

Commonly Asked Questions

1. What do you mean by “world view?”

A. A world view is simply how someone understands the meaning of life and the world. Some would suggest there are many world views with a good deal of overlap and similar understandings. In the final analysis however, there are only two. One understands the world and life to be the product of evolutionary chance, governed by the strong outlasting the weak. The other sees the world and life as the handiwork of God which is governed by His law as revealed in nature, in His Word, and in His Son. One sees man as basically good, and just in need of proper “handling” and all things will be equal and good. The other sees man as sinful and in need of a savior. One sees man as sick and needing a doctor. The other sees man dead in sin and in need of a new birth. Obviously, the world view one adopts impacts everything they do. The impact the Christian faith has had around the world in ministering to the poor and needy is unparalleled in human history. All the man-made religions of the world have at their core, the concept that people just needs a little help to be made acceptable to God. Only Christianity makes clear that God Himself, through Christ provides redemption and makes us acceptable before God. The result of this grace is a life of good works done in the name of Christ. (See Matthew 25:31-46)

2. What is an "average" ministry trip like?

A. Teams leave the US and fly to one of several European cities (eight plus hours to Amsterdam, Brussels, or London) and then on to Entebbe Uganda (eight more hours). From there most teams rest all or part of the next day before going on to its first ministry venue. Ministry opportunities can be just a day or two or most of a week in one area. Then additional travel to a new venue and the process starts over again but every venue offers some differences. Consult the “Possible Ministries” page in this packet for examples of types of ministry. At the end of a team’s time of ministry, they usually spend a day sightseeing and shopping for souvenirs before the return trip. Some typical trip schemes are as follows:

Type	Depart USA / Arrive Uganda ⁴	Depart Ug / Arrive USA ⁵	Days in Uganda	Total Trip Days
Spring break ¹	Thur am / Fri pm	Sat pm / Sun pm ⁶	7	10
One week ²	Sat am / Sun pm	Sat pm / Sun pm ⁶	6	9
Two weeks ³	Sat am / Sun pm	Sat pm / Sun pm ⁶	13	16
Three weeks ³	Sat am / Sun pm	Sat pm / Sun pm ⁶	20	23
Two Sundays ³	Thur am / Fri pm	Sun pm / Mon pm	12	11
Three Sundays ³	Thur am / Fri pm	Sun pm / Mon pm	16	19

Notes: Other schemes can be arranged to meet the time schedule of the team member

1. Includes a Sunday in Uganda but requires permission to miss two days of school

2. Does not allow a Sunday Uganda but requires only one five day work week be missed

3. Allows one or more Sundays in Uganda

4. Typically includes travel in the morning to an International Airport for a late afternoon or early evening departure from US

5. Typically flights leave late evening from Uganda to European gateway airport with flight back to US and home the next morning

6. A Saturday departure can be problematic if there are any flight delays, etc., therefore, those who MUST be back at work on Monday should have a Friday departure

3. **What if I cannot keep the same schedule and travel over and/or back with the team?**
 - A. In my early days of Uganda ministry, our teams traveled to and from Uganda together and spent the whole time in Uganda together in the various venues. That is not very common anymore. I am thankful for all who can go and minister in Uganda and I will take what I can get. **“Go when you can, return when you must, but go!”** is now my motto. Not only do we have team members who travel over and back on different schedules, we even have teams go in separate directions for some of the time of ministry. It all depends on who is on the team and what skills (gifts) they have. We would not ask teachers to conduct a pastor’s seminar, nor would we ask a construction team to spend the day helping first grade teachers learn new teaching skills. If we have both events at the same time, we just send the team in different directions.
4. **What type transportation do teams use?**
 - A. Typically we use vehicles owned and/or operated by folks associated with ACTI. This allows us total control over the vehicle, which routes we take, and that we have a safe driver. There are some exceptions whereby we may use public transportation but we try to keep this to a minimum. In some venues we stay at a guest house that is next to the place where we minister and we simply walk back and forth.
5. **Do teams walk a lot?**
 - A. Yes, but the longest distance I have ever walked on a ministry was about a mile. I have walked farther with a group hiking. My recommendation for those who do not exercise regularly, begin a five days per week walking program about sixty days before the trip. Start out slow for short distances, then gradually increase both pace and distance and include some hills and you should do well in Uganda and be better off here as well.
6. **What type foods are there to eat?**
 - A. Almost every fruit and vegetable you can think of is available there, grown in area so it is fresh. The typical meats are beef, pork, chicken, goat and fish. But most of the meat is “range feed” which means the animals forage for their own food. This constant moving about in search of food makes their meat tough to chew. Rice and bread are abundant. Increasingly western foods such as breakfast cereals, candy, canned foods, etc., are finding their way into Uganda. It is OK to bring your own nonperishable snacks like protein bars, granola bars, crackers, trail mix, etc. Hard candies are OK, but chocolate bars tend to melt. It is not unusual to eat breakfast at 7:00 a.m. and not have lunch to 3:30 and dinner at 9:00. You can buy bottles of Boost® in Uganda if that supplement is needed.
7. **Is the water safe to drink?**
 - A. Safe bottled water is readily available and our teams buy it by the case.
8. **What are housing accommodations like?**
 - A. Most places where ACTI teams stay are brick buildings with burglar bars on the doors and windows. Some have self-contained rooms (bathroom is part of the room). Others have a common toilet/shower area at the end of a hall, and a few have a separate exterior bath facility. Typically beds are wood-frame with a four inch foam mattress. In many areas you will need to sleep under a blanket as it gets cool during the night. In most places it is wise to sleep under a mosquito net, but this is not true in all areas. Running water, especially hot running water is often spotty. The same is true for electricity. I have been in areas for week and had power the whole time. The next time I visit that area, the power is off more than on. Flashlights and batteries are a must. If you don’t use them up, give them to Ugandans when you leave.

9. What about toilets and showers?

- A. Toilets range from a traditional western style flush toilet, in a ceramic tile bathroom, to a hole in the ground with a bamboo screen around it. Some pit latrines have woven bamboo floor to support a person. Others have a concrete slab with a hole in the center. I made my eighth trip to Uganda before I saw a working hot shower and still visit places without showers. In those cases, you take a pan of warm water, a little plastic cup, a bath cloth and soap. After you finish washing, you just keep dipping water from the pan and pouring it over yourself until all the soap or all the water is gone. If you put a soapy bath cloth in the pan of water, you then rinse off with soapy water.

10. What type weather patterns are there in Uganda?

- A. Because Uganda is an equatorial country, its relationship to the sun does not change much during the year. Sunrise and sunset vary from about 6:30 to 7:10 during the year. Uganda has a lot of high elevation and those areas only occasionally see extremes of heat. In the lower elevations, it can be very hot during the day. Generally speaking, it is between 80° & 90°F and sometimes higher during the day, and between 60° & 70°F at night. I have seen it in the mid 50°s F at night. There are some desert areas that are hotter and in the edge of the mountains it is cooler. Uganda has two rainy and two dry seasons with it being hotter in the dry times and cooler in the rainy times. If your team anticipates a lot of outside ministry, it would be wise to take sunglasses, a hat, and some sun screen. You are closer to the sun than in North America so your skin will burn quicker.

11. Doesn't it make more sense and cost less for those seeking a "third world, cross-cultural mission experience" to just go to Mexico?

- A. It does cost less, but then going to the inner city of most any major American city would cost even less. In fact, I totally support inner city work and work in Mexico. The real point is that Jesus did not give us an option of – here or there, or cheapest – but to start where you are and go to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8). Additionally, we do not see our ministry as simply offering a “cross-cultural experience” but personal involvement in great commission work. We have found most all who go with us to Uganda, find it changes their life forever. In 18 years of ministry in Uganda, I have never had a team member be unable to go due to financial concerns alone.

12. Isn't it dangerous in Africa?

- A. No more so than most other places on earth today. The following is a direct quote from a lady who spent months traveling around the earth on her own. In response to an Internet news group question about safety she wrote the following:

"To be honest, after traveling for most of this past year (including five months in Africa), the single place where I felt most scared alone was Wilmington, Delaware!" (Miriam N)

What really counts is being careful and not putting oneself in harm's way. There are things we all do to reduce risks in life. I think the real question on people's mind is "Doesn't just being in Uganda put me at greater risk?" ACTI ministry in Uganda since 1983 says the answer to this question is no. Moreover, we must remember "God is our refuge" in the United States and in Uganda. This does not mean there are not dangers in Uganda. We had a team ambushed and robbed. No one was harmed and we later learned it was essentially an inside job. That is why we are more prudent in whom we allow to drive our teams.

One of our team member returned to her hometown and took the storage disk from her digital

camera to a *Wallgreens* to make prints. When leaving the store, her purse was snatched by a mugger. She was less than one mile from her home.

13. Does it matter that I don't speak Kiswahili or any other African language?

- A. No. Over the years ACTI has been responsible for over one-thousand individuals ministering in Uganda without a knowledge of native languages. Actually, there are many different languages spoken in Uganda (they are tribal in nature) and many outsiders have tended to lump them together as different dialects of Kiswahili but this is in error. Kiswahili is an interaction of East Africans and Arabs, mostly in the coastal nations of Kenya and Tanzania and not so much in inland countries like Uganda.

The "official" language of Uganda is English and most signs are in English as is education. I have looked at numerous school textbooks and every single word of each of them was in English. However, English is still a second language for them and interpretation for the less educated is common. It is interest that when Ugandans (at least Presbyterians) from all regions meet together, English is the language they speak in common

14. With so much AIDS and diseases in Africa, isn't it too risky there?

- A. It is true that AIDS is a big problem in Uganda and there are many other diseases there as well. Yet, with proper precautions (see Heath Issues section at www.ugandamission.net) I believe you will find sensible information that if prudently followed will minimize health risks while in Uganda. AIDS is not transmitted by casual contact. If you have a cut or open sore while in Uganda, I would recommend keeping it covered with a band-aid and a little ointment when you are out in public.

15. What if I get sick?

- A. If you mean something very serious like appendicitis, then the answer is medical evacuation to Kampala, and the International Hospital which meets' western standards of care for fundamental medical emergencies. In fact, in 2009 they successfully performed heart bypass surgery. All ACTI team members are covered with basic overseas travel insurance that include emergency evacuation to a competent medical facility.

If you are asking about developing a cold, etc., then you should be prepared with the over the counter medications that work for you. If you are asking about a sick stomach, proper over the counter medications help here too as does a couple of cans of good old American *Chicken Noodle Soup* in your checked bags to help your stomach get back to normal.

16. What if I have an unusual medical condition?

- A. If you have a special medical condition, require special medication, or a medical history of seizures, allergic reactions, etc., it is absolutely essential that others traveling with you are aware of the condition and what to do for you in an emergency. In Uganda, your companions can't dial 911, **they are 911**. If you wear a "Medic Alert" bracelet or other similar device, the retrieval of relevant information from a database in the US or UK might be very difficult. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you take the time to write out such information on paper and put one copy with your travel documents and give your team leader a second copy sealed in an envelope with instructions to open in an emergency. Additionally, it would be wise to have your doctor briefly explain your situation, medication, and any suggested maintenance protocol on his/her letterhead stationery and include this as well. These suggestions are not intended to alarm you, but to simply practice the Boy Scout Motto to "Be Prepared." It also meets my grandmother's admonition, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!"

17. What items are good to take as benevolent help?

A. This is a great question. In short, clothing items for children and babies. Adults and even older teenagers can take care of themselves. It is children (mostly orphans) who are desperate. Vitamins (adult and children's), antibiotic cream for injuries, and other such items are helpful. But there is a warning here. I know of a team that set a goal of collecting 1,000 toothbrushes to take with them. It was a total success but they were so bulky it required an additional bag and weight which was another \$200 by the airline. So 1,000 brushes even if all were purchased at a dollar store, plus the extra baggage charge would made the project cost \$1,200. Many folks, wishing to help, purchased toothbrushes at prices as high as \$2.50 each making the real cost nearly \$2,000. The sad news, there is a company in Kampala that makes and sells toothbrushes all day long for 25 cents each. They could have done the same project for \$250. I know of similar experiences teams have had with pencils and writing tablets. The point, ask me before you launch a project like this. If a team wishes to take books, I recommend a good study Bible such as the Reformation Study Bible: English Standard Version hardcover, or the Matthew Henry One Volume Commentary on the whole Bible. There is a concise edition, meaning it is abridged but still very helpful, and also a complete edition which is best. These both add weight but it is weight that also adds value. I personally take one of the study Bibles on every trip, use it while there, then give it away when I leave.