

Namibia Community Challenge Frequently Asked Questions

Before registering...

Why should I take part?

Taking part in and fundraising for the Namibia Community Challenge will be a great personal achievement. It is a unique opportunity to work alongside the communities that Homeless International supports; you will take away unforgettable memories and meet new people. Through fundraising you will be helping to make a difference to the lives of some of the world's poorest urban communities.

Who can take part?

To take part, you must be aged 18 or over on the day of departure. You will need to complete a medical form upon registration – if you are over 60 years old or have any pre-existing medical conditions your GP must sign this to confirm that they are happy for you to take part.

How fit do I need to be?

Undertaking practical building work and trekking in Namibia's warm climate will be a challenge, so you will need to be reasonably fit. During the trek days you can expect to walk for up to 8 hours a day in temperatures of around 15-25°C. Training advice will be issued upon registration and it is important that you follow this to ensure that you are suitably fit before departure.

How much does it cost to take part?

A registration fee of £500 is required upon registration. We then ask you to raise minimum sponsorship of £2,800. The sponsorship is due in the following instalments:

- £1,600 raised by 29th February 2012
- Further £800 raised by 31st May 2012
- Remaining £400 of minimum sponsorship due four weeks after return to the UK

Where will the money go?

Approximately £1,796* (£500 registration fee + £1,296 of minimum sponsorship) will be used to pay the costs of the trip (see 'What is included in the costs?'). This means that over half of your minimum sponsorship will go directly to support Homeless International's work.

*It is possible that trip costs may change slightly. Should this happen, your minimum sponsorship target will not increase, but the ratio of costs to donation will.

What is included in the costs?

- Flights
- All internal travel
- Accommodation and camping equipment (except sleeping bags and mats)
- Most meals, water and refreshments
- Medics and guides
- 50% of your airport taxes and fuel surcharges (as of July 2011, approximately £199 per person – see below)

What is not included?

- 50% of your airport taxes and fuel surcharges (as of July 2011, approximately £199 per person – see below)
- Visas*
- Personal expenses
- Vaccinations*
- Travel insurance*
- Personal kit* (including walking boots and equipment, sleeping bag and mat, clothes and first aid kit)
- Tips for staff
- Single supplement
- Alcoholic drinks
- Your travel to/from the UK airport
- Any extensions or excursions that you choose to take after the trip has finished

* Further information will be provided upon registration.

Why do we have to pay 50% of airport taxes and fuel surcharges?

Airport taxes and fuel surcharges are currently around £398 but are subject to change/increase. We know from previous events that sponsors are more likely to donate to your challenge when a higher percentage of your sponsorship will be going to charity, rather than spent on your costs! For this reason, we ask you to make a contribution towards your airport taxes and fuel surcharges and will invoice you later in the year when these are due. We ask for a percentage, rather than a set cost, because there is no way of knowing yet exactly how much the charges will be.

Who is Action Challenge?

Action Challenge is a specialist travel agency, responsible for organising all the travel and ground arrangements on the trip. As their name suggests, Action Challenge specialises in creating challenging, travel-based activities all over the world. They have experience of organising overseas challenges for a wide range of UK charities, both large and small. The company is fully ATOL-bonded.

I am concerned about the social and environmental impact of the trip...

So are we. That is why we choose the destination of each of our trips carefully: we choose to visit countries in which Homeless International supports local communities, and we include a visit to one of our partner organisations. This way, we believe that we are not only offering our supporters an unforgettable trip, but a chance to learn about and appreciate different cultures and meet communities who are working together to find solutions to poverty. Through the understanding you gain from this experience, we hope you might share your learning with others when you return home. Trips like this can also help to support the local economy by providing employment for local people, including drivers and porters.

How do I register?

To register for your place on the trip, please complete the registration form and return it to us with:

- Registration fee of £500
- Signed terms and conditions of entry

- Completed medical form (signed by your GP if required)

You must also make sure that you have read and understood the booking conditions set out by Action Challenge in the accompanying document.

When do I need to register by?

If you decide to take part in the Namibia Community Challenge, please send your registration fee and forms to us as soon as possible to ensure your place. We will write to you to confirm your place. Fundraising for the trip is as much of the challenge as taking part and we therefore request that all registrations are received by **31st January 2012 (revised date)**. After this time, acceptance of new participants on the trip will be at Homeless International's sole discretion.

Getting started...

How do I raise the money?

The opportunities for fundraising are endless, but most people find it easier to break the sponsorship down into manageable chunks. The key is to start early and find any opportunity to fundraise. When you register for the trip, Homeless International will provide you with full fundraising advice, ideas, press release templates and style guidelines to help you on your way. Most importantly, remember the FUN in fundraising – do what you enjoy, try something different, and get lots of people involved. You'll no doubt find that you're well on your way to the target in no time at all!

What support will I receive?

Upon registration, we will send you a fundraising pack to help you get started with your fundraising. We will set up an email group facility so that you can share tips and ideas and get to know your fellow participants. We will also provide you with full kit lists, training advice, and other information before departure and invite you to an information day to help prepare you for the trip. A member of Homeless International staff will also be taking part in every step of the trip with you. Full back-up and support on the trip is provided by Action Challenge, who will provide an English-speaking doctor, experienced local guides and support staff.

What happens if I can't raise all the money in time?

Please contact us if you think you aren't on target to meet the sponsorship instalments. We will do our best to help and advise you on your fundraising. However, if you cannot raise the money, you may forfeit your place on the trip – this will be at our sole discretion based on analysis of fundraising plans and likely targets.

On the trip...

What will the building project involve?

The project you will be working on is supported by Homeless International through its Namibian partner, Namibia Housing Action Group (NHAG). Through NHAG, Homeless International supports community-led initiatives that provide better housing, water and sanitation for poor communities. The nature of the work you will be doing will depend on what stage of development the community is at when we arrive, but will be designed to benefit the whole community and support a community-led approach. Examples of work you could be doing include helping with the construction of houses with savings groups, including making bricks. Please note that you may be working on a project already underway by the community, and we cannot guarantee that you will finish the project during your stay.

What will the accommodation be like?

We stay in a hotel on the first night of the challenge. For the rest of the challenge we will stay in comfortable tents on a twin/triple share single-sex basis at a campsite with washing facilities. Where possible, we will try to meet requests for sharing with a friend, but cannot always guarantee this. Please indicate any room-sharing preferences when completing the registration form.

What do I need to bring?

A full kit list and advice on spending money will be provided upon registration. The kit list includes items such as walking boots, sleeping bags and a medical kit: if you don't already have these items, we advise buying them gradually over the coming months to help spread the cost.

How much will I need to carry?

Whilst on the trek your main luggage will be carried by porters, on mules or sometimes by vehicle to the following night's campsite. All you need to carry is a daypack (small rucksack) with your personal items for the day – waterproofs, water, snacks, camera, sun cream etc.

What will the weather be like?

The weather will typically be hot and dry, but there is a chance of some rain showers. We can expect temperatures of 15-25°C during the day. At night it can get down to freezing.

Can I stay on in Namibia after the trip has finished?

If you wish to extend your stay after the challenge has ended, you can apply to do so by contacting Action Challenge. A fixed processing fee will apply to all bookings plus any fare difference incurred. Extensions are subject to availability, airline rules and are on a first come first serve bases. Please contact operations@actionchallenge.com with your extension requests prior to the deadline of **12th April 2012**.

Where can I get travel advice on Namibia?

We strongly recommend that all participants visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at www.fco.gov.uk to read travel advice for Namibia. This gives up to date information on topics including safety and security, local laws and customs and health. For many, the local customs, services etc. in Namibia will be different to what you are used to in the UK. You should also understand that we may be visiting remote areas as well as city environments. Whilst this is all part of the nature and challenge of the event, you are likely to feel more prepared for the trip if you take time to gain an understanding of the context of the country beforehand.

Any other questions...

Please get in touch by emailing Hannah at hannah@homeless-international.org or call us on 024 7663 2802.