

This past summer (2024), I was given the amazing opportunity to serve as an intern with Bread of Life! I served as a teacher in the village near the base. I taught 7th and 8th graders part-time. I taught 7th grade English and 8th grade science, English, and Christian Religious Education. To say I enjoyed the five weeks that I taught there would be an understatement. I LOVED, LOVED, LOVED teaching in the school! These seventh and eighth graders were by far some of the sweetest, most joyful, most super fun-to-be-around people I have ever met in my life! Each student had their own personality and added something to the class!

It was interesting to notice how differently I taught compared to the other teachers. Culturally, classes are to be done at their desks with a pen and a notebook, writing down every little thing the teacher says and writes. When I walked in, I said, "Stand up, we are playing a game!" And with that, they all looked at me with wide and confused eyes. Still, they stood up and quickly realized how fun school can be if it is taught differently. We played games to help with their English skills. These games were usually played at the beginning of the class period and consisted of telephone, red light/green light, mango tree, or Simon says (which was by far their favorite). I would hand out stickers as prizes, and eventually, they would start asking for a game every class period. The students there called me one of two things: Madam Victoria or Mzungu (which means white person as I glowed in the midst of the chocolate-colored crowd).

One of my favorite weeks at the school was when all the seventh- and eighth-grade boys left for a football (soccer) tournament, leaving me with just the girls in the classroom. It was so cool to have a smaller class and get to know these girls better. That week strengthened my relationship with them as a teacher and a sister in Christ! I learned that having good relationships with your students will mean more to them than anything they will ever learn in school. So, while we did not do a ton of learning about school topics that week, we did learn a lot about each other, and I will treasure that forever. Another highlight for me and my students was when I had them act out the story of Abraham sacrificing Isaac. The students not only were given an assignment that was not normal for them, but they LOVED being able to act it out, practice their English, and learn all at the same time.

On my way home from school, just about every day, the preschoolers would crowd around me to the point where I could not even walk. They all just wanted to touch me or high-five me, and then a smaller crowd would become my little shadows as they followed me home.

All of them shouting, “MZUNGU, MZUNGU, MZUNGU!” Each day, I found it so much fun to see these children with their chocolate skin and big smiles.

While not in school, I did various things, such as church, widows’ ministry, youth group, collecting water, playing with the children, going to the laga (dry river bed), and helping out around the base. Every night, I got to help this woman named Mamma Abbey (I don't know her real name, but that's what everyone calls her) cook, and she was nice enough to teach me how to make Chapati (an African dish that tastes so good). Even when she didn't let me help, I sat in the kitchen and watched as she worked her magic on this delicious food. She would cook and praise the Lord through singing and dancing the whole time. You could tell her heart was on fire for the Lord even though her life was not easy.

I also had the chance to meet my little sponsored child and bless him with toys and necessities, something I have wanted to do since I found out I could (perks of being an intern;)). He is so cute in the photos but even more adorable in real life. He also loves school and lives with his mother in another village.

If any of this interests you, I suggest doing the internship. The mission trips are phenomenal, but with the internship, you really are immersed in the culture and get to put yourself in the villagers' shoes. You do not have to be extravagant in order to do this; I am just a college student. You learn as you go, and the phenomenal missionary who lives out there is the BEST helper EVER!