

EDGE of AFRICA

Info sheet



Project Overview

Project Duration: Minimum stay 2 weeks

Project Costs: Please refer to price list

Location of project: Knynsa, South Africa

Getting there: You can fly into Johannesburg, Cape Town or Port Elizabeth and catch a connecting flight to GEORGE (GRJ), which is our nearest airport (where we will be waiting to welcome you!) You can also get the bus from Johannesburg, Cape Town or Port Elizabeth which is a good way to see the area if you have time before your arrival date. If you decide to take the bus, a return bus ticket is included FREE of charge and we can help book this for you. We are also more than happy to assist you with booking overnight accommodation in your arrival city and advising on tours!

On departure, we will transport you to the airport or bus stop, and/ or assist with any further travel arrangements. If you are travelling further through Africa we are more than happy to provide any advice or support in planning your onward journey. We will provide you with a comprehensive Pre-Travel Advice pack when you confirm your booking with us that will outline all our recommendations for flights, packing and in-country advice.

Activities: Help us to provide education, social and health support and alleviate poverty in the beautiful township of Knynsa. Through projects aimed at empowering locals we encourage a sense of pride and create a brighter future for the poorest communities.

This program targets the main areas of concern in the local community: Health, Education and Nutrition, and provides an all-round service to the local people. Projects include conducting social surveys in the local township, building eco-friendly greenhouses, assisting with afterschool programs, helping at an elderly care centre and running a weekly recycling exchange initiative for children- a full and varied experience!

You will be able to make a tangible difference to the lives of individuals who have little or no opportunity to improve their access to a decent education or livelihood

Working Hours: You will usually start your day at 8.45 and finish at around 17.00. Normally you will return to the volunteer accommodation for lunch, or you may be provided with a packed lunch to take with you on the project

Getting to the project daily: We provide all project related transport and you will always be working alongside a project co-ordinator

Who can apply: Specific qualifications are not required for this placement, although you will need to have a love for working in the community and be comfortable working with people of varying ages. You need to be caring, motivated and enjoy team work.

Good health and average physical fitness are also required. You also need to be confident with speaking English. The minimum age for individuals joining this program is 17 (under 18s require written parental consent); and we also welcome family groups.

Project Description

When you join this program you will be assisting with the following projects:

TB Screening

Our TB Screening project uses a non-invasive questionnaire-based method to identify people who are presenting symptoms of TB and refer them to local health clinics.

With the assistance of our volunteers we go house-to-house and conduct a questionnaire – if it is apparent that someone is potentially infected with TB we provide them with a referral letter and advise them to visit a local health clinic for formal testing and treatment where necessary.

House-to-house screening is considered by the World Health Organisation to be a highly effective method for active case finding.

Please note: This project is carried out within the general population – it is not specifically aimed at people with TB and therefore there is no increased risk of contracting TB.

Support Group for Teenagers

Volunteer with Teenagers through our weekly Support Group. This project is aimed at providing local teenagers with an opportunity to discuss and learn about issues important to them; and to build their self-esteem through positive reinforcement.

This is an 8-part workshop covering the following topics:

- Bullying
- Peer Pressure & Gangs
- Body image, Self-esteem & Puberty
- Relationships & Sex (2 parts)
- Effects of alcohol
- Communication skills
- Personal Development

As well as discussing these important topics we also encourage the participants to set personal goals and to consider how the choices they make affect their ability to achieve their goals. Many of the children we work with come from backgrounds that aren't always able to provide the direction that they need to lead the best life possible. We hope that through our workshops we inspire the children we work with to make responsible decisions and be the best they can be!

Support for the Elderly

Volunteer for elderly residents who live at a care home in Knysna, South Africa. This project is aimed at providing company and support to the residents of a local old age centre.

Our volunteers provide an opportunity for residents to enjoy a range of different programs, including exercise programs, arts and craft activities, group games, story reading, gardening and more! They especially love a game of bingo and making cards for their loved ones.

Through this project we are able to keep the residents mentally and physically active, provide them with emotional support, and provide an opportunity for many hours of fun they otherwise wouldn't have. Many of the residents do not have family members that visit often. Not only do we help to break up some of the long days but it is a great opportunity for cultural exchange.

Food Security

Our Food Security Project is aimed at providing locals with the assistance and education that they need in order to be able to grow food for themselves and their families.

We assist in establishing food gardens, using various different methods depending on their needs and the space available. For example we have helped establish vertical gardens; raised beds using the "square-foot gardening" method; and door gardens.

We have also built a number of eco-friendly greenhouses. There has been a constant battle with developing vegetable gardens that are exposed to local animals in the informal areas of our Knysna Community. There is also an on-going problem that 2 L plastic bottles block drainpipes causing many houses and streets to flood.

In order to tackle these issues we began constructing greenhouses using a wooden frame (making use of alien wood wherever possible) and rows of 2 litre plastic bottles (collected via our Recycling Swop Shop and through local competitions).

We have begun by creating greenhouses and gardens at local schools, both to assist the schools in providing food for their students and also to serve as prototypes for the wider community. Our long term goal is to assist individual community members in creating their own food gardens and to develop opportunities for food exchange and business empowerment opportunities.

As part of our Food Security Project we also run our "Ipana Banye" ("sharing together") project once a week, where we prepare and distribute nutritious soup, as well as providing pamphlets with useful information on nutrition and growing vegetables. Each week we rotate around different areas of our local community to try to reach as many people as possible.

Recycling Swop Shop

Help us run a project teaching kids the value of looking after their community and the concept of using recycling to meet their immediate needs through a recycling exchange incentive scheme. Our swop shop also creates an effective means of cleaning up the local environment.

Local children collect plastic, paper, tins and glass which they bring once a week to the Swop Shop. Their recycling is weighed by EDGE of AFRICA volunteers and depending on the amount and type of recycling the child receives a certain amount of points which they can then spend in the 'Swop Shop'.

The shop is filled with clothes, toiletries, toys & stationery (and the list goes on!) all donated by Knysna locals and International volunteers. There is no money involved in this scheme and the Recycling Swop Shop is entirely reliant on donations and volunteer participation.

The recycling that is collected through this project is put to good use, for example we use 2 litre plastic bottles to create eco-friendly greenhouses (see our Food Security Project); and we are developing a business empowerment project that will employ local people to create functional products out of "waste" materials!

HIV/AIDS Awareness Workshops

These workshops are aimed at local children aged 12-18 years old and play an important role in the fight against the HIV epidemic.

In Sub-Saharan Africa nearly 1 in 20 adults are living with HIV and this region accounts for 71% of the people living with HIV Worldwide. Around 29.5% of South Africa's population is infected with HIV.

Through our years of experience of working with children in Knysna's township areas it has become increasingly apparent that although many of the children have heard about HIV/AIDS, their understanding is very minimal.

Our fun and interactive workshops cover all aspects of HIV/AIDS & TB:

- How HIV/AIDS works and the facts about transmission
 - The link between HIV/AIDS & TB
 - Prevention
 - HIV testing and treatment
 - Effects of prejudice
- In order to assess the effectiveness of our workshops, participating children complete a short quiz before they begin the workshops and the same quiz after they have finished the workshops.

Community Surveys

This project focuses on an ongoing Community Survey. This survey is aimed at giving us a better understanding of how the local people feel about their community; as well as highlighting issues that our projects are already tackling and areas where we may be able to develop new projects.

Volunteers go house-to-house and conduct questionnaires. The content of the questionnaires varies depending on the current aims of the project. Through this project we have been able to gain insight into unemployment rates; living conditions and access to services; skills that local people have; projects/classes that locals are interested in; and animal welfare issues.

The working routine

After enjoying a nutritious breakfast of bread, fruits, yoghurt and eggs:

- **8.45-9.00:** Debrief with project co-ordinator and any other volunteers to ensure that everybody is clear on the morning's plans and individual roles (volunteers will have received project training the day before). Gather together necessary resources
- **9.00-12.15:** Morning project
- **12.15-12.30:** Travel back to volunteer house
- **12:30-13:30:** Lunch
- **13:30-13.45:** Project training for following days projects
- **13:45 – 14:00:** Debrief with project co-ordinator and any other volunteers to ensure that everybody is clear on the afternoon's plans and individual roles (volunteers will have received project training the day before). Gather together necessary resources
- **14:00-16:15:** Afternoon project
- **16:15-16:30:** Travel back to accommodation
- **16:30-16:45:** Debrief with project co-ordinator and any other volunteers to ensure everybody enjoyed their day and are clear on what is happening the following day.
- **16.45-17.00:** Complete project report forms recording details of what has been achieved during the day.

What's included

- All project costs, equipment, tools and resources
- FREE return bus ticket from Cape Town, Jo'burg or PE to Knysna; or pick up/drop off at George Airport.
- 24/7 emergency support
- Orientation & Training
- Accommodation in our Volunteer House
- 3 meals a day (on weekends we provide the ingredients for you to cook your own dinners)
- Project Related Transport
- Project T-shirt
- Dedicated coordinators to assist you daily
- Assistance with optional activities and tours
- Assistance obtaining a local SIM Card for your phone
- Additional cultural and outdoor activities on Friday afternoons
- Free, unlimited Wi-Fi and computer access in the Knysna volunteer house
- Post-project involvement, and an exclusive return volunteer discount

Accommodation

The EDGE of AFRICA lodge is a beautiful Victorian House, perfectly situated on a slope, overlooking the Knysna Lagoon. A place where you can put your feet up and admire the view or take a two minute stroll to town and explore the hotspots of Knysna. As well as providing a home for our volunteers, our lodge also accommodates other International travellers, so there will be no shortage of new people to meet!

Facilities include:

- Hot water showers & electricity
- Communal kitchen
- Communal lounge area with TV/DVD Player
- Comfortable dorm style sleeping arrangements
- Unlimited Wi-Fi and computer access
- Outdoor braai (barbeque) area

Orientation

On arrival day (Saturday) you will be met by one of our team members and transported to the volunteer accommodation. You will have a brief introduction to the accommodation and meet any other volunteers. You will then be free to relax and explore your new surroundings for the remainder of the weekend.

On Monday morning you and any other new volunteers will participate in orientation. Orientation will begin with a presentation including an introduction to EDGE of AFRICA; what we do and don't do; your role on the projects; ethics and guidelines; safety information; information about project reports and feedback forms; and information about time off and excursions. Following the presentation, we will then go on a drive to show you the area and some of the projects that you will be involved with. There will also be an opportunity to stop at the shop for any snacks you might want to buy, and to get a local SIM card if you wish.

Support

We will provide you with training for any projects that you will be involved with. You will always be working alongside a project coordinator whenever you are on a project. We have a live-in staff member who stays in the volunteer accommodation with you; and all staff are always available for any emergencies.

Food

We provide 3 meals a day and will always cater to specific dietary requirements to the best of our ability.

Optional extras

Day Excursions

You will have many opportunities to experience our amazing selection of outdoor activities! We have options for every budget including:

- Visits to various food and craft markets
- Whale & dolphin boat trips
- Shark Cage diving
- Wildlife Sanctuaries including getting close to various cat, elephant and monkey species
- Highest bungee jump in the world
- Canoeing, hiking and climbing
- Visits to numerous breath-taking beaches and beautiful rivers

Addo National Park - 3 day trip

This park offers some of the most spectacular elephant viewing in the world. Addo's over 500 elephants will delight you with their antics. You have the chance of seeing the Big 5 on this trip too!

This Trip includes:

- The use of our own vehicles to enter into the park for long and informative drives
- All conservation fees
- Accommodation at backpackers or Addo campsite
- 3 meals a day
- The option to go on a horse ride; a guided safari with the park vehicles; and a night drive with the park vehicles (additional cost)

Cape Town Tour – 3 days

Day 1 - City Tour

Your City Tour in Cape Town will enable you to discover the multi-ethnic character and historical wealth of the city through visits to the SA Museum, the Company Gardens, the colourful Malay quarter with its Muslim community, the city centre and the District 6 Museum. Finally, from the top of Signal Hill, you will gaze in awe at the splendour of the Mother City (Cable Car to Table Mountain is NOT included). (Scheduled tour)

Day 2 - Peninsular Tour

The Peninsula Tour takes you along both the Atlantic and Indian Ocean Coastlines. Stop in at the charming fishing village of Hout Bay where boat trips to Seal Island are available for a supplementary charge. We then continue along the untamed Atlantic coastline to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve and Cape Point - the most southwesterly tip of Africa. On our return trip, we pass through Simon's Town (S.A's naval base), traverse the fishing port of Kalk Bay and the lush suburb of Constantia.

Day 3 - Robben Island

Enjoy a morning at leisure or visit Robben Island (where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned) for your own account. The Island represents important aspects of South African History. Then spend the remainder of your time exploring the expansive waterfront - the hub of Cape Town Shopping.

What's not included

Flights, Visas, Travel insurance, cost of optional excursions

Project rules

Minor Offences	1st Offence	2nd Offence	3rd Offence
Laziness	Verbal warning	Written warning	Project Termination
Poor Punctuality	Verbal warning	Written warning	Project Termination
Disruptiveness	Verbal warning	Written warning	Project Termination
Being absent without good reason	Verbal warning	Written warning	Project Termination
Being absent without informing a Project Coordinator	Verbal warning	Written warning	Project Termination
Showing disrespect, being rude or unfriendly to any local people, customs or traditions	Written warning	Project Termination	
Showing disrespect, being rude or unfriendly to any EDGE of AFRICA team members, project partners or fellow volunteers	Written warning	Project Termination	
Excessive profanity or religious criticism	Written warning	Project Termination	
Minor breach of safety protocols	Written warning	Project Termination	
Not listening to or heeding instructions from your Project Coordinator, representatives of EDGE of AFRICA or associated staff of your chosen project	Written warning	Project Termination	
Excessive alcohol intake	Written warning	Project Termination	

Major Offences	1st Offence
Section One crimes including: theft & assault	Project Termination
B-Section crimes such as: disturbing the peace, disorderly conduct, drunk in public etc.	Project Termination
Discrimination in any form	Project Termination
Drug use	Project Termination
Malicious damage to any property or belongings	Project Termination
Negligent performance of duties that may affect the collection, collation or dissemination of data or the progress of any community based work	Project Termination
Behaviour that may call into question the motives of EDGE of AFRICA or any associated projects	Project Termination
Serious breach of safety rules	Project Termination

Weather

The Garden Route and the surrounding area has a coastal climate. We get rain throughout the year, hot summers- where temperatures can reach upwards of 35°C and mild winters, where snow can be seen on the mountains. Evenings and nights can be cold and windy days can bring the temperature down, but generally we have a mild, lovely climate, with many sunny days perfect for beach visits on your time off!

Summer:

December – February (Day Time: 26°C-35°C; Night Time: 12°C-15°C)

Winter:

June – August (Day Time: 15°C-20°C; Night Time: 5°C-8°C)

* Autumn (March - May) and Spring (Sept - Nov) see variations of Summer and Winter temperatures.

What to pack

Please note that not all of the below will always be relevant, however due to varying weather conditions and activities you may need many of the following:

- **A small rucksack is useful for daytime**
- **One bath towel, one beach towel**
- **Camera**
- **Flashlight** (recommended)
- **Water bottle** (can buy this in South Africa)
- **Sun-block** (high SPF recommended) Beware the sun! Bring plenty of sun block, or buy some in South Africa, of at least 15SPF but 30SPF is recommended. You should use approximately a shot glass of sun block for your body and a good teaspoon full for your face. This sounds a lot but is worth it, having acute sunburn can ruin your stay and increase your risk of skin cancer.
- **Sleeping bag** for any camping we may do (optional)

Personal First Aid Kit

We carry a fully equipped first aid kit on all projects and excursions but for your personal use we recommend you have one of your own containing:

- Anti-diarrhea drugs
- Paracetamol or Aspirin
- Anti-inflammatory drugs
- Anti-histamines (for hay-fever or allergic reactions)
- Anti-bacterial ointment for cuts and abrasions
- Bandages, gauze, plasters etc
- Scissors, safety pins, tweezers
- Insect repellent containing-DEET
- Oral re-hydration salts

Please note: these items can be purchased in South Africa if necessary

Work Clothing

Enough to last you a week while the previous weeks' clothing is in the wash.

- On community programs, modest clothing is required. No short skirts, skimpy shorts or strappy tops girls (or boys!!).
- Comfortable shoes are required for project work and sandals/slops are useful for off days.
- Waterproof shoes/boots
- Rain proof jacket and trousers - we recommend you come prepared to work in the rain
- Cool and warm t-shirts – short and long sleeved
- A wide brimmed hat is also a necessity
- A couple of warm fleece tops will be beneficial for the cooler nights and days and layers always work better in Africa as it often warms up later in the day
- One or two smart-casual outfits for nights out in town

If you have space left in your bag and are feeling generous, these are some of the things on our wish list:

- Children's clothes and shoes are always needed for our community projects
- We can never have enough stationery or craft materials
- Toiletries are always very popular with our communities
- Sports equipment is always needed (balls, sports shoes, kits etc.)
- DVD's and games for the volunteer house are also much appreciated (we have some board games but if you have anything unique to your country...bring it along!)

Health

Always make sure you carry your medication in its original packaging and an original prescription for prescribed medication. It is also a good idea to carry a signed and dated letter from your doctor outlining any medical conditions you have, medication (with generic names) that you are on, and if you require needles or syringes, the reasons why.

- **Vaccinations:** The World Health Organization (www.who.int/en/) recommends that all travellers are covered for diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and polio, hepatitis B regardless of the country you travel to. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov) recommends the following vaccines for South Africa: Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and typhoid and boosters for tetanus, diphtheria and measles. Travellers are only required to have a vaccine for Yellow Fever if coming from an infective region (Kenya & Tanzania).
- **Malaria:** The most threatening tropical disease you may encounter in South Africa is Malaria; however, the Garden Route is a MALARIA-FREE ZONE. If you are travelling further North to Swaziland and in Eastern South-Africa (KwaZulu-Natal, towards Mozambique etc.) it is recommended that you consult with a travel clinic to see which malaria medication is the best option for you.
- **HIV:** South Africa has more people living with HIV than any other country in the world. The virus is spread through infected blood and blood products, by sexual intercourse with an infected partner and from an infected mother to her baby during child birth and breast feeding. We strongly suggest you take this into account before considering taking part in any activities which may put you at any risk whatsoever.
- **Dehydration:** Africa can be hot! You will be working outdoors and you may be doing physical work. Bring a water bottle or buy one when you arrive and make sure you stay hydrated in the heat! Bring plenty of sun block because the African sun is hotter than you think and bring a decent wide-brimmed hat.
- **Health Care in South Africa:** The Private health care in South Africa is of international standard. In Knysna there are several well stocked chemists, travel clinics, government and private hospitals. Prescriptions are generally required for most medication. We have doctors on call 24/7 and our Private Hospital is of high standard.

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