



# AVC AMBASSADOR INTERNSHIP

## Interning in Moshi

From one Intern to another, advice for thriving in an international setting.

*This document was put together by our intern, Hannah, who worked with AVC in Tanzania in 2014.*

### Best Practices

#### Life Abroad:

- Come with an open mind and sense of humor. Have few expectations and stay open to whatever might come your way.
- Be prepared for lots of adventure and be okay with the possibility of a little misadventure.
- Be flexible, adaptable and willing to learn. You will probably learn even in ways you may not expect.
- Challenge yourself to try new things and step out of your comfort zone - this is often where the most growth happens.
- Respect your co-workers and the new culture in which you are living.

#### Work:

- Work with internship supervisor to set up clear expectations from the beginning.
- Create a roadmap for your work with clear and measurable goals.
  - Include milestones to let you know you are on track, key tasks to accomplish your milestones, and deadlines to help reach your goal.
- Complete weekly progress reports to track your work.
- Ask for feedback - we want to help you learn and grow as much as possible.

- Ask for help - we want to ensure you are successful in all that you take on.
- Voice your ideas! Don't be afraid to speak up. Who knows, you might just have the next big idea.
- Get to know the Volunteers: become their friend, collaborate on ideas, ask questions about culture, observe. You will learn a lot!
  - They may be of similar age and/or going through similar experiences in their lives. They will probably have great insight about what local life is like, which may help you adjust to living and working abroad.

### **Moshi:**

- The more Swahili you know the better! If you've never studied Swahili before, it will be incredibly helpful to learn some of the basic grammatical structures before you arrive.
  - Learn the greetings - this is a key component to Tanzanian culture!
- Read about Tanzanian culture and customs to prepare yourself for what life living in a new country may be like. (See "Life in Moshi")
- Stay active and explore the community. There are a lot of nearby places to have adventures - take advantage of living in such a beautiful place!
- Write down what you experience. Taking time to reflect will help you process what you are experiencing and remember it all later.

## **GUIDELINES/WHAT TO EXPECT**

### **Life in Moshi**

- Let us know when you will be arriving and we will coordinate picking you up from the airport.
- Interns will be shown around Moshi and we can help you find a Swahili tutor or class if you would like to learn the language.
- Interns will also be given the chance to visit our Volunteers' placement sites and spend time with the Volunteers on site.
- The AVC office is in a house in the neighborhood of Rau - it acts as both a place of business and a home for a few of our employees.
  - Typical office hours are Monday - Friday, 8am-4:30pm.
- In Tanzania it is very common to have a housekeeper - someone who cooks, cleans and does laundry. We have Mama Zawadi, a loveable part of the AVC family! She will do laundry for you.
- In town there are many enjoyable coffee shops and restaurants, a post office, specialty stores, and the one-stop-shop Nakumatt (a Kenyan big box chain store).
- Moshi has a fun night life, including karaoke bars, pubs, and places to go dancing.
- The weather fluctuates in Moshi ranging from cool rains to intense heat depending on the season.
- Tanzania is a moderately conservative country and when living and working here it is important to dress in a way that is culturally appropriate.

- It is also important to note that Tanzania is a formal culture. People tend to dress nicely for any occasion, and it is important to look professional in a work environment. For example, do not wear baggy travel pants or worn out clothing. Business casual wear is appropriate for work and most other occasions.

## CULTURE

We want your transition to life in Moshi to be as smooth and successful as possible. Here is a brief overview of what the cultural transition may be like for you, and what sorts of things you can expect from Tanzanian society. Don't let any of this intimidate you - let it help you adapt to the new environment.

- Tanzania is a very friendly culture, but building relationships may be different than what you're used to.
  - Think of Tanzanians as peaches and Westerners as coconuts. The peach is very soft and fuzzy on the outside, with a hard internal center. The coconut is very rough and hard on the outside, while the inside is soft and mushy. Westerners tend to be more like coconuts, where they take longer to warm up, but once they do, they open up a lot. Tanzanians may come across as soft and fuzzy like the peach and they deeply value contact with others, but there is a lot they keep to themselves.
  - There is an expression in Swahili: "Mtu ni watu", which means "a person is people." This means you are not separate from the people you are connected with. Social paradigms in Tanzania are much different - they are less individualized and more relationship-focused. A person is not viewed as an individual, but rather as their roles *with* individuals. For example, Hannah is not Hannah, she is Hannah as a daughter, Hannah as a sister, etc., and not just Hannah as Hannah. It is similar to the South African concept of "ubuntu", which is sometimes translated as "I am because you are".
- People take care of people: The government doesn't have the same social safety nets set in place as the US because people take care of one another.
  - Examples: There aren't assisted-living homes for the elderly. It is common for older siblings, aunts, or uncles to pay for younger family members to go to school.
- Society is based around a patron-client mentality, which creates interdependence.
  - This generally means that if you help someone out they will have a debt to you, and vice versa. People often say, "Today it's you, tomorrow it's me."

## Packing Suggestions:

- Clothing
  - Warmer weather: cotton (breathable) clothing is ideal - it's hot and you'll get sweaty!
    - It is respectful to cover your shoulders and knees in public. Tank tops are okay as long as they are not too revealing (no bra straps showing).
    - You may want a light sweater/sweatshirt, and/or long sleeve shirts because it can cool down in the evening.
    - For everyday wear, you will probably want casual shoes/sandals. You may want active shoes/sandals to explore nearby hiking trails.
    - Bathing suit (2 pieces/bikinis are okay)
  - Cooler weather: during certain months of the year (May-August), it can be colder, especially at night.
    - You will likely want close-toed shoes, long pants, sweaters, and possibly a jacket.
- A headlamp is always a good idea.
- Tanzania uses British outlets, which are three-pronged.
- Mainstream toiletries (Johnson & Johnson, Procter & Gamble) are available to buy in town. If you have specific brands or products you like to use then you may want to bring your own (example: specific face wash, sunscreen). It can be difficult to find dental floss.
- Bedding and a mosquito net can be bought in town.
- Books can be bought in town too, no need to bring your entire library!
- Voltage is different than American appliances. Computers don't require a converter, but for other electronics or appliances (for ex. hair straighteners) you may need a converter. (Voltage in Tanzania is 220-240 vs. 110-120 in The U.S.).
- Feel free to ask us any questions you may have about packing!

## Things to Know:

- **Visas**
  - When you enter Tanzania you will need a valid passport and a tourist visa, which can be acquired at upon your arrival at the airport or at border crossings.
  - Upon your arrival, you will need to apply for a volunteer residency permit. We will help you submit your volunteer visa.
  - You should bring American dollars in cash to pay for your tourist visa and residency permit.
  - For information on visas and residency permits, please visit the [Tanzanian Immigration website](#).
  - If you fly into Kenya and travel to Tanzania, you will need to purchase a Kenyan transit visa at the airport in Nairobi.

- **Medicines/Vaccinations**

- You should visit your local travel clinic to get the necessary vaccines and prescriptions. Be sure to make your appointment well in advance as clinics are often busy and some vaccines need to be administered a certain amount of time before your departure or in multiple doses several weeks apart.
- Malaria is present in Tanzania. Consult your doctor to decide the best course of prevention.
- Please note that you may be denied entry into Tanzania without proof of a yellow fever vaccine.
- Please visit the [Centers for Disease Control](#) website for up to date vaccine and prescription recommendations and other health information.

- **Costs**

- AVC interns do not pay a program fee, but they will be expected to cover the costs of their visas, airfare, pre-travel expenses (medicines, vaccinations, etc.), housing, and food.
  - We will help find suitable homestays for interns in Moshi.
- Costs of living in Tanzania are relatively low and we can work with interns to determine a budget for their stay.
  - You can probably plan on budgeting about \$10-\$20 a day. This does not account for special activities such as climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, going on safari, travelling to Zanzibar, buying souvenirs, etc.

**One final note:**

- In Tanzanian culture, individuals are closely associated with the organizations they work for. At the same time, certain behaviors are highly frowned upon in Tanzania. In order to maintain a respected standing in the community, we ask that AVC Staff and Interns behave in a way that is culturally sensitive. This means abstaining from drug use and heavy drinking while here and dressing in a way that is culturally appropriate (see above).