

# ACTION AFRICA

## VOLUNTEER & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Champion the Environment



Exchange Cultures



Make a difference...

Action Africa is a volunteer program of Environment Africa



# Who is Action Africa ?

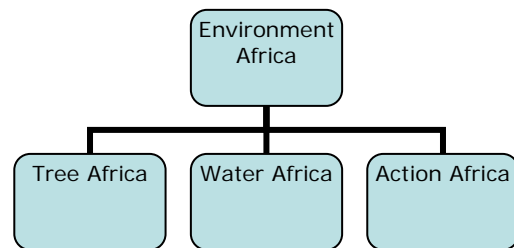
Action Africa was been established in February 2008 as a volunteer program of Environment Africa, a registered non-governmental and non-profit organisation based in Zimbabwe. We offer a wide range of volunteer opportunities in different areas for individuals or groups to explore the African culture and wildlife for a life-changing experience. With our carefully chosen projects volunteers will help to facilitate the social and economic development of local communities in African countries, particularly in Zimbabwe. Action Africa provides a holistic approach to Africa with its breathtaking environment, the African way of life and its challenges.

Since the start of our mother organisation Environment Africa in 1990 we work together with all sectors of society to raise environmental awareness and to encourage action in order to maintain a sustainable environment for present and future



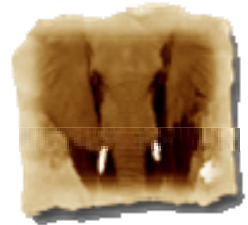
Volunteers visit a village near Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

generations. In each of our programs we work with people from all walks of life, who are passionate, committed and motivated to take action in their own areas of concern. Environment Africa plays a vital role in the research and conservation of Africa's environment and in the uplift of livelihoods through the modification of traditional practices and improving household economics. Through our volunteer and development programs we offer a safe and welcoming environment for people from all over the world who want to join us and encounter this remarkable continent.



The Action Africa Statement "Make a Difference" stands for the impact people will make in local communities. Volunteers will be actively engaged into the community and take part in their African lifestyle. Through their contribution they share not just knowledge, skills and experiences, they give hope to people. Hope for a better life.

Our programs will give people from all over the world in all age groups the opportunity to discover and enjoy Africa's beauty and cultures, to share their



experiences and to enhance knowledge about the African way of life. With our strong desire to strengthen our local communities the assistance of our volunteers is much-needed to mobilize action, mainstream the environment, improve educational standards and uplift livelihoods for children and communities in rural and urban areas. Action Africa is based in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, and run by a team of qualified and experienced staff from Zimbabwe and Germany.

## Who is Environment Africa ?

Environment Africa was formed after a spectacular and famous trans-continental bicycle journey from Great Britain to Zimbabwe undertaken by the "Rhino-Girls" Charlene Hewat and Julie Edwards. The purpose of the ride was to raise awareness, support and donations for Africa's most endangered species, the Black Rhino. One year and 22.000 km later the ride was

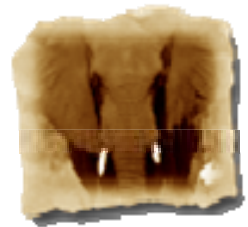


Environment Africa staff members with a promotion stand at the Clean-Up Zimbabwe Day in Victoria Falls

finished in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, and set the tone for Environment Africa's watchdog and advocacy role.

In 1990 the Environment 2000 Foundation was born with the vision of working for better awareness of environmental issues and its protection. With the staff of less than five and with limited resources our Foundation began charting its rise to what it is today - one of Africa's leading environmental organisations. In 2001 the name was changed into Environment Africa to signify our desire to cut across political and natural boundaries. Today Environment Africa is a registered Private Voluntary Organisation (WO-6/93) with over 150 staff, more than 700 members and established successful its sub-organisations Tree Africa and Water Africa. Apart from the main office in Harare the organisation has branches in Victoria Falls, Lupane and Mutare. Our organisation also expands internationally. After offices in the capitols of Zambia and Malawi we also launched our new office in Great Britain in September 2008.

The goals of our organisation are very simple. We are raising the level of environmental awareness amongst the general public, business sectors, schools, community groups as well as the government. With each of our programs



and projects we ensure that decision-makers are actively consider environmental issues and the livelihoods of rural and urban communities. To this end we implement and facilitate various projects in different areas of concern, all the time knowing that the people of an area are the key to its conservation.

## Who is Tree Africa ?

Tree Africa was founded as a sub-branch of Environment Africa and launched by Nelson Mandela in 2002. With this program we aim to involve as many people as possible in our region and the world to help planting trees in Southern Africa.



Environment Africa staff members with a promotion stand at the Clean-Up Zimbabwe Day in Victoria Falls

Why trees, you may ask. Trees are life. They are the very thing that provides us humans with the air we need, they provide food, shelter, medicine, fuel wood, prevent soil erosion, help towards the contribution of

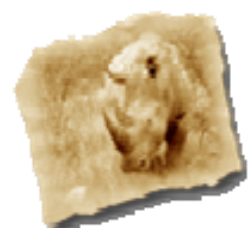
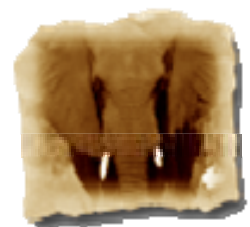
rain, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, which are good indicators for land use as well as cleaning the air and contributing to the reduction of global warming. Yes, without trees there is no way to survive. In a nutshell, trees benefit people, the planet and wildlife.

The goal of Tree Africa is to uplift the spirit of Africa and to help to regenerate its environment. Therefore the program aims to create action and awareness about the importance of trees and to help individuals, organisations, cooperates, agencies and anyone interested to improve the local and global environment by planting and caring for trees. In the first year of establishment Tree Africa already managed to plant over 1 Million trees.

In collaboration with our partners Tree Africa establishes teaching facilities on permaculture, herb production and nutritious cooking training.

## Who is Water Africa ?

Water Africa is a program which we launched in 2003 to tackle vital issues surrounding water in Southern Africa. The background for it is very simple. Fresh water is a very limited resource but



without it we can not survive. Food productions would decline, human health would fail, the natural environment would suffer and economical development would be limited. 97% of the world's water resources are salt water which means just 3% is desperately needed drinkable water, our life insurance. But almost 70% of this is already polluted.



The mighty Zambezi River, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

For that reason we aim to increase awareness about the water situation in Southern Africa. With our program Water Africa we encourage life skills and value systems that contribute to the protection of natural water resources. Furthermore we lobby for support and commitment amongst the industrial and economic areas in non-pollution and protection of catchment areas, wetlands and river systems.

## How do we work ?

Our work is to effectively restore, protect and manage the environment by working

with people and communities, building partnerships and mobilizing for change. We enable and educate in food security initiatives, nutrition improvement and income generating projects.

### **Uplifting Livelihoods**

Particularly in rural areas the communities are living in very poor conditions. Through financial and technical support we are fostering individual businesses. These projects are focussed on sustainable management of natural resources such as tree nurseries, vegetable gardens and bee-keeping. To build up long-lasting capacities farmers are given training in farming techniques and conservation methods to improve their harvest and its storage. We secure better farm productivity through educational programs and initiatives with local communities and farmers in enhancing food security, income levels and the sustainable management of their resources.

### **Mainstreaming the Environment**

Environmental challenges continue to be a cause and result of poverty, a status quo that is always effecting the poorest of the population in rural and urban settlements. Therefore we focus on mainstreaming environmental issues through building up effective systems for lobbying and advocacy, where we and



our partners effectively assist in environmental conflict resolutions.



Introducing new herbs and plants for nutrition gardens in Lupane, Zimbabwe

### **Use and Restoration**

Nowadays, many of our natural resources are overexploited and through poor agricultural practices our environment is under serious threat. To restore and conserve these resources our organisation takes a social approach to communities in urban and rural areas. We work in these communities together with environmental guardians for sustainable management, conservation and restoration of degraded environmental areas.

### **Life and Habitats**

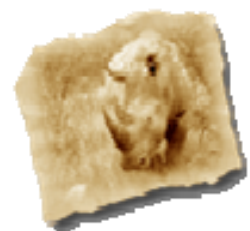
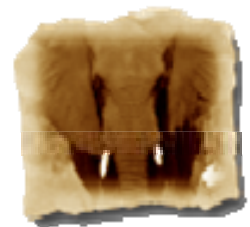
Working in the environmental sector we know that the key to provide appropriate ecological management is to help and support local authorities with knowledge, advice and equipment. For that reason we assist local departments in their work at existing and new sites of rich ecological diversity and encourage local communities to take care of them.

### **Education and Awareness**

In our opinion the first step to empower and mobilize action is to raise awareness on key environmental issues amongst the general public. Therefore our organisation runs several campaigns such as “fire” or “clean-up” throughout Zimbabwe and other African countries. Through environmental education programs at schools in rural and urban areas we approach our next generation and teach them the importance of conservation and sustainable management of natural resources. Furthermore we encourage participation in our local communities through environmental competitions and award them.

### **Partnerships**

To work together with our partners is essential for our organisation. Many of the environmental and developmental challenges we face are highly complex with limited resources and involve a variety of issues. Our partnerships enable us to share new skills, information and perspectives, we avoid duplication of efforts, add value for potential funding sources, harmonise environmental policies and management systems as well as bolster support and encouragement. With our partners we strengthen our work and approach more people who are involved in our environmental process.





Village people at a Environmental Awareness Training

## Who are the people behind?

Namo Chuma and Nicole Markert are the driving forces of Action Africa with the guidance of Charlene Hewat and Innocent Hodzonge, the Management of our mother organisation Environment Africa.

Namo is the Senior Programme Manager of Action Africa and within his role he overlooks all projects our volunteers are involved with. He started working for Environment Africa as Branch Manager for Victoria Falls in 1999 and in 2006 became the Regional Manager for Matebeleland North Province. His passion for environmental issues and his vision for developing and uplifting livelihoods in rural and urban communities are the strength of his work, batched up with his qualification in Personal Management and Human Resources. He is also responsible for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of Action Africa Volunteer & Development Programme, the mobilisation of resources and the identification of strategic partnerships.

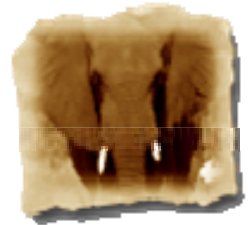
Nicole joined the team of Environment Africa in February 2008 and started as a Volunteer for the Victoria Falls branch. After studying economics with marketing in Germany she was the perfect person to create and develop our vision of Environment Africa's Volunteer & Development Program Action Africa. As Programme Coordinator she is responsible for the marketing and promotion of Action Africa on a national and international level. Furthermore she designs and reviews our projects and is in charge of volunteer recruitment, placement and training.



The management of Environment Africa and its programs Tree Africa, Water Africa and Action Africa

## Why volunteering?

Volunteering is for people who are up for challenges and life-changing experiences. Especially in Africa people will have the opportunity to make a difference. Far away from material publicity you will encounter another, more the real side of



life, surrounded by people who are grateful for your contribution.

Voluntary work in Africa offers you a close encounter to the people who live in the rural and urban communities and it is an exciting way to get involved in the African way of life, its culture and traditions. "The dark continent" is the most impoverished landmass in the world and always in the focus of many charity and humanitarian organisations around the world. Volunteering with Action Africa is to have the opportunity to participate in all kind of projects and assist in sectors such as conservation, community development and health care. The areas of our concern besides environmental programs which include biodiversity and wildlife, are youth, school, food aid, information programs to common diseases like HIV/AIDS, Malaria or Cholera and field research. So far Action Africa offers volunteer projects in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi and we are expanding soon into Botswana, Namibia and South Africa.

Regardless of if volunteers are a in high school, college, university, professional or even retired, all ages are welcome to support our organisation and to work with us to improve the livelihoods in African communities. All our programs include an affordable project fee which directly benefits our environmental, community and development projects and also covers your

accommodation, meals, training and national transport related to your project.

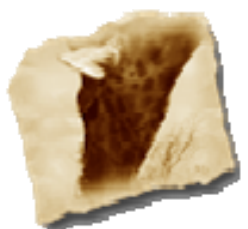
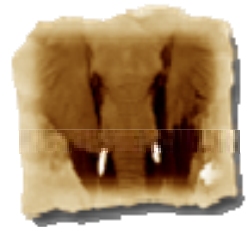


Volunteers teach Environmental Education in schools

Most of Africa's aid organisations, like Environment Africa, are non-profit organisations and can hardly work without volunteers and their assistance. Many of our meaningful projects, campaigns or initiatives we could not run without financial support through donors and our volunteers. In particular as a volunteer your assistance is much-needed in our efforts to protect, conserve and improve environmental conditions.

## Where to volunteer?

The field and areas of our volunteer projects are as different as your interests. Our organisation offers you a wide variety of projects in the sectors of environmental conservation, youth initiatives, and school programs to our POEMS (Policies of Environmental Management System) and community development programs.



Together with our partners we also offer special programs in wildlife protection and conservation of the most endangered species in Africa such as lions, elephants and rhinos. Furthermore are projects in the areas of cultural research and health care available.

### **Conservation**

Africa's environment has been facing many challenges in the last decades such as diminishing biodiversity, climate changing, air and river pollution, dwindling forests, wildlife exploitation and other forms of environmental degradation. Creating environmental awareness and sustainable development play a key role in our conservation projects. A sustainable use of our natural resources and their management also contribute to human livelihoods and would reduce poverty. Our concern lies particularly in areas of most sensitive biodiversity such as the Victoria Falls Rainforest and Africa's remaining wildlife, which need our protection. In collaboration with our partners such as the Park and Wildlife Management Authority and private Wildlife Sanctuaries we encourage our fellow citizen to take action and mobilize change. Conservation programs are an extraordinary opportunity to experience Africa's breathtaking scenery, encounter the most incredible animal species and access one of the most spectacular areas in the world.

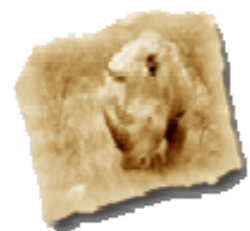
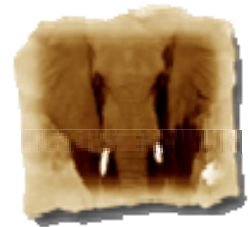


„The Smoke That Thunders“, the Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe

### **Children, Youth & Education**

Our children and youths are the next generation and decision-makers of tomorrow. Many of Africa's countries have a very poor schooling system, which reflects in the lack of professionals, books and other necessary educational material. If we want to create a better future for them it is necessary to invest in developing their education, knowledge, skills and social responsibility today.

Our organisation and its partners work closely with schools in rural and urban districts to raise awareness about environmental management, child abuse and reproductive health. We also run different campaigns and initiatives for youth empowerment. People who assist in one of these meaningful projects discover the challenges of our children and youths in Africa and their gratefulness for every contribution. You may participate in one of the youth programmes, assist in rural or urban schools at primary and secondary levels



or enjoy to work and play with kids in our Eco-Ranger Club.



Eco Rangers in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

### Health Care

In many parts of Africa people live in poor health conditions, especially in rural settlements. Millions of people experience deprivation of the most basic rights to water, shelter and food. The medical infrastructure is very low and often people need to walk long distances to receive aid. Hospitals and medical centres are desperately short of drugs, medical equipment and sometimes facing, like in Zimbabwe, an exodus of health care professionals. One of the greatest threats to the African population is HIV/AIDS.

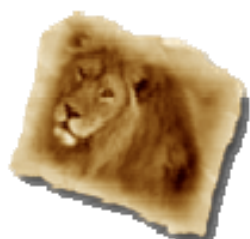
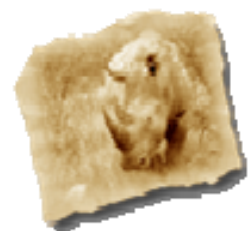
In most African countries between 15% and 35% of the whole population is infected by this disease and more and more children are targeted. Health Programs helping us to enlighten our fellow citizens in rural and urban areas about the danger of diseases like HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Cholera and their prevention. Our organisation is implementing programs where we provide

leaflets, training and information at a community level urging action against high mortality rates, low life expectancy and high burdens of malnutrition. We participate in various health care campaigns where we work closely together with hospitals and health departments to strengthen health care services.

### Community Development

Community outreach programme are vital for our work in improving living standards and effectively reacting to communities' needs. In line with global trends our organisation is working towards the eradication of poverty and hunger as well as the establishing and refurbishing of community facilities. Community development projects are mostly focused on training and informing communities on the sustainable management of natural resources, improving of farming techniques and giving financial support and assistance for building up sustainable self-made businesses to increase income levels.

Our projects acknowledge and promote the use of traditional, indigenous low input crop-varieties and ensure small grains availability to increase farm productivity as well as enhancing food security and income levels. Through all community development projects we also



meet urgent needs concerning chronic food insecurity. This is done, for example, through supplementary child feeding programme in schools and pre-schools and reintroducing highly nutritious and drought resistant food as well as fast maturing crops. People who join us in this area will explore and enjoy the real African life with all its traditions and challenges. They will live directly in the communities and participate in projects which help to uplift livelihoods in rural and urban set ups.



Building up and improving village facilities in Jambezi, Zimbabwe

### Cultural Research

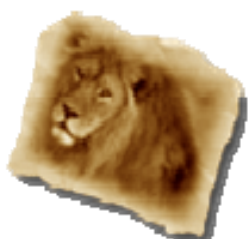
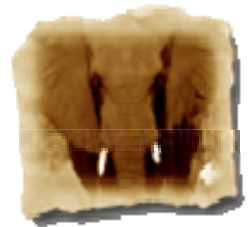
Africa has a very old history with many interesting aspects and various tribes. The “black” continent is known as the rock of mankind. Yet many of the historical facts and the old knowledge of African tribes is lost or going to be with the death of the elders. As an African organisation we are eager to preserve our heritage for future generations. In our cultural research projects what is now mouth to mouth knowledge will be saved in written documents recording well-researched historical facts and events as well as details

about their language. To gain all this information our researchers conduct interviews amongst tribe members and tribal communities, visit historical places and sites and participate in traditional ceremonies.

## What is the impact of our work?

For over 10 years we have worked as a charitable organisation and our work is important to many households and families. We believe in doing work on the ground and producing tangible results. Our carefully chosen projects and program activities make a difference in the lives of the people. With our partners we ensure that all groups within the communities are involved in improving their hygiene and health conditions, nutrition education as well as learning to identify their own needs.

Some of our projects concentrate on the lives of children and young people, while others focus on vulnerable groups in rural in urban communities and providing them with access to resources for productive economic and nutritional growth. In most of our projects our goal is to increase income generation, food security and to decrease undernourishment in children and mothers. Within this we emphasize



sustainable use of resources, thereby protecting the environment.

Our organisation promotes the use of indigenous trees, such as the Moringa, as a food supplement. Research has shown that the leaves of this tree provide children with their daily requirements of Calcium, 75% of their iron, half their protein needs and with all the Vitamin A and C they need. Our project activities involve the cultivation and propagation of Moringa trees in rural and urban set ups. Through the combination of widespread use of the Moringa tree as a food supplement and other agroforestry options such as nutrition gardens, vulnerable communities are able to improve their household nutrition and produce more effective resources for their economic and medical stability.



Farmers and their improved crop harvest in Lupane, Zimbabwe

Farmers in these vulnerable communities receive excellent training from our organisation about the cultivation of local plant species through which they may improve their overall health of local households and create opportunities for

income generation. We create nurseries for future seedling production which will assist in the expansion of nutrition gardening and ensure continuation and sustainability of the projects.

Our organisation promotes growth, infrastructural development and capacity building and gives financial, technical and marketing support to the groups who are involved in the projects that include beekeeping, urban agriculture, small grains, nutrition gardening and waste paper recycling to name just a few. With our projects we aim to greatly improve household food security and through training farmers and communities were able to produce incredible harvests in the last years.

Each year an opportunity is given to communities to interact and learn from one another through looking and learning. Our Field Days are a time where farmers learn the most practical way and indigenous knowledge systems are exhibited. The farmers contribution is encouraged as much as possible through these days and they are crucial for communities as they reduce dependency. The field days are also attended by schools and create a platform to educate both farmers and pupils on best practices that include live fences, mixed cropping, water harvesting and nurseries.



One of our key principles is to lobby, form partnerships, implement projects, carry out campaigns and activities all in the name of safeguarding and conserving the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations. We have successfully held workshops to educate farmers on why and how they can use lobbying and advocacy in environmental conservation issues. Follow-up shows that these farmers now have an improved understanding of the subject. Participants are trained in the identification nature and sources of conflicts so as to distinguish the negative and positive impacts of different possible forms of intervention and different resolutions.



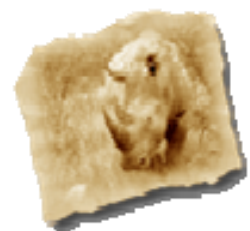
Mr. And Mrs. Mafuwa show off their nutrition garden

To create a better future we already start with our youngest. In our environmental education programme we challenge and motivate schools to develop school-based environmental policies and management plans that embrace issues of our time, locally and internationally. We create links between schools and local, national and international environmental programmes as well as awarding schools and encouraging them to take part in national environmental

school competitions. Furthermore we promote informed community involvement in resource management and protection as well as the valuation of schools into community resource centres.

You can say that the purpose of these projects is to integrate the environment into curriculum, plan for better learning opportunities using local environment and allow for the wise management of resources. These projects started in 2001 in 24 pilot schools and to date more than 100 schools have joined and even more are expressing their desire to be part of the environmental education projects. Our projects have gone a long way in raising environmental awareness among the learners, teachers and the community. Better yet the schools have, through their outreach action projects into the community, contributed effective action programmes that stimulate informed community participation in the development of ecologically sustainable ways of living.

A team of passionate, committed and dedicated people make up the success of our organisation. The contribution of our volunteers, members, stakeholders and everyone who participate in and support our organisation's activities can not be overemphasized. You are an integral part to the success of our work.



# **ACTION AFRICA**

## **VOLUNTEER & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

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WE HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON!

Your Action Africa Team

