

#6 - Volunteers Policy

African AIDS Foundation

Volunteers

African AIDS Foundation (AAF) began recruiting and sending volunteers to South Africa in 2001. The Foundation's Volunteer Program is an extension of its humanitarian and development efforts to assist those affected by HIV/AIDS. A volunteer with AAF is someone who offers their services to assist our partners, for humanitarian reasons and not for personal financial gain.

While providing additional assistance to organisations supported by AAF, the program also gives people from Australia exposure to the issues surrounding the AIDS pandemic. In addition, it strengthens AAF's relationship with our partners and gives opportunities to develop new networks and avenues of assistance.

AAF aims to place the best possible candidates with the program. The AAF will favour candidates who are able to contribute to skills development and training with our partner organisations. It is also crucial to avoid compromising the work of our partners through the burden of too many volunteers. For best effectiveness, a minimum length of service has been set at 2 months. Periods of less than 2 months will be considered, at the discretion of the Board and in consultation with our partners. AAF also encourages volunteers who are prepared stay in Africa for longer periods of 6 months, or more.

AAF has well-established links in South Africa through God's Golden Acre, Tabitha Ministries and Philakahle Wellbeing Centre. Opportunities for volunteer service in Kenya are also being developed.

Recruitment of Volunteers

The recruitment of volunteers involves the following steps:

- On request, copies of the Volunteer Information Kit, an Application Form and a Prohibited Employment Declaration are forwarded to potential applicants;
- The applicant submits the relevant forms to AAF's Volunteer Coordinator;
- An interview of the candidate is conducted by the Volunteer Task Group;
- Particular consideration will be given to candidates whose skills can develop the abilities of AAF partner organisations and their workers; are available for the minimum term of service; and are people who display values and standards which are consistent with those of AAF and its African partners.
- A recommendation by the Task Group is forwarded to the AAF Board for consideration;
- A decision by the Board is conveyed to the Task Group, in the form of either:
 - A ratification of the recommendation;
 - A request for a further interview, either by the Board, the Task Group, or both;
 - The sharing of relevant factors and information or issues, known to the Board, for further consideration by the Task Group; or
 - A rejection of the application by the Board, with or without reason.

Preparation of Candidates

The preparation of successful candidates for their assignment in Africa includes the following:

1

- HIV/AIDS awareness;
- Understanding of personal security, potential risks, health issues;
- Social and cultural issues relating to the communities in which the volunteers will be placed;

#6 - Volunteers Policy

African AIDS Foundation

- Advice relating to travel and health insurance. It is the policy of AAF that all volunteers are required to organise their own travel and health insurance and to provide proof of a current policy to the Volunteer Task Group.

Placement of Volunteers

The placement of volunteers with an African partner organisation involves:

- Liaison by the Volunteer Task Group with the candidate and partner organisations to match skills, aptitudes and interests of volunteers with the needs of these groups;
- Email and phone contact with the organisations and with the applicant to confirm placement;
- Facilitation of direct contact between the volunteer and the selected group.

Overseas In-Country Support for Volunteers

Once the volunteer is on assignment in Africa the liaison is as follows;

- Regular email or telephone contact with the volunteer by a member of the AAF Volunteer Task Group;
- Regular contact with the AAF partner organisation in Africa to monitor the volunteer's progress and the suitability for the particular assignment;
- Contact with the volunteer's family, as required.

Support of Returned Volunteers

Once a volunteer returns to Australia AAF seeks to maintain contact, as follows;

- Debriefing with the Volunteer Task Group;
- Encouragement to network with other returned volunteers;
- Encouragement to raise public awareness in Australia of both the volunteers program and the magnitude of the AIDS issue, through speaking engagements and other opportunities.

The Volunteers Information Pack, Application Form, and Prohibited Employment Declaration form part of this policy.

