



### **Q: Will I have safe drinking water, or should I bring purification tablets?**

A: You will be drinking bottled water for the duration of the trip. Do not use any tap water for drinking or brushing your teeth. It is best to avoid ice in drinks unless instructed differently by your host. You will have a filter that may be used to clean water for washing dishes.

### **Q: Will we have clean bathrooms everywhere we go?**

A: The answer is **"not always."** The **guesthouses** we will be staying in and hotel bathrooms are generally clean, but when we are traveling or at a site, toilets will be marginal, at best. You will want to bring your own toilet paper supply or buy some when we get there. You might even be introduced to a **"bush stop."**

### **Q: Will the food be safe to eat?**

A: For the most part. **We'd caution against eating salad** or raw vegetables, however. If it is cooked, it is probably fine. We recommend bringing some medications just in case (i.e., Pepto, Imodium and/or other stomach related meds).

### **Q: Is travel to and in Nigeria safe?**

A: In general, the places you will travel to are **"safe."** The Nigerian staff will guide the group with all travel plans. However, here is the US Dept of State travel warning issued on Aug 3, 2016. "The Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to Nigeria and recommends that U.S. citizens avoid all travel to Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states because the security situation in northeast Nigeria remains fluid and unpredictable. The Department of State strongly urges U.S. citizens in Nigeria to consider their own personal security and to keep personal safety in the forefront of their travel planning.... The ability of the Mission to provide assistance to U.S. citizens in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states remains severely limited. The Department recommends against all but essential travel to the following states due to the risk of kidnappings, robberies, and other armed attacks: Bauchi, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Niger, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, and Zamfara. The Department also warns against travel in the Gulf of Guinea because of the threat of piracy. Based on safety and security risk assessments, the Embassy maintains restrictions for travel by U.S. officials to the states listed above; officials must receive advance clearance by the U.S. Mission for any travel to those states."

### **Q: Should I be worried about getting cholera?**

A: Not if you drink bottled water and eat food that is either boiled (rice, beans, sweet potatoes, greens, meat), fried (plantains, meat), baked (bread) or peeled (bananas, citrus or mangoes). **Traveler's diarrhea is not uncommon, but if it is accompanied by vomiting, let your team leader know immediately.**

### **Q: What about other tropical diseases?**

A: Malaria is one of the tropical diseases that could be an issue. There are ways to minimize the risks by taking an anti-malarial drug. Symptoms of malaria are similar to the flu. Fever, chills, headaches and muscle soreness may be indicators that malaria is present. Typhoid is also present, but the risk is very low if you follow our guidelines for safe drinking water. Ask your family physician for recommended immunizations and medicine for preventing malaria.

### **Q: What will the weather be like?**

A: It is generally quite hot in Nigeria. Dry season is October through May with rainy season June-September. There is often "Harmatan" (dust from the desert) in the air from December - February which gives a hazy appearance and keeps temperatures down. Jos is on a plateau and the evenings and nights will be cooler. The northeast is typically hotter with the hottest months being March and April. The Abuja guesthouse has fans and air-conditioning in the rooms, Jos does not. If we travel to other places we cannot count on fans or electricity. Check the weather online in the month before you travel.

### **Q: Will I be able to get a shower every day if I want to?**

A: You can count on bucket baths at most places. In Jos and Abuja, heated showers may be possible. A washcloth and a small towel will be helpful.

### **Q: What should I wear?**

A: Nigerian culture is very modest. Men should wear long pants, tank tops are not recommended. Women should wear skirts or dresses (knee length or longer) and short sleeved tops (not sleeveless). Women may wear capris when on the work sites. Men and women may wear shorts when at the guesthouse (home base) in the evenings.

Bring good walking shoes and/or work shoes. Sandals and flip-flops are fine when not at the work sites.

You will be attending at least one church service. Nigerians dress up a bit for church but clean, neat clothing will be fine.

### **Q: What language will be spoken?**

A: Although English is the national language, most of the people will have limited English with a heavy accent. The common language spoken by most people will be Hausa. Interpreters will be available as necessary. Speak slowly, listen closely and let the love of Christ and each other be your universal language.

### **Q: What physical shape do I need to be in?**

A: The work will be physically taxing and you should be able to work about 4 hours in 90-100 degree sun. There will be lifting of **blocks, mixing sand etc.** **There is also a need for "go-fers" to fetch** supplies which will be less taxing. Please check with your doctor if you have any questions about your physical condition. Drinking plenty of water and taking all your normal medications is very important.

**Q: What should I expect in the airport?**

A: You should have little trouble in Abuja. There is a form to complete and you will be given the information you need to complete it. You may have difficulties coming back into the U.S. if you buy anything which is not permitted by U.S. customs (i.e. fruits and vegetables, animal products, etc.).

**Q: Are there any other Nigerian customs that I should know about?**

A: This will be discussed during an orientation session before you go or right after you arrive.

**Q: May I wear jewelry?**

A: Yes, but don't bring things of value.

**Q: When I attend a church service will I be expected to sing or preach?**

A: No, but someone from your group should be prepared to give a short greeting from the US and an introduction of the members. If desired, the group could pull together a musical selection to share.

**Q. Will I have internet service?**

A: Internet will be spotty to almost non-existent. There are 2 Nigerian phones that can be used to call or text home. For your safety, do not advertise on FB or other social media the details (dates) of your trip!

**Q. Should I bring along anything else?**

A: Sun screen & mosquito repellent  
Camera (phone cameras are fine – leave on Airplane mode and it is an alarm clock and night light)  
Small flashlight (called a torch)  
Small snacks like peanut butter crackers, granola bars, energy bars, or dried fruit and/or nuts  
Possible Medicines: Any regular prescribed medications, pain reliever, sleep aid for the first night, anti-diarrhea, laxative, anti-malarial (rainy season is the height of the malaria season), cold medications, band-aids and antibacterial cream, etc.

**Optional items to bring:**

Small pillow (theirs are large and hard), Twin top sheet (often not provided)  
Adapter for plug-ins, something to read, a notebook for journaling,  
Lotion (during dry months), solar lantern  
Coffee singles (like from Starbucks)

**Not recommended:** Hair dryers and styling wands, lots of cash

**For Additional Information Contact:**

Kendra Harbeck	Roxane Hill
847-429-4388	847-429-4329
<a href="mailto:kharbeck@brethren.org">kharbeck@brethren.org</a>	<a href="mailto:crhill@brethren.org">crhill@brethren.org</a>