

Iris Info Sheet for Disaster Relief Teams to Mozambique

Disclaimer

Disaster Relief teams assemble with incomplete information due to limited communication and rapid situation changes. All participants must accept that there may be changes, errors or omissions to the information provided. This is not ineptitude or carelessness, it is just reality; grace is essential on all sides.

This work can be dangerous and strenuous – the crime rate is high, even under normal circumstances. Desperate people have been known to riot during food and aid distribution. There is a heightened risk of cholera, malaria and other diseases associated with poor sanitary conditions and flooding. We cannot guarantee your safety.

General Information

The purpose of these trips is to provide assistance with Iris Ministries in the flood/cyclone disaster relief efforts conducted from three staging areas in Mozambique: (1) Quelimane/Morrumbala, (2) Caia/Dondo, and (3) Pemba. Iris Ministries' leaders will assign your duties day by day. Pemba is not a disaster area, but some staging happens here. Minor damage to churches nearby is being repaired quickly.

You will participate in activities such as evangelism, distribution of food and other aid, building, cleaning, and *serving the refugees in whatever way possible*. These are resilient people, internally strong beyond comprehension. What they suffer when things go well is more than most of us could bear. They are now coping with raw events that the world would rather forget. You may be asked to simply sit with some.

The work involves a lot of rough travel and waiting around. It is easy to be taken aback by what seems to be a waste of your precious time on the ground. For we who are so eager to 'get the job done,' the African logistics and cultural process can stir disturbing questions. It is important to trust the call of God if He has led you to go in person. Your *greatest contribution* is likely to be the presence of God that you, personally, carry in your spirit. There is no way to measure the encouragement brought to a bone-weary local pastor who wants to sit under a tree or in a truck for maybe half a day with a guest who came to do some high-energy bit of business. Just sitting beside one, in silence, may make a profound difference in the spirit realm. If that is your lot while there, please be at peace with it, and serve the gospel of Jesus in this way. These local leaders may have, themselves, lost every earthly thing. Even Job's friends had the grace to sit with him in silence for seven days! (This is a lost art for us in the 2007 Western world.)

We ask you to plan for at least two weeks; coordinating your date and duration with betty@irismin.org once your application has been processed.

You will need a valid passport, with at least six months remaining beyond your planned stay, and at least three clean (unstamped) pages. Obtain a notarized copy of your passport before you leave; you will take this with you whenever you leave the Iris staging area. A photocopy without the notary stamp is *not* sufficient. We ask this so you do not have to bring your original passport with you to the rugged areas. It is more difficult to replace the original passport than it is to replace a copy, in case of loss or destruction. We recommend that you leave a photo-copy of your passport, and a complete itinerary with someone back home who could help arrange a new one if necessary.

Portuguese and tribal dialects are spoken in Mozambique – knowledge of Portuguese or Spanish is helpful.

There may not be electricity, running water, showers, bathing, or bathroom facilities. You may be in your tent at a refugee camp. You could also be in your tent or other accommodations at the World Vision compound in Morrumbala. We cannot ensure that you will have food to eat every day. Some sleeping quarters may be available at the staging areas, but your own personal tent, sleeping bag and mosquito net will be required.

Iris Ministries will make an effort to have a vehicle available. In the event this is not possible, the team will want to rent a 4WD. This will be determined in advance communication with Betty Johnson when scheduling and assigning, after the application has been processed. The roads are very rough. Only

manual stick shift vehicles are available. Drivers need an international driver's license, be competent driving on the left, and a basic knowledge of 4x4 functions (High range, Low Range & Diff Lock).

It may be raining or very hot. Evenings may be cool. Temperatures have been 80-90s, with high humidity.

The Dondo/Beira/Caia teams need to be smaller – 3-5 persons. One or two people having medical training would be an asset. Be advised that any medical relief there would be conducted under the auspices of the local church, not in an open clinic.

Who Can Go?

Volunteers must be 19 years of age or older, physically fit and very healthy, spiritually mature, self-reliant, able to work in a team, and/or independently, as the situation requires. Candidates must be strong, uncomplaining, servant-minded, pleasant, even in adverse conditions and circumstances, flexible, courageous, and submissive to leadership. **If you are uncomfortable with risk or hazards in another culture, this will not be the trip for you.**

Medical professionals are urgently needed, but they may encounter difficulties in dispensing medicine or providing care in some places.

Translators are most welcome – Portuguese/English.

Drivers of 4WD vehicles will be helpful -- capable of driving on the left side of the road.

Expenses

You will be responsible for all your own expenses and travel arrangements; coordinating travel plans with Iris Ministries (betty@irismin.org) **before ticketing.**

- Bank cards usually work in all the major cities, including Quelimane.
- Airfare – costs will vary depending on your point of origin and how far in advance your ticket is purchased. *You are apt to need a paper ticket* – guard this document well.
- Airport fees – depending on which airports you travel through; check with your travel agent. We have been told that most airports charge fees – the one at Maputo, and Quelimane charge you \$8.00 each, and a \$20.00 customs fee each. They don't give you change so have some small bills with you. You can also pay with mets, which are easy to get in the airport.
- Ground transportation. If needed, you and your team will split the cost of truck rental and fuel.
- Food – plan around \$10.00/day while in Mozambique; more while traveling.
- Lodging – on your way to/from Mozambique, with moderate offerings at the various compounds. If you stay at the base in Morrumbala the charge is \$10.00 per night for a bed, and \$6.00 per day for food. If the base is full you will sleep in your tent inside the compound.
- Visa for Mozambique is \$25 USD at the border; it is more costly in advance through an embassy. This will be a 30-day visa that can be extended. See options in “Resources” at the end of this document.
- Vaccines - Cholera is highly recommended (you must have the immunization 10 days before possible exposure); malaria is a serious threat – so malaria prophylaxis should be taken, and it is advisable to bring a course of Coartem (which can be bought at a pharmacy in Johannesburg airport) with you if you are staying for 2 weeks or more. This would be used to treat you, if you contract Malaria.

NOTE: Malarone is the recommended choice for preventive malaria meds.

Cholera is often prevented by washing your hands, adhering to strict hygiene standards, and drinking only bottled water.

Your local Travel Health Clinic can advise you re other recommended immunizations and the cost of the vaccines.

- Please also ensure that your travel insurance is up to date and makes provision for medical evacuation. Dear Canadians – Provincial Medical Health Plan will **not** be adequate. You need separate travel health insurance (available at any insurance broker). If you need additional coverage, you can check with your travel agent or contact Specialty Risk International, Inc. (SRI)

and check out their Liaison International Traveler's Insurance. Go to www.specialtyrisk.com for free quotations. You can also purchase coverage online and receive an immediate Virtual ID Card.

- Bottled water – each Quelimane team member will want to purchase their drinking water at the city; plan about 3 liters per day.
- A TRI-BAND, NON-BLOCKED, cell phone is needed, in order to use a Mozambican SIM card and phone credit. Phones are available to purchase in Beira/Quelimane for about US\$70. This will be the only way to communicate. We recommend that each team purchase a phone to share.

What to Bring

- US currency (for some reason, not Canadian currency)
- For the Quilamene staging group, once you leave there, you may not be able to purchase anything. This is the group going furthest into the flood zone.
- You will be limited to ONE 66 lb [30 kg] bag, plus ONE carry-on size bag. Included in these restrictions are your tent, net, and sleeping bag. This is due to limited room for luggage in the trucks.
- Tent. Decide among your team members who will bring what sized tents. A groundsheet is always a good idea as well. Please plan to leave your tent and sleeping bag behind for a refugee family.
- Your clothing may be ruined – do not bring anything that you care to keep.
- Women MUST wear skirts. You can wear pants or shorts underneath a wrap-type skirt if you wish. Loose culottes are acceptable, but not form-fitting capri pants. All skirts or culottes must be at least mid-calf length. Sleeveless or tank tops are OK, but no low necklines or abdominal skin showing.
- Modest shorts or pants are fine for men.
- Footwear – you may be working in heavy rains and mud. Bring some form of rubber shoes, aqua shoes or flip flops, and tennis/running shoes.
- Poncho or raincoat
- Heavy hooded sweater or sweatshirt as it can get cool in the evenings. Those that zip up the front are best.
- Flashlight/batteries
- Sunscreen
- Bring lots of bug spray with a high DEET content (30-100%).
- Waterless, anti-bacterial hand wash and/or pre-moistened wipes (such as baby wipes) for the times you can't wash your hands.
- All personal hygiene items – be prepared to leave as much as possible behind for the refugees.
- Any prescription medications. They must be in the original labeled containers. You may wish to have your doctor give you an all-purpose antibiotic "just in case." See notes in section above re: vaccines and prophylaxis.
- Imodium is always good to have. Conversely, with a mostly-rice diet you may also need Metamucil.
- Small first aid kit (may want to organize this between your group)
- Blow dryer (just kidding!!)
- Do not bring any valuables. Carry any cameras etc in your carry-on luggage; theft from checked bags is common. Lock or plastic-wrap your baggage at the Johannesburg airport.
- Mozambique law requires everyone to carry ID. Carry a notarized photo-copy of your passport. Check with your Iris staging-area coordinator about this, once you have been accepted/assigned. You may wish to have a money-belt-type item.

RESOURCES:

Official government links for travel to Mozambique. Copy and paste them into your browser to access, if necessary.

Canadian government - <http://www.voyage.gc.ca/dest/report-en.asp?country=198000>

US government - http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_976.html

Travel agencies:

Used by Be a Hero –

Eunice Mitchell, International Travel Consultant
eunice@mennotvl.com <<mailto:eunice@mennotvl.com>>

32112 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford B.C. V2T 1W4 Canada

Ph. 1-800-667-5559 ext 305 <<http://www.mennotvl.com/>>

Often used by Iris Ministries, among others:

Shelly Prosch shellyprosch@msn.com

See www.embamoc-usa.org for requirements and printable application forms as well as a list of Mozambican embassies and consulates around the world.

Information to use for your visa application:

Province: Cabo Delgado

District: Pemba

City: Pemba

Street: Pria Wimbe

House #: CP 275

Friends: Heidi and Rolland Baker, US Citizens, friends

Reason for entry: Volunteer at a children's centre

Border: (if flying from Johannesburg or Maputo) Maputo International Airport
(if flying from Dar Salaam) Pemba