

February 27, 2022

### Volunteer with MindLeaps Rwanda

Thank you so much for your interest in volunteering with MindLeaps Rwanda! Our programs in Kigali, Nyabihu, and the refugee camps will benefit from your experience and expertise. We are honored that you will share your time with us.

We are offering volunteering in Rwanda for a minimum of four weeks and a maximum of eight weeks, beginning July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Project examples include academic tutoring, IT tutoring, and administrative support.

Again, we deeply appreciate your commitment as a volunteer. Be prepared to work on your volunteer projects at the Jim Bell Centre of MindLeaps Rwanda in Kigali from 8am-5pm five or six days per week. Evenings and weekends will be your free time. Staff will be available to guide you on projects during your work day, but volunteers should also be comfortable working independently.

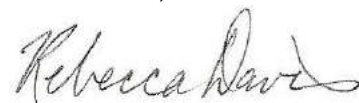
You will have the phone numbers of the team at MindLeaps Rwanda, and they will always be available to help you in an emergency. The first two days will consist of in-field orientation, but please note that this is not a fully guided trip and international staff will not be on the ground during the entire time. Rwandan staff will not be able to schedule restaurant reservations, cultural outings, or accompany you on other activities not related to the volunteer projects. If you are interested in a cultural/historical, fully-guided tour of Rwanda, please request information about our one-week trip also taking place in July 2022.

Rwanda has recently been named the sixth safest country in the world and safest country in Africa for solo travelers ([Business Insider](#)). In accordance with COVID-19 guidelines, all travelers are required to provide a negative PCR test within 72 hours of their departure flight.

The hosting fee for this volunteer experience is \$1,500 and covers your visa, a local phone, and airport pick up and drop off. It does not cover airfare, accommodations, medications, local transportation, meals or other incidentals.

We would be very happy to answer any questions that you may have or connect you with other previous volunteers to share their experiences. Thank you again; we look forward to seeing you in Rwanda!

Best wishes,



Rebecca Davis  
Executive Director

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## Summer 2022 Dates and Registration

### Departure:

Please choose flights that arrive in Kigali no earlier than July 10<sup>th</sup>.

### Return flight:

Please choose flights that return anytime between August 6<sup>th</sup> and September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Trip fee:** \$1,500 per person, payable to MindLeaps. Scholarships are available for schoolteachers and teachers who have previously visited Rwanda. The trip fee includes your visa, phone set up, and airport pick up and drop off. The fee does not include airfare or accommodations, vaccinations, malaria pills, COVID tests, in-country transportation, or meals. We would be happy to recommend and help book your accommodations.

### Estimated personal trip budget:

**Flight:** \$900 - \$1,500 USD

#### Accommodations:

- Shared House in Walking Distance to the Center: \$250 - \$800/person/month
- Hotel in Walking Distance to the Center: \$30-\$40/night (Breakfast included, no Wifi)
- Hotels about 10 minutes Driving to the Center: \$80+/night (Breakfast, Wifi)

#### Covid-19 Testing (as of February 2022):

- Upon arrival: \$70 USD
- For Departure: \$50 USD

#### Meals:

- Hired Cook for Shared House: \$400 - \$600/person/month (2 meals per day, includes ingredients & labor)
- Low-Cost Local Meals: \$4-10/meal
- High-End Restaurants: \$30 - \$60/person

#### Local Transportation:

- Local Taxis: \$8/ride up to \$150/day for tours outside of Kigali
- Mottos: \$1-\$3/ride
- Private Car Hire: \$20+ per day

**Payment due:** Non-refundable \$1,500 payment per person is due by *April 30<sup>th</sup>*.

### Please send your payment to:

*By check:* Mail a check made out to *MindLeaps* to  
116 West 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 500  
New York, NY 10011

*Online:* Please email [info@mindleaps.org](mailto:info@mindleaps.org) or call 646.902.1295 to receive an invoice you can pay online through ACH or credit card (includes 1% fee for ACH and 2.9% fee for credit card)

MindLeaps creates educational paths for the most vulnerable children in the world through a creative arts program that is built on data-driven metrics. Supplemental skill training is provided through academic acceleration courses.

In Rwanda, MindLeaps serves children at: The Jim Bell Centre in Kigali, hearing disabled children in Nyabihu, and in the refugee camps.

[www.mindleaps.org](http://www.mindleaps.org)



## About Rwanda

Rwanda is a landlocked East African country whose green, mountainous landscape has earned it the nickname “Land of a Thousand Hills.” Its renowned Volcanoes National Park is home to mountain gorillas and golden monkeys.

Kigali is the nation's capital city with a population over 1 million.

The country has made an incredible recovery and become an example of reconciliation following the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi.

## VOLUNTEER IN RWANDA



Thank you for your interest in volunteering at MindLeaps Rwanda! On this trip you can volunteer for four to eight weeks in the summer. Your projects may work with students, trainers, or staff in academic, dance, or administrative projects depending on your skills and interests.

### Who will you meet?

MindLeaps works with vulnerable youth living in extreme poverty. The youth change their mindset of survival and learn skills that are in demand in Rwanda’s labor force. This opens the way to employment and self-sufficiency. After completing MindLeaps’ program, many students are sponsored to join formal education. Throughout your time, you will meet youth who are at every stage of this life-changing journey. Through doing so, you learn about Rwanda and help in the fight against poverty.



## About the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi:

- On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1994, President Habyarimana's airplane was shot down and this unleashed an organized campaign of extermination.
- Approximately 800,000 Tutsi and Hutu moderates died in 100 days.
- Approximately 250,000-500,000 women were raped.
- By July, the Rwanda Patriotic Force had predominantly liberated the country.
- Approximately 100,000 children were orphaned or abandoned.
- 26% of the population still suffers from PTSD.



*"What happened in Rwanda happened to us all -- humanity was wounded by the genocide."*

-- Immacuee Ilibagiza

*"Nobody hates himself more than he who hates others."*

-- Rwandan Proverb



## About Rwanda Today:

- Most densely populated African country.
- Main economic sectors: tourism, minerals, coffee/tea exports.
- Languages: Kinyarwanda, English, French, Swahili.
- 90% of population in subsistence agriculture & mineral processing.
- According to World Bank, Rwanda has the 12<sup>th</sup> fastest growing economy in the world.
- According to Business Insider, Rwanda is one of the safest countries in the world.

## Suggested Readings & Viewings:

*Ghosts of Rwanda*, Frontline/PBS

*We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families*, Philip Gourevitch  
*A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, Samantha Power



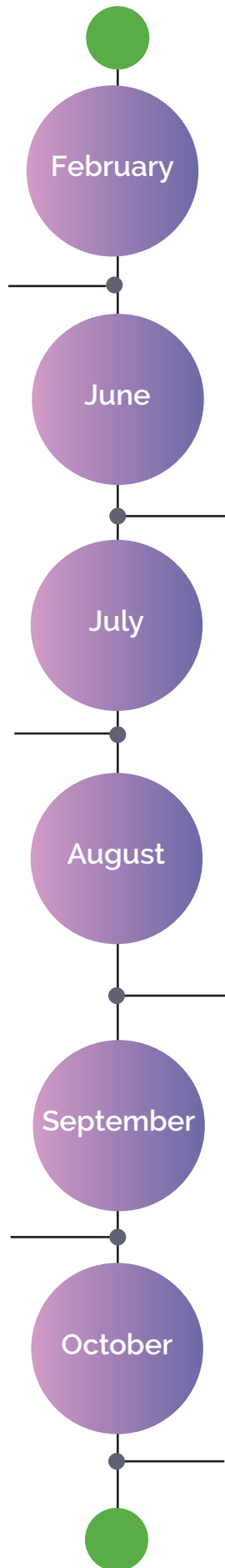
In February 2021, a permanent MindLeaps program in the Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement was secured. The settlement hosts almost 76,000 refugees, primarily those who have fled violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



In July 2021, MindLeaps hosted Kirven Douthit-Boyd, former dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Kirven traveled to the Jim Bell Centre in Rwanda to choreograph a dance piece for the Ubumuntu Arts Festival and host five artistic workshops.



In September 2021, MindLeaps partnered with Chance for Childhood (CfC) and Empowering Children with Disabilities (EmCD) to launch a new program that focuses on D/deaf girls from the Nyabihu School for Deaf Children (NSDC) in Rwanda.



In June 2021, 600 MindLeaps students completed their academic year. In addition, 116 of these students began preparing for their national examinations in July to graduate from Primary or Secondary School.



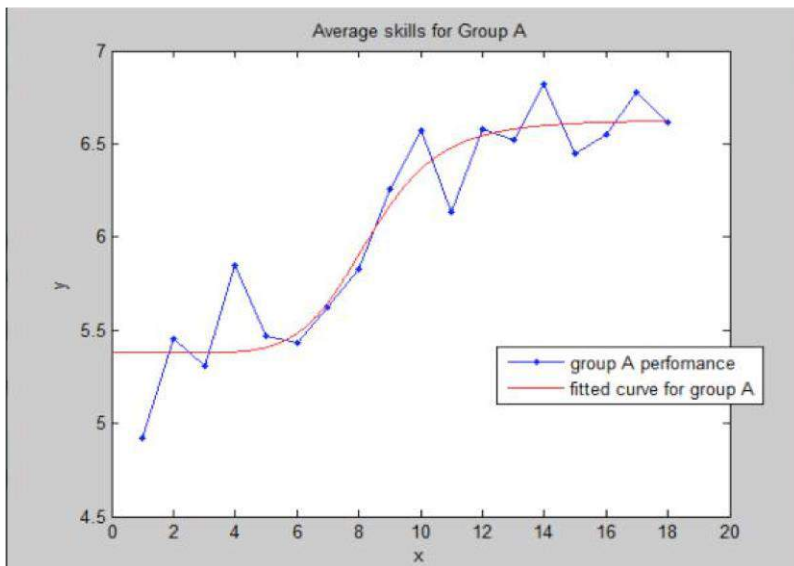
Beginning in August 2021, local Guinean youth began a 12-week intensive Train The Trainer program. 13 of these youth graduated from the training and will be hired by MindLeaps in 2022.



In October 2021, MindLeaps opened the Women's Digital Dreams Center at MindLeaps Guinea. This center is made possible through the support of Fondation Orange Guinée.

# MindLeaps Research

Working with **Carnegie Mellon University Rwanda** and **Drexel University**, MindLeaps has developed an analytical tool to measure the change in 7 cognitive and non-cognitive skills in vulnerable children through the MindLeaps' dance curriculum. These skills are considered critical for success in a formal classroom setting. Below is a typical graph showing the average change in these 7 skills in a class of 15 students over 20 weeks in the program. The seven skills measured on a scale of 1 to 7: memorization, language, grit, self-esteem, creativity & self-expression, discipline and teamwork & collaboration. [www.mindleaps.org/research](http://www.mindleaps.org/research)



70% of MindLeaps children performed in the top 20% of their class when enrolled in school

*X-Axis: # of Weeks at MindLeaps Center in Rwanda*

*Y-Axis: Average scores on 7 cognitive and behavioral skills on a scale of 1-7*

*Sample: 15 children ("Group A") who take dance class three days/week (2 hours/class) at MindLeaps*

## History of MindLeaps

MindLeaps was founded in 2005 as a dance company with a focus on developing original, full-length contemporary ballets based on famous literary works, significant historical events, and modern social issues. In 2010, it underwent a mission change to reflect today's international work serving children. The evolution of the MindLeaps model is the result of step by step research and development in the field, collaborating on projects beginning in 2009 in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and Guinea. These earlier stages of endeavor allowed MindLeaps to test, refine and perfect its methodology – to build a model that worked. MindLeaps began work in Rwanda in 2010 under its former name, RDDC, and between 2011-13 partnered with FidesCo Rwanda (now Centre Cyprien et Daphrose Rugamba – CECYDAR) to administer a dance and IT program for vulnerable children in Kigali. After this proof of concept, the organization was ready to establish its own first permanent center in 2014. In 2014, the company changed its name to MindLeaps to better reflect the mission of the organization and the collective effort put forth every day to help advance children in need. Following MindLeaps' work in Rwanda, MindLeaps began its expansion to other countries and opened permanent centers in Guinea and Uganda, and partnerships in Mauritania and North Macedonia. In 2021, MindLeaps served over 1,900 children annually and operated programs across 5 countries - Rwanda, Guinea, Uganda, Mauritania, and North Macedonia. In the next level of expansion, MindLeaps launched in the USA in 2022.