided if you are not returning to the house in the middle of the day. A hot dinner will be prepared for you in the evenings.



## Orientation & Support

Your orientation will typically take place the day after arrival. This will include:

- An introduction to Malawian culture
- Your health and safety whilst in Malawi
- Money and transportation in Malawi
- Workplace ethics
- Basic local greetings
- An introduction to some of the project staff
- An introduction and background to your project activities
- Weekend excursions and free time

In the afternoon of the orientation day, you will be taken on a familiarisation tour of the local area and nearest town, including the local market there. This will provide an opportunity to buy cheaply priced local material for wrap-around skirts if you need to. Throughout your stay in Malawi you will have the support and guidance of your project co-ordinator, as well as the other project staff who you will be working alongside. They will provide competent assistance, advice and be able to answer any questions that you may have on a daily basis.



## VOLUNTEER AFRICA 32° SOUTH

PHYSICAL ADDRESS Shop 3, Atalaia Centre, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa  
POSTAL ADDRESS PO Box 20, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa  
Tel: +27 (0)43 738 5523 | Fax: +27 (0)86 600 6808 | Email: [info@volunteerafrica.co.za](mailto:info@volunteerafrica.co.za)

Project Partners





## Program Fees & Dates

There are start dates every second Monday throughout the year.

See our website under the [rates and dates](#) tab for current rates on this project.

### What's included in the program fee?

- Airport transfers upon arrival and departure (Monday arrivals only)
- Accommodation in shared volunteer house
- Three meals a day whilst on project
- All project related transport
- Support of our experienced on-site project co-ordinators
- On site orientation

### What's not included?

- Flights
- Snacks, drinks and meals outside of project
- Personal Insurance
- Extra excursions and trips

## Getting There

Arrange your flights to arrive at Lilongwe Airport in Malawi prior to 2pm on the date specified. Upon arrival, you will be met by a project representative and will be transferred to the accommodation; about three and a half hours drive from the airport.

## Booking Process

Contact us on [info@volunteerafrica.co.za](mailto:info@volunteerafrica.co.za) or +27 (0)43 738 5523. Our travel and bookings guru Karen will email an application form to you asap. This needs to be filled in and returned to us and upon receipt we will invoice you for a 35% deposit which is needed to confirm your placement on project. The remainder of the fee is due one month prior to arrival.



### VOLUNTEER AFRICA 32° SOUTH

PHYSICAL ADDRESS Shop 3, Atalaia Centre, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

POSTAL ADDRESS PO Box 20, Chintsa East, Chintsa. 5275. South Africa

Tel: +27 (0)43 738 5523 | Fax: +27 (0)86 600 6808 | Email: [info@volunteerafrica.co.za](mailto:info@volunteerafrica.co.za)

Project Partners

