INTERNATIONAL VISITOR MANUAL

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN VISITING THE NYAKA AIDS ORPHANS PROJECT

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Shabnam Olinga, Executive Program Assistant
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Table of Contents

About The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project 1-3
Uganda- The Pearl of Africa 4-6

Before You Leave
Eligibility 7
Application Requirements for Visiting NAOP 7-8
Entry Requirements for Visiting Uganda 9

Travel & Transportation
Travel Agent Information 10
Traveling to Nyakagyezi 10-16
Transport While at Nyaka and Visiting Kutamba 16

While You Are Visiting
Emergency Information 17
In Uganda and at Nyaka 18-19
Accommodations in Nyakagyezi 20-24
Packing List 25-27
Communication While in Uganda 27-28
Example Itineraries for Visiting Nyaka 29-33

After You Return
Requirements When Returning from NAOP 34

Spread Awareness of NAOP 35
Twesigye Jackson Kaguri was born and raised in the small village of Nyakagyezi, Uganda. Jackson graduated from Makerere University in Kampala and studied Human Rights Advocacy at Columbia University, as a visiting scholar.

Jackson’s older brother Frank died of AIDS, leaving Jackson to care for his nieces and nephews and financially support their education. In 2001, after Jackson had seen the impact that the AIDS epidemic had caused in his life and his village, Jackson decided to build Nyaka Primary School, the first school in the area to offer free education to children who had been orphaned due to the AIDS crisis.

When not visiting the schools in Uganda or working out of Nyaka’s two offices, one in East Lansing, MI and the other in Kampala, Uganda, Jackson travels the world to speak with students and supporters about Nyaka.

**Mission Statement**

The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project is working on behalf of HIV/AIDS orphans in rural Uganda to end systemic deprivation, poverty, and hunger through a holistic approach to community development, education, and health care.
Vision Statement
Nyaka AIDS Foundation’s vision is for rural communities in Uganda and Africa to build strong community and family structures using sustainable, community-focused approaches to address challenges they face due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

15 Years of Progress
Our project operates in two districts in rural southwestern Uganda, Rukungiri and Kanungu, and we work to break down the barriers that prevent our students, grandmothers, and community members from rising out of poverty. NAOP helps 7,004 grandmothers and the 43,000 children that they are caring for. We are proud to say that in the last 15 years we have accomplished the following and more:

- We built and operate two primary schools, one secondary and vocational school, and are educating over 700 students. Our first class of students are currently attending their first year in Universities; one student was offered a full ride scholarship to Vancouver Island University!

- We provide all students with free tuition, uniforms, shoes, school supplies, sanitary products, and everything else they need to get their education.

- We believe in empowering our students along with the grandmothers who are caring for them after losing their own children to AIDS and the entire community.

- We have two libraries near the schools to provide students a safe place to study, with access to books, newspapers, computers, and e-readers. Solar power provides lighting and internet access. Community members are also welcome to use the libraries.
• We have a farm and nutrition program that feeds all of our students two meals a day, for some these are the only meals they’ll eat in a day.

• We have two gravity fed water systems that provide safe drinking water to the community and schools, and we distribute jerry cans and rain barrels.

• We have a free medical clinic and school nurses to ensure that our students, their families, and community members have access to health care and HIV/AIDS testing.

• We believe that education is a powerful tool, so we have two student led Anti-AIDS Choirs that sing and speak on radio programs and perform in front of all of our students and community members, educating them about the risks and effects of HIV/AIDS.

• We provide houses, smokeless kitchens, and pit latrines to the neediest Grandmothers, who deserve to live and raise children in dignity and comfort.

• We also provide farming tools and micro-finance loans to Grandmothers, so that they can be more productive, start businesses, and better provide for themselves and the children they care for.

It is only because of our caring supporters that we have been able to accomplish so much in the past 15 years! Our Students, Grannies, and Staff Members Thank You!

Webale Nyo! (Thank You)
Uganda- The Pearl of Africa

**Location** The Republic of Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa, straddling the equator. Uganda is bordered on the north by South Sudan, east by Kenya, south by Tanzania and Rwanda, and west by the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is the world’s second most populous landlocked country.

**Geography** Uganda is in the African Great Lakes region and Nile basin, including almost half of Lake Victoria, with high mountains in the west and southwest. Uganda features 60 protected wildlife areas and national parks: Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and Rwenzori Mountains National Park are both UNESCO World Heritage sites, with other National Parks including Kibale, Kidepo Valley, Lake Mburo, Mount Elgon, Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth, Semuliki, and Mgahinga Gorilla National Park.

**Climate** Uganda has an equatorial climate with no real winter or summer. Average daily temperatures range from 70-77°F throughout the year, with cool nights dipping down to the 50’s. The hottest months are February and March. The south, where Nyakagyezi is located, has two wet seasons of daily rains, from mid-September to November and again from March to May.

**Population** Uganda is approximately the size of the state of Oregon but with a population of 37.8 million people. Kampala, the capital and largest city, has a population of 1.7 million. Uganda’s median age is 15 years, the lowest in the world due to deaths from the AIDS epidemic.

**AIDS Epidemic** Uganda has been among the rare HIV success stories. Infection rates of 30% of the population in the 1980s has fallen to just 7.4%. Researchers have found that rates of new infection have stabilized as of 2005 due to a variety of factors, including increased condom use and sexual health awareness. The epidemic has caused the death of many young adults and orphaned up to 1.2 million children.
**Language** The official languages of Uganda are Swahili and English. Several regional languages are also spoken, including Luganda, Runyoro, Runyankole, Rukiga, and Langi. All Ugandans with formal education speak English in the British style.

**Religion** Christians make up about 85.2% of Uganda's population. The next most reported religion is Islam, with Muslims representing 12.1% of the population.

**History/Government/Political Situation** A former colony of the British Empire, Uganda's current borders were set as a Protectorate by the British government in 1894. Uganda gained its independence in 1962, but remains a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Yoweri Museveni has been the President of Uganda since January 1986, after deposing the previous regime following a six-year insurgency. Museveni has been re-elected President in every subsequent election, most recently in 2016. While Uganda is a politically stable nation, with several active political parties and an engaged populace, its public sector is widely considered to be one of the most corrupt in the world, mostly concerning issues of patronage and bribery. Public rallies and demonstrations do occur, with occasional police violence against protesters.

**Safety** Uganda is one of the safest countries in Africa, and Kampala is one of its safest capitals. Uganda's military forces are a conspicuous presence, as are private armed guards. Travelers should expect to pass through security checkpoints almost everywhere, including park entrances, hotels, restaurants, and shopping centers. Foreigners are treated with great respect, but note that it is illegal to take photos of military personnel and police stations. Generally, only the far northeast Karamoja district is considered unsafe for travel, and while conflict continues in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo, there is considered no danger in the southern districts where Nyaka operates.

You can find more information on travel alerts and warnings here:  
[https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/uganda-travel-alert.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/uganda-travel-alert.html)
Poverty Uganda has made enormous progress in reducing poverty, slashing the countrywide incidence from 56% of the population in 1992 to 24.5% in 2009. However, the absolute number of poor people has increased due to population growth, and poverty remains firmly entrenched in rural areas, which are home to 84% of Ugandans.

About 27% of all rural people – some 8 million men, women and children – still live below the national rural poverty line, most of them being smallholder farmers living in remote areas scattered throughout the country. These farmers do not have access to vehicles and roads to transport their produce, and they lack technology to help them increase their production and reduce pests and disease. Uganda is also considered one of the world's most vulnerable and least climate-resilient countries which has a serious impact on agricultural production and rural livelihoods.
Before You Leave

Eligibility

1. 21 years of age minimum, unless approved by NAOP staff and accompanied by a parent, chaperone, or teacher at all times, no exceptions will be made.

2. Speak and read basic English.

3. We are able to accommodate group visits to a certain extent, please email our Executive Program Assistant Shabnam Olinga at shabnam@nyakaschool.org for more details.

Application Requirements for visiting NAOP

Fulfillment of these requirements is necessary to visit Nyaka schools and properties. Applicants who do not fulfill the requirements listed below will not be allowed to visit.

1. Read through and understand our International Visitor Manual.

2. Submit your $100 non-refundable volunteer application fee by going to our website’s donation page www.nyakaschool.org/donations/donate.php. Please indicate that your $100 donation is for your volunteer application fee by selecting other and typing “volunteer application fee” under the heading If you have a special purpose for your donation, please let us know on the donation page. You can also mail a $100 check made out to Nyaka to:
Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project
2970 E Lake Lansing Rd
East Lansing, MI 48823

3. Submit all of the following to our Executive Program Assistant Shabnam Olinga at shabnam@nyakaschool.org

   o Your confirmation email stating that you paid the $100 application fee
   
   o Your required National Sex Offender Check results that you obtained from www.nsopw.gov/Core/Portal.aspx
   
   o Your required Background Check results that you obtained from www.ussearch.com/consumer/index.jsp?searchtab=home
4. **Conduct a fundraiser, or personally donate, at least $500 towards building a Grandmother Home before you visit **Nyaka.** The complete cost to build a home is $1400.**

- For more information on Grandmother Homes please refer to our website: [www.nyakaschool.org/grandmothers/homes.php](http://www.nyakaschool.org/grandmothers/homes.php)

- Please direct questions about creating a fundraiser to Desiree Kofoed at [desiree@nyakaschool.org](mailto:desiree@nyakaschool.org)
Entry Requirements of Uganda

1. Acquire a Passport, **$110 cost**
   [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

2. Receive Immunizations and malaria prophylaxis, from your health care provider, health department, or travel clinic. Costs are dependent upon your insurance coverage.
   - You will need to receive your immunizations at least 4-6 weeks prior to your departure
   - You must provide an Inoculation Certificate for Yellow Fever to enter Uganda

   
   or you can obtain your VISA at the port of entry. If you are visiting more than one East African country you should buy an East African VISA for $100 and that will be valid to visit Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania for 30 days.

You will need the following to complete your Visa application:
   - A completed application form- online only
   - A passport valid for at least 6 months and past your departure date
   - A money order of the correct VISA fee
   - An international Inoculation Certificate for yellow fever.
   - A letter of invitation/introduction, if traveling on business
   - Enclose a prepaid, self-addressed UPS, FEDEX, DHL, USPS Priority or Express return envelope. Regular envelopes are not accepted.
Travel & Transportation
Travel Agent Information

After submitting and receiving approval of your volunteer application we recommend that you contact Samuel Mugisha, Founder and Director of BIC Tours LTD, for help with all of your travel arrangements. Sam is an expert and will be able to help you with flights, hotels, in-country transport, and if desired, sightseeing tours and safaris. It is also possible that Sam can get better rates than if you made the arrangements yourself. Nyaka is also able to accommodate group visits to a certain extent, and Sam is wonderful in helping plan group trips.

Samuel Mugisha
BIC Tours LTD
Tirupati, Mazima/Uchumi Mall 1st Floor,
Room No. 110-111
PO Box 29878 Kampala Uganda
Phone: +256-312-111 513
Mobile: +256-527 333
Email: info@bic-tours.com
Website: www.bic-tours.com

Traveling to Nyakagyezi

There are two options for booking flights that you can discuss with Samuel Mugisha, you can fly into Entebbe, Uganda or Kigali, Rwanda. In either case you will need a hotel for the night and transportation to the rural village of Nyakagyezi where Nyaka is located.

Flying into Entebbe, Uganda
(1½ hrs from Kampala, 6-8 hrs from Nyakagyezi)

- You will have a chance to exchange money and buy cell phones or sim cards in the airport, although it is recommended that you exchange money in town for a better exchange rate and phones will also be cheaper.

- Flights into Entebbe arrive in the evening or the middle of the night so it is recommended that you stay in a hotel in Entebbe.
Lake Heights Hotel is in Entebbe and is around $200+ a night. Transportation to the hotel can be arranged (a small fee may apply) and you must let them know when you make your reservation. [www.lakeheightshotel.com](http://www.lakeheightshotel.com)

Anderita Beach Hotel is off the shore of Lake Victoria, is around $80 a night and offers free transport from the airport to the hotel. [www.anderitabeachhotel.com](http://www.anderitabeachhotel.com)

Gorilla African Guest House is about a 10 minute drive from the airport, is around $25 a night, and transportation to the hotel can be arranged for by the Guest House for around $6. [www.gorilla-african-guest-house.weebly.com](http://www.gorilla-african-guest-house.weebly.com)

If you fly into Entebbe and stay in Entebbe or Kampala there are three options to travel to Nyakagyezi.

1. Have **BIC Tours** drive you from Entebbe or Kampala to Nyakagyezi. The drive takes 7-9 hours; recommended departure is at 8:00am to allow enough time for stopovers and to arrive at Nyaka before dark. If you are traveling with **BIC Tours** it will cost approximately $400 for a one way transfer to pay for the driver, car, and fuel. The vehicle costs can be shared; the vehicle can transport up to 7 people. You will make a couple stops along the way.

   - The first stop will be at the equator to take pictures and or the water experiment (which costs a small fee.) There are some shops there, but their items are priced pretty high because it’s a tourist destination. **It is better to buy handmade items from the Grannies in Nyaka’s Granny Groups.**

   - The second stop will be for a buffet lunch at Igongo Country Hotel & Cultural Centre in Mbarara. Lunch will cost approximately $15 per person.
• The third stop will be at Enengo Valley to take in the stunning views and take pictures.

*Have your cameras readily available on the drive; Uganda is a beautiful country and you might see some wildlife.

2. Take a flight from Entebbe, Uganda to Kihiihi, Uganda (1- 1½ hrs from Nyakagyezi)

• Flights into Kihiihi arrive at 8:45am.

• A local driver will charge about $15-$25 to drive you to Nyakagyezi. If you choose to have BIC Tours pick you up and drive you around while you are staying at Nyaka this cost will be included.

• You will need to stop at Stanbic Bank in Kihiihi town to exchange money. You can also buy a phone at the MTN shop if needed.

3. Take a bus from Kampala to Nyakagyezi.

This option is only recommended for experienced travelers who embrace the backpacker travel experience!

• We recommend that you travel with a local guide unless you are very familiar with public transport in the African setting. $125 should cover your (one person) and your guide’s bus tickets to Nyaka, transfer fees, your guide’s fee for 2 days, and your guide’s bus ticket back to Kampala. If you plan on having a guide accompany you on the way back to Kampala it will cost approximately $250 for the round trip. If you travel without the guide it should cost $20-$25 round trip.

• Your guide will let you know where you are, how far you are from your destination, help you with basic safety precautions, and will be very useful if the bus breaks down along the way (which is quite common).

• You will need to get on the bus in Kisenyi Bus Park. You can either have your driver help you find the correct bus or there are always guys who will help
find the bus you need to be on. They will immediately locate you and ask where you are going. Say Kanungu-Kihihi. Avoid letting them carry your bags unless you are willing to pay a porter fee of around 2,000 shillings (less than $1).

- There are two day buses you can take to Nyaka. The first bus, Muhabura, leaves at 6:30am so you should plan on being there around 6:00am to get a decent seat. The second bus, Savana, leaves around 7:15am so you should plan on being there by 6:45am. The time the buses arrive at Nyaka varies widely depending on how many stops the buses make. The buses usually arrive around 5:00pm, but you could be there as early as 3:00pm or as late as 7:30pm, although that is pretty rare.

- Please be prepared for a long day. There will be stop-overs and you may be waiting on the bus for up to an hour while it is stopped without any explanation. It is best to keep an eye on how other passengers are reacting and if they are calmly waiting for the bus to start up again, there is probably nothing to worry about. The bus will likely be crowded and the seats are hard so you may want to place a small cushion on your seat. The seats in the front of the bus near the driver have more leg room.

- There are limited stops for bathroom breaks so if the bus stops and a bunch of passengers get off--take a quick bathroom break! The toilet will probably be a squat toilet, which may or may not be clean, or it could be a "bush stop" where you find a relatively private place in the bushes, as if you are camping. Pack your own toilet paper and hand sanitizer!
• There won’t be a specific lunch break so feel free to pack your lunch. There will also be vendors who will run up to the bus windows to sell snacks, water, and soft drinks. They will sell packaged cookies and prepared foods like roasted plantains, hard boiled eggs and bananas. We recommend avoiding the meat snacks and pre-cut fruit so you don’t get ill, but everything else is fine to eat.

• Most people are honest but you should be careful with your belongings because theft can happen. It is best to keep your valuables in a purse or small bag on your person. Large backpacks won’t fit comfortably with you on the seat or by your feet so if it’s possible try storing your bags in a place where you can have a constant visual of them, like the overhead rack directly across the aisle from where you are sitting.

The bus route will be as follows:

• Kampala Kisenyi Bus Park – Masaka, Mbarara, Ntungamo, Rukungiri. The Tarmac Road ends after Rukungiri and it’s still another hour until Kambuga. You will cross the Enengo gorge (with bridge at the bottom) and it is about 15 minutes after that. A fellow traveler or the bus conductor will help you, but Kambuga Hospital is a major stage where they will usually stop.

  o If you are staying at Nyaka’s guesthouse you will want to take a boda boda (motor bike taxi) from the bus stop to Nyaka Primary School where the guesthouse is located. There will be several boda bodas waiting for passengers and it should cost about 2,500 shillings (less than $1). The boda boda drivers might seem a bit overwhelming, all vying to have the muzungu on their bike, but they are friendly and will help you with your bags. Just go with the flow! If you are staying at the cottages you can easily walk to them. They are visible from where you disembark; just down the road and across the street from the bus stop, though you may ask someone to point the way.

Vendors selling food and drinks.

Beautiful scenery on the way to Nyakagyezi.

Sunset near Nyakagyezi.
Flying into Kigali, Rwanda
(5-7 hours from Nyakagyezi)

- You will have a chance to exchange money and buy cell phones or sim cards in the airport, although it is recommended that you exchange money at the Forex Bureau in town for a better exchange rate and phones will also be cheaper.

- Only flights into Kigali that arrive before 10:00am (Rwandan time) can drive to Nyakagyezi that night, so it is recommended that you stay in a hotel in Kigali.
  - Hotel Des Milles Collines is around $280 a night, is in a good location, has a pool and air conditioning, very attentive staff, and is the inspiration for the movie Hotel Rwanda. [www.enjoyrwanda.info/where-to-stay/kigali/des-mille-collines-hotel](http://www.enjoyrwanda.info/where-to-stay/kigali/des-mille-collines-hotel)
  - Heaven is $85-$150 a night and is a boutique hotel in a great location with exceptional service. Breakfast is included, a dinner discount is offered, and it is attached to one of Kigali’s best restaurants. Airport transportation can be arranged for $35. [www.heavenrwanda.com](http://www.heavenrwanda.com)
  - Iris Guest House is $75 a night for a private room, private bath, and includes breakfast. It is in a great location with attentive staff, there is a restaurant on site, and it’s within walking distance to the main shopping area. [www.irisguesthouse-rw.com](http://www.irisguesthouse-rw.com)
  - Discover Rwanda has camping for $8, dorm rooms for $14-$17, double rooms for $45, and includes breakfast. It’s an incredible value with beautiful surroundings and incredibly helpful staff. [www.discoverrwanda.net/hostels/discover-kigali](http://www.discoverrwanda.net/hostels/discover-kigali)

- The drive from Kigali to Nyakagyezi takes 5-7 hours, recommended departure is at 8:00am (Rwandan time) to allow enough time for stopovers and to arrive at Nyaka before dark. **If you planned ahead and scheduled a visit to Kutamba School, you will need to leave at 6:30am.** If you are traveling with BIC Tours it will cost approximately $500 for a one way transfer to pay for the driver, car, fuel, and border crossing fees. The vehicle costs can be shared; the vehicle can transport up to seven people. You will make a couple stops along the way.
o The first stop will be at the Rwanda/Uganda border crossing.

o The second stop will be for lunch.

o The third stop (if you planned ahead and scheduled it) will be at Kutamba, the second school that Nyaka built.

Make sure you exchange USD into francs, if needed, and then exchange francs to shillings at the border, or you can stop in Kabale, Uganda after crossing the border and find a Forex or ATM to get shillings.

*Have your cameras readily available on the drive; Uganda is a beautiful country and you might see some wildlife.

**Transportation While at Nyaka and Visiting Kutamba**

Unfortunately, Nyaka will not be able to provide you with transportation while you are visiting. The roads near Nyaka are very hard on vehicles and we do not have any vehicles to spare.

- If you have chosen to have **BIC Tours** drive you to Nyaka and are only staying for a couple of days, they recommend having their driver and car stay in Nyakagyezi to drive you around as needed. This would actually be cheaper than having to pay for that driver to go back to Kampala and then come back and get you at the end of your stay.

- You can also hire a local driver to drive you around during your stay, here are two options:
  o Nicholas +256 772 624 234
  o Axim +256 077 376 0259

- There are also Boda Bodas (motor bike taxis) that you can hire as well, here are a couple options:
  o Bernard +256 755 826 982
  o Aggrey +256 784 935 770
  o Bashir +256 782 254 810

Kutamba Primary School is built into the side of a mountain.

Kutamba students walking to school.

Boda Bodos are motor bike taxis.
While You Are Visiting

Emergency Information

Nyaka AIDS Foundation Office in Kampala:
P O Box 12540
Kampala, Uganda
+256 414 669 483

Makindye-Luwafu neighborhood on Makindye Court. It can be tricky to find on your own so we recommend calling the office first and having them talk to the driver.

Jennifer Nantale, Country Director +256 772 539 751
(Please Call in Emergency Only)

Sempa Abu Bakr, Finance and Administration Manager +256 779 404 153
(Please Call in Emergency Only)

Nyaka AIDS Foundation Office in Nyakagyezi
No office address due to rural location but, it is in Kambuga, at the Nyaka Blue Lupin Community Library, behind Kambuga Hospital and next to Nyaka Vocational Secondary School.

No office phone number due to rural location.

Daniel Turyasingura, Nyaka Programs Manager +256 772 626 295
(Call for anything you might need and in an Emergency.)

Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project Office in the United States
P O Box 339
East Lansing, MI 48826
517-575-6623

Jackson Kaguri, Founder and Executive Director 517-402-2787
(Please Call in Emergency Only)
In Uganda and at Nyaka

- **Money** Uganda is mostly a cash based society dealing with shillings and sometimes US dollars. It is wisest to carry $50 and $100 bills for the best exchange rate, and all bills need to be newer than 2003. You can check the exchange rate here [www.bou.or.ug](http://www.bou.or.ug). We recommend you use Stanbic and Barclays banks and ATMs, as they are the most reliable. Stanbic also doesn’t charge ATM fees, but your home bank might.

We also recommend that you take some time to try to figure out how much money you would like to exchange ahead of time because you cannot exchange money once you get to Nyaka. All money needs to be exchanged in Kampala, Entebbe, or at the Rwandan border. There is access to an ATM in Kihihi and Rukingiri, about 40 minutes away from Nyaka.

You will want to pay with small shilling bills for shopping at the markets, buying baskets and jewelry from Nyaka’s Grannies, dining, tipping, having your laundry washed, and getting boda boda rides.

When paying for hotels, safaris, park entry fees etc. you will want to pay with US dollars.

- **Credit Cards** Visa credit cards are basically the only card you can use in Uganda. Visas can be used at some banks, some ATMs, and at some places in the cities, but not all, so it is best to plan on using cash. The Stanbic Bank in Khihihi is the closest ATM to Nyaka that will take a Visa and that is 1-1 ½ hours away.

- **Pricing** It is not unusual for prices to fluctuate a little bit in Uganda, so you should plan on being a little flexible. Foreigners will also be charged more for things, but feel free to negotiate prices.

- **Tipping** While tipping is not expected, it will gladly be accepted by a waiter, waitress, driver-guide, lodge or hotel staff during your time in Uganda. Tipping is expected by drivers and guides while on Safari or in parks while tracking wildlife.

- **Internet** The only internet access when visiting Nyaka is at the Blue Lupin Library or the Kigezi Forest Cottages, and that is often slow and unreliable, though it is usually adequate for checking email and facebook. If you would like, you can buy a Ugandan sim card for unlocked smartphones or buy a Ugandan smartphone where you can access the internet using data which you would buy. The Airtel network is the best option for the internet.
- **Safety and Security** Uganda takes safety and security very seriously. You will see armed security guards throughout the country and there will oftentimes be security checks before entering hotels, shopping plazas, etc. It is advised that you fully cooperate and that you do not take photos of the guards.

- **Ugandans** The people of Uganda are incredibly warm and welcoming. You will most likely be greeted with “Mzungu” (ma-zoon-gu) more than once while in the country. Mzungu dates back to the 18th century and refers to people of European descent or travelers. It is common for Ugandans to place your hand in theirs when they are talking with you. It is also common for very good friends of all ages to hold hands as they walk together.

- **Language** The official languages of Uganda are Swahili and English, and there are several regional languages that are also spoken. Rukiga is the local language spoken by the Nyaka community. While many Ugandans, and almost all Nyaka staff speak English, the Ugandan dialect of English is quite different from the American dialect. *A few basic greetings and phrases can be found on pages 21 and 22 of the manual.*

- **Attire** Ugandans dress more formally than many Americans are used to. Clothing is not used as an expression of identity so much as it is to show respect to others. Most of the Nyaka staff will be dressed up much more than you might expect for people working in such a rural environment. You don’t need to “dress up” but please dress nicely and conservatively. *Please see our packing list on pages 18-20 of the manual.*

- **Time and Pace in Uganda** Uganda seems to run at a more leisurely pace. You most likely won’t find people rushing around and worrying about being late. It is best to just relax and go with the flow, time is a flexible concept in Uganda. If you are scheduled to do something at 9:00am, it might not happen until closer to 10:00am for example, and that is okay and an apology wouldn’t be necessary.

- **Rural Uganda** “If Uganda is the ‘pearl of Africa’, then southwestern Uganda is the mother of pearl. Easily the most beautiful part of the country, it’s a lush region of lakes, islands and mountains. And whether you’re here for adventure or respite, the southwest has got you covered in spades.” *Lonely Planet*
  
  - Please remember that Nyaka’s location in southwestern Uganda while very beautiful, is mountainous and does require some physical exertion and endurance.
  
  - For the most part, pit latrines are the standard facility and there aren’t a lot of flush toilets in the area.
Accommodations in Nyakagyezi

Nyakagyezi is a very small village in rural southwestern Uganda. There are two options for accommodations while visiting, Nyaka’s Guesthouse or the Kigezi Forest Cottages.

Nyaka Guesthouse
Nyaka’s Guesthouse sits right next to Nyaka Primary School and is a modest shared space for visitors, volunteers, fellows, and interns to stay the night. The guesthouse is set up dorm style with bunk beds, women sleeping in one room and men sleeping in another room. There is also a shared bathroom, living room, and dining room. The guesthouse is not staffed, so it is your responsibility to clean up after yourself.

$30 A Night Per Person/ $20 for Students

Amenities

- **Safety** The Nyaka Primary School compound has a security guard on site, which is the norm in Uganda, and also has a gate that will be shut at night. The security guard patrols the compound day and night, so if you hear him walking around outside the house do not be alarmed! During the day he wears regular clothing, but at night he wears a uniform so he will be easy to recognize. The term of respect for security guards, police officers, etc. is “afande” (ah-fahn-day), so if you need to call him for any reason please do so.

- **Electricity** There is limited electricity in the guesthouse so we ask that you be mindful not to leave lights on when they are not in use. It is okay to charge cell phones but we recommend that you bring solar chargers and power banks if wanting to charge laptops and other large electronics because charging those can cause the power to go out. Also, don’t forget your electric voltage converter/plug adapters.
• **Cold Water** The guesthouse does have two bathroom sinks, a shower, and a bathtub that have cold running water. If you would like hot water for bathing, you can let the cooks know ahead of time and they will prepare a bucket of hot water for you.

• **Flush Toilets** There are two flush toilets at the guesthouse and toilet paper is provided.

• **Bedding and Mosquito Nets** Clean bedding and mosquito nets are provided. If your net is long enough, please tuck it under your mattress for added protection.

• **Laundry** You can ask that your laundry be washed for you. It costs 1,000 shillings ($0.25) for a top and 2,000 ($0.50) shillings for bottoms to be washed. Please note that Ugandan ladies will not wash undergarments and that they get clothes really clean but can be really rough on them so it might be best to wash anything delicate yourself. You can wash your laundry using the basins provided in the guest house and the spigot outside. *Washing your laundry must be done outside to help prevent our septic tank from getting filled up!*

• **Drinking Water** The guesthouse will provide two bottles of water per person per day, but it is generally not as much as guests would like. Uganda’s tap water is not potable so we highly recommend that you travel with a portable water filter to ensure that you have as much clean water as you desire. The Sawyer Squeeze filter [www.sawyer.com](http://www.sawyer.com) or a SteriPen [www.steripen.com](http://www.steripen.com) make travel much easier!

• **Food/Meals** If you are staying at the guesthouse, you will be provided with 3 meals a day plus hot water for tea. Our cooks make an effort to provide a variety of food options that they know foreign visitors tend to like, but please keep in mind that the food may be different and less varied from what you are used to, and special requests are difficult to accommodate. We are happy to provide vegetarian meals if you let us know ahead of time. *You also have the option of going to the cottages and ordering meals at your own expense.*

  o Meals are served family-style with everyone staying at the guest house eating at the same time. Meals can be scheduled to accommodate your other activities, but plan on breakfast around 7:00am, lunch at 1:00pm, and dinner around 7:00pm.
While the Guesthouse does have a kitchen, the only residents who are allowed to use the kitchen are Interns and GHC Fellows who live in the house long-term.

Please make sure to throw all food trash in the garbage bin placed outside the back door to avoid attracting rodents and insects.

Breakfast  A typical breakfast may include bread, hard-boiled eggs, and tea.

Lunch & Dinner  Lunch and dinner may include rice, potatoes, cabbage, meat, beans, and fresh fruit.

Snacks  Snacks are not provided; you are welcome to bring snacks with you.

Alcohol  There is NO alcohol allowed at the guesthouse, but you are free to go to the nearby Kigezi Forest Cottages if you want to relax with a beer.

Rules and Etiquette at Nyaka

- **Alcohol**  We would like to reiterate that there is NO alcohol allowed at the guesthouse, but you are free to go to the nearby Kigezi Forest Cottages if you want to relax with a beer.

- **Locks**  While you are staying at the guest house, the front and back doors will be left open and unlocked during the day. Please keep your valuables safely tucked away when not in use. Nyaka staff will be in and out throughout the day to clean, serve food, etc. The doors will be locked at night. We also recommend closing and latching windows and closing curtains in the evening for security purposes and to keep insects out.

- **Dogs**  There are several local dogs who sometimes visit the compound. They are friendly, but please do not pet them. They may carry diseases.
Kigezi Forest Cottages
The cottages are within walking distance to Nyaka’s library, Desire Farm, and Nyaka’s Vocational and Secondary School.

$25-$140 Per Person Per Night (Prices vary dependent upon exchange rate, type of cottage/room, number of people staying, and whether you are paying for full board which includes break tea, lunch, evening tea, and supper.)

Single (plus bathroom) $30-$40 per night
Executive Single (1 bed, 1 bath, sitting room) $40-$60
Double (2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and sitting room) $60-$90
Family Cottage (3 bed, 3 bath, sitting room) $90-$120
Presidential Suite $120-$135

Amenities

- **Safety** The cottages have a security guard on site, which is the norm in Uganda, and they also have a gate that will be shut at night. There are also several staff members who are around and stay on the property.

- **Electricity** There is electricity in the cottages and they also have a backup generator in the event that their power does go out.

- **Wi-Fi** There is Wi-Fi at the cottages but it isn’t always accessible or reliable.

- **Hot Water** The cottages have bathroom sinks and showers that do have hot water.
• **Flush Toilets** The cottages do have flush toilets and toilet paper is provided.

• **Bedding and Mosquito Nets** Clean bedding and mosquito nets are provided.

• **Laundry** You can ask the staff at the cottages to wash your laundry for you for about $1.50 a load. Please note that Ugandan ladies will not wash undergarments. They are able to get clothes really clean but they can be really rough on them so it might be best not to have anything delicate washed.

• **Drinking Water** The cottages will provide one bottle of water per person per day, but it is generally not as much as guests would like. You can buy bottles of water at the cottages or we highly recommend that you travel with a portable water filter to ensure that you have as much clean water as you desire. The Sawyer Squeeze filter [www.sawyer.com](http://www.sawyer.com) or a SteriPen [www.steripen.com](http://www.steripen.com) make travel much easier!

• **Food/Meals** The cottages have a kitchen with an open air dining area, room service, and full bar.
  
  o **Breakfast** A breakfast buffet is provided free of charge with your cottage rental. Coffee, tea, juice, milk, cereal, bread, fresh fruit, eggs, and a couple of hot dishes are served on the buffet daily. Note: Staff will ask you when you would like the breakfast buffet prepared and it is best to tell them about 30 minutes earlier than you plan on eating so everything will be ready.

  o **Lunch & Dinner** can be ordered at any time. The menu includes a lot of Ugandan fare, but also fried chicken, pork, goat, or fish with chips (french fries) or chapati (flatbread).

  o **Alcohol** The cottages do have a full bar.

  o **Swimming Pool** The pool is open from sunset to sundown or from about 6:00am-6:00pm.
Packing List

Please try to pack everything you think you will need while visiting Nyaka. Nyakagyezi is in a very rural part of Uganda and there is no guarantee that you will be able to easily purchase something that you forgot.

Medical

Must Have
- Proof of Yellow Fever vaccination
- Malaria tablets
- Traveler’s diarrhea antibiotic
- Prescription medications in original bottles
- Water filter [www.sawyer.com](http://www.sawyer.com) or [www.steripen.com](http://www.steripen.com)

May Need
- Basic first aid items
- Motion sickness tablets
- Anti-diarrhea medicine
- Insect sting/bite relief solution
- Insect repellent
- Small eyeglass repair kit, if you have glasses

Protection from the Elements
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Hat- for sunny days or if you find yourself unable to wash your hair for a couple of day.
- Umbrella- good for sun and rain protection

Toiletries

Pack toiletries in Ziploc bags.

- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Soaps and Body Wash
- Lotions and Powders
- Q-tips and Cotton Balls
- Toothpaste, Toothbrush, Dental Floss
- Deodorant
- Razor
- Brush, Combs, Hair Ties
- Nail Clippers and Nail Files
- Baby Wipes- Nice for wiping off mud and dirt
• Hand Sanitizer and Travel Toilet Paper - You are not guaranteed to have toilet paper or a place to wash your hands outside of the guest house.
• Feminine Hygiene Products

Other

*Note: Pack electronics and valuables at your own risk. In the village, there is very little danger of theft but there is some risk in Kampala and while traveling to and from Uganda. NAOP is not responsible for any damages or theft.*

• Electric voltage converter/plug adapters
• Solar powered charger for electronics
• Travel alarm clock
• Camera, memory cards, extra batteries, battery charger and lens cleaner
• Money belt—Use this to store money and travel documents while traveling or in Kampala. (You should also make copies of your passport and other documents to keep at home with someone you trust just in case you lose yours.)
• Day Pack (e.g. small backpack)
• Small Flashlight
• Book or an E-Reader
• Journal with Pens and Pencils
• Cards or Travel-sized Games
• Snacks
• Photos of you with your family to give to new friends

Don’t Bring

• Entire contents of your wallet, multiple credit cards
• Valuables or sentimental objects
• Hair dryers, other electric items
• Knives of any length, or cutting instruments of ANY kind (metallic or nonmetallic)
• Camouflaged clothing; it is illegal for anyone other than the military to wear it.

Clothing

The amount of clothing you bring depends on the length of your trip. You can ask that your laundry be washed for you. It costs 1,000 shillings ($0.25) for a top and 2,000 ($0.50) shillings for bottoms to be washed, with the exception of underwear; it is taboo to wash another person’s underwear and so it will not be done. Clothing is line dried, so it can take more than a day to dry. If you are planning on washing your own underwear you will need to dry it inside.

Men

Ugandan men tend to dress well, usually in button up or collared shirts and pants. A nice looking t-shirt and long pants are fine for men. Shorts are not generally acceptable for men or women, unless you are playing sports.
Women
It is culturally appropriate for women to wear skirts or dresses in the rural villages like Nyakagyezi. We encourage knee-length or longer skirts for women, but women may wear long pants or capris, as long as they are not tight. Conservative tank tops or t-shirts are fine for women as well.

- Raincoat
- Scarf - Nice to cover your face with on dusty roads.
- Sweater - It can get chilly at night and in the mornings.
- Shirts
- Pants
- Dresses or Skirts
- Sleepwear
- Socks
- Underwear - Enough pairs to last the length of your trip if you’re not planning on washing them yourselves.
- Swimwear - If you are staying at the cottages or plan on swimming on your trip.
- Sandals - Remember, you might be doing a fair amount of walking.
- Walking Shoes - Remember, you might be doing a fair amount of walking.
- Nice Shoes - If you plan on attending church.

Communication While in Uganda

The Ugandan dialect of English is quite different from the American dialect. The following tips can make a huge difference in how well you are understood while you are in Uganda:

- Listen to the way Ugandans speak English, the cadence of their voice, their word choice, their accent, and practice speaking that way.
- Speak slowly, enunciate clearly, and make sure you are not slurring your words together.
- Avoid using colloquial phrases/idioms. e.g.: instead of “Wow, what a scorcher!” try “It is very hot outside today!”
- Ugandans may also use English colloquialisms that you may not be familiar with. If you don’t understand something, repeat the phrase you do not understand back to them and ask them to explain it in a different way.
• If someone does not understand you, even after you have spoken slowly and clearly, they may be confused by your word choice, try to think of a different way to get your point across.

**Rukiga phrases**  
*(also called Kiga, Ruchiga, or Chiga)*

Rukiga is the local language spoken by the Nyaka community. While many Ugandans, and almost all Nyaka staff, speak English, knowing a few Rukiga phrases are always helpful!

**Agandi** *(ah-gahn-dee)* hello/how are you?  
Response: **nigye** *(nee-jay)*: I’m fine.

**Oraire ota?** *(Oh-ree roh-tah?)* Good morning/how did you sleep?  
Response: **nigye**

**Muriregye?** *(Moo-ree-reh-jay)* Did you sleep well?  
Response: **ego** *(eh-go)* Yes.

**Wasibota?** *(wah-see-boh-tah?)* Good afternoon/how is your day?  
Response: **nigye**

**Mwasibamuta?** *(mwah-see-bah-moo-tah?)* Same as wasibota, but for greeting a group.

**Webale** *(way-bah-lay)* Thank you

**Webale munonga** *(way-bah-lay moo-noan-gah)* Thank you very much!

**Ssebo:** Sir

**Nyabo:** Ma’am  
You can add “ba” in front of these words to make it plural. “Nyabo” is one woman, “banyabo” is multiple women.

**Mukaaka:** Grandmother. *Used as a polite way to refer to any older woman.*
Example Itineraries for Visiting Nyaka

*These are just examples to give you an idea of what you can expect when you are visiting Nyaka. Modifications can be made to the number of days spent at Nyaka and the activities performed. You will be able to discuss any changes that need to be made with Shabnam Olinga at shabnam@nyakaschool.org and Samuel Mugisha at info@bic-tours.com.*

**Version 1: Arriving from Kampala**

**Day 1:**
- Arrive from Kampala in time for dinner.
- Dinner at either the guest house or the cottages, wherever you are staying the night.
- Rest and Relaxation.

**Day 2:**
- 7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you’re staying at the cottages.
- 7:40-8:00am Attend the morning assembly at Nyaka Primary School.
- Meet the Head Teacher and learn about Nyaka Primary School and what an average school day looks like.
- Head to Blue Lupin Community Library. (You can hike there, which will be about a 30 minute hike, or you can hire a boda boda, or you can take a hired car to the library from Nyaka.
- Meet the staff and take a tour of Blue Lupin Community Library and Desire Farm. You will also have the opportunity to use the Internet to check in at home.
- Meet the Head Teacher and learn about Nyaka Vocational Secondary School and what an average school day looks like.
- Return to guest house and relax until lunch.
- 1:00pm Eat lunch at the guest house.
- After lunch, travel with members of the grandmother’s team to visit a grandmother in a home Nyaka built for her.
- 4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary Students.
- 7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
- Rest and Relaxation.
Day 3:

- 7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you’re staying at the cottages.
- AM-Travel with members of the Grandmother’s Team to visit a Granny Group.
- 1:00pm Eat lunch at the guest house.
- PM- Meet the staff and take a tour of the Mummy Drayton Medical Clinic.
- 4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary students.
- 5:00pm Take a tour of Kambuga Hospital.
- 7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
- Rest and Relaxation.

Day 4:

- 7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you’re staying at the cottages.
- AM- Visit Kutamba school
- 1:00pm Return in time for lunch at the guest house.
- PM- Optional visit to Blue Lupin Community Library to use the Internet.
- 4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary students.
- 7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
- Rest and Relaxation.

Day 5:

- 7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you’re staying at the cottages.
- Depart after breakfast.

Version 2: Arrive from Kigali

Day 1:

- Arrive at Kisiizi from Kampala in time for dinner.
- Rest and Relaxation.
Day 2:

- 7:00am Breakfast at the guest house.
- AM- Meet head teacher and learn about Kutamba Primary School and what an average school day looks like.
- 1:00pm Arrive in time for lunch at the guest house.
- Meet the Head Teacher and learn about Nyaka Primary School and what an average school day looks like.
- 4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary students.
- 7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
- Rest and Relaxation.

Day 3:

- 7:40-8:00am Attend the morning assembly at Nyaka Primary School.
- Head to Blue Lupin Community Library. (You can hike there, which will be about a 30 minute hike, or you can hire a boda boda, or you can take a hired car to the library from Nyaka.
- Meet the staff and take a tour of Blue Lupin Community Library and Desire Farm. You will also have the opportunity to use the Internet to check in at home.
- Meet the Head Teacher and learn about Nyaka’s Vocational and Secondary School and what an average school day looks like.
- Return to the guest house and relax until lunch.
- 1:00pm Eat lunch at the guest house.
- After lunch, travel with members of the Grandmother’s Team to visit a grandmother in a home Nyaka built for her.
- 4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary Students.
- 7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
- Rest and Relaxation.

Day 4:

- 7:00 am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you’re staying at the cottages.
- AM-Travel with members of the Grandmother’s Team to visit a Granny Group.
- 1:00 pm Eat lunch at the guest house.
- PM- Meet the staff and take a tour of the Mummy Drayton Medical Clinic.
- 4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary students.
• 5:00pm Take a tour of Kambuga Hospital.
• 7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
• Rest and Relaxation

Day 5:
• 7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you’re staying at the cottages.
• Depart after breakfast.

Version 3: Arriving from Kihhi

Day 1:
• 9:00am Arrive in Kihhi.
• Run any necessary errands while in Kihhi.
• 10:30am Arrive at Nyaka.
• Head to Blue Lupin Community Library. Meet the staff and take a tour of Blue Lupin Community Library and Desire Farm. You will also have the opportunity to use the Internet to check in at home.
• Meet the Head Teacher and learn about Nyaka’s Vocational and Secondary School and what an average school day looks like.
• Return to guest house and relax until lunch.
• 1:00pm Eat lunch at the guest house.
• After lunch, travel with members of the Grandmother’s Team to visit a grandmother in a home Nyaka built for her.
• 4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary students.
• 5:00pm Take a tour of Kambuga Hospital.
• 7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
• Rest and Relaxation.

Day 2:
• 7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you’re staying at the cottages.
• 7:40-8:00am Attend the morning assembly at Nyaka Primary School.
• AM: Travel with members of the Grandmother’s Team to visit a Granny Group
1:00pm Eat lunch at the guest house.
After lunch, travel with members of the grandmother’s team to visit a grandmother in a home Nyaka built for her.
PM: Meet the staff and take a tour of the Mummy Drayton Medical Clinic.
4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary students.
5:00pm Take a tour of Kambuga Hospital.
7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
Rest and Relaxation.

Day 3:

7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you're staying at the cottages.
AM: Visit Kutamba school
1:00pm Return in time for lunch at the guest house.
PM: Optional visit to Blue Lupin Community Library to use the internet.
4:00pm Recess with Nyaka Primary students.
7:00pm Eat dinner at the guest house or the cottages.
Rest and Relaxation.

Day 4:

7:00am Breakfast at the guest house, or whenever you choose, if you're staying at the cottages.
Depart after breakfast.
After You Return

Requirements When Returning From NAOP

We have no doubt that you had a life-changing experience while visiting Nyaka, now we want to hear all about it!

Fill Out Nyaka’s Visitor Questionnaire

- We ask that you fill out our visitor’s questionnaire, which can be found on our website: www.nyakaschool.org/get_involved/volunteer.php We value your HONEST feedback, both positive and negative, as it will help us to ensure that every visitor has a satisfying and memorable visit to Nyaka in the future.

Send Us Your Photos

- Please email our office a copy of the pictures you took to info@nyakaschool.org It is so important for us to have up to date pictures of our students, grannies, and all that is going on in Uganda. Your pictures will help us tell Nyaka’s story!

- You can also mail them to us at:
  Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project
  2970 E Lake Lansing Rd
  East Lansing, MI 48823

Share Your Story With Us

- Send us your testimony detailing your trip and your most memorable experiences. We would love to share your experience as a blog post. Let us know if you would like to write one, or we would be happy to write one for you.
Spread Awareness of NAOP

Our hope for you upon your return home, is that you will be inspired to build awareness of Nyaka in your home community, with your family and friends, and your social network. Share your experience and ways that others can get involved.

- **Share Your Story** by giving a presentation about your visit to Nyaka.
- **Share Your Support of Nyaka** by hosting a fundraiser or creating an online fundraiser.
- **Share Nyaka’s Story with Your Community** by purchasing Jackson’s books for your local library, church, book clubs, and other social groups.
- **Support A Student** by sponsoring a student.
  - [www.nyakaschool.org/students/sponsor.php](http://www.nyakaschool.org/students/sponsor.php)
- **Support Grandmothers** by throwing a basket party.
- **Build A Home** $1400 provides a house, smokeless kitchen and a pit latrine.

If you need help with anything, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 517-575-6623 or email us at info@nyakaschool.org.