



Kalagala Education Initiative - Volunteer Manual

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to the Kalagala Education Initiative family! We are excited to have you join us in our mission to empower children through education, cultural exchange, and community connection.

At KEI, we believe every interaction has the power to inspire; whether it's a shared story, a classroom activity, or a smile exchanged with a child. Your presence here helps us strengthen literacy, nurture confidence, and open doors to opportunity for children in Uganda's rural schools.

This manual will guide you through everything you need to know before, during, and after your volunteer experience.

About KEI

Kalagala Education Initiative (KEI) is a registered Community-Based Organization (CBO) operating in Kyotera District, Uganda.

Our mission:

To connect children in rural Uganda to the global community through letters, sponsorship, and volunteerism enhancing literacy, communication skills, and confidence.

Our vision:

A world where every child feels connected, supported, and empowered to reach their potential.

Our core programs:

- **Letter Exchange Platform:** Cross-cultural friendships through pen-pal letters.
- **Volunteer Program:** Teaching, mentoring, and skill-sharing with local schools.
- **Student Sponsorships:** Linking learners to educational support.
- **Football Academy:** Developing talent and teamwork.
- **Community Engagement:** Strengthening family and school collaboration.

Volunteer Goals & Responsibilities

Volunteers are ambassadors of learning, empathy, and cultural exchange. You will:

- Support literacy, English, and communication activities in primary classrooms.
- Mentor children through reading clubs, singing, dancing, art, or sports.
- Assist with letter exchange coordination and documentation.
- Participate in school or community improvement projects.
- Share cultural presentations or lessons.

- Uphold KEI's safeguarding and community values at all times.

Typical schedule

Time	Activity	
7:30 AM	Breakfast & preparation	
8:30 AM – 12:30 PM	School placement activities	
1:00 PM	Lunch	
2:00 – 4:30 PM	Afternoon clubs / community outreach	
6:00 PM	Dinner & reflection	

Schedules vary depending on school calendars and projects.

Placement Overview

Volunteers at Kalagala Education Initiative (KEI) work directly with Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools located in rural communities across Kyotera District, Uganda. These schools are government-aided, serving children from low-income and marginalized families.

Most pupils come from households living below the poverty line, with limited access to basic resources such as shoes, school supplies, and nutritious meals. Many children walk several kilometers to school each day often barefoot yet they remain eager to learn and participate.

Class sizes typically range from 50 to 100 pupils per teacher, creating significant challenges for individualized attention and learning support. Volunteers play a vital role in enhancing literacy, improving communication skills, and offering mentorship, helping to bridge this gap and inspire confidence among learners.

Duration

Placements typically range from **1 week to 3 months**, depending on volunteer availability and visa. We accept long term volunteer opportunities

Accommodation

- Clean, safe shared volunteer house near schools.
- Rooms are same-gender shared unless otherwise requested.
- Meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) are provided daily. You will get time to enjoy the Ugandan rolex
- Electricity and running water may be limited at times — welcome to authentic rural Uganda life!

Code of Conduct - Expected behavior

Volunteers are representatives of KEI. We expect:

- Respect for children, staff, and community members.

- No discrimination or offensive language.
- Modest dress (shoulders/knees covered in schools).
- Punctuality and reliability.
- Responsible social media use — no photos of children shared publicly without KEI permission.

Prohibited conduct

- Any form of child abuse, harassment, or exploitation.
- Alcohol or drugs during working hours.
- Romantic relationships with minors or local students.
- Taking children outside school without official approval.

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

KEI prioritizes **child safety and well-being**. All volunteers must:

- Attend a safeguarding orientation upon arrival.
- Sign the KEI Child Protection Agreement.
- Report any suspicious or inappropriate behavior immediately to the KEI Volunteer Coordinator.

Remember:

Children's trust is sacred — protect it always.

Health, Safety & Security

- Uganda is generally safe, but remain alert.
- Do not walk alone at night; use local transport or go in pairs.
- Keep valuables secure.
- If you must use a boda (motorcycle taxis), get one from a stage
- Drink bottled or boiled water only.
- Mosquito nets are provided; use repellents.
- KEI has local emergency contacts and can assist with medical needs.

Emergency contacts

- KEI Program Coordinator: **+256 702 017 741 (WhatsApp)**
- Local Health Center: Kalisizo Hospital
- Police: 999 (National)

Cultural Awareness

Ugandans are warm, friendly, and deeply respectful. Here is a small cultural tip:

- Greet elders first and with a handshake.
- Learn a few Luganda phrases — locals appreciate it!
- Dress modestly in schools and community settings.
- Always ask before taking photos.
- Sundays are typically family or worship days.

What to Pack

Essentials:

- Passport (valid 6+ months)
- Visa approval letter / e-Visa
- Yellow fever vaccination certificate
- Lightweight clothing, long trousers/skirts
- Closed shoes/sandals
- Sunscreen, hat, insect repellent
- Personal toiletries
- Reusable water bottle
- Notebook / teaching materials, sports equipments (if you are doing Sports)
- Small gifts for children (optional, non-monetary)

Program Fees & What's Included

Volunteer contribution:

Duration	Volunteer fees (Per head)	Notes
1 Week	\$300	
2 weeks	\$550	
3 weeks	\$750	
4 weeks	\$950	

Covers:

- Accommodation
- 3 meals/day
- Local transport to project sites
- Orientation & coordination
- Certificate of completion

Excludes:

Flights, visa, insurance, vaccinations, personal expenses, Airport transfers, tourism trips.

Tourism & Weekend Activities

Uganda offers incredible natural beauty and adventure. KEI can help arrange optional add-ons:

- **Safari** at Lake Mburo or Queen Elizabeth National Park
- **Gorilla trekking** in Bwindi
- **Boat cruise** on Kazinga Channel
- **Hiking** in Ssezibwa or Mabira
- **Cultural dance & craft markets** in Masaka or Kampala

Departure & Reflection

Before leaving:

- Complete your evaluation form.
- Submit any photos, stories, or feedback.
- Attend the KEI farewell session & certificate presentation.

We encourage volunteers to become KEI Ambassadors — helping spread awareness, sponsor children, or organize fundraisers back home.

Staying Involved After Volunteering

After your trip, you can:

- Sponsor a child you met.
- Help fundraise for a school project.
- Host a letter exchange in your country.
- Return as a long-term volunteer or intern.
- Share your KEI story on social media!

Contact Information

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