

1. Medical information

- a. Refer to cdc.gov
- b. Vaccinations needed – none required, but if time spent in country (like Ethiopia) that has yellow fever, they may inspect your WHO card and require the vaccination if you don't have it.
- c. Personal experience with injections, vaccinations, pills, etc. You should come with any prescription meds you may be taking. You can't assume they'll be available here. You should also start on a malaria prophylaxis before arrival and make sure to continue it for the required number of doses after returning home. It is also advisable to purchase while here a course of treatment for malaria so that IF you should come down with malaria after returning home, you have at least the first line of attack ready.

2. Passport and Visa information

- a. Is a Visa necessary for the destination country? For those from USA and Canada visas can be obtained at the airport upon disembarking from the airplane. Passport holders from SOME countries may have to obtain a visa ahead of time (our recent experience with a colleague from the Philippines).
- b. Is a Visa necessary for travel outside of destination country? To neighbouring countries Zambia and Mozambique – yes. If you are planning to enter these countries from Malawi, you can obtain visas from their consulates in North America before your trip. If your trip is of sufficient duration, you can also apply for visas from the local consulates in Lilongwe. They can generally be obtained in one day.
- c. Are passport pictures needed at any time? When applying for visas as in "b." above.
- d. General passport protocol – always make sure you have at least 4 blank pages in your passport. Some countries will refuse to put a visa in a passport with fewer than 4 blank pages. Always travel with a photocopy of your passport (especially the picture/information page) kept in a place other than where you usually carry your passport.

3. Additional things to know

- a. Time zone – GMT + 2 hours. That is, Malawi is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Daylight Savings Time; 7 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time.
- b. Electricity format
 - i. Is a converter needed? A transformer is needed if you are bringing anything that is 110VAC only. Most electronic stuff these days is multi-voltage (100-240VAC; 50/60 Hz). The current here is 220VAC 50Hz. Be sure to check your electrical equipment BEFORE coming and make sure it will function automatically on

any type of electricity or, if not, that you know how to change the settings or that you have a transformer of adequate wattage and output to run what you are running.

- ii. If so, what type? An outlet converter will also be necessary even if you have multi-voltage equipment. The outlets here are, for the most part, British type with 3 large square prongs. You can get outlet converters at most travel stores – some are quite flexible and even offer surge protection.
- c. Computer/Email access
 - i. Bringing laptops – if you bring a laptop, there is no guarantee that you'll be able to hook up to internet. It's possible, but will require access codes/passwords to access local service providers. Lilongwe is improving, though, and more and more hotels and guest houses are offering "high speed" internet connections – usually on their own computers provided at work stations.
 - ii. Internet availability – there are several local service providers. Usually you can get on line either at an internet café, through the place where you are staying or at the CRWRC office.
- d. Telephone calls – Cell phones from North America don't work here unless they are specifically designed for international use and "unlocked". You can buy/rent cell phones here for a reasonable price. Sometimes the CRWRC office has an extra cell phone that visitors can use while here. Generally, direct-dialing North America is not a problem – just a bit expensive – a little in excess of \$1/minute. Through the CRWRC office you can Skype people computer to computer for free – but that assumes they have a Skype address.
- e. Arrival Procedure (See information below)

4. Be sure not to forget to take your:

- a. US Dollars in cash -- \$200-500 each. Be sure to reserve \$30 for the departure tax at the Lilongwe airport – must be paid in US\$. Traveler's Cheques are a pain to use, you get a poor exchange rate, and they aren't universally acceptable. Credit cards have limited usefulness in Malawi. It's possible to use a debit card at bank ATM's.
- b. Prescription meds, extra contacts or glasses, Imodium, aspirin...
- c. Batteries or charging units for electrical equipment (cameras, etc.)
- d. Toiletries and a change of clothes in your carry-on just in case your luggage takes a side-trip and doesn't arrive with you.
- e. Sunscreen, sunglasses, or hat – this is the tropics.
- f. Any treats/sweets you can't live without.
- g. Towel and wash cloth – unless you KNOW you are going to be staying in a better guest house/hotel.
- h. Home contact information – not only so you don't forget to call home, but also in case of emergency, somebody in the group will know whom to contact.

5. **Weather** – Malawi is south of the equator (about 15 degrees), so the seasons are opposite North America. Hottest time of the year is Nov/Dec just before the rains start. Rains are usually from Dec. through March. Coldest time of the year is July/Aug. During the hot time, days will be in the upper 80's to mid-90's F. (30-35 degrees C.) and the nights in the mid- to upper-60's (around 20 degrees C.) During the cold time, days will be in the mid-70's (24-26 degrees C.) and nights hover around 50 degrees F. (8-12 degrees C.). During the rainy season, it is not monsoons like India, but it is just the time of year when we are more likely to get rain. It'll cloud up and rain maybe 2-3 days in a row (not solid, but mixed rain and sun and partly cloudy) then clear off and be sunny for a few days. During the dry season, there is no chance of rain for 8 months in a row (April through Nov.)!!

6. Dress

- a. What should men wear/avoid? Men should wear dressy casual slacks (what one would wear in the office in North America) and a knit or sport shirt. Their African counterparts will often have on a coat and tie! Dress shoes and socks. Avoid shorts, T-shirts, sandals unless relaxing at the hotel or at the lake. If you'll be here over a Sunday, dress nicely. Africans generally dress more formally than North Americans and it appears rude to them if we are underdressed.
 - b. What should women wear/avoid? Dresses/skirts that come below the knee or longer. Slacks/shorts are generally not considered proper public attire. Dress modestly. When in the village, one should wear a *chitenje* (chee.TEHN.jay) (a 2mx1m piece of cloth that can be bought at the local market) that is wrapped at the waist over the top of other garments.
 - c. Reminder of business dress in the country (no slippers, shorts, etc.) Not just business dress, but modesty, decorum, and dignity befitting sons and daughters of the King!
7. Any other information you would like to add.
 - a. For more information see "Work Team Manual Malawi-Mozambique" available on request – rather large file for email attachment. Will try to put on CentraStone
 - b. Also shorter version of orientation information called "Your Gateway to Malawi" available as email attachment.

INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO MALAWI

* first stop after getting off bus that brings you from the airplane is a desk where they check your passport to see where you are coming from. Some countries of origin have to show WHO cards to show proper vaccination. Usually those from the States aren't stopped.

- * next, collect an Entry card to fill out for immigration.
 - * last residential address is your home address
 - * address traveling to is CRWRC, PO Box 62, Lilongwe
 - * reason for entry is "visit"

- * present the Entry card and your passport at immigration. They'll ask length of stay -- ask for one month visitors visa. They'll stamp it in your passport and you pass by the desk to the luggage claim area. (It's a very small airport -- you can't get lost!)

- * wait for your bags at the conveyor. Should your bags not arrive, there is a desk there for making lost luggage claim. Fill out the form. Contact information is Larry McAuley, phone 01-753-357 or 01-753-210 (home) or 09-963-020 (cell).

- * assuming you get your luggage (which we all hope will be the case!) proceed to customs. When they ask what you are carrying, just say personal effects needed for your trip. They may ask to see in one of your bags. They'll take a cursory look and wave you on. You've nothing to declare.

- * go to the end of the customs area and turn right. You MAY be met by a policeman in plain clothes who'll ask again to see your passport. I have no idea why they do this, but show them your passport and wait patiently for him to complete his inspection.

- * proceed ahead through the open double doorway, turn right to end of short passageway, then left through a phalanx of taxi drivers all wanting your business. Watch for me (likely) in the crowd to collect you. If, for some reason, I don't make it to the airport and you are feeling abandoned, a taxi driver will gladly give you lift to the Korea Garden Lodge. If he doesn't know where it is, tell him it's in Area 3, Tsirinana Ave. near to the High Courts Compound and the Anglican church. The charge for the ride should be about Malawi kwacha 2,500 (about \$20).

- * You might want to change money at the airport at the bureau de change' -- it's usually a pretty good exchange rate.