



Volunteer-Interns-Guide

During the phase of preparation for your stay abroad certainly a lot of thoughts are running through your head. This guide will help you with the preparations!

It aims to make the stay of volunteers and interns who come to "Maison Shalom" more pleasant, facilitate their rapid integration into the scoreboard, maximize their contribution to the work of Maison Shalom and allow the most positive experience possible.

In addition you, of course, always have the possibility, to contact us directly. We will be glad to help you and are looking forward to welcome you here in Kigali!



1. Preamble

Welcome, Bienvenue, Kaze, Willkommen!

Your stay abroad at Maison Shalom in Rwanda will be a very special time in your life. You'll get to know Rwanda not only as a tourist, but go deeper into the culture and the normal life on site. You'll discover a lot of new things, meet like-minded people, improve your professional skills and learn more about the Burundian and Rwandan culture.

With your own initiative and richness of ideas you can reach a lot at Maison Shalom for the project and for your own personality. Cosmopolitanism, curiosity, team spirit and independent engagement are the most important requirements for your work at Maison Shalom.

Your future work environment and the mentality of Rwandan and Burundians are different from what you used to know from west European countries. Immerse yourself! We are offering a lot of possibilities, to engage yourself, to contribute with your knowledge and skills and to become acquainted with places, people and Burundian and Rwandan culture in a better way.

I wish all of our Interns and Volunteers impressive experiences and inspiring encounters that touch the soul and never go away!

Marguerite BARANKITSE

Founder and Legal Representative



A. Values and guiding Principles

Maison Shalom was created to say no to the fratricidal hatred based on political, ethnical and regional divisions. For this purpose, it is apolitical and non-confessional; promotes respect for all human beings and is against all forms of discrimination or exclusion. Maison Shalom's philosophy is based on five principles that support the daily work and services for people in need of assistance. These principles are:

- **Dignity**

We believe that every human being has an inherent worth, regardless of his or her social status, socioeconomic situation, ethnicity, or of their political or religious affiliation.

- **Compassion**

We share the suffering of our neighbors, but do not pity them. Instead, we help them get back on their feet."

- **Tolerance**

We welcome our differences as a source of strength and inspiration. We live together as members of the same family by respecting the liberties, convictions and opinions of one another.

- **Humility**

We recognize our limits and are open to any constructive contribution by our partners, so that we may improve our services."

- **Integrity**

We use all goods and donations towards the common good, and are fully transparent with all our partners as to the use of these goods."

B. Fields of activity at Maison Shalom

At Maison Shalom you can support numerous programs. We are not just strongly positioned in the social sector, but provide you a lot of other options according to your individual interests and ideas.

Sector	Programs
Education	Preschool education, secondary education, vocational training, post-secondary education, English skills, basic computer skills
Community development	Training on small business management, microloans
Psychosocial work	Counseling, trauma healing, social support
Oasis of Peace Community Centre	Hotel and Restoration services, trainings in culinary arts and catering, Fashion (Elite Design), culture (modern and traditional dance), sport, cinema, trainings on basic computer skills
Mahama Elite Centre	Trainings in tailoring, basic computer skills, painting, shoe making, library, traditional dance.

Generally:

You must first be aware of your fields of intervention as well as the various activities. If necessary, the information is available at the website of Maison Shalom www.maisonshalom.org and may be supplemented by direct responses of authorized persons of Maison Shalom's team on your specific questions (see also point 6: contact).

The areas of intervention, activities to be implemented must be defined and validated by agreement between you and the coordination of Maison Shalom. Your service should be adapted to the current needs of Maison Shalom. In case of no match between the services offered by the volunteer and the needs of Maison Shalom, the latter reserves the right to refuse services.

Visa :

To enter Rwanda, you need a Visa depending on the Country of Residence. For more information, please visit the official site of the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration Rwanda (DGIE) at <https://www.migration.gov.rw/index.php?id=75>. Some embassies need, in addition to your application, an invitation of Maison Shalom. In this we confirm you the Internship or voluntary service. If you need it, please write a short email to Richard NIJIMBERE, the Country Director (richardn@maisonshalom.org) and he will send you the invitation.

From the Embassy you'll get a Visa for maximum 3 months. The costs depend on your home-country. If you need to travel to East African Countries, you should apply for the East African Visa. If you want to stay longer than 3 months, please plan for it beforehand and contact the DGIE for detailed information.



2. Preparation

A. Foreign health insurance

Essential for your stay abroad is a foreign health insurance. We suggest, comparing different offers in advance. Important criteria are, amongst others:

- **Period of validity** Foreign health insurances are often be charged on a daily basis. Please make sure, that all days you stay in Rwanda (East Africa), are included - also the day of your entry and departure.
- **Insurance benefits** Essential is for example the free return transportation in your foreign country in case of a medical emergency. Please check before conclusion of the insurance for important ben-efits, depending on your individual needs.

- Criteria for the insured person

If you, for example organize your stay at Maison Shalom by yourself (and e.g. not with your university), sometimes different insurance policies apply to you compared to volunteers. Make sure, that your insurance knows before and check again before conclusion of the insurance, if you meet all the requirements of the insurance, to ensure the insurance coverage.

- Territory

Sometimes it's recommendable, that the insurance is not just limited to Rwanda, because you may also want to travel to neighbor-countries like Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya. Therefore you need a policy for the territory "Worldwide without USA/Canada".

B. Money

- Currency

The Rwandan Currency is Rwandan Franc (RWF).

- Currency ex-change

Please note that in Rwanda for the Exchange from US-Dollar to RWF just Notes newer than (and including) 2013 are accepted. For the current Exchange Rate please check at one of the currency converters in the Internet. Locally you can change your Money at a Bank or in a Forex Bureau. It is important to know that the exchange rate at the Forex is always the most interesting when you exchange foreign for local currency. In case of the opposite operation, please refer to the nearest bank. Also you have the possibility, to withdraw cash with your Credit-Card in Kigali and other urban area. Accepted is Visa, MasterCard, etc. On the ATM – Cash Machine on which there is a Visa Card logo, it normally works.

- Medical references
Safe-keeping of the money

You can keep Money (and also documents like passport etc.) on your own responsibility in your room, which is lockable.

c. Medical references

For flying to Rwanda, we suggest you the consultancy by your family doctor for the immunization and a Health Check. Please note necessarily also the travel advices of the Foreign Office of your country - also with regard to Malaria, HIV/AIDS, diarrhea diseases etc.

Foreign Office Belgium	http://diplomatie.belgium.be/fr/Services/voyager_a_letranger/conseils_par_destination/afrique/burundi/ra_burundi.jsp?referer=tcm:313-75047-64
Foreign Office France	http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/burundi-200/
Foreign Office Germany	http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/sid_F95FD5627B1DEA5E52BA3C8CCCF1391A/DE/Laenderinformationen/00-SiHi/Nodes/BurundiSicherheit_node.html
Foreign Office Luxembourg	See Belgium



3. Travelling

A. How to come to Rwanda?

- **Foreign Country**
 > **Rwanda** By airplane to Kigali International Airport.
Airlines: Brussels Airlines, Kenya Airways, Ethiopian Airlines, Qatar Airways, KLM, ...depending on the country of residence.

- **Airport**
 > **Headquarters of Maison Shalom** By car.
In certain cases it is possible, to go with a car of Maison Shalom from the Airport to Maison Shalom. Please talk for that to Richard NIJIMBERE, the Country Director (richardn@maisonshalom.org) and he will try to organize a transport. It is also safe to take a taxi.

- **In Kigali** Kigali is a safe city, so you can reach many destinations on foot. Sometimes you can also join a car of Maison Shalom, which is in the area.

Generally: Maison Shalom does not provide transport if not just for service reasons. If you decide to spend a weekend out of Kigali, any costs occurring will be on your charge. If possible, you can always ask a place in a vehicle of Maison Shalom going to the destination you want to reach. The program schedule can always be consulted at office of Human Resources and Logistics Officer.

B. Packing-List: What to bring?

Just a few weeks and your stay abroad at Maison Shalom will begin! Now it's time to pack your bags. We suggest you to write a Check-List in good time before your departure. So you'll get the chance, to run important errands and pack your bags a few days before on a trial basis to weight them (please check the baggage policy of your airline in advance). This Packing-List tries to provide useful pointers and is meant for your orientation. But: we don't claim the following information to be complete and what you bring always depends on your individual needs as well.

A lot of the following articles can also be purchased on-site, but please note, that especially hygienic articles from European brands are often more expensive and electronic articles are also often not equivalent to European standards.

C. Packing-List

Basics	Suitcase	<input type="radio"/>
	Big Backpack with enough volume for excursions	<input type="radio"/>
	Little Backpack as Daypack (and for Hand luggage)	<input type="radio"/>
	Belly pocket for travel-documents and valuables	<input type="radio"/>
	Space-saving and foldable Bag (for shopping or excursions)	<input type="radio"/>
	Waterproof coating for Backpacks (to transport sensitive stuff like electronic in the rain season)	<input type="radio"/>
Formal	Bus/train/flight ticket or booking confirmation	<input type="radio"/>
	Valid Passport including Visa	<input type="radio"/>
	Printout of the Visa-Confirmation incl. confirmation of payment	<input type="radio"/>
	Identity Card	<input type="radio"/>
	Debit-Card/Credit-Card	<input type="radio"/>
	Proofs of insurance (foreign health insurance etc.)	<input type="radio"/>
	Cash Money (incl. US-Dollar from 2013)	<input type="radio"/>
	Valid vaccination certificate	<input type="radio"/>
	International drivers-license (to rent a car on-site)	<input type="radio"/>
	Important addresses and telephone-numbers (Hotel, Maison Shalom, Insurances, emergency calls, Banks to block your Cards etc.; the address of Maison Shalom is important, because you have to indicate it by your arrival on the airport of Kigali)	<input type="radio"/>
	Printouts of important Documents of Maison Shalom (Invitation etc.)	<input type="radio"/>
	Printouts of all personal, important Documents (maybe additional as digital documents on a data-medium)	<input type="radio"/>
	Stable folder for Document-Copies, Memories etc.	<input type="radio"/>
	Travel guide (e.g. lonely planet East Africa, Petit Futé etc.)	<input type="radio"/>
	Rwanda Map	<input type="radio"/>
	Dictionary (Recommendation: Kirundi-English-French" by A.H. Zembak)	<input type="radio"/>
	Paper, Notebooks, diaries	<input type="radio"/>
	Books	<input type="radio"/>
Electronic	USB flash drive / hard drive	<input type="radio"/>
	Power Adapter (Standard in Rwanda: Schuko)	<input type="radio"/>
	Laptop + Charger and additions	<input type="radio"/>
	Mobile (SIM-Lock free for local SIM-Card) + Charger	<input type="radio"/>
	MP3-Player + Charger + USB-cable	<input type="radio"/>
	Batteries	<input type="radio"/>
	Camera + Camera-Bag + Charger + memory Card + battery + spare rechargeable battery + USB-cable	<input type="radio"/>
	Hairdryer	<input type="radio"/>
	Multi-outlet power strip (often you have just 1 or 2 power stations in your room and the power-strips, you can buy here, are often	<input type="radio"/>

Clothing

broken after a short time)	
Portable Speakers (to listen to music outside)	○
Alarm-clock (if not included in the mobile)	○
Sunglasses + Etui	○
Base cap	○
Trousers, Jeans (Recommendation: thin, but long trousers)	○
Rain cape (especially while the rain season)	○
T-Shirts/ Sweatshirts	○
(Fleece-) Pullovers (it can get cold, especially in the evening)	○
Comfortable Clothes	○
Sportswear incl. Sport shoes	○
Festive clothes like Blouses, elegant shirts etc. (for official events)	○
2 pairs of shoes (Light footwear and sturdy shoes for excursions)	○
Sandals/ Flip-Flops	○
Underwear and Socks	○
Swimwear (there is a swimming pool at 10 min walk from Maison Shalom)	○
Towels (for excursions etc., Towels for the daily use you'll get from Maison Shalom)	○
Pyjama	○
Leggings	○
Dresses/Skirts (but knee-length or longer)	○
Scarf(s)	○
Wash bag (you'll leave your hygiene-products in your room and just take it in the bathroom for use)	○
Products for face cleaning	○
Sun milk (with high sun protection factor - the sun can get very aggressive here)	○
After-Sun-Lotion	○
Toothbrush + toothpaste + dental floss	○
Razor + shaving foam	○
Deo + perfume	○
Richly textured lotion	○
Lip Care Stick	○
Showerlotion/soap + Shampoo	○
Nail scissor + tweezers + nail file	○
Hand lotion	○
Comb, hairbrush	○
Hair pins/hair-tie	○
Hairspray	○
Contact lenses + fluid	○
Cotton pads	○
Tampons/pads	○
Make-up, Mascara etc.	○

Hygiene

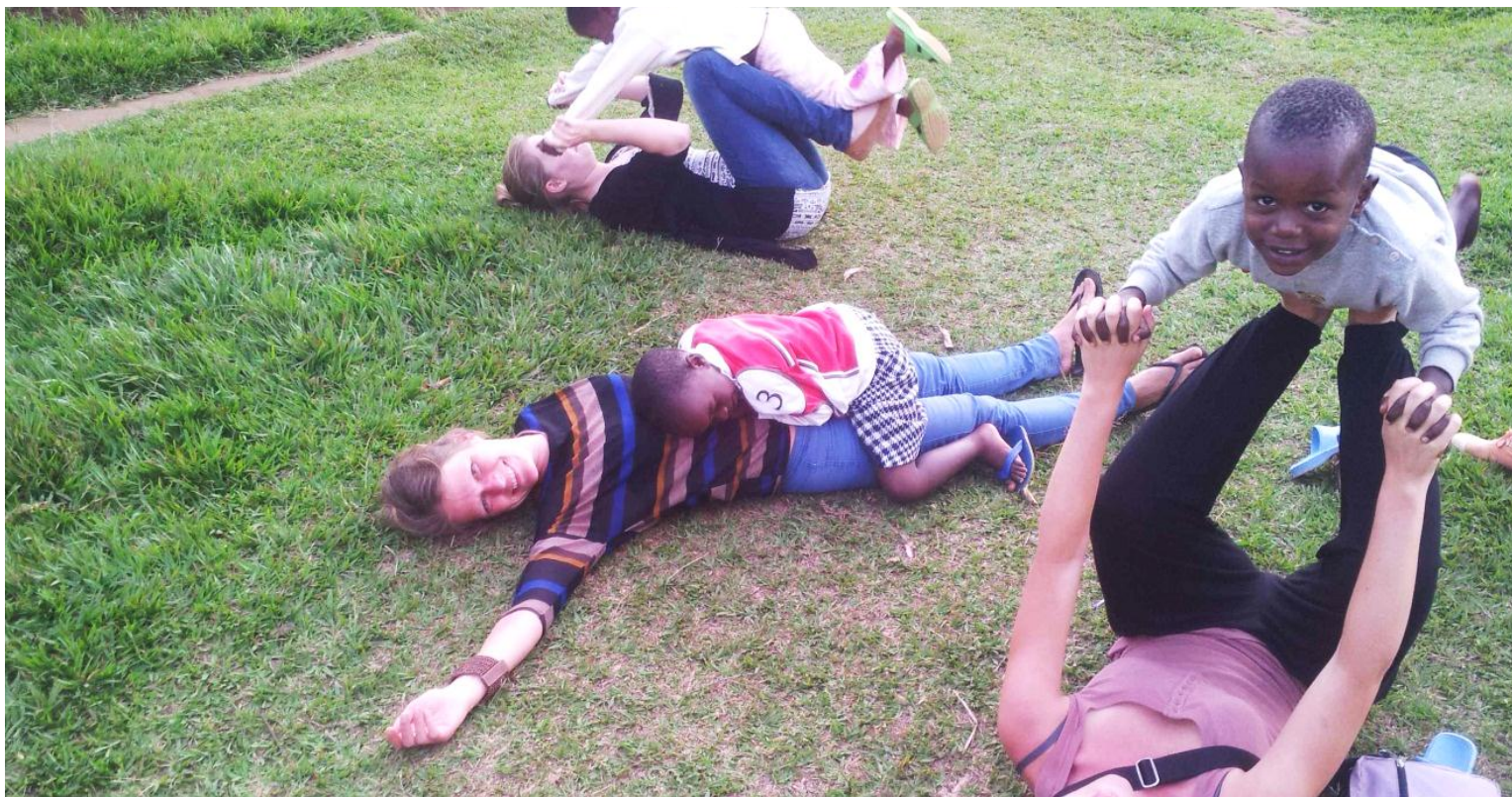
First aid kit

Tissues	<input type="radio"/>
Individual Medication that you need to take	<input type="radio"/>
Mosquito spray	<input type="radio"/>
Ointment against Mosquito-Bites	<input type="radio"/>
Malaria prophylaxis + Antibiotic	<input type="radio"/>
Painkillers	<input type="radio"/>
Wound and Healing Ointment	<input type="radio"/>
Band-Aids	<input type="radio"/>
Dressing material (elastic bandage / wound pads)	<input type="radio"/>
Cold-medicine	<input type="radio"/>
Nasal spray	<input type="radio"/>
Inflammation inhibitors/ Disinfection-spray	<input type="radio"/>
Hand sanitizer	<input type="radio"/>
Antibacterial agents	<input type="radio"/>
Tablets for disinfecting water	<input type="radio"/>
Medication for treatment of diarrhea	<input type="radio"/>
Birth-control pills / condoms	<input type="radio"/>
Silicone gels/lotions	<input type="radio"/>
Herpes-ointment	<input type="radio"/>
Vitamin tablets	<input type="radio"/>
Pocket knife (not in the hand luggage!)	<input type="radio"/>
Lighters (please check the baggage policy of your airline)	<input type="radio"/>
Earplugs	<input type="radio"/>
Sleep mask	<input type="radio"/>
2-3 little locks to lock the luggage	<input type="radio"/>
Pens	<input type="radio"/>
Inflatable neck pillow (for the flight)	<input type="radio"/>
Hand laundry detergent (no washing-machine available)	<input type="radio"/>
Stain remover	<input type="radio"/>
Clothespins (wash-line available)	<input type="radio"/>
Safety Pins	<input type="radio"/>
Sewing kit	<input type="radio"/>
Umbrella	<input type="radio"/>
Tape, Rope, Glue	<input type="radio"/>
Scissors	<input type="radio"/>
Games (e.g. Cards)	<input type="radio"/>
Personal valuables	<input type="radio"/>
For smokers: portable ashtray	<input type="radio"/>
Maybe: souvenirs for the children (balloons, sweets, pens, handi-craft materials)	<input type="radio"/>

Other

Not necessary

Bedcovers
Towels for the daily use
Food and Drinks



4. Volunteer-Life at Maison Shalom

A. Living:

- **Where:** On the compound of Maison Shalom
- **Room facilities:** Double-room with bed, bedside table, wardrobe, desk, chair
- **Bathroom:** Sanitary facilities available per room
- **Electricity:** Exists (temporary power cuts not excluded), standard-socket: Schuko

B. Laundry:

- **Washing and Drying:** Manual washing - no washing machine available (you can bring detergent or purchase it on site).

C. Food and Drinks:

Breakfast (incl. Tea and Coffee), Lunch (warm) and Dinner (warm). In Addition drinking-water, soft drinks are available for purchase the whole day.

- Eating-Times

Breakfast: around 7 - 8.30 am
Lunch: around 1: 00 pm
Dinner: around 7.30 pm

- Where

Oasis of Peace Restaurant



D. Costs

DI. Conditions How to value contribution?Special/ Other condi-tions?

Interns and volunteers pay a contribution to costs of stay depending on the value of the work they accomplish on site for Maison Shalom. Added to that you write a report after your stay, so Maison Shalom can improve our teamwork with volunteers and interns continuously.

- Included

- Accommodation: Overnight-stays in double-rooms
- Full-board with breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Support and contact persons on site
- If required: Certificate for the stay abroad for your university or the like

- Living (Alternative)

You have the free choice to rent a room outside Maison Shalom's compound. In this case, you will have to negotiate the price on your own depending on your preferences.

Visitors: Your visitors are more than welcome at Maison Shalom. We can offer them good value overnight accommodations - in our lodges at Maison Shalom. Just give us a short sign at an early stage and kindly be prepared to take care of the cost of their stay

You can stay in the same room if you are a married couple only. Otherwise, we ask you to kindly stay in separate rooms.



Weather

▪ Rain Season

Around September till the End of April (don't forget to bring your rain cape), small rain season: Sep-tember till December, big rain season: January till April

Note: When it's raining, live stands a bit still in Kigali. So if you have any appointments, while it's raining just call the other person, to make sure, when and if they are coming.

▪ Dry Season

Mai – August

Dress code

We recommend you, to bring a Rain Cape with you - especially during the Rainy Season. Added to that you should take care, to meet the local requirements with clothes. This means, you should wear long (but thin) Trousers and Skirts and Dresses just, when they are knee length or longer. You should also bring official/festive clothes like button-downs, blouses, elegant trousers etc. For the mass in church we suggest you, to wear clothes, which cover your shoulders. Additional you should leave your casual wear in the wardrobe and better go to church with more festive clothes. It can get cold in Rwanda, especially in the evening, so please also bring some warm clothes like (fleece-) pullovers etc. The most important things we also added in the packing-list under "clothes".

5. Also good to know

A. Languages

Kirundi, Kinyarwanda, French, English

B. Telephone and Internet

Telephone and Internet work in Rwanda by prepaid-method. That means, that you need a SIM-Card first, which you have to charge with credit in advance. You get the credit without any problems in one of the many Shops available anywhere in Rwanda. Additional to the internet by SIM Card, of personal Modem, you have the possibility, to use the internet in ICT room at Oasis of Peace or Mahama Elite Centre for free.

C. Shopping

Dukas and market Day –to-day necessities (food, drinks, credit etc.) you can buy without any problems in shops available everywhere in Kigali

Tailor Rwanda and Maison Shalom especially, has a lot of beautiful, African fabrics to offer. You want to make a dress, trouser, bag or something else out of it? For that just go to the tailor in the Elite Design Workshop and you'll get your individual clothing items made just for you.

D. Free-time-activities

Kigali is, with around 1.5M inhabitants, not a big city. Nevertheless you can discover a lot of things here in your free time. Your working-times depend on the projects you do. Normally you have the weekends, which you can use for discovering Kigali and Rwanda in general; traveling through Rwanda, getting to know country and people or even just relaxing.

Sport	Should you like to do sport, the main hall at Maison Shalom is available. You can also do jogging or swim in the nearest Hotel (Nobleza at 5 minutes' walk). In the latter case, a session will cost you 4 EUR.
Les Tambourinaires	Burundian refugees are very famous for their drummers, "Les Tambourinaires". The Beating of the Drums is just amazing and will go directly into your heart. There is a group, which is practicing twice a week close in the compound of Maison Shalom. Just join their practicing-sessions - you're more than welcome!
Church	Church in Africa is always an experience. The people sing a lot, which gives every mass a special charm. In the Church of Kigali you can join the mass every Sunday (7.30 - 10 am and 10.30 am - 13 pm). For the mass we suggest you, to wear clothes, which cover your shoulders. Additionally you should leave your casual wear in the wardrobe and better go to church with more festive clothes.
Evening activities	Maison Shalom has a nice Bar & Restaurant in its compound. There you can enjoy your after work-time. There are many other places you can enjoy too. Sometimes it takes some time, until the food is served, but you are getting used to "buhoro buhoro" (take your time). All in all Kigali is safe. The people are very open-minded and will extend a warm welcome to all visitors. You can walk around the city without any problems at day-time. Nevertheless we recommend you, just to go outside with a male (at best from Maison Shalom) after it's getting dark. Until 10 pm you should be back at the compound of Maison Shalom.

Kindly keep in mind over 10pm, the compound of Maison Shalom is closed and the security guards may not let you in.

...You are prepared! We wish you a great time at Maison Shalom - with impressive experiences that touch the soul and never go away! **You are most welcome!**

This Guide was first published in April 2014 and updated in 2019. We want to keep this Guide on point. So if you have any suggestions to change or add new information, don't hesitate to contact Richard Nijimbere, the Country Director (richardn@maisonshalom.org).

He will update the Volunteer-Guide for the volunteers following you.

Thank you very much in advance!

And now...

Imprint

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