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## Malawi Sports and Community

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



**Trip Name:** Malawi Sports and Community    **Trip Code:** MASP    **Duration:** From 2 weeks

### Trip Highlights

- Living right on the shores of Lake Malawi
- Seeing the children smile and laugh as you teach them new sports and games
- Have the chance to offer extra help in childcare centres or teaching English
- Providing support and getting involved in the local community



### Overview

Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries, with over half of the population living below the poverty line and an average daily income of less than 30 pence.

Based in Monkey Bay, on the southern shore of Lake Malawi, you will play a vital role in teaching children core subjects such as English and Maths during the morning and extra curricular activities such as sports including football and netball in the afternoons, as well as the opportunity to get involved with other community projects.

Volunteering in Malawi will help make a difference to the education and well being of hundreds of children in the local communities.

### Destination Info

Malawi is a small and beautiful country in East Africa, renowned for having some of the friendliest people and a huge diversity of scenery. Malawi has it all, from palm-lined beaches to remote wilderness and safaris. The country is dominated by Lake Malawi, stretching 500km down the Eastern border, estimated to take up about one third of Malawi's size. To the east and southern edges it borders Mozambique, to the west Zambia, and to the north-east, Tanzania.

# Malawi Sports and Community

The project is located on the shores of Lake Malawi close to the town of Monkey Bay. Around 200km from the capital, Lilongwe, Monkey Bay is one of the main ports on the beautiful lake. Still, clear waters and golden beaches are at your doorstep as well as the nearby village of Cape Maclear. Nearby attractions include National Parks and the Mulanje Massif.

## Itinerary



On your first full day after your arrival into Monkey Bay you will have a comprehensive orientation given by a project coordinator.

There will be local members of staff in the class with you; the class size is normally up to 200 students, so it is advisable that the class is split between you and your fellow volunteers. The main subject that you will teach will be English, then Maths. You may get involved in other academic subjects though this will depend on what the teacher is teaching at the time. If you are creative you can plan your own lessons to incorporate pretty much anything.

In the afternoon, after your school teaching session and after a well-deserved lunch break, you will be involved in extra-curricular activities with the children, such as teaching additional lessons or teaching sports. You will ideally go back around three afternoons per week to do additional lessons with the children. We recommend that you try and identify those children who would benefit from extra help to take part in the additional afternoon lessons. You can also teach additional lessons such as sports. Football is by far the most popular sport in Malawi, as in much of Africa and netball is also played by many of the girls; with the schools having teams for both sports. Other sports, such as volleyball, rounders and badminton are also offered on an informal basis, due to a lack of equipment and knowledge of these sports.

The schools also run wildlife and conservation clubs, where pupils learn about conservation and how to preserve and protect the wildlife of Malawi. This occasionally includes educational visits to National Parks and game reserves where the children gain an insight into the importance of Malawi's natural areas, though this work could certainly be instigated and further developed by you.



During your placement in Malawi you will be staying in a lovely volunteer house located right on the shores of Lake Malawi!

You'll have free time during the evenings and a weekends and the beach, right outside the garden, is the perfect place to chill out and take in the beautiful surroundings.

At weekends, you may like to venture further afield and explore more of what this incredible country has to offer. Our fantastic in-country team are on hand to assist you in arranging some great weekend excursions! Some of the most popular excursions include...

*Cape Maclear* – another lakeshore village near to Monkey Bay, makes the perfect destination for a relaxing weekend break. Enjoy fantastic boat rides, snorkelling and traditional BBQ's and experience a different area of Lake Malawi.

*Liwonde National Park* – a fantastic weekend away to explore one of Malawi's beautiful National Parks. Just south of our projects in Monkey Bay, Liwonde National Park makes for a great weekend getaway– go on a game drive, boat safari and guided bush walk and try and spot majestic Elephant, Rhino, Hippo, Waterbuck, various Antelope species, Zebra, Eland, Bushbabies, Jackals, Lion and Leopard, as well as an abundance of bird life.

In addition to a number of different weekend excursions there are also lots of different day trip options, including visits to a nearby hotel resort complex to chill out by the pool and make use of the sports facilities. Or how about kicking back at a cultural party, experience traditional Malawian food, entertainment and a whole lot of fun!

Excursions are not included in the programme and will be at your own additional cost, should you wish to participate. All excursions should be arranged in-country with our local team who will be more than happy to assist you and make suggestions to help you make the most of your time in Malawi!

## Accommodation

You will stay in a very comfortable, shared volunteer house, within a 25 minute walk to one of the schools. Transport is provided for you to schools further away. Situated on the beach of Lake Malawi, just 11km south of Monkey Bay Town, the house has great views over the lake.

The property is fenced, gated and has a lovely big green garden. Bedrooms are dormitory style and there is running water, a cold shower and western style toilets. Whilst both electricity and water are pretty reliable there is the odd power cut and water shortage from time to time, that you should be aware of.

## Programme Services and Facilities

### Internet

There is no wifi at the volunteer house however there may be a possibility to get internet on your laptop (if you choose to take this with you) as the house has a few internet dongles but please be aware the internet doesn't have the best connection. This can be used in the evenings and weekends for approx. 600MWK per hour. There will also be the opportunity to use wifi if you go away at the weekends.

### Telephone

The international dialling code for Malawi is +265. To place an outgoing, direct-dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164.

The mobile network is very good in urban areas, and even most villages, therefore it is a good idea to take out a mobile phone with you to Malawi and buy a local Celtel pay-as-you-go SIM card when you arrive, so that people at home can call you using a cheap international access number. If you are planning to do this please ensure your mobile phone is set up with international roaming and unlocked before you depart.

### Laundry

You will be able to get your laundry done whilst at the house. You may either hand-wash items yourselves, or the staff may wash items for you for a small fee. Please remember to bring travel wash for doing your laundry.

### Electricity

Malawi uses 220V – 240V electricity, and 120V devices will burn out if used without a power converter, so please do not bring things like hairdryers and straighteners without a transformer.

The plug sockets used are the same as in the UK, three square pins.

### Transport

Most transport is included to and from the projects or are within walking distance (max 45 minutes) of the volunteer accommodation and you will be expected to walk where possible. However, sometimes you will be required to take public transport, which will be at your own cost, approx 100 MWK per journey. If you choose to take part in additional volunteer work, outside of project hours, you will need to pay for these extra transfer costs.

## Meals

The house has staff that includes a cook, a housekeeper (volunteers are expected to do their bit to keep the house clean and tidy) and there is also a night watchman.

All of your three meals a day are provided. Breakfast is usually a get your own toast or porridge affair, though there might be the odd occasion where the cook treats you. Lunch is either packed or get your own (if you plan on returning to the house at lunchtime). The cook will prepare the evening meal for you.

*Please Note:* The fridge in the house is used to store the food from which your meals are prepared from each day as well as additional drinks that you will be able to purchase from the staff. You are welcome to buy your own food/snacks and drinks but you must be aware that you will not be able to store them in the fridge.

## What's Included

- Airport transfers to and from Lilongwe International Airport on set dates
- Orientation on arrival
- All accommodation during your stay
- Full support and assistance from your coordinator
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner each day.
- 24-hour support number and contact for emergencies.



## What's Not Included

- Travel insurance
- All flights
- Private Airport Transfers if arriving outside of the specified dates
- Visas



## What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore, you may not need all of the listed items on your travels nor is it exhaustive.

Also, please be aware that the weather can change considerably from winter to summer and you should pack according to when you are travelling to ensure that you have the appropriate clothing.

## Personal Admin

- Passport, insurance certificates and personal documentation
- Photocopies of all the above to be left at home with your next of kin
- Spending money
- Proof of inoculations (please speak to your doctor about necessary immunisations)
- Secure, waterproof bag for documents and money: sealable plastic bags will do

## General

- Personal hygiene kit, toiletries and towel
- Sleeping bag – optional but advisable for weekend excursions and winter months
- Mosquito net – we recommend the ones that hang from the ceiling (nets are provided at the house, however a net is recommended for weekend excursions)
- Silk or Cotton Liner: Ideal for hot nights or as an extra layer to your sleeping bag
- Sunglasses (high UV protection)
- Sun cream (high factor needed)
- Small torch (head torch is preferable)
- Diary and writing pens
- Camera/batteries/film or memory card
- Water bottle – at least 75cl
- Day pack/rucksack for everyday use
- Mobile phone – set for roaming
- Personal stereo
- Plug adaptor
- Alarm clock/watch
- Sewing kit and pocket knife for general use
- Travel wash for clothes (biodegradable recommended)
- Travel Guide, such as Lonely Planet or Rough Guide
- Books, cards, board games for your free time

## Clothing

- Sets of outdoor loose fitting cotton clothes with full arm and leg cover for cooler mornings and evenings
- Shorts and/or trousers (for males) and long skirts (for females) for project work
- T-shirts for project work
- Trainers
- Casual clothes for the weekends
- Flip flops / sandals
- Swimwear
- Sun hat / Bandana
- Underwear – enough for at least seven days, possibly more
- Pyjamas/nightwear
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Warm clothes for winter and early mornings.

## Medical Kit

- Hand sanitiser and wet wipes
- Anti-malarial tablets
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Personal medication e.g. prescription drugs/inhalers
- Painkillers
- Contact lenses and solution if necessary
- Plasters
- Lip Balm with SPF
- Tweezers (not in hand luggage!)
- Scissors (not in hand luggage!)
- Sanitary products for women if necessary
- Mosquito repellent (ensure it contains DEET or equivalent)
- Ear Plugs – in case you sleep next to a snorer!

**Please Note:** We recommend you take some shirts/blouses, trousers for males/long skirts for females and comfortable shoes. This is to show respect of African culture and also gain respect from the children you will be working with. Female volunteers cannot wear trousers during the project work in the communities and **MUST** wear full length long skirts. Alternatively, you can purchase inexpensive Kakoy materials when you are there to use as wrap-arounds. You can wear casual clothing in your spare time, though these must be appropriate.

## Minimum Age

Minimum 17 years with written parental consent, maximum decided on potential participants' health

## Minimum Numbers

There are no minimum numbers on the trip.

Please note: you may be the only volunteer at your chosen project at any one time. However, each of our Malawi volunteer projects share the same accommodation. Therefore, if there are volunteers on our other programmes you will be able to spend your spare time and evenings with them. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact us

## Flights

Your flight to Malawi should arrive at Lilongwe airport on your programme start date. Your return flight or onward travel should be arranged on your programme end date.

Please note: Anyone arriving or leaving outside of these dates will need to pay a private transfer fee of US\$175 per person, one way (this will need to be paid in \$USD locally); any additional nights at the volunteer accommodation will cost extra, if you would like to book any extra nights please contact us as these will need to be booked and paid for before you leave.

To book your flights, please contact your sales advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your online account or alternatively

you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

## FAQs

- 1. What sports can you do?**  
Football is the biggest sport in Malawi, netball is close behind however the kids are happy to try anything!
- 2. Do I need to bring anything with me?**  
There will be basic sports equipment there, however there is always a need for more!
- 3. How many others are there taking part?**  
For most months there are between 6 and 8 taking part, however all the volunteers on Malawi options meet up and get together.
- 4. What is the accommodation like?**  
The house is situated right on the beach of Lake Malawi about 7km south of Monkey Bay Town, so you can sit and gaze out over the waters. The property is fenced and gated and has a large green garden.
- 5. Do I need to take a sleeping bag with me?**  
Yes, especially for weekend trips.
- 6. Yes, you will need to take a net with you as they aren't provided.**  
Yes, you will need to take a net with you as they aren't provided.
- 7. Will there be a safe/safety deposit box available?**  
Yes, there is a safety deposit box at the volunteer house where you can keep your valuables.

## Police Check

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.

## Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

## Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

## Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that



you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

## Money Matters

The official currency in Malawi is the Malawian kwacha (MK) and is made up of 100 tambala. Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10 and 20 tambala and 1 MK. Notes come in denominations of 500, 200, 100, 50, 10 and 5 MK.

US dollars, British pounds and South African rands and the most common and favoured foreign currency and with the addition of the euro, these currencies also make up the most preferred Traveller's cheques. In most places a 1% commission is charged for changing traveller's cheques.

In most major cities ATMs are available but are very rare outside in more rural areas and towns. Facilities to pay with credit and debit cards remains rare in most areas.

Please note that passports will always be needed when changing currency or travellers cheques.

You'll find your money goes a pretty long way if you purchase local foods and drinks.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant \$3.25  
Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) \$0.57  
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.52  
Water (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.52

(Prices quoted in US Dollars)

## Passports and Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visa for stays up to 90 days are not required for:

Holders of British passports & nationals of Antigua & Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominica, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Iceland, Ireland Rep, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Samoa, San Marino, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Grenadines, Swaziland, Sweden, Taiwan, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad & Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United States, Vanuatu, Zambia & Zimbabwe.

Visitors must present, on arrival, confirmed return or onward flight tickets, all visas and required documents required for their next destination and funds to cover the period of their stay.

## Visa courier service

For those of you who would prefer a specialist company to take care of your visa needs, we have teamed up Visa Central who can offer you assistance and advice when arranging your visa/s for your time away; making your preparations for your trip easier and more straight forward.

To investigate costs for this service [click here](#) to select the country or countries that you wish to travel to.

If the visa form requires details of addresses/inviters/referees you will find all this information on your Online Account once you have booked.

## Cultural Considerations

### Religion

The local population is predominantly Christian, influenced from early settling missionaries. Alongside Christian and Catholic beliefs, many people still follow traditional African religions.

### Clothing

Locals expect a certain dress code that you should adhere to. Please respect their customs and wear the appropriate level of dress. This includes trousers or skirts below the knee, and a shirt with sleeves. Vest tops are not appropriate.

### Smoking and Alcohol

Smoking and drinking is tolerated in Malawi and you will find that you will be able to get imported beer cheaply in most establishments. However, please respect other volunteers. Smoking is not permitted inside the house. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact on your volunteer work during the week.

### Drugs

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into Malawi. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries, Malawi has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of drugs. All drugs, including 'soft' drugs like marijuana, are illegal. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling – it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable at the project.

### Greetings

Pleasantries are taken seriously and using 'hello' and 'goodbye' can go a long way to making friends and being accepted. Please take the time to learn a few local words and show that you are keen to fit in (see the language section for some examples). There is also a big emphasis on shaking hands. The Western way of doing this will be fine, but you are likely to pick up a few local variations!

### Social Hierarchy

This is what you would expect of any country; the older people are treated with great respect. Men are considered to be of higher standing than women and children are expected to do as they are told!

Above all, Malawians are easy-going people - any social errors are unlikely to cause offence, so please do not worry!

## Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

## Safety

Tourists are always targets for pickpockets and thieves. Please educate yourself about Africa and Malawi in particular, before you leave, so that you can be alert for all types of situations. General travel safety rules are below.

- Avoid travelling alone, especially at night
- Find out where the unsafe areas are and avoid them
- When travelling, keep all of your important documents and valuables in a safe place, like an inner hidden pocket or money belt.
- Carry only as much cash as you think you will need for the day
- Don't wear expensive jewellery or watches
- Be wary of people who seem too friendly too fast
- Keep cameras out of sight. Always keep bags and purses in your sight.
- Before swimming, ask how safe the area is.

Lake Malawi is a large body of water and it has many hidden currents running through it. Please be careful when swimming in the lake. Always stay within your depth and never swim alone, and always make sure there are other volunteers around you. It is also important to be aware that African children are generally not very confident swimmers and therefore please be aware of them swimming in Lake Malawi with you as this can be dangerous if they are out of their depth.

### ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

## Schistosomiasis (Bilharzia)

Schistosomiasis is an infection that occurs in fresh water lakes, ponds, rivers and streams and is present in Lake Malawi. Schistosomiasis is transmitted to humans through contact with fresh water. Please make sure that you are aware of how to avoid it and make yourself familiar with the symptoms. The team in country will cover this topic in your orientation so please don't worry however for more information before you travel please follow the link below or speak to your doctor. <http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk/advice/disease-prevention-advice/schistosomiasis.aspx>

## Language Guide

The national language of Malawi is Chewa, or Chichewa. This is the language of the dominant group, also known as the Chewa. There are many other dialects and languages as there are so many ethnic groups. However, English is the official language and is spoken prevalently across the country.

Here are some useful Chichewa phrases to remember when you get to Malawi. We also suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

### English - *Chichewa*

Hello - *Moni*

How are you? - *Muli bwanji?*

I'm fine - *Ndili bwino*

Thank you (very much) - *Zikomo (kwambiri)*

Please - *Chonde*

Yes / No - *Inde / Iyayi*

Goodbye - stay well - *Tsala bwino*

## Food & Drink

Traditional food is fun to try and easy to enjoy. Nsima, the most widely served traditional dish, consists of pounded balls of maize, eaten by hand, dipped in a gravy or sauce.

Buying food at the roadside/market stalls is a good way to experience some more traditional food, and is very tasty. You can often find pieces of grilled meat, deep-fried potato or cassava chips, roasted corncobs and many local sweets.

The traditional staple diet in Africa is meat and carbohydrates. If you are a vegetarian you will be catered for with lots of fresh root vegetables such as yams and potatoes and fruits. However, please be aware that your meals towards the end of your programme may become a little repetitive so perhaps it may be worth buying a few of your favourite snacks whilst you are in Africa.

There is a lot of fresh fruit in Africa, which is cheap to buy for a quick snack or nutritional lunch so it may be worth picking some up from the market quite cheaply for your daily vitamin fix.

Drinking water from the tap is not generally considered to be safe, so choices include plastic bottled water, boiled or filtered tap water, and "pure water" sachets. These sachets are filtered and come in 500ml plastic bag portions. Many foreigners prefer bottled water, though water in sealed plastic sachets is safe, easily accessible and cheap.

Please remember to let us know before you depart if you have any special dietary requirements.

## Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. However, although businesses and government offices are closed on public holidays, tourist attractions and shops are almost never closed. The main impact on the tourist of these holidays is the increased competition for travel and accommodation from Malawian's who use long weekends to get away from the big towns.

To view a list of the public holidays for Malawi, please see the link below:

<http://www.worldtravelguide.net/malawi/public-holidays>

## Weather

Malawi has varied weather patterns due to varying altitudes across the country. Generally, Malawi's wet season falls from November to April, when the days are warm and humid. The heat and humidity are at their most extreme during September and October. May to August is cool and dry.

## Time

Malawi is two hours ahead of GMT.

In Africa, time is not a priority like it is in much of the western world – there is a saying that Africa works to 'Africa Time', which basically means you must exercise a lot of patience! If a boat is due to leave at 12pm, don't be surprised if it still hasn't a couple of hours later... keep an open mind, and arrive in Africa 'Expecting the unexpected'.

## Electricity

Electricity in India uses 230 volts, 50Hz. If your device does not run on these rates, you'll need a voltage converter.

Outlets across Malawi generally accept the following plug type:



Three round pins arranged in a triangle

## Trip Note Disclaimer



# Malawi Sports and Community

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as we make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

## Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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