

Home › Blog › Volunteering Doesn't Have An End Date

# Volunteering Doesn't Have An End Date



Post by: John Gillette



*What happens after you volunteer? What happens when you return home to your way of life? It can be a hard adjustment for many volunteers, who have had their eyes opened to a new culture, a new way of being and the power of giving back. IVHQers John and Joanne Gillette found the perfect way to keep their volunteer work in Zambia going long after they returned home to England. Here's their story*

As a lawyer and lecturer in our late forties, we decided to volunteer abroad for the first time. We chose the teaching program in Zambia, because it was an area of Africa that we hadn't been to before. Having set aside a month for our placements, we set off for Zambia with not the slightest idea that our volunteer journey actually had no end date, and that on our return we would be setting up a charity, [The Zambezi Sunrise Trust](#), to support education in Zambia.



Zambia is a peaceful, stable and democratic country but it is also a developing country and the work of volunteers is highly valued by local communities. Only one in four children receive a secondary education and many have limited primary education. Through its local partner, IVHQ sends volunteers to support a variety of schools with different levels of resources and conditions. A combination of dedicated staff and eager students means that they achieve great things with what they have, but so much more could be done with greater financial support.

As well as the opportunity to teach, IVHQ volunteers also have the chance to take part in Childcare, Elderly Care, Medical and Community Development projects. Volunteers are soon immersed in local culture and challenged in an infinite number of ways.



It was one such challenge that inspired us to do more. At the end of each day at the nutrition centre where Joanne was placed, a teacher and social worker would walk for about an hour to the area where they lived. There they had set up an evening 'homework club' for local children – for some of whom it was the main source of education that they were receiving. The children sat on the ground outside with no shelter. With temperatures over 30 degrees centigrade and a blazing sun, conditions were not ideal. When it rained, there was no class and no education. With the help of the teachers, for a modest sum Joanne was able to organize the construction of a rudimentary classroom as well as benches and a blackboard. Now classes can be taught whatever the weather. Something had been done, but there was that 'If only we'd had more time, we could have done more' feeling. And that feeling led to the Zambezi Sunrise Trust.

Not everyone is in a position to set up a charity, but many will be very familiar with the feeling of wishing you could do more when your placement ends and it is time to return home. Our journey is a heartening reminder that when an IVHQ placement ends, it does not necessarily mean that there has to be an end to the opportunity to help those with whom relationships have been made during a volunteer's time abroad.



Many of the former IVHQers that we have contacted since are delighted that there is now a simple way to donate and support work in Zambia, from wherever in the world they may be. Word has quickly spread on the IVHQ grapevine! We've had volunteers from Australia, Canada, Germany, Holland, Italy, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America support our trust.

Founded in May 2016, the trust has gone from strength to strength and was recently recognized by the relevant UK authorities as a 'Registered Charity' (number 1169587). We are always delighted to hear from IVHQ volunteers, past or present, who are interested in continuing their support for Zambia. Recently we have had an past volunteer in America set up a fundraiser and support her project through Zambezi Sunrise, another in Holland who has organized fundraising at the school where she teaches in order to help where she taught in Zambia, and another in Italy who has donated computers for a school, Nekacheya, that we will take to them. Present volunteers have also contacted us, one from Germany providing some of the photos on our website and [Facebook page](#).



Aware of a sponsored walk to raise funds for much needed items at Nekacheya Primary School and aware of the generosity of spirit that there is towards the school amongst past IVHQers, we set about giving volunteers the opportunity to continue supporting their placement. In October, 2016, forty school children, their teachers and some parents walked from the centre of Livingstone in Zambia towards Victoria Falls. Past volunteers from Australia, Canada, Italy, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America showed their support. Some were in a position to immediately donate to sponsor the walk, some were able to pledge future fundraising activities and some were just able to send messages of encouragement: all were greatly appreciated by the school. In the end that group of past volunteers was able to double the amount that the school was able to raise itself. Through social media the trust was also able to raise sponsorship for a pupil at Nekacheya who was doing the walk.

While all this was happening we also found ourselves shortlisted as finalists for the 2016 IVHQ Volunteer of the Year Scholarship. Marissa Frank, was a fellow finalist and another past volunteer from the IVHQ Zambia program. The American student has set up a non profit organization that provides water purifiers, and education about clean water, to schools by selling water bottles in the United States. [True Thabo](#) has recently provided a water purifier to Nekacheya. A development of the scholarship has been that we have been in contact and we look forward to working with True Thabo in the future.

These are all examples of how past and present volunteers can combine to have an effect beyond what they would be able to do alone.

For more information about the Zambezi Sunrise Trust, [John can be contacted here](#).

**APPLY NOW**



**0 Comments**

Sort by **Newest** ▼



Add a comment...

 Facebook Comments Plugin



## Latest Blog Posts

### The Magic Of Volunteering In The Jungle

Carmen Liberatore was awarded the IVHQ Travel Blogger Scholarship in 2016. Here she talks about volunteering in Peru on the Jungle Conservation project...

*Posted on:* Jun 27, 2017 *By:* Carmen Liberatore



### 2018 Volunteer Abroad Destinations + Best Programs & Projects

2018 Volunteer Abroad Destinations + Best Programs & Projects. Everything you need to know to make volunteering abroad a reality.



## How To Volunteer Abroad As A Physical Therapist

If you're looking for physiotherapy work experience abroad, physiotherapy volunteer opportunities are available through IVHQ. Becoming a physiotherapy volunteer may seem like a daunting task, however our step by step guide shows you how easy it can be...



Posted on: Jun 15, 2017 By: Taylor Haskell

[View all blog posts](#)

Ready to get started?

[APPLY NOW](#)



Got a question for the team?

[Send an enquiry](#) or [start a live chat](#).



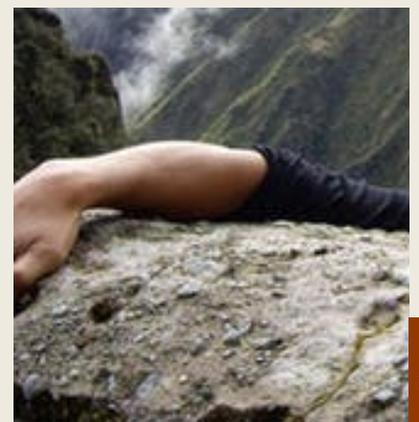
### IVHQ Flights

Create cheap travel itineraries with STA Travel



### IVHQ Groups

Volunteer abroad as a group of students, colleagues, friends or family



### IVHQ Travel Insurance

Affordable insurance packages designed specifically for volunteer travelers





**INTERNATIONAL  
VOLUNTEER HQ**

[info@volunteerhq.org](mailto:info@volunteerhq.org)

+64-6-758-7949 (International)

1-877-342-6588 (USA/Canada Call Free)

0-808-234-1621 (UK Call Free)

1-800-557-380 (Australia Call Free)

© International Volunteer HQ

[Terms and Conditions](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Sitemap](#)

Certified



Corporation

[bcorporation.net](http://bcorporation.net)